

# THE GREAT CHRONICLE



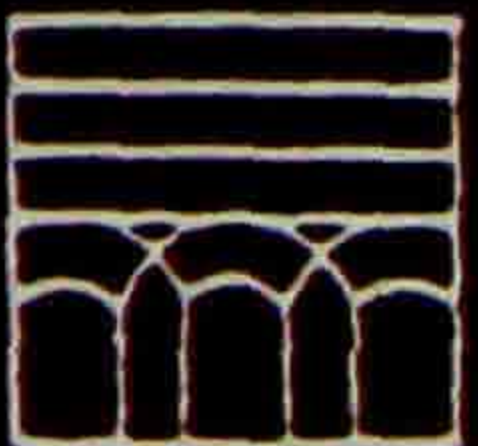
THE STATE BUDDHA SĀSANA COUNCIL'S VERSION  
**VOLUME FIVE**

THE MOST VENERABLE MINGUN SAYADAW  
**BHADDANTA VICITTASĀRĀBHIVAMSA**

TIPITAKADHARA DHAMMABHAṄḌĀGĀRIKA  
AGGA MAHĀPAṄḌITA  
ABHIDHAJA MAHĀRAṬṬHAGURU  
ABHIDHAJA AGGAMAHĀ SADDHAMMAJOTIKA

TRANSLATED  
BY  
**U TIN OO**  
(MYAUNG)

EDITED  
BY  
**U KO LAY**  
(ZEYAR MAUNG)



TI=NI PUBLISHING CENTRE  
B.E. 2541 M.E. 1359 C.E. 1997



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*Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!*

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THE STATE BUDDHA SĀSANA COUNCIL'S VERSION  
VOLUME FIVE

Department for the Promotion and  
Propagation of the Sāsana

Kaba-Aye, Yangon.

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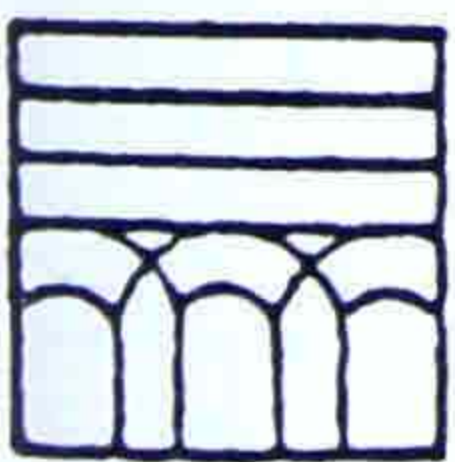
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*Sabbadānaṃ dhammadānaṃ jināti*  
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**W**e would like to acknowledge our appreciation to The Most Venerable Mingun Sayādaw Bhaddanta Vicittasārā bhivaṃsa, the author of this publication, (posthumously) for contributing such a great treasure to the Buddha Sāsana, to Dr. U Tha Hla, Prime Chairman of Tipiṭaka Nikāya Organisation, for his kind permission to reprint this valuable publication, and to U Tin Oo and U Ko Lay for their dedication in the arduous work of translating and editing, without which Sayadaw's works would not have been available in English.

Special gratitude to Sis. Susan Teh and family for having generously donated the cost of this reprint, in loving memory of her beloved mother. *(for dedicated see back page)*

Again our thanks and appreciation to Sis. Jackie Teh and Sis. I. K. Lim for their infatigable efforts in checking and correcting the typing errors and to all, who in one-way or another helped and supported to make this reprint possible.

*Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!*



**The Author**

## ***Biography of U Tha Hla***

**B**orn in Minhla, Bago Division on Friday, 1 May 1925, as the only son of U Po Saw, Retired Superintendent of Land Records and Land Owner and Daw Than Tin.

He started his education at the Buddhist High School in Minhla in 1934 and passed the Anglo-Myanmar Tenth Standard Examination from the "A" List that qualified him to attend the University.

He obtained his MBBS Degree from the Yangon Medical College in 1954 and also the Post-graduate Diploma in Venereology and Dermatology from the Madras Medical Institute, India in 1957.

From 1957 to 1965, he worked as Head of the Department of Dermatology and Venereology at the Mandalay General Hospital. From that time onwards he had been appointed by the successive Myanmar Governments personal physician to the late Tipitakadhara Sayadaw of Mingun.

In 1969, he worked as a specialist for Dermatology and Venereology at the Yangon General Hospital and also as Associate Professor at the Medical Institute of Yangon from which he retired in 1984.

In 1982, he earned the most respectable FDS from the St. John's Dermatology Institute, the Hospital for general skin diseases, London.

While serving in Mandalay, he gave free medical treatments to religious personnel, title-holding Sayadaws, homes of social services, homes for the aged poor, and government services, for this and his effective medical services in the fight against venereal disease, he was awarded the title of *Wunna Kyaw-htin* in 1962.

As assigned by the Mingun Sayadaw, he was undertaken till today the three main projects for the propagation of the Sāsana and managed all the charitable works of the Sayadaw. He has also organized the construction of the State Pariyatti Sāsana University under the State Sangha Mahā-Nayāka Council and has been obliged to hold the office of the Chairman of the construction committee.

He became Advisor to the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 1991 and served in that capacity for two years. In recognition of his religious contribution of such amazing proportions, the Government conferred on him the religious title of Mahā Saddhamma Jotikadhaja in 1992.

At present, U Tha Hla is supervising (1) the English translation of the Maha-Buddhavaṃsa, “The Great Chronicle of Buddhas”, of six volumes in eight books; (2) the publication of the Mingun Sayadaw’s Lectures on the ten Major Jatakas and a series of talks on the Buddhist doctrines, and (3) the emergence of the Sayadaw’s historic biography.





***Dr. U Tha Hla***

Mahā Saddhamma Jotikadhaja, Wanna Kyaw Htin  
Prime Chairman  
Tipiṭaka Nikāya Organisation Main Ministrative Body,  
Yangon, Myanmar

## *Biography of U Tin Oo*

**U** Tin Oo, the eldest son of U Ba and Daw Sein Pu, was born in 1923 at Myaung, Sagaing District. Educated at the Government High School, Sagaing; Mandalay Intermediate College, and Rangoon University, he earned the B.A. and B.L. Degrees and Diploma in Management and Administration and Diploma in Economic Planning.

He retired from public service and volunteered for the Piṭaka translation project launched by the Myanmar Piṭaka Association in 1981, first as a translator and later as an editor. In 1991 the MPA was voluntarily wound up and its Editorial Committee was incorporated in the Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sāsana (DPSS).

He was awarded the title of Mahā Saddhamma Jotikadhaja in 1998 by the state in recognition of his distinguished contribution to the cause of spreading the Buddha's Teaching.



**U Tin Oo**

Mahā Saddhamma Jotikadhaja  
Former Senior Editor of Myanmar Piṭaka Association.

## ***Biography of U Ko Lay***

**G**raduated from Yangon University in 1934, educated also at London University of UK, Cornell University and Columbia University, USA

He founded the first Myanmar University after gaining Independence, at Mandalay, the old capital of Burma and became its first vice-chancellor. He retired from the university service in 1963 and devoted himself entirely to practice of vipassanā meditation and to translating Tipiṭaka Pali Canon into English. He first translated the discourses given by the Venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw on *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* and *Anattalakkhaṇasutta* in 1979. Next he served as senior Editor on the Editorial Committee of the Burma Piṭaka Association. The Association has published his book on the “Guide to Tipiṭaka” and four of his translations in “Ten Suttas from the Dīgha Nikāya”. His other translations from the Majjhima Nikāya, Saṃyutta Nikāya and the Vinaya Mahāvagga remain to be published in due course.

At present he is engaged in translating into English the six volumes in eight books of The Great Chronicle of Buddhas in Myanmar which is based on the Pali Text *Buddhavaṃsa* and written by The Most Venerable Mingun Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṃsa. He is also working as a guest professor at the State Pariyatti Sāsana University, Kaba Aye, Yangon.



***U Ko Lay***

Former Vice-Chancellor  
Mandalay University, Myanmar

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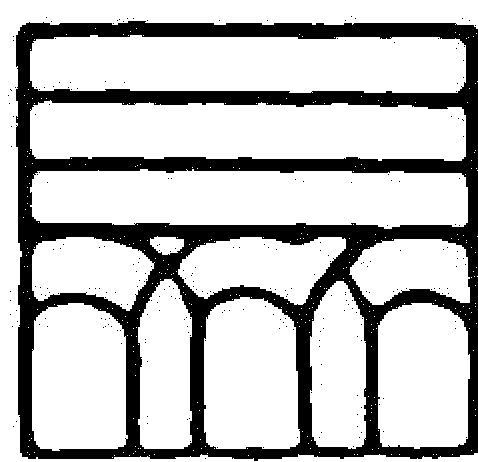
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## PREFACE

### Veneration to the Exalted One, the Homage-Worthy, the Perfectly Self-enlightened

This book forms the English rendering of Volume five of the Great Chronicle of Buddhas, the State Buddha Council's version, by the Most Venerable Mingun Sayadaw, Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivamsa, Tipiṭakadhara Dhammabhaṇḍāgārika, Agga Mahāpaṇḍita, Abhidhaja Mahāraṭṭhaguru, Abhidhaja Saddhammajotika.

Out of the five Chapters of this volume the four Chapters 38, 39, 40 and 41 continue to deal with the main theme of the Buddha Ratana, Jewel of Buddha which has its beginning in Volume Two. The whole of Chapter 42 is devoted entirely to the Dhamma Ratana, Jewel of Dhamma.

Chapter 38 opens with the story of the Brahmin couple of Saketa who had been the parents of the Buddha in previous existences. Through their encounter with the Buddha, they had been able to follow the Path as guided by the Buddha, finally attaining the Arahattaphala. Eighty four thousand beings gained Enlightenment on the occasion of the funeral of the Brahmin couple.

This is followed by the story concerning personages such as King Pasenadi, his school-mate General Bandula and his wife Mallikā, the King's son Viṭaṭūbha born of a slave girl who was given to King Pasenadi in marriage as a princess of Sakyans. Viṭaṭūbha wreaked vengeance on the Sakyans for what he regarded as an insult to his departed royal father, thus causing the total extermination of the Sakyan clan. Viṭaṭūbha and his mighty army also met their disastrous fate on their return from the expedition. The Buddha pointed out these tragedies as instances of evil actions bearing evil fruits.

Chapter 39 gives an account of how Āṭānāṭiya Paritta came to be taught together with the proper rituals for reciting the Āṭānāṭiya Paritta. The most important feature of this chapter is the Buddha's

Discourse to Sakka, *Sakka Pañha Sutta*, in answer to fourteen questions put by Sakka to the Bhagavā. The fourteen questions touch on pure Dhamma matters such as covetousness, stinginess, love, hatred, craving, illusory concepts etc. They further deal with advanced Dhamma aspects such as practice of meditation, the Pātimokkha restraints, restraint of faculties, and finally with attainments of the Supramundane.

Chapter forty gives an account of the last days of the Buddha as described in the Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya. The account begins with the Bhagavā's declaration of sets of Seven factors of non-decline, namely, those for rulers and those for bhikkhus. It describes how Vesālī fell and Licchavīs came to utter ruin through insidious scheming of Vassakāra, King Ajātasattu's spy agent.

During this period, about one year and three months before his *parinibbhāna*, the Bhagavā made repeated exhortations on *Sīla*, *Samādhi* and *Paññā* to his bhikkhu disciples while residing at Gijjakuṭa hill in Rājagaha and in various villages in the surrounding area.

The famous discourse, the Mirror of Wisdom was delivered by the Bhagavā at Nātika village. The Mirror of Wisdom enumerates four factors, namely, unshakable confidence in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha and being endowed with the moral precepts, *Sīla*. The Buddha explains that the Ariya disciple who possesses these four factors of the Mirror of Wisdom is assured of spiritual progress and good destination after passing away.

The Bhagavā spent his last rains-retreat at Veluva village, close by Vesālī. At the village the Bhagava was afflicted with a very severe illness, which he overcame through effort of *Vipassanā Bhāvanā* and abiding in the life-maintaining *Phala samāpatti*.

After the rains-retreat at Veluva village, the Bhagavā proceeded to Sāvatti where he received the news of the demise of his Chief Disciple, the Venerable Sāriputta. From Sāvatti, the Bhagavā returned to Rājagaha, where the other Chief Disciple the Venerable



Mahā Moggallāna passed away exactly a fortnight after the Venerable Sāriputta's demise.

Then the Bhagavā set out on his last long journey heading towards Kusināra where he would pass away. His first stop was Vasālī where at the Cāpāla shrine he gave hints to the Venerable Ānandā about his passing away and told him about the possibility of any one who developed the four bases of psychic powers to live the maximum life-span or even beyond it. But the Venerable Ānandā was not able to grasp the significance of the broad hints given by the Bhagavā and made no attempts to request the Bhagavā to stay the maximum life-span. Consequently, at the same Cāpāla Shrine, the Māra was able to press his request to the Bhagavā to relinquish his life sustaining mental process, *Ayusañkhāra*.

When the Bhagavā told him the whole story about the relinquishing of the life-maintaining mental process, Ānandā made belated request to the Bhagavā to live the maximum life-span. But it was to no avail; the Bhagavā informed him that, three months hence, he would realize *parinibbāna* in the Sal Grove of the Malla Princes near Kusināra.

During the rest of the time prior to *parinibbāna* at Kusināra the Bhagavā gave important discourses on topics such as Thirty-Seven factors of the perpetuation of the teaching, the Four Great Authorities, Four places that inspire religious awakening, Four classes of persons worthy of a stupa etc..

The most important event on the last day of the journey to Kusināra was partaking of the meal offered by Cunda, the Goldsmith's son; at Pāvā. After eating the last meal offered by Cunda, the Bhagavā was afflicted with a severe dysentery with discharge of blood.

Refreshing his exhausted body with a bath in the Kukuda river Bhagavā made his weary way to the Sal Grove where he laid down to rest on the couch prepared by Ānandā amidst two Sal trees. Even while lying on his death-bed during the few hours before his *parinibbāna*, the Bhagavā continued to show his great Compassion

towards all beings. The most fortunate individual to be blessed by the Bhagavā at the last moment was Subhadda, the wandering ascetic who became the last Arahāt before the Bhagavā passed away.

The last admonition given by the Bhagavā to his disciples was "*Appamādena Sampādeṭha* — Strive with mindfulness and diligence".

Chapter forty one opens with *Samvega* stanzas uttered in turn by Brahma Sahampati, Sakka, the Venerables Anuruddha and Ānandā, at the moment of the Bhagavā's passing away.

After mentioning the preparations made by Malla princes for honouring the remains of the Bhagavā, the Chapter gives the story of the Venerable Mahā Kassapa who arrived late at the site of cremation. It also provides accounts of distribution of the Buddha's relics, raising relic-stupas in reverence, building a secret relic depository by the Venerable Mahā Kassapa in co-operation with king Ajātasattu and discovery of these relics by King Asoka after three hundred years.

The continuous account of *Buddha Ratana*, the Jewel of the Buddha which begins from Volume Two is terminated at the conclusion of Chapter forty one.

The last Chapter forty two of this book is devoted entirely to the *Dhamma Ratana*, the Jewel of the Dhamma. It gives full exposition of the nine Supreme Attributes of the Buddha, the Six Supreme Attributes of the Dhamma and the Nine Supreme Attributes of the Sangha together with the methods of contemplation of the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha and the merits accruing there from. It further provides explanation of Knowledges and Powers which belong solely to Buddha's province.

The Chapter concludes with exposition on Dependent Origination, *Paṭiccasamuppāda* and some important remarks on the *Dhammacakkapavatta* and *Anattalakkhaṇa suttas*.

In undertaking the final redaction of the book, I have made use of the translation manuscripts of volume five by U Tin Oo (Myaung), formerly a senior editor of Burma Tipitaka Association, at present engaged in the same work under the Department for Promotion and Propagation of Sāsana in the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

This book will be presented to the Nine Ovādācariya Sayadaws of Mingun on the auspicious occasion of the 86<sup>th</sup> birth day of the Venerable Author, the 7<sup>th</sup> Waxing moon of Tazaungmon, 1359 ME (6<sup>th</sup> November, 1994).

**U Ko Lay**

Dated, Yangon,  
The Full moon day of Wagaung, 1359 ME  
18<sup>th</sup> August, 1997.

**THE GREAT CHRONICLE OF BUDDHAS  
THE STATE BUDDHA-SĀSANA COUNCIL'S VERSION**

**VOLUME FIVE**

**THE CHRONICLE OF BUDDHA GOTAMA**

**Namo Tassa Bhagavato Ārahato Sammāsambuddhassa**

**THE JEWEL OF THE BUDDHA**

**(BUDDHARATANĀ)**

**CHAPTER THIRTY EIGHT**

**THE STORY OF THE BRAHMIN COUPLE WHO HAD BEEN  
THE PARENTS OF THE BUDDHA IN THE PREVIOUS  
EXISTENCES**

On one occasion, after residing in Sāvatti for the rains retreat, the Bhagavā set out on a journey, taking into consideration the opportunities that would be provided by it such as promoting his health, prescribing fresh rules of conduct for the Order of *bhikkhus*, taming (through dialogues and discourses) those who deserved to be tamed, discoursing on the Birth Stories of the Buddha wherever the situation was appropriate. Travelling in stages, the Bhagavā got to Sāketa at eventide and entered the Añjana forest.

(for the night's stay).

On hearing the news of the arrival of the Buddha, the townsfolk of Sāketa thought that it was not proper to go and see the Bhagavā that night. They waited till the next morning when, taking flowers, perfumes

and other offerings with them, they approached the Bhagavā, and making their offerings to the Bhagavā, making obeisance, and exchanging courteous words of greeting with the Bhagavā, remained there till it was time for the Bhagavā to go on the daily alms-round.

When it was time for going on the alms-round the Bhagavā in the company of bhikkhus entered Sāketa to collect alms-food. At that time a wealthy brahmin of Sāketa was coming out of the town when he saw the Bhagavā near the town's gate. On seeing the Bhagavā the brahmin felt an intense filial love for the Bhagavā and weeping with joy and uttering, "O my son, I have not seen you for such a long time!" he drew near the Bhagavā.

Even while the brahmin was drawing near him, the Bhagavā said to the bhikkhus, "Bhikkhus, let brahmin Sāketa alone: let him do as he pleases." And as a mother cow would treat her own calf, the brahmin viewed the Bhagavā at close range from the front, from the back, and from the left side and from the right side. Then embracing the Bhagavā, he said, "Oh, my son, my son! so long have I not seen you! so long have you been away!".

(It may be noted here that if the brahmin were to be restrained from these outpourings of affection, he would not be able to contain the intense feeling and probably die of heart-break.)

Brahmin Sāketa said to the Bhagavā: "Venerable Sir, I am able to offer food to the Bhagavā and the company of bhikkhus. May the Bhagavā, out of compassion, do me the favour of accepting the offering." The Bhagavā indicated his consent by remaining silent. The brahmin led the way to his place holding the Bhagava's alms-bowl in his hands. He sent word to his wife at home to say, "My son is coming! spread out a suitable place for his stay" The wife did as she was told by her husband and stood all agog to receive the Bhagavā: As she saw the Bhagavā nearing her house, she went to the Bhagavā, and saying, "My son, it is a long time that I have not seen you", fondled the Buddha's feet and wept with joy. She requested the Bhagavā to proceed to her home where the brahmin couple respectfully offered the Bhagavā and his company of bhikkhus with food. After the Bhagavā had finished his meal the brahmin took the alms-bowl and washed it himself.

The Bhagavā then discoursed to the brahmin couple in a way fitting to them and at the end of the discourse they became Stream-Enterers, having turned *ariyas*. They requested the Bhagavā, "May the Bhagavā and his company of bhikkhus during their sojourn at Sāketa receive offering of alms-food only at our place." The Bhagavā replied, "Brahmin couple, it is not the custom for Buddhas to have a permanent place to receive alms-food as you request." Thereupon the brahmin couple requested the Bhagavā, "In that case, Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā and his company of bhikkhus go for alms (elsewhere) but take the meals at our place only, and go back to the monastery after giving us some talk on the Dhamma." To this request the Buddha consented as a special favour.

From that time the brahmin came to be called by the people as 'the Buddha's father' and the wife of the brahmin as 'the Buddha's mother'. The clan of brahmin Sāketa also earned the name of 'the Buddha's clan'.

Thereupon the Venerable Ānandā asked the Bhagavā: "Venerable Sir, I know your parentage (as Queen Mahā Mayā Devī and King Suddhodana) and yet why is it that the brahmin Sāketa and his wife are called the Buddha's parents?" And the Bhagavā explained: Ānandā, this brahmin couple had been my parents in the past for five hundred continuous existences; (besides), they had been my elder uncle and elder aunt (i.e., elder brother to the *Bodhisatta's* father and elder sister to the *Bodhisatta's* mother for five hundred continuous existences; they had also been my younger uncle and younger aunt (i.e., younger brother to the *Bodhisatta's* father and younger sister to the *Bodhisatta's* mother) for five hundred continuous existences. The brahmin couple call me their son due to the extraordinary affection that had existed in the past", The Bhagavā then uttered this stanza.

*Pubbeva sannivāsenā paccuppannahitena vā  
evaṃ taṃ jāyate pemaṃ uppalaṃva yathodake.*

"Due to having lived together in previous existences and having done some beneficial thing to each other, there arises love between two persons. It is like the case of the water lily (or any other water plant) that grows in the marsh where mud and water jointly cause its arising."

The Bhagavā spent his days in Sāketa for as many persons as there were in that town that deserved to gain enlightenment. Then he proceeded his way to Sāvatti. The brahmin couple further sought guidance from the bhikkhus from whom they got appropriate instructions and in due course attained the three higher *maggas* after which they realized *Nibbāna* without any substrata of existence remaining - i.e., *anupādisca parinibbāna*.

**Eighty-four thousand beings gained enlightenment on the occasion of the funeral of the Brahmin couple.**

When the brahmin couple passed away the brahmin community of Sāketa assembled together with the common objective of paying due respects to one of their members. Similarly, the Stream-Enterers, the Once-Returners and the Never-Returners, all Ariyas who had been associates in the practice of the path with the brahmin couple, assembled together with the common objective of paying their respects to one of their members. Those two groups of people placed the remains of the brahmin couple on a bier with gabled roofs, and amidst floral tributes and sprinkling of perfumes about the bier, they carried it out of the town.

The Bhagavā (as of his daily routine) viewed the sentient world with his Buddha Eye consisting of knowledge that discerns the natural bent and latent proclivities of individuals (*āsayā nisaya ñāṇa*) and knowledge of the maturity and immaturity of the faculties of beings (*Indriyaparopariyatti ñāṇa*) for that day and knew the passing away in total cessation of the brahmin couple; and seeing that his presence and preaching at the funeral of the deceased ones would lead to the enlightenment of the multitudes attending the funeral he left Sāvatti for the cemetery at Sāketa, carrying the alms-bowl and big robe himself.

On seeing the Bhagavā the people said, "The Bhagava has come to attend to the funeral of his father and mother" and paid their obeisance to the Bhagavā. The townsfolk brought the bier to the cemetery in reverential ceremony. They asked the Bhagavā, "Venerable Sir, what is

the proper way to venerate the brahmin couple who had been Ariya lay disciples?"

The Buddha replied in the following stanza revealing the fact that the deceased couple had attained Arahatship and that they deserved veneration that was due to *Arahats*:

*Ahiṃsakā ye munayo niccam kāyeva saṅvutā  
te yanti accutam thānam yattha gantvā na socare.*

"The Arahats who do not harm others are always restrained in their (physical verbal and mental) actions. Having gone to *Nibbāna* through Magga-knowledge, they are free from sorrow. They have realized the four *Maggas* and *Phalas* and attained to the deathless *Nibbāna*."

*Dhanmapada, 225*

(The Commentary to the Dhammapada says that at the end of that stanza a great number of people attained Stream-Entry and higher stages of Path-Knowledge.)

After uttering the above stanza the Buddha delivered the *Jarā sutta* that he knew would benefit the audience at that time. (Refer to *Sutta Nipāta, 4. Athaka Vagga, Jarā Sutta*, the sixth in that *vagga* or group of discourses.) At the end of the *Jarā sutta* eighty four thousand beings perceived the Four Truths and became Ariyas.

(This is the story of brahmin Sāketa and his wife.)

## 2. The story of Viṭaṭūbha. (also known as Mittadubbhi)

Three princes - (1) Prince Pasenadi, son of King Mahā Kosala of Sāvatti, (2) Prince Mahā Licchavī, son of King Licchavī of Vesālī, and (3) Prince Bandula, son of King Malla of Kusināra, who were on their way to Takkasila (Taxila) to get their education under the famous Professor there met at a rest house outside the city. They introduced themselves, learned one another's names, parentage and clan, and also the purpose of their journey, and became friends. After having completed their education under the guidance of the great teacher in due course, they bid farewell to the teacher and left Taxila together and returned to their respective homes.



Of those three princes, Prince Pasenadi demonstrated his prowess and skill before his royal father King Mahā Kosala who was so pleased with the son's capabilities that he anointed him king and so the prince became King Pasenadi of Kosala.

Prince Mahāli of the Licchavis demonstrated his prowess and skill before the Licchavis so arduously that both of his eyes went blind. The Licchavī princes felt very sorry at the fate of their teacher Prince Mahāli and conferred among themselves to afford suitable status to him without abandoning him. They unanimously resolved to name him as lord of a certain toll gate which had a yearly revenue of a hundred thousand pieces of silver. Prince Mahāli lived on the revenues collected at the toll gate and took charge of educating and training the five hundred Licchavī princes.

When Prince Bandula demonstrated his prowess and skill before the Mallas he was tricked by someone: an iron rod was secretly concealed inside one of the bamboos which he was to cut with his sword. There were sixty bundles of sixty bamboos each standing before him. His royal father commanded, "Now son, cut these bamboos with your sword," by way of testing the prince's might. Prince Bandula leapt up to a height of eighty cubits and cut down the sixty bundles of bamboos one by one. At the last bundle he noticed a strange frictional noise from inside the bamboo which had the concealed iron rod inside. Discovering the nature of the dirty trick played upon him, he threw away his sword and wailed, "Oh, there was not a single one out of this big crowd of my kinsmen and friends who would out of kind regard for me warn me of this trick. Had I been forewarned, I could very well have cut that iron rod too without letting it betray its presence there by its frictional noise." Then he said to his royal parents: "I shall kill all the Malla princes and make myself king." To this the parents replied: "Dear son, it is a time-honoured tradition with us Mallas to rule by turns. We cannot approve of your idea." On being repeatedly refused approval of this idea of his, Prince Bandula became frustrated and said, "Then I will go and live with my friend King Pasenadi of Kosala," and went to Sāvatti.

When King Pasenadi of Kosala learned the arrival of his friend Prince Bandula, he went out to greet him and escorted him into the city with much pomp and honour. King Pasenadi of Kosala made Bandula his Commander-in-Chief and Bandula the Commander-in-Chief sent for his royal parents and let them live in Sāvatti. This is an account of the three Princes: Prince Kosala, Prince Mahāli of the Licchavis, and Prince Bandula of the Mallas.

### 3. King Pasenadi of Kosala tries to become closely acquainted with the Sangha.

One day, King Pasenadi of Kosala was standing on an upper floor of his multi-gabled palace looking out towards the high road in the city when he saw thousand of bhikkhus coming to the houses of Anāthapiṇḍika, the Rich Man, Cūlaanāthapiṇḍika, the Rich Man, Visākhā the donor of the Pupphārāma Monastery, and Suppavāsā, the Rich Man's wife, to collect alms-food. He asked his men where these bhikkhus were going and they reported to him that two thousand bhikkhus daily collected their alms-food - the daily food, the ticket food (i.e., specially arranged, invited food offering at the donor's place), or sick-bhikkhu's food at the house of Anāthapiṇḍika the Rich Man; five hundred each at the house of Cūlaanāthapiṇḍika the Rich Man, at the house of Visākhā, and at the house of Suppavāsā. The king was impressed. He also wanted to be a regular donor of alms-food to the Sangha. He went to the Jetavana Monastery, invited the Bhagavā and a thousand bhikkhus to the palace and offered food for seven days when he personally served the food. On the seventh day he said to the Bhagavā, "Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā and five hundred bhikkhus come to the palace to receive our food offerings every day." The Bhagavā replied, "Great King, it is not the custom of Buddhas to receive alms-food from the same donor every day. People like to see the Buddha come to their places too."

"In that case, Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā let one regular bhikkhu, together with five hundred other bhikkhus, come to the palace for daily alms-food offering." The Bhagavā assigned the Venerable Ānandā to head the five hundred bhikkhus to go to the palace for the daily alms-food.

The king attended to the feeding of the bhikkhus personally for seven days without assigning these duties to any one. On the eighth day he was preoccupied with state affairs and forgot to offer alms-food to the Sangha.

As it was not the custom in the royal palace to carry out anything without orders, the attendants just provided seats to the bhikkhus but no offering of food took place for lack of orders. Many of the bhikkhus were disappointed and saying, "we cannot remain here" left. On the next day also the king forgot to feed the Sangha and many of the bhikkhus left the place. On the third day also the same thing happened and all the bhikkhus left: only the Venerable Ānandā remained.

Noble ones endowed with great past merits take things with wise circumspection. They foster the lay supporters' faith in the teaching. To wit: there are certain disciples of the Buddha beginning with: (1) the Venerable Sāriputta, (2) the Venerable Mahā Moggalāna who were two Chief Disciples; (1) Therī Khemā (2) Therī Uppalavanna who were two Chief Female Disciples; (1) Citta the Rich Man, (2) Prince Hathakalavaka who were two foremost lay disciples; and (1) Nandamātā, wife of the Rich Man of Veḷukaṇḍaka and (2) Lady Khujjuttarā who were two foremost female lay disciples all of whom won acclaim by the Buddha as foremost in their own right who were endowed with the ten perfections (*pāramī*) to a certain extent and were therefore noble persons of great past merit, blessed with their previous aspirations. The Venerable Ānandā also had fulfilled the ten perfections over a hundred thousand eons (*Kappas*) and was a noble one of great past merit, blessed with previous aspirations. He was circumspect by nature. So, being desirous of fostering the faith of the supporters, he alone remain in the palace for the daily food-offerings.

The palace officials prepared a suitable place and made food offerings to the only bhikkhu, the Venerable Ānandā. King Pasenadī of Kosala came to the place after every other bhikkhu had left the palace. On seeing the food for the Sangha left untouched, the King asked, "Have not the revered ones come?" and the officials replied that only the Venerable Ānandā came. The king was angry because he felt that the bhikkhus had let such a big amount of food go to waste. He went to

see the Bhagava and complained: "Venerable Sir, I had prepared food offerings for five hundred bhikkhus but only the Venerable Ānandā came. All the food remains untouched. How is it, Venerable Sir, that those bhikkhus have such disregard for our invitation to the palace?"

Thereupon the Bhagavā did not say anything against the bhikkhus but said, "Great King, these bhikkhu disciples are not very well acquainted with you. Probably that is why they did not come to your palace." On that occasion the Bhagavā discoursed to the bhikkhus the Kula sutta, setting out nine reasons for bhikkhus that make it not proper to go to the lay supporters of all the four castes, and nine reasons that make it proper to go to the lay supporters. (Aṅguttara Nikāya, Navaka Nipāta, Pathama Paṇṇāsaka, 2 - Sīhanāda vagga, 7 - Kula Sutta).

### *The Kula Sutta*

**(Lay supporters whose houses ought not to be visited by Bhikkhus)**

Bhikkhus, homes of lay supporters who come under these nine condition should not be visited by bhikkhus if they have never been there, or if they happen to be already there they should not stay there. Now, these are the nine (improper) conditions:

1. If the lay supporters do not respectfully welcome them;
2. If they do not make obeisance respectfully to the bhikkhus,
3. If they do not respectfully offer proper seats;
4. If they hide from bhikkhus their property worth offering to bhikkhus;
5. If they offer only a little whereas they possess much to offer,
6. If they offer inferior things whereas they have superior things worthy of offering.
7. If they do not offer things respectfully but do so disrespectfully;
8. If they do not come near bhikkhus to listen to his teaching.
9. If they do not listen to the bhikkhus discourse respectfully.

"Bhikkhus, homes of lay supporters who are of the above nine (improper) conditions should not be visited by bhikkhus if they have never been there; and if a bhikkhu happens to be already at such a home he should not stay there."

"Bhikkhus, homes of lay supporters who come under nine conditions ought to be visited by bhikkhus if they have never been there, and if they happen to be already there, they should stay there. Now, these are the nine (proper) conditions:

1. If the lay supporters welcome them respectfully;
2. If they make obeisance respectfully to the bhikkhus;
3. If they respectfully offer proper seats;
4. If they do not make any secret of their property worth offering to bhikkhus;
5. If they have much to offer they offer much;
6. If they have superior things to offer they offer them;
7. If they offer things respectfully;
8. If they come near the bhikkhu to listen to his teaching;
9. If they listen to the bhikkhus discourse respectfully.

"Bhikkhus, lay supporters who are of the above nine (proper) conditions should be visited by bhikkhus if they have never been there; and if a bhikkhu happens to be at such a house, he should stay there."

"Great King, those bhikkhus left you probably because they are not on intimate terms with you: That indeed is so. Wise ones of yore are known to have gone to their intimate ones in times of serious illness near unto death although they were respectfully looked after by people not intimate to them." On being requested by King Pasenadi of Kosala to tell about that story, the Bhagavā related to him the story of *Kesava Jātaka* contained in the *Catukka Nipāta*. (This story was also referred to when the brahma Baka was tamed by the Bhagavā and has appeared in the Fourth Volume of the present series of Great Chronicles.)

After hearing the Bhagava's discourse, King Pasenadi of Kosala saw the need to become intimate with the bhikkhu Sangha and thought of some way to fulfill this aim. He struck on the idea of marrying one of the Sakyan princes. "If I were to raise a Sakyan princess to the status of Chief Queen," he thought, "the Bhagavā would become my relation and his disciples would consider me as an intimate person." Thereupon he sent an ultimatum to the Sakyan princes demanding the hand of a Sakyan princess in marriage to him. When the royal messengers charged with the mission asked, "Which princess that is, the daughter of which Sakyan prince, would his Majesty specify?" the king said, "Any Sakyan princess would do, provided her ancestry is ascertained by you."

At the city of Kapilavatthu the Sakyans held a council to answer the ultimatum. They did not like to go to war with their rival kingdom, for if they refused to comply with King Pasenadi's demand their kingdom would certainly be invaded. Since the Kosala were a different clan from the Sakyans, they could not give in marriage any one of their own kin to a non-Sakyan. It was Prince Mahānāma the Sakyan who conceived a way out of the dilemma. "I have a very beautiful girl born of one of my slaves (named Nāgamuṇḍā); the girl is called Vāsabhakhattiyā. Let us give her away." They agreed. Formal reply was then given to the delegation from Kosala: "We shall comply."

"The daughter of which Sakyan prince are you going to give?"

"It is the daughter born of Mahānāma, the Sakyan Prince, cousin of Gotama Buddha, son of Amitodana. Vāsabhakhattiyā is the name of the princess."

The delegation returned to Sāvatti with the favourable news. King Pasenadi of Kosala was pleased and said: "Go and bring the Sakyan princess without delay. But mark this: kings as a rule are crafty. A slave's daughter might be posed as a princess. So you must ascertain her genuineness by watching her at table: make sure she eats together with her Sakyan father."

The delegation went again to Kapilavatthu and announced: "Our King of Kosala would accept only a princess who eats together with you Sakyans."

"Very well, friends," said Mahānāma the Sakyan.

When it was meal time Vāsabhakhattiyā, fully attired and adorned as a princess, was brought to the dining table where Mahānāma the Sakyan was sitting, and there it was made to appear that the two ate together. The delegation was satisfied with what they saw and returned to Savatthi with the girl.

(This neat trick was carried out thus:

When the Sakyans were confronted with the 'dining test' required by King Pasenadi of Kosala, the Sakyans were quite at a loss what to do. But Mahānāma the Sakyan reassured them with the instruction that after the bogus princess was being seated at Mahānāmas dining table, and the prince was just about to put his first morsel into the mouth, he was to be intervened with an urgent message which must be seen by him forthwith. The plan got the approval of the Sakyans and was carried out accordingly.) (It was taken in by the delegation from Sāvātthi.)

Back at their capital, the delegation reported to the king what they had witnessed. King Pasenadi of Kosala was delighted. He made, (after the customary anointing ceremony) Vāsabhakhattiyā the Chief Queen, waited on by five hundred court ladies. Not long afterwards the Chief Queen who became very dear to the king gave birth to a son with golden complexion.

When it was time for the young prince to be named, the Kosala king sent a royal message to the royal grand father Mahānāma the Sakyan informing him of the birth of a son and asking him to suggest a suitable name for the princeling. It so happened that the messenger who took the royal message to the Sakyan court was slightly hard of hearing. After reading the Kosala king's message Mahānāma the Sakyan remarked. "Vāsabhakhattiyā was previously a girl of great personal influence. And now after giving birth to a son she is going to be a favourite, *vallabhā*, of the Kosala king!" Now, the joyous expression 'favourite'- i.e., an intimate darling-, *vallabhā* in the local dialect, sounded as '*viṭaṭūbha*' to the Kosalan messenger who took that word as the name to be given to the Kosalan prince. He reported to King Pasenadi of Kosala "*Viṭaṭūbha* is the name, your Majesty, that his

royal grandfather suggests for the princeling." The king mused, "Possibly, *Viṭaṭūbha* is a clan name of yore with us" and named his son *Viṭaṭūbha*. Then, with a view to pleasing the Bhagavā, the King made *Viṭaṭūbha* Commander in-Chief even in his tender age.

*Viṭaṭūbha* was reared as a prince in all regal style. When he was seven years old he came to notice how other princes were receiving dolls and other children's presents from their maternal grand parents and so he asked his mother, Chief Queen *Vāsabhakhattiyā*: "Mother, other princes get children's presents such as dolls and the like from their maternal grand parents. But I have received none from my maternal grandparents. Why is it? Have you no parents?" The mother replied, "Dear son, the Sakyans of course are your maternal grand parents. But they live far away from us. That is why they cannot send you any gifts."

When *Viṭaṭūbha* was sixteen he said to his mother, "Mother, I would like to see my maternal grand-parent's palace." And the mother discouraged him with the words. "Dear son, it is not advisable for you to do that. After all, what use is there in your seeing your maternal grand parent's palace?" But Prince *Viṭaṭūbha* was insistent and after many repeated requests, the mother could do nothing but to yield to his wish.

*Viṭaṭūbha* informed his father, the king, of his intended journey and left *Sāvatti*, leading a big army. Chief Queen *Vāsabhakhattiyā* had in the meantime sent a secret message to the Sakyans to keep up appearances when *Viṭaṭūbha* came so that the whole conspiracy would not in any way be betrayed. This message gave the timely opportunity for the younger Sakyan princes, i.e., who are junior to *Viṭaṭūbha*, to leave the city and remain in the remote country during *Viṭaṭūbha*'s, visit because they could not make obeisance to *Viṭaṭūbha* as would be normally expected. Those Sakyans who were to receive *Viṭaṭūbha* met him on arrival at *Kapilavatthu* at the royal rest house.

There *Viṭaṭūbha* was introduced to his maternal grandfather and maternal uncles whom he had to make obeisance. Having done his turn of paying respects, he saw no one paying him respects. "Why, are there no Sakyan to pay respects to me?," he asked. The Sakyan elders



then said, "Dear son, your younger cousins are going on a visit to the country." They entertained Viṭaṭūbha lavishly.

After staying two or three days in Kapilavatthu, Viṭaṭūbha left the city with his big army. When every visitor had gone, a slave girl came to cleanse with diluted milk the seat where Viṭaṭūbha had sat at the royal rest house, all the while cursing, "Fie! Profaned is in this place—profaned by Viṭaṭūbha son of slave girl Vāsabhakhattiyā." These words were overheard by one of Viṭaṭūbha's men who had come back to the place to fetch his arms that he had forgotten to take away with him. He asked how far the girl's curse was true and was told that Vāsabhakhattiyā was the child born of Mahānāma the Sakyan and his slave maid Vāgamuṇḍā. The Kosala soldier related this news to his comrades and it soon became the talk of the town that Chief Queen Vāsabhakhattiyā was a daughter of a slave girl.

When Viṭaṭūbha learned this news he was touched to the quick. "Well, let the Sakyans cleanse my seat with diluted milk now; when I become king I will wash my seat with the blood from the Sakyan's throats!" He said to himself, bearing an ominous grudge against the Sakyan Clan.

After arriving back at the capital the king's ministers reported the news to the king. King Pasenadi of Kosala was very angry, with the Sakyans. "This presenting a slave girl for my queen is preposterous; it is an insult against my honour!"—he roared and withdrew all the rank and status accorded to his Chief Queen and Commander-in-Chief, allowing them only slaves' rank and status.

Two or three days later, the Bhagavā paid a visit to the royal palace of King Pasenadi of Kosala where he sat on the specially arranged seat. The king made his obeisance to the Bhagavā and said to the Bhagavā. "Venerable Sir, the kinsmen of the Bhagavā have deceived me: they had sent me a slave girl's daughter saying that she was a princess. I have discovered this and have therefore downgraded both mother Vāsabhakhattiyā and son Viṭaṭūbha to the slave's rank and status."

The Bhagavā said, "Great King, the Sakyans had done a wrong thing; they ought to have given you a princess as befitting your lineage. However, Great King, I wish you to consider this: Vāsabhakhattiyā was

a daughter of Mahānāma the Sakyan; and moreover she has been anointed as Chief Queen by you who are of royal blood. Viṭaṭūbha is of your own blood. What does maternal lineage matter? It is paternal lineage that counts. This important fact was recognized by wise people of yore and therefore a firewood-gatherer, a poor peasant girl, was made the Chief Queen, and the boy born of this Chief Queen of humble origin became King Kaṭṭhavāhana of Bhārānāsī, a city with an area of twelve yojanas.

When King Pasenadi of Kosala had heard the story of Kaṭṭhavāhana he was satisfied with the dictum "that only paternal lineage is of real significance." Accordingly he reinstated the Chief Queen and the Commander-in-Chief to their previous ranks and status. (See Ekanipāta for the story of Kaṭṭhavāhana.)

### **The story of Bandula, the Commander-in-Chief and his wife Mallikā.**

The Commander-in-Chief of King Pasenadi of Kosala was Bandula, a Malla prince. His wife Mallikā was the daughter of King Malla of Kusināra. Even after some years of wedlock, the couple did not beget any offspring. Bandula therefore sent Mallikā to her father's home. Mallikā thought that it would be well if she saw the Bhagavā before leaving Sāvatti. She went to the Jetavana monastery and made obeisance to the Bhagavā. On being asked where she was going next, Mallikā told the Bhagavā how she was being sent home to her father because she failed to produce any child. Thereupon the Bhagavā said "In that case there is no need for you to go home to your father; you should go back to the home of the Commander-in-Chief." Mallikā was very happy at these words and, making her obeisance to the Bhagavā, went back to her husband. Bandula asked her why she had come back. She told him what the Bhagavā had said to her. Bandula pondered. "The Bhagavā is far sighted. He must have fore-knowledge about Mallikā's probable pregnancy." And so he let her stay with him.

Not long afterwards, Mallikā was with child. She had an intense craving as is often the case with pregnant women. She told her husband about it. She wanted to bathe in the auspicious royal lake where the

Licchavis usually got anointed king and she also wanted to drink its water. Bandula said, "Very well," and putting her on his chariot and, taking his great bow that needed a thousand men to harness, left Sāvatti and entered Vesali from the city gate assigned to Mahā Licchavī for enjoyment of tolls collected at that gate. Mahā Licchavi's house was just close by.

Mahā Licchavī recognized the sound of Bandula's chariot thumping on the threshold of the city gate. He had great foreboding. "Disaster is afoot today for the Licchavi's," and he warned to all. The auspicious royal lake was very heavily guarded, inside as well as outside. It was covered with iron netting so that even birds could not gain entry to it.

Bandula, the Commander-in-Chief, alighted from his chariot, drove away the guards with his cane and cut open the iron netting with his scimitar. He and his wife entered the lake, bathed there and, coolly putting her in the chariot, headed home by the same route that he had come.

The guards reported the matter to the Vajjī princes. Infuriated, the Vajjis mounted on five hundred chariots and gave chase. When the chase was reported to Mahā Licchavī, he called out: "O young Licchavī princes. don't do that! That Bandula, the Commander-in-Chief, will destroy you." To that the princes replied. "Sir, we cannot stand it. We must catch him!"

Mahā Licchavī had known the might of his school mate Bandula and warned the Vajjī princes thus:

"Well, princes, if you must give chase, when you see Bandula's chariot depressed down to the wheel hub, turn back from wherever you saw it."

"If you don't turn back, but still pursue him, do turn back when you hear a great roaring sound."

"If you don't turn back, but still pursue him, you will see holes at the front of each of your chariots. Turn back wherever you see these holes! Don't go any further."

The Licchavi's did not listen to the advice and proceeded on hot pursuit. When Mallikā saw they were being pursued, she told Bandula what she saw. "Well, (watch well). When all the five hundred chariots are seen as one (i.e., when they all were in a straight line from him), tell me!" he said. Mallikā informed her husband when the pursuing chariots were seen as a single one. Then Bandula, the Commander-in-Chief, gave the reins of the horse to her saying, "You hold them!" Then he stood in the chariot and drew his great bow that needed a thousand strong men to do it. At that moment the chariot sank to the level of the wheel hub. The Licchavis saw this but did not heed Mahānāma Licchavi's warning and drove on. Bandula, as the Commander-in-Chief, after proceeding a while, pulled at the bow string when a thunderous sound was produced. The Licchavis heard it but still they did not turn back. Then Bandula sent an arrow which pierced through all the five hundred pursuing chariots, it passed through the chest of the Licchavi princes and struck the ground.

The Licchavi princes were still unaware that they had been shot and cried, "Hey, Bandula, stop!" all the while still following Bandula. Then Bandula, the Commander-in-Chief, halted a while and said, "all of you Licchavis are dead men; I need not fight with dead persons!"

"But we do not look like dead men, do we?"

"Then, take off the mail armour from the last Licchavi Prince."

When they did as they were told, the lifeless body of the rearmost Licchavi prince dropped to the floor of the chariot. Then Bandula told them to drive home and prepare for the funeral of all of them. "Before taking off your mail armour, you may leave your last word to your wives," he added. The Licchavis did as they were told. All of them perished.

Bandula, the Commander-in-Chief, drove back with his wife Mallikā safely home. She bore him twin sons sixteen times so that the couple had thirty-two robust sons, all brave and strong. They had their training completed in all the arts when they were allotted a thousand men each as their followers. Whenever Bandula, the Commander-in-Chief, appeared in court he and his thirty two sons, together with thirty two thousand strong warriors filled the whole courtyard.

### **The Commander-in-Chief Bandula performing as a judge.**

One day, there arose an uproar at the court of justice complaining that a miscarriage of justice had taken place. The matter was reported to Bandula the Commander-in-Chief. Bandula, the Commander-in-Chief, then went to the Court of justice, heard the case afresh, and passed judgment, declaring who the rightful owner was. The people joined in their loud approval of the righteous judgment.

King Pasenadi of Kosala heard the sound and asked what it was. On being told about it the king was very pleased and placed him in charge of the Court of justice; the former justices were all removed from service. Bandula thus got an additional duty as judge which he discharged with uprightness.

The disgraced judges, being deprived of their usual bribes, plotted against Bandula, the Commander-in-Chief. They conspired to make false allegations that Bandula was aspiring to the throne. The King believed the words of the disgraced judges. He was greatly ill at ease. He wanted to do away with Bandula but since Bandula was a popular figure he dared not put Bandula to death in the city. So he invented a wicked ploy. He had his trusted men stage an 'uprising,' at the border regions. Bandula, the Commander-in-Chief, and his thirty-two sons were ordered to put down the 'uprising,' and to bring back the insurgents. The King sent along his chosen generals with Bandula, with orders to murder Bandula and all his sons.

When Bandula got to the so-called area of unrest the king's men planted as insurgents fled. Bandula carried out measures to turn the remote region into flourishing settlements, and returned to the city. When they were a good distance away from the city the captains who were sent along with them beheaded Bandula and his thirty-two sons.

On that day Mallikā, the wife of the Commander-in-Chief, was preparing to offer a meal to the two Chief Disciples, the Venerable Sāriputta and Mahā Moggallana together with five hundred bhikkhus at her home. Early that morning, she had received a message that her husband Bandula, the Commander-in-Chief, and the thirty-two sons had been beheaded. She kept the news to herself, having slipped in the note of message inside her jacket. While she was attending on the two

Chief Disciples at table, her maids, after having offered rice, were bringing ghee to the table, when they accidentally broke the vessel containing ghee. The two Chief Disciples witnessed this; the Venerable Sāriputta said to Mallikā, "What has the nature of breaking up had broken up. Don't let it prey on your mind." Thereupon Mallikā produced the grim message from inside her jacket and said, "Venerable Sir, they sent me this message to tell me that my thirty-two sons, together with their father, had been beheaded. Even that news I did not allow to prey on my mind; how would this pot of ghee prey on my mind?"

The Venerable Sāriputta gave a discourse beginning with the stanza: *Animitta manaññātaṃ macānaṃ ida jīvitam* (etc.) Then he rose from his seat and returned to the Jetavana monastery. See *Sutta Nipāta*, 3. *Mahā vagga*; 7 *Salla sutta*.

When the offering of food to the Sangha was finished Mallikā sent for her thirty-two daughters-in-law and said: "Dear daughters-in-law, your husbands, though faultless, have suffered the consequence of their past deeds. Do not be oppressed by sorrow, grief and lamentation. Also do not bear malice against the king." These words were overheard by the King's secret agents who reported to the king that Bandula and his sons were free of guilt. The king was remorseful. He went to Mallika's house and apologized to Mallikā and her thirty-two daughters-in-law. Then he offered Mallikā to name any boon she would like.

Mallikā said: "Great king, let the boon be considered as having been granted to me." After the king had returned she offered special alms-food to the Sangha for the benefit of the dear departed ones. then she took her bath and went to see the King. She bowed before the King and said, "Great King, you have granted me leave to name a boon. I have no other wish than your permission to allow me and my thirty-two daughters-in-law to return to our respective parents." The king gave his assent gladly. Mallikā sent home her thirty-two daughters-in-law to their respective parents homes and she herself returned to hers.

(The Mallikā Story; continued:

Mallikā lived at her parents' place in Kusinārā for a long time. When the Buddha passed away and she learned that his remains were being

carried to Kusinārā by the Mallas, she got the idea to honour the Buddha by adorning the Buddha's body with the (famous) Mahālatā gown which she did not wear since the death of her husband. She took it out from its place, cleaned it, with perfumed water and awaited the arrival of the Buddha's remains.

The Mahālatā gown was a very rare piece of adornment which only three persons had the good fortune to possess, namely. Visākhā, Mallikā wife of Bandula, the Commander-in-Chief, and Devadinya the thief. (This is according to the Commentary on the Mahāvagga, Dīgha Nikāya.)

According to the Commentary on the Dhammapada it was possessed by these three ladies in the whole human world. Visākhā, Mallikā, wife of Bandula the Commander-in-Chief, and the daughter of the Rich Man of Bārānasī.

When the remains of the Buddha were being carried past her house she requested the carriers of the bier; "Please! Please wait a moment," and (respectfully) encased the Buddha's body in the Mahālatā gown which covered neatly from head to sole. The golden-hued body of the Buddha clothed in the great gown wrought with the seven kinds of gems made a gorgeous spectacle.

Mallika's mind was filled with ecstatic delight in seeing the magnificence of the Buddha's body. Her conviction in the Triple Gem soared. She made this wish, "O Exalted Buddha! May I, in my faring the Samsaric journey, be always, perfect in my personal appearance even without the need to embellish myself." (Commentary to the *Mahāvagga* (*Dīgha Nikāya*) on Mahāparinibbāna Sutta.)

After she had passed away Mallikā was reborn as a celestial being in the *Tāvatiṃsā deva* realm. On account of her wish she was endowed with unrivaled beauty. She had a dress magnificently finished with the seven kinds of gems and also a mansion of like description. (See details in the commentary on *Vimāna vatthu*, 3-Pārīchattaka vagga, 8-Mallikā vimānavatthu).

King Pasenadi of Kosala let the nephew of Bandula, named Dīghakārāyāna, to succeed him as Commander-in-Chief. This token of his high regard for Bandula did not, however, appease the nephew. He kept awaiting his opportunity to revenge the death of his innocent uncle.

The King was never happy since the assassination of the innocent Bandula. A feeling of guilt possessed him so much so that he did not find pleasure in his kingly luxuries. At that time the Bhagavā was sojourning at the market town of Mēdālupa in the province of the Sakyans. The King of Kosala wishing to see the Bhagavā, put up a rustic tent built of branches of trees in the vicinity of the Bhagava's monastery and stayed in camp there. There, leaving the regal paraphernalia with Dīghakārāyana, the Commander-in-Chief, he entered the Bhagava's chamber alone.

(The reason for the King's leaving his regal paraphernalia with Dīghakārāyana were: (1) he considered it improper to look ostentatious in the presence of the Bhagavā; and (2) he intended to have a private dialogue with the Bhagavā which he believed would gladden him. That indeed is so. For when the regal paraphernalia was sent to the palace it was understood by the royal attendants that (they did not need to wait on the king for the meantime and that) they should return to the palace.

As the Kosala king went alone to the Bhagava's monastery, Dīghakārāyana felt uneasy with the thought. "This king had previously private conference with Gotama the recluse;" after which my uncle Bandula and his thirty-two sons were assassinated; now he is again in conference with Gotama the recluse. What might this mean? Might I be the target this time?"

As soon as the king had entered the Buddha's chamber, Dīghakārāyana, the Commander-in-Chief, took the regal paraphernalia to Viṭaṭūbha, cajoled and coerced Viṭaṭūbha to accept kingship then and there. Then he left a charger, a scimitar and a royal maid for Pasenadi of Kosala with a note saying, "Do not come after us if you



wish to stay alive!" After that he took Prince Viṭaṭūbha to the palace in Sāvatti as the new king with the white umbrella held above him.

When the Kosala king came out of the monastery after having cordial conversation with the Bhagavā, he saw none of his army: he asked the maid who told him what she heard and saw. Thereupon he headed for Rājagaha to muster help from his royal nephew, King Ajātasattu with the object of deposing Viṭaṭūbha the usurper. On his way he had to make do with a meal of broken rice and to drink unfiltered water. As he was of a delicate constitution, that food proved indigestible for him. It was late in the evening when he got to the city of Rājagaha. The city gates were already closed. So he had to spend the night at a rest-house outside the city, intending to see his nephew King Ajātasattu the next morning.

That night the Kosala king suffered from indigestion due to the upset condition of phlegm, bile and wind. He could answer the call of nature only two or three times before he became totally exhausted. He slept in the bosom of the young maid who was his sole company. He died at dawn the next day. (At the time of death the Kosala king was eighty years of age, the same age with the Bhagavā. (See *Majjhima paṇṇāsa Pāli, Dhammacetiya Sutta*).

When the young maid found that the king had passed away she wailed loudly: "My Lord the Kosala King, who had ruled over the two provinces of Kasi and Kosala, had died uncared for outside the city on this rest-house where the homeless make it their home." On hearing her lamentation people came to know about the death of the Kosala king. They reported it to King Ajātasattu who came out and saw his dead uncle. He arranged for a fitting funeral with much ceremony. Then he mustered his troops by the beat of the gong, intending to capture Viṭaṭūbha.

The ministers of King Ajātasattu pleaded at his feet saying, "Great King, if your royal uncle (the Kosala King) were alive, your visit to Savatti would be proper. But now that Vitatubha, your younger cousin, is on the throne, and he had also a right through kinship to the throne, your expedition is not advisable." (And Ajātasattu stayed his hand.)

Prince Viṭaṭūbha after ascending the throne at Sāvatti remembered his grudge against the Sakyans. He left the city at the head of a big army to make war against and destroy the Sakyans. Early in the morning, the Bhagavā viewed the world of beings with his Buddha. Eye and saw that danger was imminent for his kinsmen the Sakyans. He thought it right and proper to protect them. So after going on the alms-round, he took a rest in his scented Chamber in a noble resting posture (like the lion) lying on his right side. In the evening he went to Kapilavattu, travelling there through the air. He sat at the foot of a tree with bare branches in the vicinity of the city of Kapilavatthu.

Not far away from that tree there was a shady banyan tree near the boundary between Kapilavatthu and Viṭaṭūbha's country. When Viṭaṭūbha saw the Bhagavā he made obeisance to the Bhagavā and said, "Venerable Sir, how is it that the Bhagavā is sitting underneath this skeleton of a tree when it is still hot? May the Bhagavā come and sit underneath shady banyan tree which is near our boundary." The Bhagavā replied, "Great King, so be it. Shelter provided by kinsman is cool enough." Viṭaṭūbha was not slow to take the hint. He surmised (rightly) that the Bhagavā was there to give his benign protection to his kinsmen. So he withdrew his forces after respectfully making his obeisance to the Bhagavā. The Bhagavā travelled back to the Jetavana monastery through the air.

Viṭaṭūbha did not forget the insult he suffered at the hands of the Sakyān. He took out another expedition against the Sakyān city. On this occasion too the Bhagavā was there and he was obliged to withdraw. For the third time he led a mighty force towards the Sakyān territory, only to meet with the Bhagavā before he could start operation and had to withdraw.

When King Viṭaṭūbha set out for the fourth time the Bhagavā saw that the time for the evil misdeeds of the Sakyān to fructify had now arrived and so did not intervene. The past misdeeds of the Sakyāns consisted in spreading poison in a stream on a certain day in their previous existence.

Viṭaṭūbha came with a big army intent on destroying the Sakyāns. The Bhagava's kinsmen, on the other hand were averse to taking life.

They would rather give up their own life than destroy life. They know that they were past masters in archery, so they thought of frightening away the enemy by their feats in archery. They put on mail armour and came out pretending to join battle. They sent arrows into the enemy which did not hit anyone but passed through their shields or through holes in their ear-lobes. (pierced while young for wearing ear-rings).

When Viṭaṭūbha saw the arrows he thought that the Sakyans were shooting them in earnest. "They say the Sakyans don't destroy life," he said, " but now they are trying to kill us with arrows!"

One of his men said, "Lord, inspect your forces and you will know."

"Boy, there the arrows come in the direction of our men."

"But there is no one hit on this side, Great King. Would your Majesty make a count of your men," replied the men boldly. The king ordered to make a count and found that no one had fallen.

Viṭaṭūbha withdrew his forces a little and ordered his men: "O men, slay all those who say they are Sakyan. But spare my grand father Mahānāma and those who are together with him. Thereupon Viṭaṭūbha's forces made a dash for the kill. The Sakyans did not see anything to hold on to. Some of them stood holding on to tufts of grass while others stood holding on to clusters of reed. When asked by the enemy, "Are you not Sakyan?" these Sakyans did not and could not utter a lie, those Sakyan holding on to the grass so replied: "These are not *Tectona grandis* trees but only grass, and those Sakyans holding on to the reeds replied: "These are not *Tectona grandis* trees, but only reed." Those Sakyans and Mahānāma together with the Sakyans that remained together with him were spared. Those who held on to the grass later came to be known as Grass Sakyans, and those who held on to the reeds as Reed Sakyans. All other Sakyans were put to the sword not even infants were allowed to live. Viṭaṭūbha then cleansed his seat with the enemy's blood from their throats. Thus was the Sakyans clan exterminated by Viṭaṭūbha.

Mahānāma the Sakyan was captured alive. On his way to Viṭaṭūbha's country, when it was time for the morning meal they dismounted and the table was laid; Viṭaṭūbha informed Mahānāma the Sakyan to join

him. Persons of royal blood as a rule never share a meal with sons of a slave. Mahānāma therefore, noticing a pond nearby, said, "My grandson I need a washing up before I eat." "Then, Grand father, take a bath," replied Viṭaṭūbha.

Mahānāma knew that if he refused to eat with Viṭaṭūbha he would be put to the sword. "It were better to take my own life," he mooted. So he untied his coil of hair, made a knot at the end of his hair which was spread out, and putting both his big toes together inside the hair, he dived into the water. King Mahānāma was possessed of such merit that his presence underneath the water caused warmth in the realm of Nagas. The king of Nagas looked for the strange phenomenon and on seeing the plight of King Mahānāma the Sakyans, he appeared before the king and letting the King sit on his hood, carried him down to the realm of Nagas where Mahānāma the Sakyan survived for twelve years.

#### **Viṭaṭūbha and company meet their fate.**

King Viṭaṭūbha was left waiting for the return of his royal grand father. "He should be back any time," he kept on saying to himself. But he had been waiting rather too long. "Something is wrong," he thought and he had his men wade into the water, dive into it, and search around the pond. As it was already dark, he sent his men all around to search any possible nook and corner with oil lamps. When he had left no stone unturned he gave up the search at that locality and assuming his grandfather must have fled from him he and his army left the place.

He got to the Aciravati river at nightfall and it was too late to enter the city. So he and his army had to camp on the river bank for the night. Some of his men lay on the sandbank to rest while others lay on higher ground. Among the first group there were some who had not committed evil deeds in the past; among the second group there were some who had done evil deeds in the past. It so happened that to both the groups swarms of white ants made their stay impossible; they were driven to seek fresh quarter for the night. Persons who had done no bad actions in the past who were lying on the sand bank therefore found it necessary to move to high ground; those who had done bad actions in the past who were lying on high ground found it necessary to move to the sand bank.

After the people had made these shifting of quarters, there arose black rain clouds and all of a sudden there was a deluge that caused the Aciravatī to burst its banks. Viṭaṭūbha and his army were carried away in the floods down to the ocean where they were devoured by fishes and turtles.

### **The past evil actions of the Sakyans.**

The massacre of the Sakyan became a subject of a lively talk among the people. "O men," they would say, "the massacre of the Sakyans is absolutely uncalled for; and the brutality they suffered, their small children even not being spared, is most improper." This sort of popular opinion came to the ear of the Bhagava who said, "Bhikkhus, the Sakyans meet with a seemingly undeserved fate in their present existence. However if their present fate is considered against their past evil action they met the kind of death appropriate to the cause thereof." The bhikkhus requested the Bhagavā to relate the nature of their past evil action. And the Bhagavā briefly related to them how in a certain existence in the past they had united themselves in one mind and spread poison into a stream (causing wholesale destruction of fish in it).

Again, the following day, at the assembly of bhikkhus for hearing the teaching, the bhikkhus were discussing about the fate of Viṭaṭūbha: "Friends, Viṭaṭūbha together with his company, after slaying such a great number of the Sakyans, became victims of fishes and turtles in the ocean even before achieving his ambition." When the Bhagavā came to the assembly and asked the bhikkhus, "Bhikkhus, what was that you were talking about when I came?" they told the Bhagavā about their subject of discussion. Then the Bhagavā said, "Bhikkhus, just as, all the villagers in a sleeping village are swept away by a great flood, so also, even before their ambitions in life are fulfilled all living beings who are forgetful and sleeping (i.e., not vigilant) have their lives cut short and are carried away by Death to the ocean of the four miserable states." Then the Bhagavā uttered this stanza.

*Pupphāni heva pacinantam  
byāsattamanasam naram  
suttam gāmam mahoghova  
maccuādāya gacchati.*

"(Bhikkhus) like one who gathers choicest flowers, a person who hankers after sense-pleasure, craving for what he had not got and clinging to what he has got is carried away by Death to the ocean of the four miserable states, just as a whole village that are soundly asleep are swept away to the ocean by a great flood."

At the end of the discourse many beings attained enlightenment such as Stream-Entry. This discourse is therefore a very beneficial discourse for all

Here ends the story of Viṭaṭūbha,(the Destroyer of Friends')

### **The two Mallikas differentiated.**

There were (at the time of the Buddha) two Mallikas in Sāvatti, one was Mallikā, wife of Bandula, the Commander-in-Chief, the other was Mallikā, Queen of the Kosala King. The former was a Mallan princess of Kusinārā about whom we have said earlier on; we shall now describe Queen Mallikā in a brief way.

This future queen was daughter of a flower seller in the city of Sāvatti. She was a maiden of great beauty; with a large store of great past merits. One day when she was sixteen she went flower-gathering in the company of other girls, carrying three lumps of barley cakes in a flower basket.

As the group of girls were coming out of the city, they meet the Buddha, surrounded by a wondrous aura of six hues, in the company of many bhikkhus, who was entering the city. Mallikā was deeply moved by the glory of the Buddha and in a super state of devotional faith she offered her three lumps of barley cakes to the Bhagavā. The Bhagavā accepted the alms in the alms-bowl donated by the four Great Guardians of the Four Quarters.

Mallikā paid her obeisance at the feet of the Bhagavā, with her mind filled with delightful satisfaction, *pīti*, derived from reflection on the attributes of the Buddha and stood at a suitable place. The Bhagavā looked at her and gave a smile. The Venerable Ānandā asked the Bhagavā about the reason for the smile "Ānandā", said the Bhagavā, on account of her offering of these three lumps of barley cakes with the volition of the first impulsion this young girl will become Chief Queen of the Kosala King this very day "

Mallikā was overjoyed to hear the words of the Bhagavā and went to the park with her companions. It was the day when the King of Kosala fought a battle with his nephew Ajātasattu and was defeated. He escaped on horseback and on hearing the singing of Mallikā he turned towards the park, being attracted by the girl's voice. Whereas all the other girls fled with fear at the sight of the king, Mallikā who was destined to become queen felt no fear; instead, she came forward and took the reins of the king's charger in her hand.

Still sitting on horseback, he inquired the girl whether she was married or not. On learning that she was unmarried, he dismounted and as he was tired from the heat of the sun and the wind, he took a rest in the bosom of Mallikā. After having rested, he took the girl on horseback and entered the city accompanied by his army. He had the girl escorted to her parents' place. That evening he sent (to Mallikā's house) the royal carriage reserved for the use of Chief Queen in which she was brought to the palace with pomp and ceremony. Then, placing her on a ceremonial seat wrought with precious gems, she was anointed Chief Queen. From that day Mallikā became the beloved Chief Queen. (These details are based on the Commentary on the Jātaka, Volume Three, Sattaka Nipāta; 10- Kummāsapiṇḍi Jātaka).

Thus the two Mallikas should be known: Mallikā the Kosala Queen was the daughter of a flower-seller; Mallikā wife of Bandula, Commander-in-Chief, was the daughter of one of the Malla princes.

**(End of Chapter Thirty Eight)**

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*TINI*

## CHAPTER THIRTY NINE

### HOW THE ĀTĀNĀTIYA PARITTA CAME TO BE TAUGHT.

At one time the Bhagavā was staying in the monastery on the Gijjakuta Hill near Rājagaha. During that time Dhataratṭha, Virūlaka, Virūpakkha and Kuvera, the Four Great Guardian Kings of the four quarters, held a conference at the celestial city of Ātānātiya, the abode of Kuvera, after they had carefully arranged for the defences of Tāvatisa, the abode of Sakka, King of devas, (against the Asuras) at the four directions, employing hordes of Yakkhas, Gandhabbas, Kumbhaṇḍas, and Nagas. They composed stanzas called the *Ātānātiya paritta* on the subject of the seven Buddhas (preceding Gotama Buddha). "Whosoever disregards and goes against the authority of the Buddhas' Doctrine and the authority of our commandments shall be meted out specific punishments," they proclaimed. They also placed at the four quarters a big number of Yakkhas, Gandhabbas, Kumbhaṇḍas and Nagas for their own protection. Around midnight they came to the Bhagavā in resplendent appearances, their personal radiance flooding the entire Gijjhakuta Hill. After having approached the Bhagavā, and making obeisance to him, they sat at a suitable place.

(Note: It was unusual for devas to sit before the Buddhas' presence, they usually remained standing. But here they were sitting, out of reverence for the *Ātānātiya Paritta* - Commentary).

The company of Yakkhas who came with the Four Great Guardian Kings behaved in different ways in the presence of the Bhagavā: some of them made obeisance to the Bhagava and sat in a suitable place: some of them exchanged words of felicitations with the Bhagavā and sat in a suitable place; some of them raised their joined palms in the direction of the Bhagavā and sat in a suitable place; some declared their names and lineage and sat in a suitable place; some sat remaining silent.

At that assembly of devas, Vessavaṇṇa addressed the Bhagavā in these words;



"Venerable Sir, among very powerful Yakkhas some have pious faith in the Bhagavā while others have not. It is the same with yakkhas of middling powers and those of small powers. Venerable Sir, most Yakkhas do not have reverence for the Bhagavā (i.e., they do not like the Bhagavā) because the Bhagavā preaches refraining from killing, stealing, unlawful sexual conduct, lying and taking intoxicants whereas yakkhas generally do not refrain from killing, stealing, unlawful sexual conduct, lying and taking intoxicants. For those yakkhas who lack morality the five moral precepts is anathema.

"Venerable Sir, there are many bhikkhu disciples of the Bhagavā who dwell in monasteries in remote places. Those remote places are permanent places where very powerful yakkhas who do not show reverence to the Bhagavā live. To win their confidence, to serve as protection for bhikkhu disciples, bhikkhuni disciples, lay male disciples and lay female disciples of the Bhagavā, to let them be free from harassment of yakkhas, and for a peaceful, carefree life in all the four bodily postures for everyone, may the Bhagavā teach them the *Ātānāṭiya Paritta* to the disciples."

(Herein, Vessavaṇṇa acted as spokesmen for the four Great Guardian Kings because he was well acquainted with the Bhagavā and was also an accomplished speaker.)

The Bhagavā accepted Vessavaṇṇa's proposition by remaining silent.

Seeing that the Bhagavā approved his suggestion, Vessavaṇṇa recited the *Ātānāṭiya Paritta* thus:

### *The Ātānāṭiya Paritta (Pāli)*

- (1) *Vipassissa ca namatthu cakku mantassa sirīmato  
Sikhissapi ca namatthu abbabhutā nukanpino.*
- (2) *Vessabhussa ca namatthu nhātakassa tapassino  
namatthu Kakusandhassa mārasenā pamaddino.*
- (3) *Koṇāgamanassa namatthu brāhmaṇassa vusīmato  
Kassapassaca namatthu Vip̄pamuttassa sabbadhi.*

- (4) *Añgīrassasa namatthu sakyaputtassa sirīmato  
Yo imaṃ dhammaṃ decesi sabbadukkhāpanūdanam.*
- (5) *Ye cā pi nibbutā loke yathābhutaṃ vipassisuṃ.  
Te janā apisuṇātha mahantā vītasāradam.*
- (6) *Hitam devamanussānam yam namassanti Gotamam  
Vijjācaraṇasampannam mahantam vīta sāradam.*
- (7) *Yato uggacchati sūriyo ādicco maṇḍalī mahā  
Yassa sugacchamānassa samvarīpi nirujjhati  
Yassa suggati sūriye divasoti pavuccati.*
- (8) *Rahadopi tattha gambhīro samuddo saritodako  
Evaṃ taṃ tattha jānanti samuddo saritodako.*
- (9) *Ito sā purimā disā iti naṃ ācikkhatī jano  
Yaṃ disaṃ abhipālehti maharajā yassassi so.*
- (10) *Gandhabbānam adhipati dhataratthoti nāmasso  
Ramatī naccagītehi gandhabbehi purakkhato.*
- (11) *Puttāpi tassa bahavo ekañāmati me sutam  
Asīti dasa eko ca Indanāmā mahabbalā.*
- (12) *Te cāpi buddham disvāna buddhaṃ ādiccabandhunaṃ  
Dūratova namassanti mahantam vītasāradam.*
- (13) *Namo te purisā jāñña namote purisuttama  
Kusalena samekhasi amanussāpi taṃ vadanti  
Sutaṃ netam abhiñhaso tasmā evaṃ vademase.*
- (14) *Jinaṃ vandatha Gotamam jinaiṃ vadāma Gotamam  
Vijjācaraṇasampannam buddham vandāma Gotamam.*
- (15) *Yena petā pavuccanti pisuṇā piṭṭhimamsikā  
Pānātipātino luddā corānekatikā janā.*
- (16) *Ito sā dakkhiṇā disā  
Iti naṃ ācikkhatī jano  
Yaṃ disaṃ abhipāleti  
Mahārājā yasassi so.*

- (17) *Kumbhaṇḍānaṃ adhipati Virūḷho iti nāmaso.  
Ramaṭī niccagītehi kumbhaṇḍehi purakkhato.*
- (18) *Puttāpi tassa bahavo ekaṇāmāti me sutam  
Asīti dasa eko ca Indaṇāmā mahabbalā.*
- (19) *Te cā pi Buddhaṃ disavāna Buddhaṃ ādiccabandhunam  
Dūratova namassanti mahantam vītasāradam.*
- (20) *Namo te purisājañña namo te purisuttama  
Kusalena samekhasi amanussāpi tam vandanti  
Sutam netam abhiṇhaso tasamā evam vademase.*
- (21) *Jinaṃ vandatha Gotamaṃ jinaiṃ vandāma Gotamaṃ  
Vijjācaraṇasampannam Buddhaṃ vandāma Gotamaṃ.*
- (22) *Yattha coggacchati suriyo ādicco maṇḍalī mahā  
Yassa coggacchamānassa divasopi nirujjhati.  
Yassa coggatesūriye samavarīti pavuccati.*
- (23) *Rahadopi tatha gambhīro samuddo saritodako  
Evam tam tattha jānanti samuddo saritodako.*
- (24) *Ito sā pacchimā disā iti nam acikkhatī jano  
Yam disam abhipāleti mahārājā yasassiso.*
- (25) *Nāgānañca adhipati Virūpakkho ti nāmaso  
Ramaṭī naccagītehi Nāgeheva purakkhato.*
- (26) *Puttāpi tassa bahavo ekaṇāmāti me sutam  
Asīti dasa eko ca indaṇāmā mahabbalā.*
- (27) *Te cāpi buddham disvāna Buddhaṃ ādiccabhandunam  
Dūratova namassanti mahantam vītasārādam.*
- (28) *Namo te purisājañña namo te purisuttama  
Kusalena samekhasi amanussāpi tam vandanti  
Sutam netam abhiṇhaso tasmā evam vandemase.*
- (29) *Jinaṃ vandatha Gotamaṃ jinaṃ vandāma Gotamaṃ  
Vijjācaraṇasampannam Buddhaṃ vandāma Gotamaṃ.*
- (30) *Yena uttarakuruvho mahā neru sudassano  
Manussā tattha jāyanti amamā apariggahā.*

- (31) *Nate bījaṃ pavapanti napi nīyanti naṅgalā  
Akaṭṭhapākimam sāliṃ paribnuhjaṅti mānusā.*
- (32) *Akanam athusam suddham sugandham taṇḍulapphalam  
Tundikīre pacitavāna tato bhunjaṅti bhojanam.*
- (33) *Gāviṃ ekakhuram katvā anuyanti disodisam  
Pasum ekakhurain katvā anuyanti disodisam*
- (34) *Itthim vā vāhanam katvā anuyanti diso disam  
Purisam vāhanam katvā anuyanti diso disam.*
- (35) *Kumariṃ vāhanam katvā anuyanti diso disam  
Kumāram vāhanam katvā anuyanti diso disam.*
- (36) *Te yāne abhiruhitvā  
Sabbā disā anupariyāyanti  
Pasārā tassa rājino*
- (37) *Hatthiyānam assayānam dibbam yānam upatṭhitam  
Pāsādā sivikā ceva mahārājassa yasassino.*
- (38) *Tassa ca nagarā ahu  
Antalikkhe sumāpitā  
Ātānātā kusinātā parakusinātā  
Nātasuriyā parakusitanātā*
- (39) *Uttarena kasivanto  
Janoghamaparena ca  
Nanavutiyo ambaraambaravatiyo  
Ā laka mandā nāma rājaddānī.  
Kuverassa kho pana Mārissa mahārājassa visānānāma  
rājadhānī  
tasmā Kuvero mahārajā Vessavaṇṇoti pavuccati.*
- (40) *Paccesanto pakāsenti  
Tatolā tattalā tatotalā  
Ojasi tejasi tatojasī  
Sūro rājā aritṭho nemi.*

- (41) *Rahadopi tattha dharanī nāma  
Yato meghā pavassanti  
Vassā yato patāyanti  
Sabbāpi tattha Sālavatī nāma.*
- (42) *Yattha yakkhā payirupāsanti tattha niccaphalā rukkhā.  
Nānā dijagaṇā yutā mayūraṅcābhirudā  
Kokilādīhi vagguhi*
- (43) *Jīvañjīvakasaddettha atho oṭṭhavacittakā  
Kukkutakā kulīrakā vane pokkharasātakā.*
- (44) *Sukasālikasaddettha daṇḍamaṇavakāni ca  
sobhati sabbakālam sā kuveranaḷinī sadā.*
- (45) *Ito sā uttarā disā iti naṃ ācckhatī jano  
Yaṃ disaṃ abhipāleti mahāarājā yasassi so.*
- (46) *Yakkhānañca adhipati kuvero iti nāmaso  
Ramatī naccagītehi yakkheheva purakkhato.*
- (47) *Puttāpi tassa bahavo ekanāmāti me sutam  
Asīti dasa ekoca indanāmā mahabbalā.*
- (48) *Tecāpi Buddham disvāna Buddham ādiccabandhunam  
Dūratova namassanti mahantam vīlasāradam.*
- (49) *Namo te purisājañña namo te pivrisuttama  
Kusalena samekhasi amanussāpi tam vandanti  
Sutam netam abhiṅhaso tasmā evaiṅ vademase.*
- (50) *Jinam vandatha Gotamam jinam vandāma Gotamam  
Vijjācaraṇasampannam Buddham vandāma Gotamam.*

(This is the *Ātānāṭiya Paritta*)

••••• ☆ •••••

Then Vessavanna said: "Venerable Sir, this is the *Ātānāṭiya Paritta* which is to be used as protection for bhikkhu disciples, bhikkhunī disciples, lay male disciples, lay female disciples, to let them be free from the harassment of Yakkhas, and for a peaceful, carefree life in all

the four bodily postures for everyone. Venerable Sir, if a yakkha, or a gandhabba, or a kumbhaṇḍa, or a naga were to possess, with intention to harass, any one of the bhikkhu disciple, or bhikkhunī disciple, or lay male disciple, or lay female disciple who has learnt this *Paritta* well, that yakkha will not enjoy the respect and reverence in the village or town which is my prerogative (to allow or disallow them such respect and reverence). "Venerable Sir, that yakkha cannot have mansion of his own or get my permission to reside permanently in my city called Aḷakamandā." After mentioning to the Bhagavā, the disqualification that surround a recalcitrant yakkha etc., Vessavaṇṇa went on to say that just as there were recalcitrant men who defied the authority of king, there were also recalcitrant yakkas who did not obey the authority of the four Great Guardian Kings; and that in case those recalcitrant yakkhas were to possess and harass the four classes of the Buddha's disciples (bhikkhu disciples, bhikkhunī disciples, lay male disciple and lay female disciples), thirty-eight *deva* generals such as Inda, Soma, Varuṇa, should be invoked and reported to, describing details. After that Vessavaṇṇa bid the Bhagavā farewell in these words: "Venerable Sir, we have many affairs to attend to; we shall go now." (For the Myanmar rendering of *Ātānātiya Paritta* and details of Vessaṇṇa's additional remarks, reference may be made of *Pāthika Vagga*.)

The Bhagavā said, "Great Guardian Kings, you know the time to go. (i.e., you may go as you please.)"

Then the four Great Guardian Kings rose from their seats, made obeisance to the Bhagavā and vanished there. The company of yakkhas that came together with the four great Guardian Kings bade farewell to the Bhagavā in different ways as on their arrival, some rose to make obeisance to the Bhagavā and vanished there; some exchanged memorable words of felicitation with the Bhagavā and vanished there; some raised joined palms in the direction of the Bhagavā and vanished there; some just vanished there without saying anything.

**The Bhagavā relates the story of the visit of the four  
great Guardian Kings.**

On the next morning the Bhagavā related to the bhikkhus the story of the visit of the four Great Guardian Kings and recited the *Āṭānāṭiya Paritta*. Then he said;

"Bhikkhus, learn the *Āṭānāṭiya Paritta*; study it again and again, commit it to memory. Bhikkhus the *Āṭānāṭiya Paritta* is beneficial to all. It will serve as protection for bhikkhu disciples, bhikkhunī disciples, lay male disciples, lay female disciples; it could enable them to free themselves from harassment of yakkhas, and to lead a peaceful, carefree life in all the bodily postures."

**Ritual for reciting the *Āṭānāṭiya Paritta*.**

The reciter of *Āṭānāṭiya Paritta* must have a thorough knowledge of the *paritta*, both in word and meaning. He must be able to enunciate every word correctly. Should there occur any flaw in enunciating it or any deficiency in reciting it, the efficacy of the *paritta* will not be as great as it should. Its efficacy depends on the overall efficiency in the reciting.

If the reciter has any self motive of personal gain in the learning and reciting the *paritta*, the objective of the *paritta*, will not be achieved. The reciter should be primarily motivated by a desire to gain liberation from the round of rebirths, and recite the *paritta* in an attitude of good will to all. (Commentary on *Pāthika vagga*.)

In driving out the yakkha that has possessed a person, *Metta Sutta*, *Dhajagga Sutta*, *Ratana Sutta* should be tried first. Only if the reciting of those *suttas* for even whole days fail, should *Āṭānāṭiya Paritta* be recited.

The reciting bhikkhu should abstain from cakes made from dough, fish, meat and non-vegetarian foods, nor should he dwell at a cemetery. The reason is that yakkhas are fond of those kinds of food, and like to frequent cemeteries so that they could get better opportunity to possess men.

The place where the *paritta* is to be recited should be plastered with fresh cow-dung. A clean seat should be spread for the reciter, who should see to his personal cleanliness.

The bhikkhu who is to recite the *paritta* should be brought to the assigned place at the house of the victim, surrounded by an armed guard. The recital should not be made in an open space. It must be made in a fully enclosed room, well guarded with armed men. The reciter should have an attitude of good will to all (i.e., including the recalcitrant *yakkha*). The diffusion of *metta* is the internal security for the reciter while an armed guard is the external security. These precautions are necessary for a trouble-free recital.

First of all, the victim must be made to get established in the (five) precepts. Only after being established in the five precepts should the *paritta* be recited for his protection. These measures should put an end to the harassment of *yakkhas*.

If the *yakkha* does not release the victim after the end of the recital, the victim should be carried to the monastery and laid on the pagoda precincts. An offering of the place where the victim is lying will be made to the Buddha together with offerings of lights. The pagoda precincts must then be swept clean. Auspicious stanzas (of *Maṅgala sutta*) should then be recited as a preliminary measure. Then a loud proclamation should be made calling upon all bhikkhus residing within the monastic area to assemble on the pagoda precincts. There will be a certain tree in a grove in the vicinity of the monastery where a guardian tree spirit is traditionally said to reside. A person should be sent to that tree to act as official messenger of the congregation of bhikkhus, where he should say, "O *yakkhas*, your presence is wanted by the bhikkhu Sangha." The *yakkhas* who resided in that area (including the *yakkha* who has possessed the victim cannot neglect the formal invitation because he does not dare to disregard the authority of the Buddha and the four Great Guardian Kings.

Then the victim must be asked: "Who are you?" (Addressing the victim here is addressing the *yakkha* that has possessed him.). When the *yakkha* reveals his name the bhikkhus should say: "Friend so-and-so, we share our merit in our offerings of flowers, seat, and alms-food to



the Buddha. The Sangha have recited for your benefit auspicious stanzas; these stanzas are the friendly gift of the Sangha to you. Now, out of respect for the sangha, release this victim."

The recalcitrant yakkha should respond to the request of the bhikkhu congregation made in loving kindness. If he does not respond, then an invocation should be made to the thirty-eight *deva* generals such as Inda, Soma, Varuṇa, and they should be told in these terms: "*Deva* generals, as you know, this yakkha has disregarded our request made in loving-kindness. So we have to use the authority of the Buddha." Having let the *deva* generals know the necessity of resorting to the *Ātānāṭiya Paritta* in those terms, a recitation of the *Paritta* should be made. This is the procedure where the victim is a lay person.

In the case of a bhikkhu being possessed by a yakkha, the place for the congregation of bhikkhus should be cleaned; a loud proclamation about the convening of the bhikkhu congregation made, sharing of merit made to the recalcitrant yakkha (for the offerings of flowers, etc., to the Buddha) and a genial request made to him to withdraw. Only when the yakkha remains unresponsive should the *Ātānāṭiya Paritta* be recited. (This is the procedure for bhikkhu-victims).



### The Buddha's Discourse to Sakka: Sakka *Pañha* Sutta.

At one time the Bhagavā was residing at the Indasāla Cave where the *Odina wodier* tree stood, on the slope of the Vēdiyaka hill, north of Ambasaṇḍa brahmin village, which lay to the east of the City of Rajagaha, in the province of Magadha.

(The brahmin village was known as Ambasaṇḍa because it was situated by the side of a mango grove. The Vēdiyaka hill got its name from a grove of gracefully straight and round trees like columns of sapphire, growing around the hill. Indasāla Cave got its name from the *Odina wodier* tree that stood at its entrance. It was originally a natural stone cave which was later embellished with engravings.)

### Signs of imminent death appeared to Sakka.

As the Bhagavā was staying at the Indasāla Cave where the *Odina wodier* tree stood on the slope of the Vedyaka hill near Rājagaha, there appeared to Sakka the five signs that proclaim the approaching death of a *deva*; (these are: 1. the flowers adorning his person wither; 2. the dress become soiled; 3. the armpit sweat; 4. personal appearance declines; 5. listlessness sets in.) Sakka knew these signs well and said to himself. "Alas, my life-span has ended."

When the five signs of imminent death appear to *devas*, those with little merit in store are gravely concerned about their next (oncoming) existence. Those *devas* with vast store of merit remember their unprevious good deeds of giving, observing moral precepts and achieving concentration, and being assured of a good destination in the higher *deva* realms. remain unperturbed.

As for Sakka he was fearful and despondent. For he would now lose all the greatness of a Sakka, namely: the *Tavatimsa deva* realm which is ten thousand *yojanas* wide; the Vejayantā palatial mansion that is a thousand *yojanas* tall; the Sudhammā Assembly Hall, three hundred *yojanas* wide, for the hearing of the Dhamma, the Coral Tree (the *Paricchattaka*) which is a hundred *yojanas* high; the Paṇḍukambalā slab of emerald, which is sixty *yojanas* long, fifty *yojanas* wide and fifteen *yojanas* high; twenty five million celestial dancers; his follower *devas* who are denizens of *Catumahārāja* realm and *Tavatimsa* realm; and celestial parks known as Nandavana Park; Cittalatā Park, Missaka Park, Phāsuka Park.

Then Sakka pondered, "Is there any samaṇa or brahmaṇa outside the Buddha's Teaching who can allay my worries and fears of death and help perpetuate my Lordship of devas?" He saw none. He continued pondering and thought of the Buddha, the Buddha can allay fears and worries that oppress hundreds of thousands of Sakkas like myself."; thus he had a strong desire to see the Buddha.

"Where is the Bhagavā residing just now?" he considered. He saw that the Bhagavā was residing at the Indasāla Cave where the *Odina wodier* tree stood on the slope of the Vedyaka hill near Rājagaha. He

then said to his companions, the Tavatimsa devas, "Friends, the Bhagavā is residing at the Indasāla Cave where the *Odina wodier* tree stands on the slope of the Vedyaka hill near Rājagaha. Friends, it were well if we went there to see the Bhagavā." The Tavatimsa devas said, "Very well, Lord."

(Herein, the time and circumstances of Sakka's seeing the Bhagavā may be noted. A few days ago Sakka had paid a visit to the Bhagavā at the Jetavana monastery, in the company of his close attendants such as Mātali but without a big retinue. At that time the Bhagavā saw that Sakka was not yet ripe for enlightenment and that after two or three days' time he would become obsessed with death after seeing signs of nearing the end of his life, and then he would be coming to the Tathāgata in the company of devas from both the *Catumahārājika* and *Tavatimsa* deva realms to ask fourteen questions and that at the end of the question concerning equanimity he would win Stream-Entry along with eighty thousand devas of *Catumahārājika* and *Tavatimsa* deva realms.' Seeing this situation, the Bhagavā dwelled in the Jhānic absorption of Arahattaphala so that Sakka did not get an opportunity to see him:

On his part Sakka was thinking thus: "About three days back the Bhagavā did not give me audience because I went to see him alone. Perhaps I was not endowed with sufficing condition (of ripened merit) to gain enlightenment. It is customary for the Bhagavā to go to the end of the world-system to preach the Doctrine if there is someone who has sufficing condition for enlightenment. This time if I go to the Bhagavā along with a company of followers there must be at least one of them who is endowed with sufficing condition and the Bhagavā would discourse to him. In that way I shall have my opportunity to hear the discourse which will set my troubled mind at ease." That was why he called up the Tavatimsa devas to accompany him. (This is as explained in the Commentary.)

Then Sakka, on second thought, considered that it would not be wise for him to go straight to the Bhagavā in the company of *devas* from *Catumahārājika* and *Tavatimsa*. "It would look somewhat lacking in grace on my part. This Pañcasikha Deva, is well acquainted with the Bhagavā, being used to rendering personal service to the Bhagavā. He has the privilege of seeing the Bhagavā and asking questions freely. It would be well if I were to send him first, apprise my coming to the Bhagavā and obtain the Bhagava's, permission, then only I will put my questions to the Bhagavā." Accordingly, he said to Pañcasikha, "O Pañcasikha, the Bhagavā is now residing at Indasāla Cave where the *Odinamodier* tree stands on the slope of the Vedyaka hill near Rājagaha. O Pañcasikha, it would be well if we approached the Bhagavā there."

"Very well, Lord," said Pañcasikha. Then, taking his lute known as *Beluvapaṇḍu*, and strumming it in accompaniment with a song, thereby letting the other *devas* know that Sakka was about to go somewhere, stood by the side of Sakka.

At the musical signal of Pañcasikha, *Tavatimsa devas* got ready to go. Then, just as soon as a strong man were to flex his bent arm, or bend his spread-out arm, suddenly appeared on the Vedyaka hill lying to the north of Ambasaṇḍa brahmin village, eastwards from Rājagaha in the province of Magadha.

At that time the Vedyaka hill and Ambasaṇḍa brahmin village were aglow with celestial lights. People living in that area were in awe with wonder at the extraordinary glowing of lights "Today the Vedyaka hill seems aflame! There are so many glowing lights on the Vedyaka hill and above Ambasaṇḍa brahmin village! What is the matter?" People were talking in great wonder, with gooseflesh forming on their skin.

(It should be noted that the visit to the Bhagavā by Sakka and company was rather too early. They were there after nightfall while even children had not gone to bed. It was the custom of *devas* and *brahmas* to come and see the Bhagavā around midnight. But now that Sakka was so uneasy at the thought of death that he made the visit in the first watch of the night.)

Then Sakka said to Pañcasikha, "O Pañcasikha, Buddhas generally dwell in jhāna. If it is the time while the Bhagavā is dwelling in jhāna, it is not proper for person like me who are not free of greed, hatred and bewilderment. O Pañcasikha, go now and ask permission of the Bhagavā to see him. Having got permission, we shall go near the Bhagavā."

"Very well, Lord," said Pañcasikha. Then, carrying the Beluvapaṇḍu lute in his left arm, he drew near to the Indasāla Cave. He took up his position not too close to the Bhagavā and not too far either, just a suitable distance away from where the Bhagavā could hear his music.

### Deva Pañcasikha's songs to the accompaniment of his lute.

From that appropriate position deva Pañcasikha played his lute singing songs<sup>1</sup> on the subjects of the Buddha, the Dhamma the Sangha the Arahat, and of sensual pleasures.

(1) *Vande te pitaraṃ bhaadde timbaruṃ sūriyavacchase  
yena jātāsi kalyāṇī Ānanda janānī mama.*

"My noble Lady of glowing complexion like the radiant sun,  
Offspring of Lord Timbaru!  
You are as fair as fair can be,  
Possessing the five qualities of feminine beauty,  
The source of my delight.  
Out of my fondness for you,  
I worship your father Timbaru.

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<sup>1</sup> The word-for-word renderings in the original Myanmar, beautiful and learned, are penned by the Sibhani Sayadaw who presided over the Fifth Buddhist synod in Mandalay. He was awarded (1) Narinda bhisiri Saddhamma dhaja mahā dhammarājādhi rājaguru and Narinda bhisiri Sadhammajotipala dhaja mahā dhammarājādhi rājaguru title by King Mindon and Narindha bhi dhaja atuladhipati sīri pavara mahā dhammarājā dhirājaguru title by King Thipaw. The Sayadaw wrote the Burmese meaning of the songs in his treatise "Kavi maṇḍana medaṇī". Only the gist of each song is given here in English prose.

(2) *Vālova sedatam kanto pāṇṭyamva pipsato  
Aṅgīrasi piyāmesi dhammo arahatāmiva.*

(3) *Āturasseva bhesajjam bhojanamva jighacchato  
Parinibbāpaya maim bhadde jalantamiva vārinā.*

(2-3) "O glowing-complexioned Lady!

Just as a sweating man welcomes a cool breeze,  
Just as a thirsty man welcomes drinking water;  
Just as the Arahāt welcomes the Dhamma;  
Just as one afflicted by malady welcomes the medicine,  
Just as a famished one welcomes the food.  
So also I, the deva with Five Knots, adore you.  
Just as water quells the blaze,  
O my noble Lady!  
Let your smile quell the fire of passion in me!

(4) *Sītodakam pokkharanim yuttam kiñjakkhareṇunā  
Nāgo ghammābhitattova ogāhe te thanūdaram.*

"Just as a tusker oppressed by heat  
Wishes to descend into the cool waters of a lily pond,  
So also I would fain descend into your soft bosom.

(5) *Accaṅkusova nāgo va jitam me tuttatomaram  
Kāraṇam nappajānāmi sammatto lakkhanūruyā.*

"O my noble Lady! Just as a tusker in musk,  
Defying the pike that checks him, is blinded by passion,  
I too, being infatuated with your graceful thighs,  
Am blinded by passion.

(6) *Tayi gedhitacittosmi cittam vipariṇāmitam  
Patigantum na sakkomi vaṅkaghastova ambujo.*

"O, Lady of radiant complexion!  
How I wish to possess you!  
Just as a fish that has swallowed the hook.  
Is unable to cast it out,  
So also my fervour for you is irreversible.  
O, how my mind flusters!

(7) *Vamūrusaja maṃ bhadda saja maṃ mandalocane  
Palissaja maṃ kalyāṇi etaṃ me abhipattitaṃ.*

"O, Lady with lovely thighs!  
May you, my beloved, embrace me gently.  
O you Perfection personified!  
How I yearn for your tender embrace!

(8) *Appako vata me santo kāmo vellitake siyā  
Anebhahāvo samuppādi arahanteva dakkhinā.*

"Previously, I had known little sensual desire.  
But since I have set my eyes, on you,  
The possessor of long hair bent at the tips,  
Sensual desire has risen by leaps and bounds in me,  
Just as the fervent enthusiasm that arises  
In one who makes offerings to an Arahāt.

(9) *Yaṃ me atthi kataṃ punnaṃ Arahantesu tādisu  
Taṃ me sabbaṅgakalyāṇi tayā saddhim vipaccataṃ.*

"O Maiden blessed with the five feminine charms!  
In me there is past merit  
On account of serving Arahats, the stable ones.  
May that merit now result in my nuptial tie with you.

(10) *Yaṃ me atthi kataṃ punnaṃ asamim pathavimaṇḍale  
Taṃ me sabbaṅgakalyāṇi taya saddhim vipaccataṃ.*

"O Maiden blessed with the five feminine charms!  
In me there is past merit (such as alms-offerings)  
Done upon the entire-expanse of this great earth.  
May that merit result in my nuptial tie with you.

(11) *Sakyaputtova jhānena ekodi nipako sato  
Amataṃ muni jigīsāno tamahaṃ sūriyavacchase.*

"The sage, son of sākya clan (born of King Suddhodana and  
Queen Mahā Māyā) who delights in Jhāna and who resorts to  
seclusion,  
Who is wise and mindful,

Desires for the Deathless (Nibbāna)  
O, my Lady of radiant complexion!  
Likewise I desire for you.

(12) *Yathāpi muni nandeyya patvā sambodhimuttamaṃ  
Evam nandeyyam kalyāṇi missībhāvaṃ gato tayā.*

"O Embodiment of Elegance!  
The Sage, having attained the Supremely Perfect Wisdom  
(through the seven purities),  
Delights in his Enlightenment.  
So also, it would delight me greatly.  
If I were to be joined with you.

(13) *Sakko ce me varam dajjā tāvatimsā namissaro  
Tā haṃ bhaddē vareyyāhe evaṃ kāmo dalho mama.*

"O, my beloved! If Sakka, Lord of Tavatimsa,  
were to grant me a boon of my choice,  
I would opt for you  
(rather than for Lordship of devas).  
O my noble Lady!  
So firm is my fondness for you.

(14) *Sālam va na ciraṃ phullaṃ pitaraṃ te sumedhase.  
Vandamāno namassāmi yassācetādisī pajā.*

"O my Lady of great intelligence!  
Like the sudden blooming forth of the coral tree,  
You came into existence  
As the illustrious daughter of Lord Timbaru  
Whom I worship on account of you."

At the end of Pañcasikha's songs the Bhagavā praised him:  
"Pañsikka, your lute is in perfect harmony with your singing: neither  
the lute nor the singing dominated (or out rivals) each other."

(Note: the Bhagavā praised Pañcasikha not because he enjoyed  
the music, but only for some purpose. For the Bhagavā (being an  
Arahat) is neutral towards all pleasurable or painful sensations  
because he is possessed of equanimity in six ways (Vide Koṭhika



Sutta of Saḷāyatana Vagga, Saṃyutta Pāli). Yet he openly praises Pañcasikha to let him know that the Bhagavā approves of the devas action. If he did not give express approval Pañcasikha might withdraw, wrongly thinking that he was not welcome, in which case Sakka and company would get no opportunity to put Sakka's question and to hear the Bhagava's answers to him that would lead to their enlightenment.)

After praising Pañcasikha the Bhagavā asked him "Pañcasikha, when did you compose these verses on the Buddha; the Dhamma, the Sangha, the Arahāt and sensual pleasures?"

Pañcasikha replied, "Venerable Sir, at one time the Bhagavā was staying at the foot of the Ajapāta Banyan Tree near the bank of the Nerañjarā river in the Uruvela Forest (on the eighth week after the Buddha's Enlightenment). Venerable Sir, during that time I fell in love with Sūrijavacchāsā, daughter of Lord Timbaru. She on her part was in love with Sikhandī, son of Mātali, Sakka's charioteer. Venerable Sir, when I saw that I had to lose Sūrijavacchāsā I went to the mansion of Lord Timbaru and played my Beluvapaṇḍu lute singing these verses on the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha, the Arahāt, and sensual pleasures." (The author repeats the verses here.) Venerable Sir, On my playing the lute and singing those verses, Surijavacchasa said to me, 'Lord, I had never seen the Bhagavā myself, but while I was dancing at the gathering of Tavatiṃsa devas at the Assembly Hall for hearing the Dhamma, I had heard of the Bhagavā. Today you are singing in praise of the Bhagavā, and so you get your opportunity of meeting me.' "Venerable Sir, since that day I had never got the opportunity to see her."

### **Sakka goes before the Bhagava's presence.**

Sakka was glad that Pañcasikha was conversing cordially with the Bhagavā and said to him, "O Pañcasikha, go and say to the Bhagavā on my behalf, "Sakka, Lord of devas and his ministers with their retinue make obeisance with their heads at the feet of the Bhagavā." "Very well, Lord," said Pañcasikha, and having approached the Bhagavā, said

"Venerable Sir Sakka and his ministers with their retinue make obeisance with their heads at the feet of the Bhagavā."

Thereupon the Bhagavā said, "Very well, Pañcasikha, may Sakka, his ministers and their retinue be well. Indeed, all beings - devas, human beings, asuras, nagas, gandhabbas - want to be well." (This is the customary mode of response of the Bhagavā to the arrival of mighty devas.)

When the Bhagavā had said that Sakka entered the Indasāla Cave and making obeisance to the Bhagavā, stood at a suitable place. Pañcasikha and other Tavatimsa devas also followed Sakka into the cave, made their obeisance to the Bhagavā and stood at a suitable place.

The Indasāla Cave was not a big one to accommodate this big crowd. However, at that time the cave became not only spacious enough to contain the big crowd but its floor which was normally uneven was now even; the darkness inside also gave way to the dazzling lights of the devas-only that the lights were not as magnificent as the Buddha's aura that surrounded (enveloped) him to a range of eighty cubits, where the deva's lights were outshone by the Buddha radiance.

Then the Bhagavā said to Sakka, "Wonderful indeed, Sakka unprecedented it is Sakka, that Sakka of Kosiya clan find time to come here amidst the multifarious duties."

Sakka said, "Venerable Sir, I have been intending to see the Bhagavā for a long time but various matters concerning Tavatimsa devas had held me back.

(In this context, "various matters concerning Tavatimsa devas" may be explained here. Sakka as Lord of devas has to act as judge or arbiter in disputes between Tavatimsa devas. Devas are born as full grown adults as male or female in the bosom of deva parents. Their spouses also appear on the bed simultaneously. Female attendants to those spouses of devas appear surrounding the bed. Slaves also appear inside the mansion. For that kind of clear-cut cases no disputes arise as to ownership. Devas that appear at the boundary between two mansions form a bone of contention regarding the question of who owns those devas.

Disputes arise on that account which are referred to Sakka for a decision.

Sakka would then adjudge ownership of those devas that appear nearer to one of the disputants mansions. Where the distance of the appearance of a certain deva is the same, the deva that was born (i.e. appear suddenly) facing either of the disputants' mansions is declared by Sakka as belonging to that mansion. If that deva was born without facing any of the two mansions then the case has to be concluded by declaring that neither side wins the dispute, and that the deva in question belongs to Sakka. This is the nature of Sakka's duty in matters concerning Tavatimsa devas. Besides those duties, normal life of devas in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures also take up much of Sakka's time.(Commentary)

Then Sakka continued: "Venerable Sir, on another occasion (i.e. about three days ago) the Bhagavā was staying at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatti, (in the chamber built of celestial wood, donated by King Pasenadi of Kosala). Venerable Sir, I had gone there in the hope of paying my respect to the Bhagavā but at that time the Bhagavā was dwelling in Jhāna. Bhūjati, Queen of Vessavaṇṇa, the Great Guardian King, was standing in worshipping posture by the Bhagavā then. I had said to her, "Sister, say to the Bhagavā on my behalf, "Venerable Sir, Sakka, Lord of devas, and his ministers with their retinue make obeisance with their heads at the feet of the Bhagavā." To this that Bhūjati replied to me, "Lord Sakka, this is not the time to see the Bhagavā; the Bhagavā is in solitary seclusion." Then I said to her, "Sister, in that case, when the Bhagavā rises from Jhāna (*phala samapatti*), say to the Bhagavā on my behalf: "Venerable Sir, Sakka, Lord of devas and his ministers with their retinue make obeisance with their heads at the feet of the Bhagavā." How is it, Venerable Sir, did that Bhūjati report to the Bhagavā of my message and does the Bhagavā recall it?"

The Bhagavā said, "Sakka, Lord of devas, that celestial maiden did report to me your message and I do recall it. As a matter of fact; I rose

from the absorption in the Jhāna of Fruition simultaneously with the sound of the rolling of your chariots wheels."

(Note: There were four principal mansions where the Bhagavā resided in the Jetavana Monastic compound, namely: (1) Kareri Kuṭi with the magnificent array of water sycamore trees at the entrance to it whose boughs and branches intertwined with one another, providing a pleasant cool shelter as if a pandal had been put up. (2) Kosamba Kuṭi with the great Ceylon oak tree whose foliage provided shelter at its entrance; (3) monastic building built of scented wood known as the *Gandhakuṭi*; (4) monastic building built of celestial wood, called Salalāgara monastery. Each of them cost one hundred thousand pieces of silver. The Salalāgara monastery was donated by King Pasenadi of Kosala; the other three were donated by Anāthapiṇḍika. (Commentary on the *Dīgha Nikāya*, volume 2).

Prior to the discourse on Sakka's questions, when the Bhagavā was residing in the Salalāgara monastery, Sakka had paid a visit to the monastery but as his faculties were not fully ripe yet, the Bhagavā did not receive him, but went to dwell on the Jhānic absorption of Fruition for a predetermined duration.

Bhūjati was a Queen of Vessavaṇṇa, the Great Guardian King. She was a Once-Returner, an Ariya at the second stage of enlightenment, and so did not find deva pleasures agreeable to her. She spent her time in making obeisance to the Bhagavā with her joined palms raised above her head.

Sakka returned home after leaving his message with Bhūjati, after paying his respect toward the Bhagavā Salalāgara monastery. As he drove away skywards the wheels of his chariot filled the whole Jetavana monastery compound with a strange musical sound as though five kinds of musical instruments were playing. At that very moment the Bhagavā rose from his predetermined dwelling in the attainment of *Arahatta phala*. That being so, the Bhagava's first sense cognition thought was the sound of the chariot. However, it must be noted that the Bhagavā did not rise from Jhāna absorption due to that sound; it was only the predetermined time for arising.

(Commentary on the *Dīgha Nikāya*, Volume 2.)

TINI

### Sakka's report to the Bhagavā.

Sakka continued to say: "Venerable Sir, I had learnt from those Tavatiṃsa devas who were there previous to me that during the time of the appearance of Buddhas who are Homage-Worthy and Perfectly self-Enlightened the number of *asuras* decline and the number of devas swell. Venerable Sir, I have personally observed this fact that when the Buddha who is Homage-Worthy and Perfectly Self-Enlightened appears in the world the number of asuras decline and the number of devas swell."

### The story of Deva Gopaka.

"Venerable Sir, in this city of Sāvatti there was once a Sakyan princess called Gopika who had faith in the Triple Gem and was in the habit of observing the five precepts. She hated being a female and conducting herself well with a view to being reborn as a male person, she was reborn in the Tavatiṃsa deva realm as my son. He is known as deva Gopaka in Tavatiṃsa realm.

"Venerable Sir, three bhikkhus, on the other hand practised the noble Practice under the Buddha but at their death they were reborn as Gandhabba, devas inferior to Tavatiṃsa devas. These gandhabba devas enjoy sensual pleasures fully and they come to the gathering of devas in the Assembly Hall to entertain the (Tavatiṃsa) devas with their music. To them deva Gopaka said:

"Revered Sirs, in what manner of attention did you listen the Bhagava's teachings? As for me I was a mere woman (in my former human existence) who could observe just the five precepts, but being greatly dissatisfied with womanhood, I conducted myself well with a view to gaining manhood at the next rebirth with the result that I am now reborn as a son of Sakka, Lord of devas. In this Tavatiṃsa deva realm I am known as deva Gopaka.

"As for you, revered Sirs, you had been bhikkhus who had practised the Noble Path under the Buddha, and yet you are now reborn as gandhabba devas, inferior to Tavatiṃsa Devas. That looks a very unsatisfactory matter to us."

On hearing these words of rebuke which sounded as a warning to the three gandhabba devas, two of them gained mindfulness that set them up at the first jhana there and then, and were reborn in the Brahmmapurohita realm. The third one continued enjoying himself in the sensuous sphere." (Sakka's report not ended yet.)

In this story of deva Gopaka the destination of the three former bhikkhus is remarkable. Although they had conducted themselves well as bhikkhus they were reborn as gandhabba devas, and were called *sammaṇa devas* (devas who had been *sammaṇas* in their former existence). This was because they had in the past been gandhabba devas for many existences so that there had in them a liking for that existence (*bhavanikanti*). Gandhabba devas belong to the realm of the Four Guardian Kings.

When deva Gopaka met the three *sammaṇa devas* he reflected on what previous merit they were endowed with so that they had such attractive appearance. Then he saw that they had been bhikkhus in their previous existence. Then he reflected whether they had been established in morality; he saw that they had been established in morality. Then he reflected whether they had further merit; he saw that they had attained *jhāna*. Then he reflected where those bhikkhus lived; he saw that they were the bhikkhus who came to his (the then Sakyan lady Gopaka) house for daily alms-food. He reviewed their case thus: "Persons established in morality can wish for any of the six deva realms. These bhikkhus do not have rebirth in the higher deva realms. Further, persons who have attained jhana usually are reborn in the Brahma realms. These bhikkhus do not get reborn in the Brahma realms. As for me I had followed their instruction and am now born as Sakka's own son. These bhikkhus who are reborn as inferior devas as gandhabbas are the *atthiveda* type of persons who need goading to the extreme." That was why he said the words of rebuke, "Revered Sirs, in what manner of attention did you listen to the Bhagava's teachings? (etc.)"

"*Atthiveda* Persons who need goading to the extreme" is a reference to the Patoda sutta, Kesi vagga of tatiya Paṇṇāsa *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (Catukka Nipāta) where four types of trained horses and four types of trained men are described. The gist of that exposition:

### Four types of trained horses.

(1) the horse that responds just by the hint of the use of the goading stick (the *chāyā diṭṭha*) (2) the horse that responds only when struck so that his hair comes off, (the *lomavedha*): (3) the horse that responds only when struck so that his skin is torn off (the *cammavedha*) (4) the horse that responds only when struck so that he feels unbearable pain, (the *aṭṭhivedha*).

### Four types of trained men.

(on the analogy of the four types of trained horses):

(1) On hearing that so and so in such and such place is suffering from illness, or had died, he has urgent religious awakening *samvega*, and he strives to gain Insight and Path-Knowledge, (the *chāyādiṭṭha*); (2) On witnessing someone suffering from illness or die in his presence, he has urgent religious awakening, and he strives to gain Insight and Path-Knowledge, (the *lomavedha*); (3) On witnessing one of his family suffering from illness or die in his presence, he has urgent religious awakening, and he strives to gain Insight and Path-Knowledge (the *cammavedha*); (4) Only on meeting with some serious illness himself, he has urgent religious awakening, and he strives to gain Insight and Path-Knowledge, (the *aṭṭhivedha*).

Deva Gopaka placed those three bhikkhus in the fourth category above and therefore considered that they 'needed goading to the extreme.'

In Sakka's story the passage, "two of them gained mindfulness that set them up at the first *jhāna* there and then and were reborn in the *Brahmapurohita* realm" - needs some explanation. On hearing the words of deva Gopaka, two out of the three *samaṇa* devas thought: "Normally, we ought to be rewarded for our service in entertaining them, but now instead of any reward we are being scolded right from the start, like salt sprinkled onto a hotplate. How is this?" Reflecting on their past existence, they saw vividly that they had been bhikkhus, that they had pure morality, that they had attained *jhāna*, and that they used to go to Gopaka the Sakyan lady's place, for daily alms-food.

They reflected their situation thus: "Person established in morality can wish for any of the six deva realms. Person who have attained jhāna usually are reborn in the Brahma realms. Yet we have not been able to get rebirth in the higher deva realms or in the Brahma realms. The young lady who followed our instructions is now reborn in the higher deva realm. Although we had been bhikkhus and practised the Noble Path under the Bhagavā we are reborn as gandhabba devas, inferior class of devas (due to our liking for gandhabba existence where we had been repeatedly reborn before). That is the reason why this deva Gopaka is saying words of rebuke." The two of them took these words to heart and regained mindfulness of the first jhāna (i.e., they attained the first jhāna) and, based on that concentration, they contemplated, on the impermanence, woefulness and non self nature of mind and matter, conditioned by causes, and won *Anāgami Phala* there and then.

An *Anāgami puggala* or a Never-Returner has a class of Supramundane consciousness that does not fit well with the five aggregates pertaining to the gandhabba existence of the Sensuous Sphere; that class of consciousness is superior to that of the Sense Sphere existence. Hence as soon as *Anāgami Magga* was attained, those two Ariya devas passed away from the deva existence and were reborn in the *Brahmapurohita* realm, the middle plane of the three Fine-material realms because they attained the first jhāna which is the medium class of jhāna. Although it is said that they were reborn in the *Brahmapurohita* realm their bodies did not appear in that Brahma realm: only that they remained in Tavatimsa deva realm (at the Assembly Hall for the discussion of the Dhamma) in the form of *Brahmapurohita* brahmas instead of the gandhabba deva forms.

The third gandhabba deva was unable to give up his clinging to the gandhabba existence and so remained in his present existence as a *Caumhārājikā* deva. (These details are as explained in the Commentary.)

After Sakka, Lord of the devas, has reported in prose to the bhagavā the story of deva Gopaka, he further spoke in fifteen stanza on the same subject. Then in three more stanza he sang in praise of the Buddha's attributes, the Teaching of the Buddha, and the purpose of his



visit which was to win the Supramundane *Magga Phala* like that attained by those two brahmas. He then concluded his last three stanzas with a request that if the Bhagavā should permit he would put certain questions (and hear the Bhagava's answers on them). The last of Sakkas eighteen stanza is as follows:

*Tassa dhammassa pattiyā āgatamhāsi mārīsa  
Katāvakāsā bhagavatā pañhaṃ pucchemu mārīsa.*

"O Venerable One who is free from all forms of dukkha, we have come here for the benefit of gaining the Supramundane dhamma that those two brahmas gained. O Venerable One who is free from all forms of dukkha; if the Bhagavā should, out of compassion permit us, we would ask some questions."

Then the Bhagavā reflected; "This Sakka has long been virtuous. Whatever question he might like to ask it will be of benefit to him; he is not going to ask unbeneficial questions. If I answer to his questions he will understand readily."

### **The story of Magha the young man of Macala village.**

The Commentary elaborates the passage: "This Sakka has long been virtuous" by relating the past existence of Sakka, when he had lived a virtuous life as Magha, a young man in the village of Macala in the province of Magadha. That was at a time before the advent of the Buddha.

Early one morning Magha went to the open space in the village where the villagers met to discuss community affairs, tidied up the ground. Another man found the ground inviting and spent his time there. Magha was glad that his effort was useful to others. So he selected a spacious place in the centre of the village, swept it clean, strew it with clean sand; and in the cold season he collected faggots and made small fires there. The villagers, young and old gathered there, to warm themselves by the fireside.

One day Magha thought about the ease and comfort enjoyed by the king and minister and officials in the city. He also thought about the

Moon Deva and the Sun Deva up in the skies. What previous actions had they done so that these great people on earth and the great devas in the sky enjoy such ease and comfort? Surely they must have done pure meritorious deeds that have led to their present state. Reasoning correctly thus, he decided to go on doing pure meritorious deeds in the foot steps of those great persons.

He rose early, took his breakfast of rice gruel, and taking the necessary tools and implements, went to the place where the four main roads met. He removed rocks that stood in the way, cut down trees that were growing too close by the roadside to allow free carriage way, and leveled the roadway. He set up a rest house at the road junction, dug a rectangular pond, built bridges and spent the whole day earning merit and retired only at sunset.

Seeing Magha's daily routine, a villager asked him, "Friend Magha, you leave the village early in the morning and come back only late in the evening. What have you been doing?"

"Friend," said Magha, "I am doing pure meritorious deeds; I am paving the way to the deva world."

"What do you mean by pure meritorious deeds?"

"Don't you know what is pure meritorious deed?"

"No, I don't."

"Haven't you seen the glorious state of the king, the king's ministers and officials when you visit the city?"

"Yes, I did."

"Well, the king and those great people enjoy their elite status because in the past they had done pure meritorious deeds. I am doing that sort of work that leads to similar state. Have you not heard of the Moon deva and the sun deva?"

"Yes, I have."

"I am paving the way to the deva world"

"Friend Magha, are you doing these works all by yourself? Are you the only person fit for the sort of work? Should not other people also do it?"

"Friend, there is nothing that forbids anyone to do it."

"In that case, friend Magha, let me know when you go to the countryside tomorrow."

The next day Magha had a partner in his good works. In due course he had by his side thirty three strong youths that volunteered on his projects. This team of Magha and thirty three youths had a common mind in seeking merit. They went about together mending roads digging tanks, building rest houses and bridges. They executed their projects with might and main, generally finishing a particular work within the same day.

### **The village chief plans for Magha's ruin.**

The chief of Macala village was a rogue. He found Magha's social undertakings unacceptable because he himself sold liquor in the village and when there occurred brawls and quarrels, he increased his income through fines collected as penalty. His trade was dwindling when youths did not come to his place for drinks but went out on sheer social projects. Therefore he used his official position to cause the ruin of Magha and his comrades. He misinformed the king that a band of bad hats had been troubling his village. When asked by the king what lineage those criminals belonged to, the chief of Macala said, "Great King, they come from good families."

"How come that men of good families turn bad?" Why did you keep the bad news till now?"

"Great King, I was afraid that they might turn on me. May Your Majesty pardon me for this!"

The king believed in the chief's words and ordered the arrest of the so called criminals, despatching a contingent of his men with him

### Magha and party arrested.

Magha and party, after returning from their work and having had their evening meal, were discussing the next day's plan for meritorious deeds in the village centre when the chief surrounded them, placed them "under arrest under the King's orders." and were taken to the King.

The wives of those youths heard the news of the arrest and said, "That serves them right. These men of ours have been giving lame excuses for shirking their household duties and spending their time in the countryside everyday.

### The royal elephant refuses to trample on Magha and company.

When Magha and party were presented to the king, without examining them he passed the order that the band be trampled to death by the royal elephant. As they were taken to the place of execution, Magha said to his comrades, "Friends, will you listen to my words?" "Dear Magha, we are in this plight for listening to your words. Nevertheless, we shall continue to do so. What is your advice?"

"Friends, death comes to all wayfarers in this *samsarā*. Now, are you robbers (as alleged by the village chief)?"

"Certainly not," they replied.

"Friends, asserveration of truth is the only reliance for all people in the world. So, declare the truth like this: ' If we are robbers (as alleged by the chief) let the elephant trample on us; if we are not robbers let the elephant not trample on us."

The thirty three youths made their asserveration as instructed. The royal elephant, far from trampling on them, dared not even come near them but trumpeted in fear and ran away. The mahout goaded the elephant with the spike and other sharp points to come back to the site but to no avail.

When the situation was reported to the king, the king ordered, " In that case, conceal the criminals under matting and let the elephant

trample over it." The King's men did as ordered but this time the royal elephant showed even greater fright, trumpeted in a doubly loud sound and ran away.

**The King finds out the truth and rewards Magha  
and company.**

When the king learned the miraculous news he summoned the chief of Macala village and asked. "Is it true that the royal elephant refused to trample these men?"

"That is true, your Majesty. This is because their leader (Magha) knows a mantra that frightens elephants."

Thereupon the king sent for Magha and asked, "Is it true that you know a mantra that frightens elephants?"

Magha replied, "Your Majesty I have no such mantra. What I and my associates did was to make a solemn declaration:" If we are robbers and enemies of the King let the elephant trample on us; if we are not let the elephant not harm us.' "

Then the king asked: "What sort of activities did you engage yourselves in?"

"Your Majesty, we repair roads, build rest-houses for travellers at road junctions, dig tanks and build bridges, or repair old bridges. We go to various places to carry out this kind of undertakings."

"Why do you think the village chief reported falsely against you?"

"Your Majesty, the chief used to enjoy a good income from selling liquor when the youth of the village were forgetful and wanted to enjoy themselves. But since we engaged ourselves in useful work and are not forgetful as before, the chief loses his usual income. That was the reason for misreporting against us."

Then the king said, "O Magha, the royal elephant, though a mere animal, understands your good qualities whereas I, even though a human being did not understand them. From now, you be the chief of Macala village. I present you with my royal elephant. Let the slanderer,

that old chief, be your slave. From now on, do meritorious deeds on my behalf too." And lavished the group with rich rewards.

On their happy journey home they rode the elephant by turns. Magha said to his friends, "Friends, meritorious deeds are generally aimed at future existence. But here we are reaping the merit of our good deeds even at the present like the brown lily growing in the water. Let us do good deeds with still greater zeal." Then he said further; "What sort of meritorious work should we do now?" And all agreed after discussion that they would build a big rest-house at the road junction as a permanent shelter for travellers coming that way. "But let us make it a point that our wives have no share whatever in our good deeds. They had been unkind to us. They failed to understand us. Instead of thinking about our release they even showed delight at our misfortune."

#### **Magha and party build a big rest-house.**

The thirty four youths headed by Magha each gave a morsel of rice and a bunch of grass a day to feed the elephant which was sufficient for the animal. As the group cut down trees for timber the elephant dragged them and placed them on the work site. The group began in earnest shaping the timber for the construction of a big rest-house.

#### **Magha's four wives.**

Magha had four wives by the names of Sūjā, Sudhammā, Cittā and Nandā. Of those four, Nandā asked the chief carpenter about the reason why Magha and party are spending the whole day in the forest. The chief carpenter told her about the rest-house construction project. Nandā requested him to arrange for her contribution in the project but he told her that Magha and party had decided against contribution of any kind from their wives. Thereupon Nandā bribed the chief carpenter with eight ticals of silver to see his way to her contribution in the project.

The chief carpenter agreed. He went to the village center and loudly proclaimed to Magha and party that it was time to start work for the day. When he was sure that everyone in the party was on his way to the

forest he said, "Boys, you go ahead. I have some business that is keeping me back." He went in another direction and chose a tree fit for making a ridge-pole. He sent it to Sudhammā and said, "Keep this until I send someone for it."

The construction project progressed from stage to stage; collection of timber, site clearing, foundation-work, structural frame and scaffolding were all ready and in place, but for the rafters. At that juncture the chief carpenter announced that to fix the rafters he needed a ridge-pole but that he forgot to find a piece of timber of a special kind for the purpose. The working party blamed the man for his forgetfulness and asked him where to find one at this belated stage. "Let us try and inquire at our kinsmen's places," said the chief carpenter. Magha and party went into the village asking whether anyone had got some suitable piece of timber for making a ridge-pole.

Sudhammā said she had got one. The party of workers asked the price for it, but she said, "I don't want any price, but let it be my contribution." Magha scoffed at the idea. "Come men, let's go," he said, "this woman shall not be allowed to contribute. We will get one from the forest." So saying, they left the village.

Back at the work site, the chief carpenter, sitting on the scaffolding for fixing the ridge-pole, asked "Where's the timber for the ridge pole?" Magha and his friends explained the situation. The chief carpenter then looked up to the sky and said. "Young men, today is a very auspicious day; another equally auspicious day will not be around at least for another year. You have collected all the timber in this structure with so much trouble. If we were to leave it unroofed, it will rot as it is. Let Sudhammā have her contribution and share the result of the merit in the deva world. Please get the timber for the ridge-pole from her house."

In the meantime Sudhammā had an inscription that read: "This is Sudhammā Rest-House" carved on the lower surface of the ridge-pole which was wrapped up with a piece of new cloth. Magha's men then came back and said, "O Sudhammā, please bring the ridge-pole. Let things take their own course. We shall now share the merit with you." Sudhammā, in handing over the ridge-pole, warned them, "Don't take

off that cloth-wrapping until eight or sixteen rafters have been fixed to the ridge-pole!"

The builders obeyed her warning. They removed the cloth-wrapping on the ridge-pole only after it had been put in its place needing only to be nailed down. Then an observant villager, looking up the building, noticed the inscription. "What is written there?" A literate villager read it out to them. " It reads:" This is Sudhammā Rest-house."

At that Magha and company protested loudly. "Remove that ridge-pole men! We who had laboured all along have got none of our names on this building whereas Sudhammā, by putting in a piece of timber a cubit long got her name for the whole Rest-house." But even while they were protesting, the chief carpenter nailed down all the fixtures at the ridge-pole, thus putting the finishing stroke.

Afterwards the builders marked out three portions on the floor space of the big rest-house: one for the king and the king officers, one for the common people and one for the sick.

### **Devison of responsibility in the running of the rest-house.**

There were thirty-three flooring boards used in the building of the Rest-house, each assigned to one of Magha's men. The elephant was given the instructions by Magha that whenever a guest arrived and sat on the board assigned to one of the thirty-three co-builders the elephant was to take the guest to the house of that co-builder where the guest would get every care and attention. These instructions were satisfactorily followed by the elephant so that every guest who came to the rest-house got food, lodging and massage services at the co-builders house for the day.

### **Contributions by Magha's family.**

(1) Magha had a coral tree planted not far away from the rest-house. Beneath the tree he laid a big stone slab. (2) Nandā, one of Magha's wives, dug a big tank not far away from the rest-house (3) Cittā, another wife of Magha, planted a garden in the vicinity.



(4) Sūjā, the senior most wife of Magha, was not interested in works of merit. She spent much of her time in front of the mirror, tending herself to look beautiful. Magha said to her, "Now Sūjā, Sudhammā had got an opportunity to contribute her mite in the building of the rest house; Nandā has a tank to her credit; and Cittā has created a garden. But you have done no meritorious deed. Please do some good deed for the benefit of others. Sūjā replied, "My lord, for whom did you perform these good deeds? Are your good deeds not mine also. She was not interested. She just went on her way beautifying herself.

**The hereafter of Magha and party: Magha is reborn  
as Sakka.**

Magha lived the full life span and at the death of that existence he was reborn in the Tavatīṃsa deva realm as Sakka, Lord of devas. His thirty-three friends at their death were also reborn in Tavatīṃsa deva realm as Sakka's close assistants.

(Of the four wives of Magha, Sudhammā, Cittā and Nandā at their death were reborn as the three queens of Sakka. The senior most wife of Magha, Sūjā, who did not listen to Magha's advice but spent her time embellishing herself, at her death was reborn as a paddy bird in ravine.)

**Sakka's Grand State.**

Sakka's Vejayanta palace was seven hundred yojanas high; the flag post on the top of it is three hundred yojanas high. As the result of planting the coral tree when he was Magha, the celestial coral tree, three hundred yojanas in diameter of foliage, with a trunk of fifteen-yojana girth, (with a height of a hundred yojanas) arose in the Tavatīṃsa realm: For his former deed of laying a stone slab for the use of the public, there arose his majestic Paṇḍukambalā rock throne of emerald colour which is sixty yojanas in length (fifty yojanas in width and fifteen yojanas in height.)

For having donated timber in the construction of the rest-house, Sudhammā Assembly Hall for the discussion of the Dhamma arose, much to the fame and honour of Queen Sudhammā. (Likewise) for her

former donation for public use of a tank, Nandā tank arose in Tavatiṃsa realm to the credit of Queen Nandā; and for her donation for Public use of a garden, Cittalatā Park, sixty yojanas wide, appeared in Tavatiṃsa realm to perpetuate the name of Queen Cittā.

Sakka sat at the Sudhammā Assembly Hall on a golden throne one yojana long, with a white umbrella three yojanas wide, held above him, surrounded by thirty three assistants or celestial Chieftains and three deva queens, while twenty five million celestial dancers kept Sakka and his queens entertained. His followership comprised devas of Catumahārāja and Tavatiṃsa realms.

### **The strange destiny of Sūjā.**

Magha was glad that his three former wives in the human existence were now deva Queens but where had Sūjā been reborn? He reviewed the destiny of his former wife and saw that she was a paddy bird in a ravine. "Alas! this girl disregarded my words and is now having an ignoble existence," Sakka said to himself, and he went to the place where Sūjā the paddy bird lived.

Sūjā recognized Sakka as Magha of her previous existence and she held down her face in despondency. "O you stupid girl!"- he scolded her, "You spent all your time in preening yourself. And now you are afraid to look up to me. Sudhammā, Nandā, and Cittā are now deva Queens. Come with me and see our happy state." So saying, he took her to Tavatiṃsa realm where she was put at the Nandā Park. He then resumed his seat on the golden throne at the Vejayantā Palace.

### **Sūjā is slighted by the deva dancers.**

The deva dancers asked Sakka, "Where have you been just now, Lord?" Sakka was reluctant to answer. But when pressed hard by them, he told them the truth. He said that Sūjā having been reborn a paddy bird in a ravine had been brought by him, and that she was now staying at the Nandā Park.

The deva dancers who had been servants at Sūjā's house-hold in their past existence went to the Nandā Park to see their former mistress.

They poked fun at her funny appearance. "Look at Sūjā's beak: how it's like a spike for hunting crabs!" Poor Sūjā was deeply hurt when those girls who had been her household servants in the human world whom she had treated with disdain were now so scornful of her. She entreated Sakka to send her back to her own place. What use is there for me with these palaces glittering with gold and gems? This Nandā Park has no attraction for me. All beings feel at home only where they are born. Send me back to the ravine. That is where I belong."

Sakka complied with her wish. Before leaving her at the ravine he asked, "Now, will you listen to my word (this time)?" And Sūjā replied, "Yes, I will, my Lord." "Then take upon yourself to observe the five precepts. Observe them well without the slightest flaw. I will then make you Chief of those deva maidens in two or three days."

Sūjā, the paddy bird, was observing the five precepts when, two or three day later, Sakka came to test her virtue. He took up the form of a fish and floated spine downwards in front of Sūjā in a stream. Thinking that it was a dead fish, Sūjā seized it by the head when, lo! its tail fluttered. Sūjā said, "Oh, it's a living fish!" and let it go. Then Sakka standing in the sky, cried out, "Good! Good! you observe the five precepts well. For this virtuous conduct I shall make you Chief of the deva maidens two or three days hence."

### **Sūjā was reborn as a Potter's daughter.**

Sūjā as a paddy bird lived a life-span of five hundred years. Since she would not eat living fish, she was mostly starving herself. Although she was failing in her health due to starvation, she never breached the five precepts. At her death she was reborn as the daughter of a potter in the city of Bārānasī.

Sakka reviewed the fate of Suja the paddy bird and seeing that she was now the potter's daughter, he thought of helping her in life, it being not appropriate for him to take her to Tavatimsa realm straight from the potter's house. So he turned himself into an old man selling golden cucumbers. He was not however selling them for any amount of money, "I will sell them only to those who have morality," he said to the would-be buyers, who said, "Old man, we do not know what is

meant by morality. Name your price for these." But the old man insisted, "They will go only to those who observe morality." The villagers said between themselves, "Let's go, men, this old man is rather quaint!" And so they left.

The potter's daughter asked them, "You went to buy cucumbers. Where are the cucumbers?"

"Dear girl, that cucumber-vendor is rather quaint. He says he will give his cucumbers only to those who observe morality. Perhaps he has got daughters who were fed on morality. But as for us we do not even know what morality means."

On hearing this strange news, Sūjā rightly surmised that these golden cucumbers must have been meant for her only; so she went to the old man and said, "O Father, give me the cucumbers."

"My little girl, do you observe morality?"

"Yes, Father, I observe morality well without a flaw."

"These cucumbers which are solid gold are for you," said the old man and Sakka in the guise of the old man, after leaving the whole cart of golden cucumbers in front of the potter's house vanished to Tavatimsa.

### **Sūjā is reborn as a daughter of Vepacitti Asurā.**

The potter's daughter observed the five precepts through-out her life and on her death she was reborn as the daughter of Vepacitti Asurā. Thanks to the observance of morality in her two previous existences as a paddy bird and as a potter's daughter, she possessed great beauty and charm. Vepacitti Asurā planned to marry his daughter to a suitable husband, and called up an assembly of Asuras.

Sakka reviewed the destiny of Suja. He saw that Sūjā was now born as an Asurā and that her marriage was being planned. "Now is my chance to get Sūjā" he thought, and setting his mind on eloping her, went to the assembly of Asuras in the guise of an Asurā. As he sat in the midst of Asuras no one noticed him as stranger.

Vepacitti Asurā handed her daughter a garland saying, "Make your choice of the bride groom by throwing this garland above the head of

any one of your fancy." Sūjā looked around and on seeing Sakka in the guise of an Asurā she was inflamed with love, a love that had bound the two in many previous existences. "This is my bridegroom (lit, my husband)," She declared, throwing the garland above Sakka's head.

Thereupon, seizing Suja's arm firmly, Sakka went up into the sky. Then only the Asuras know that it was Sakka and raised a cry, "Friends, hold him! Hold this old Sakka! He is our enemy. We will never give up our Sūjā to this old Sakka."

Vepacitti Asurā asked his followers, "Who is it that has taken away my daughter?"

" My Lord, it is that old Sakka!"

Then he said to his followers, "This Sakka is the most powerful person besides myself. So make way."

Sakka succeeded in his amorous venture. He made Sūjā Chief of the twenty-five million celestial dancers in Tavatīṃsa.

Thereafter Sūjā said to her husband, "My Lord, I have no relatives here in Tavatīṃsa. So take me wherever you go." Sakka conceded to this wish. (This is the story of Magha)



The Bhagavā had known the virtue of Sakka since the latter's previous existence as Magha the young man of Macala village. That was why the Bhagavā bethought himself, "Whatever question Sakka might like to ask, it will be of benefit to him; he is not going to ask unbeneficial questions. If I answer to his questions he will understand readily."

Then the Bhagavā replied to Sakka in verse:

*Puccha vāsava maṃ pañhaṃ yaṃ kiñci manasicchasi.  
Tassa tasseva pañhassa ahaṃ antaiṃ koromi te.*

"Vāsava, Lord of Deva, whatever question you may like to put, put it to me. I, the Teacher of the three worlds, will clear up any doubts and uncertainties concerning your questions."

*TINI*

### Sakka questions and the Bhagavā answers.

Thus obtaining the Bhagava's express consent, Sakka spoke in verse his (first) question thus:

#### (1) The first question and answer.

"Venerable Sir, all beings, whether man or deva, asurā, nāga, or gandhabba, have an earnest desire to be free from enmity, danger, enemies, sorrow and anger. However, they live in enmity and danger amidst enemies, sorrow and anger. What is the factor that fetter them thus?"

To that question the Bhagavā answered as follows:

"Sakka, King of Deva, all beings, whether man or deva, asurā, nāga, or gandhabba, have an earnest desire to be free from enmity, danger, enemies, sorrow and anger. However, they live in enmity and danger amidst enemies, sorrow and anger. This is due to *issā*, envy and *macchariya*, meanness, stinginess..

#### Envy and stinginess differentiated.

Here Envy, *issā*, means begrudging other's well being and status. (1) It has the character of feeling displeased with other's gain, whether already acquired or about to acquire.

(When the sign or character of the displeasure in someone who begrudges another person's gain, already acquired or is likely to be acquired, is noticed, the fact of the arising of envy in that person should be known through the knowledge of *Abhidhamma*, the ultimate truth about natural mental phenomena.)

(2) Envy has the function of dissatisfaction with others prosperity.

(It is the function of envy to feel distressed to get annoyed, when someone sees or hears other's gain.)

(3) Envy is manifested to the insight of the yogī, as turning away from others' well being. (To the yogī who has insight into mental phenomena, the result of envy is manifested as the turning away in

disgust from the success and wellbeing of others. Of the four kinds of manifestation, this is the manifestation of result.)

(4) The proximate cause of envy is other people's wellbeing or status (Envy arises due to other person's prosperity. If one has no occasion to see or hear of another person's wealth there is no cause for envy to arise.) (Commentary on the *Abhidhammā*)

The character of envy that reveals itself as begrudging others' wellbeing and status should be explained regarding both lay persons and bhikkhus, To wit: Some one may have acquired through his own effort and qualities, in any form of enterprise, valuable things such as vehicles or horses or cattle or precious stones.

Another person with envy in him may find it an eyesore to see that successful man prosper. He is very displeased with the other man's good fortune. "When will this fellow meet his downfall? How I wish he become a pauper!" Such evil thoughts occupy the envious person. And if the successful man does meet with bad fortune, the envious one rejoiced to see it.

An envious bhikkhu sees another bhikkhu surrounded by fame and followership on account of the latter's learnedness and efforts such as teaching the doctrine. The one with envy is all the time thinking about the decline of the successful bhikkhu. If the latter does sink in popularity, the former is pleased.

In this manner, the character of envy should be known as begrudging other's well being and feeling displeased with other's gains. (Commentary on the *Abhidhammā*)

It is in the nature of envy to feel irritated by some gain that someone is enjoying as a matter of fact. Even the likelihood of someone meeting with some good fortune cannot be tolerated by envy. Envy longs for another person's failure and down fall. (Ledi Sayadaw: *Paramattha Dīpanī*, Chapter on Mental concomitants) This is an explanation on envy, *issā*.

*Macchhariya*: Stinginess, miserliness, meanness.

Stinginess is also called meanness. It is a mean attitude concerning one's own possessions. (1) It is characterized by a secretiveness about one's gains or status already enjoyed or about to enjoy. (One oppressed by *macchhariya*, an evil state of mind, is secretive about one's success.) (2) Stinginess functions as a reluctant attitude about one's own good fortune; the reluctance is the attitude that no one should enjoy similar fortune. One oppressed by stinginess is loath to share his gain or status with someone else. This meanness is the function of *macchhariya*. (3) *Macchhariya* is manifested as unwillingness to share one's gain or status with any other person. If perforce there is occasion to share it, the stingy person feels very strongly about it. Or put it in another way, if it comes to sharing his property with someone or making any donation to someone, he would part with a very tiny portion of it reluctantly. (To a wise one with insight, stinginess is manifested as meanness about one's property (or rights). This is the natural manifestation. Considered from another angle, stinginess manifests itself in anger when one is forced to part with one's property (or rights). This is manifestation by way of function, i.e., how the manifestation works out itself. Or yet viewed in another way, it manifests itself as parting with only an insignificant part of one's possession under unavoidable circumstances, i.e., giving away merely as namesake which does not amount to a real meaningful gift. This is manifestation as result. (4) The proximate cause of stinginess is one's own possession or rights. (Commentary to *Abhidhammā*)

#### **Five kinds of *macchhariya* or stinginess or meanness**

- (1) Stinginess or meanness about living place: monastery, dwelling place, park, day resort, night camp etc., *Āvāsamacchhariya*.
- (2) Stinginess or meanness about one's circle of friends or relatives, i.e., unwillingness to see one's or relatives friends to be on friendly terms with others, *Kula macchhariya*.
- (3) Stinginess or meanness to share any form of gain with another, *Lābha macchhariya*.



- (4) Stinginess or meanness in being painful to see others look as attractive in appearance as oneself or gain as fair a reputation as oneself, *Vaṇṇa macchhariya*.
- (5) Stinginess or meanness to share doctrinal knowledge with others, *Dhamma macchhariya*.

(To expand this:)

- (1) "Living place" may mean any living space for bhikkhus, whether the whole monastic complex or a room or space allotted for residing by day or by night. A bhikkhu who has a specific place to dwell lives in comfort as a bhikkhu and enjoys the four bhikkhu requisites (i.e., food, robes, lodging, medicines). A stingy or mean bhikkhu cannot agree to the idea of sharing his living place with some other bhikkhu who fulfills his bhikkhu obligations, big or small. If that other bhikkhu happens to get a chance of living there, the stingy one is wishing in his own mind that the new-comer leave soon. This attitude or state of mind is called stinginess or meanness about living quarters. Exception. If the co-resident of a living place is quarrelsome, the unwillingness to share with him is not stinginess.
- (2) Stinginess about ones friends or followership: *Kulamaccharrja* (*kula*: clan; supporter to a bhikkhu):

The relatives and lay supporters of a bhikkhu form the subject of stinginess or meanness here. A stingy bhikkhu wants to monopolise them. He does not wish any of them going to the monastery of another bhikkhu or let them have any relationship between them and the bhikkhu. Exception: If the other bhikkhu is of an immoral type (*dussīla*), the unwillingness to see that happen does not amount to stinginess. As immoral bhikkhu is likely to debase his lay supporters; so the unwillingness to have relations with one's own relatives and lay supporters is proper. It is stinginess only when that other bhikkhu is a virtuous one.

- (3) "Any form of gain" includes the four bhikkhu-requisites, robe, alms food, dwelling, medicine. When, on seeing a virtuous bhikkhu receiving the four requisites, a bhikkhu harbours such

thoughts as "May that one be deprived of these gains", this is stinginess or meanness about gain. Exception: Where the unwillingness to see another bhikkhu receive the four requisites is justifiable there is no evil of stinginess or meanness. It is justifiable where that other bhikkhu is in the habit of misusing the four requisites thus destroying the faith of the donors, or if that bhikkhu does not make proper use of them but hoards them without giving them away in time so that they turn unusable (having gone stale or gone to rot.)

- (4) *Vaṇṇa* means personal appearance or attributes. Meanness regarding *Vaṇṇa* means displeasure at other person's good looks or attributes in the sense that no one must have the same good looks or the same good attributes as oneself. The mean person (bhikkhu) hates to discuss about other peoples personal attractiveness or good name concerning morality, practice of austerity, or practice of dhamma.
- (5) '*Dhamma*' is of two kinds: *pariyatta dhamma*, learning the *piṭaka* and *paṭiveda dhamma*, attainment of the Noble Path culminating in *Magga Phala Nibbāna*. The latter is the property of *Ariyas* who are never stingy or mean about their Insight-Knowledge. In fact they are desirous of sharing it with all beings, men, devas and Brahmas. They wish all beings to acquire the *paṭiveda dhamma* they have gained for themselves.. Therefore the expression *Dhamma macchariya* can mean only stinginess or meanness about learning, *pariyatta dhamma*. Here the meanness lies in not wanting other people know what one has acquired by learning the difficult and obscure passages in the Pāli Text and in the commentaries. One wishes to remain the sole authority in the matter of learning. *Exceptions*: The unwillingness to share the bookish knowledge may be justified on two counts:-
- (i) where the learner's integrity is in question while the purity of the Dhamma (Doctrine) needs to be safeguarded;
  - (ii) where the value of the Dhamma is carefully considered and the type of person needs to be saved in his own interest.

These two exceptions need to be understood properly. (i) In the first case there are some persons in the world who are fickle minded and change from one faith to another from samana to brahmana to a heretical ascetic. If such an unreliable bhikkhu were to be taught the Pitaka, he might distort the subtle teachings of the Pitaka to suit his own purpose. He might misinterpret the meanings of scriptural terms such as meritoriousness and demeritoriousness. He might put the Buddha's teachings into the mouth of some heretic and claim them that they were what the heretic teacher said. There would be confusion. Therefore keeping the Pitaka from those unreliable bhikkhus so as to preserve the purity of the Dhamma is justified.

- (ii) In the second case where the learner bhikkhu is of the type of person who is likely to claim Arahatsip even though not yet an Arahata, that would be his ruination. Keeping the Pitaka from such an unreliable bhikkhu is also justifiable. It is in his own interest that the profound Dhamma is not imparted to him, so that the non-sharing of the learning in such cases is not stinginess or meanness.

Stinginess exists in the case of a teacher where he is afraid that his pupil might outshine him, or outdistance him in the interpretation of the Dhamma and so withholds the learning.

#### **Evil consequences of the five kinds of stinginess.**

- (1) One who acts with stinginess in dwelling, *āvāsa macchāriya*, is reborn as a demon or hungry spirit, and due to the meanness about his living quarters he is destined to carry the filth of that dwelling place on his head wherever he goes.
- (2) One who is stingy about relatives and followership, *kula macchāriya*, feels painful to see his relatives and lay supporters making offerings to other bhikkhus. The greater the degree of stinginess, the greater the pain. In extreme cases thinking his relatives and lay supporters have turned away from him, the stingy bhikkhu suffers heartburning to such an extent that he may vomit blood, or his entrails would go to pieces and come out.

- (3) Stinginess about bhikkhu requisites, *lobha macchhariya*, whether in respect of those of the Sangha or of a sect of the Sangha, not sharing them with fellow-bhikkhus, leads to rebirth as a demon or a hungry spirit or a python.
- (4) Stinginess about personal appearance or attributes, *vaṇṇa macchhariya*, that makes one self-admiring and deprecating of others, leads to ugliness in appearance in future existences.
- (5) (Penetration of the Dhamma, Paṭivedha Dhamma, i.e. attainment of Magga Phala Nibbāna, arises only in the mind of the Ariya who has destroyed all the defilements so that stinginess no longer arises in him, he is never close-fisted about what he has understood from the practice of the Dhamma.) Stinginess about the Dhamma is possible only in respect of learning. Stinginess regarding one's learning, *Pariyatti Dhamma maccharia*, keeping one's knowledge to oneself, leads to rebirth as a dullard, an ignoramus, a stupid person.

(Or explained in another way:)

- (1) *Āsāva macchhariya* leads to rebirth in *Niraya* where the stingy one is baked on hot iron sheets. (This is because he had prevented others from enjoying the peace and comfort of living quarters).
- (2) *Kula macchhariya* results in dearth of good fortune in future existences. (This is the result of denying others their right or receiving offerings at the homes of the lay supporters.)
- (3) *Lobha macchhariya* leads to rebirth in *niraya* where the stingy one wallows in human excreta. (This *niraya* is particularly nauseating. This kind of result follows the stingy one because he had deprived others of the pleasure of the enjoyment concerning the bhikkhu requisites.)
- (4) *Vaṇṇa macchhariya* results in a complete lack of presentable appearance and good attributes in future existences. A detestable appearance and an abominable reputation is what he inherits for his past meanness. Whatever good he might do,

goes unnoticed by anyone like arrows shot away in the dark night

- (5) *Dhamma macchhariya* sends the bhikkhu down to the *niraya* of hot ashes.

*Envy* arises from consideration of other people's property. *Stinginess* arises from consideration of one's own property. Since the object of thought differs, envy and stinginess cannot arise together.

In the world, enmity, punishment and antagonism between persons arise due to envy and stinginess which are two evil fetters. These fetters are eliminated only by *Sotapatti magga*. Unless envy and stinginess have been rooted out by Stream-Entry Knowledge, people's wishes for freedom from enmity, etc. will never be fulfilled; they will live miserably surrounded by enmity, etc. This is the explanation to the Bhagava's answer to the first question. Why is it that all beings live in enmity and danger amidst enemies, sorrow and anger although they have an earnest desire to be free from them.

On hearing the Bhagava's answer Sakka was delighted and said,

"Venerable Sir, that indeed is so. O well-spoken One, that indeed is so. Having learnt the Bhagava's answer, all my doubts are cleared, all uncertainties have left me."

(End of the First Question and Answer)

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## (2) The second question and answer.

After receiving with delight the Bhagava's answer, Sakka put his next question thus:

"Venerable Sir, what is the cause of envy and stinginess? What is their origin? What is their genesis? What is their source? When what factor is present, do envy and stinginess arise? When what factor is not present, do envy and stinginess do not arise?"

*TINI*

To this question the Bhagavā replied as follows:

"Sakka, King of Devas, envy and stinginess have objects (i.e. living beings, conditioned formations) that one likes (relishes) and objects that one dislikes as their cause, as their origin, as their genesis, as their source. When objects that one likes and objects that one dislikes are present, envy and stinginess arise. When objects of like and dislike are not present, envy and stinginess do not arise."

(Herein, something (living being, conditioned formation) that one wants to possess is an object of one's liking, irrespect of its intrinsic nature of disagreeableness. This is because defilements delude the mind into liking something that is of a disagreeable nature. Something (animate thing or conditioned formation) belonging to another person is an object of one's dislike even though it is a good thing. This is because for one who looks at it in anger (i.e., with a biased mind) that good thing appears hateful. (Commentary and Sub-Commentary on *Machavagga, Dīgha Nikāya*).

Stinginess arises on account of objects that one likes. Envy arises on account of objects that one dislikes. In another mode of explanation, both envy and stinginess arise out of likes and dislikes. This will be elucidated as follows:

For a bhikkhu a co-resident pupil or some living thing of his fancy may be there as objects of his liking. For a lay person there are his children and his possessions such as elephants, horses or cattle which are objects of his liking. When the bhikkhu or the lay person is away from them even for a short time he feels uneasy. When the bhikkhu or the lay person sees someone else having similar objects or that person's liking, there arises in that bhikkhu or lay person envy against the other person. If some other person were to come and ask that bhikkhu or lay person to loan him that favourite pupil (of the bhikkhu) or the children or elephant or horse (of the lay person) for some purpose for a short time, the bhikkhu or lay person would refuse, saying. "I cannot loan him/her (or it) to you. He/she (or it) will get tired or feel bored." In this manner there arise both envy and stinginess on account of some object of one's liking.

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(Again,) for bhikkhus there are bhikkhu requisites such as alms-bowl or robes which are objects that he likes. For lay person there are various possessions such as clothing and ornaments which are objects that he or she likes. When that bhikkhu or lay person sees someone else having similar objects of that other person's liking, that bhikkhu or lay person has an evil thought, "Oh it would be well if that person did not have those agreeable things!" This is envy. If some one were to come and ask of that bhikkhu or lay person to loan for a short time that piece of one's fancy, the bhikkhu or lay person would refuse, saying, "Ah!, that is not possible. I value that thing so much that I very seldom use it myself." This is how an object of one's liking gives rise to stinginess.

Furthermore, whether for a bhikkhu or a lay person there are persons or things such as a wayward pupil or child, or an inferior article in his or her possession. Although those persons and things are actually not likable person or things yet due to the deluding nature of defilement those very person and things become objects of their liking. That bhikkhu or lay person would feel self-satisfaction about those persons or things. "Who else can have such valuable assets?-" they would think. Thus entertaining thoughts of self-admiration on account of greed (*lobha*) for these possessions, envy the evil desire to deny others of these (kinds of) possessions, arises. (This is envy that springs from self-esteem and that arises due to the likelihood or possibility of other persons to come into possession of (the kind of) things one possesses.

(In another way;) As in the aforesaid case where one entertains thoughts of self-admiration on account of greed for their possessions (of no intrinsic worth), one wishes, "Oh that, that person did not have those things!" Thus envy arises. (This is envy that springs from what other people already possess.) This latter explanation is not given in detail since it has already been shown in the Commentary. The former explanation is made in an inferential way which is suitably modified to be in line with the Sub-Commentary thereto, and *Mulaṅkā* to the *Aṭṭhasālinī*.) If someone came and asked for a loan of these persons or things of one's liking even for a short time, the owner is not willing to

part with them. This is how persons or things that ought not to be cherished can also become a source of envy and stinginess.

(End of the Second Question and Answer.)

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### (3) The third question and answer.

Sakka received with delight the Bhagava's answer and asked the next question.

"Venerable Sir, what is the cause of like and dislike? What is their origin? What is their genesis? What is their source? When what factor is present, do like and dislike arise? When what factor is not present, do like and dislike not arise?"

And the Bhagavā answered thus:

"Sakka, King of Devas, like and dislike have craving or hankering *chanda taṇhā* as their cause, as their origin, as their genesis, as their source. When craving or hankering is present, like and dislike arise. When craving or hankering is not present, like and dislike do not arise."

(Herein, *chanda* is synonymous with desire or wish. *Chanda* is used in two ways: wishing to see, hear, smell, taste, touch or to know, and craving for sense objects. The former is a wholesome factor called *Kattukamyatā chanda* which is the mental concomitant *chanda*, a wish to do. The latter is *taṇhā* which is the mental concomitant *lobha*, hankering after various sense objects. What is meant here is the latter type namely *lobha, taṇhā chanda*.

#### Five kinds of *taṇhā chanda*.

- (1) *Taṇhā chanda* developed as *pariyesana chanda*, while seeking objects of sense pleasure.
- (2) *Taṇhā chanda* developed as *patilābha chanda*, while acquiring objects of sense pleasure.



- (3) *Taṇhā chanda* developed *paribhoga chanda*, while enjoying objects of sense pleasure.
- (4) *Taṇhā chanda* developed *sannidhi chanda*, while storing and securing of sense pleasure.
- (5) While bestowing rewards or gifts, as *visajjana chanda* i.e., giving out one's property with expectation of reciprocal gain, as the bestowing of salaries and awards by rulers upon their men in the belief that these men will render their service by attending upon them and safeguarding them.

Hankering or Craving causes likes or dislikes. When one gets what one hankers after or craves for, one likes and has a fondness for the thing acquired. When one fails to get what one hankers after or craves for, one hates that objects of one's craving- i.e., dislike arises in him.

(End of the third question and answer).

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#### (4) The fourth question and answer.

After receiving with delight the Bhagava's answer, Sakka put his next question thus:

"Venerable Sir, what is the cause of craving or hankering, *chanda taṇhā*? What is its origin? What is its genesis? What is its source? When what factor is present, does craving or hankering arises? When what factor is not present, does craving or hankering does not arise?"

The Bhagavā gave the answer:

"Sakka, King of Devas, craving or hankering has deliberation, decision, *vinicchaya takka* as its cause, as its origin, as its genesis, as its source. When there is deliberation, decision, *vinicchaya takka*, craving or hankering arises. When there is no deliberation, decision, craving or hankering does not arise."

(In this matter, *vittaka* is not mere thinking about something in general. It is making up the mind about something after due deliberation' *vinicchaya vitakka*. In making up the mind, the Buddha has pointed out, the decision may be made in two ways; (1) *taṇhā vinicchaya*, decision that is influenced by kinds of craving (2) *ditṭhi vinicchaya*, judgment made through 62 wrong views.

A decision influenced by craving cannot come to a judgment as to good or bad, agreeable or disagreeable. That is because as the saying goes, one man's food is another man's poison. For example: earth-worm is a delicacy for certain rulers of the remote regions whereas it is nausea to those of the middle region or kingdoms. Venison is a delicacy for rulers of the middle region whereas it is disagreeable to those of the remote regions. In fact, decision influenced by craving is not a correct decision. After having acquired something, whether it relates to a visible object, or a sound, or an odour, or a taste, or a tangible object, one considers how much will go to others and how much will be kept for oneself. This manner of making a decision is the function of *vinicchaya vitakka*.

Summing up: Where one makes up one's mind about something that has been acquired after deliberating on it, and becomes attached to whatever is decided by oneself to remain one's own, craving or hankering arises in respect of that object. That is the explanation of the Bhagava's answer that *vinicchaya vitakka* is the cause of craving or hankering.

(End of the fourth question and answer.)

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**(5) The fifth question and answer.**

Having learnt with great satisfaction the Bhagava's answers Sakka put another question thus:

"Venerable Sir, what is the cause of *vinicchaya vitakka*? What is its origin? What is its genesis? What is its source? When what factor is present, does *vinicchaya vitakka* take place? When what factor is not present does *vinicchaya vitakka* not take place?"

And the Bhagavā replied:

"Sakka King of Devas, *vinicchaya vitakka* has illusory perceptions, *sanna* associated with *papañca dhamma*, which tends to prolong the *samsāra*, as their cause, as their origin, as their genesis, as their source. When there are illusory perceptions, *vinicchaya vitakka* takes place. When there are no illusory perceptions, *vinicchaya vitakka* does not take place."<sup>2</sup>

(Herein, there are three kinds of illusion that tend to diffuse the mind; they are: craving *taṇhā*, conceit *mana* and wrong view *diṭṭhi*. They are called the diffusing factors *papañca dhamma*, because they tend to prolong the round of rebirth, and one who is under their spell is called as "one who is attached to the world, who is egoistic, who is deluded." In other words, these three factors are hindrances that make one conceited and forgetful. In our present context the illusion of craving is meant. There are six kinds or categories of illusory perception *saññā*, according to six sense-objects, viz.: perceptions about visible objects, *rupa saññā*, perceptions about sounds *sadda saññā*,

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<sup>2</sup> 108 kinds of craving: Basically there are 3 types of craving: Craving for sense pleasure, craving for becoming, craving for non-becoming. Alternatively, craving for sense pleasure, craving for form, craving for the formless — (for details, see Book of Analysis by Ashin Setthila — P.T.S publication). As each type of craving arises with respect to six objects of sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, mind, it expands to 18 types: Again as each of them is concerned with 3 moments of past, present and future, it becomes  $18 \times 3 = 54$  in member, which, when considered for both internal and external aspect, multiples to 108.

perceptions about odours *gandha saññā*, etc.; *vinicchaya vitakka* is developed based on those illusory perceptions.)

(End of the fifth question and answer.)

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### The sixth, the seventh, and the eighth question and their answer.

Then, having learnt with much delight the Bhagava's answer, Sakka asked further;

"Venerable Sir, by what way of practice does a bhikkhu work out the extinction of illusory perceptions (group of *saññās* associated with diffusing factors, *papañca*) that lead to Nibbāna where all perceptions cease?"

#### Meditation or contemplation of sensation, *vedanā*

- "(a) Sakka, King of Devas, I declare that *vedanā* mentally agreeable sensation *somanassa vedana* is of two types- that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted to.
- (b) Sakka, King of Devas, I declare that actually disagreeable sensation, *domanassa vedanā* unpleasant sensation also is of two types- that which should be resorted to and that which should not be resorted to.
- (c) Sakka, King of Devas, I declare that mentally neither-agreeable-nor-disagreeable-sensation *upekkhā vedanā* is of two types-that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted to."

(Exposition in brief)

"(a) Sakka, King of Devas, I have said earlier 'I declare that *somanassa vedanā* is of two types-that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted.' The reason for my above statement is this: should you understand that in resorting to a certain pleasant sensation, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness

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decreases, you should not resort to that pleasant sensation. *Somanassa vedanā* that tends to increase demeritoriousness and decrease meritoriousness should not be resorted to. The same should be understood to apply to the two other kinds of sensation.

Of the two types of mentally agreeable sensation, should you understand that in resorting to a certain pleasant sensation demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should resort to that *somanassa vedanā*. *Somanassa vedanā* that tends to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness should be resorted to. The same should be understood to apply to the two other kinds of sensation, i.e., *domanassa vedanā* and *upekkha vedanā*.

Of the type of *somanassa vedana* that should be resorted to, there is the one that arises together with initial application of the mind and with sustained application of the mind (called *savitakka savicāra somanassa*). And there is (also) the one that arises without initial application of the mind and without sustained application of the mind (*avitakka avicāra somanassa*). Of these two, the latter, i.e., *avitakka avicāra somanassa* is superior (Para (a) above explained.)

"Sakka, King of Devas, it is for this reason that I have said: 'I declare that *somanassa vedanā* is of two types-that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted.' (Conclusion to para (a) above)"

(b) Sakka, King of Devas, I have said earlier: 'I declare that *domanassa vedanā* is of two types- that which should be resorted to and that which should not be resorted to.' The reason for my above statement is this: should you understand that in resorting to a certain mentally disagreed, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not resort to that unpleasant sensation.

Of those two types of *domanassa vedanā*, should you understand that in resorting to a certain unpleasant sensation, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should resort to that unpleasant sensation.

Of the types of *domanassa vedanā* that should be resorted to, there is the one that arises together with initial application of the mind and with sustained application of the mind, (*savitakka savicāra domanassa*). And there is (also) the one that arises without initial application of the mind and without sustained application of the mind, (*avitakka avicāra domanassa*). Of these two, the latter, i.e., *avitakka avicāra domanassa*, is superior.

(Para (b) above explained.)

"Sakka, King of Devas, it is for this reason that I have said: 'I declare that there are two types of *domanassa vedanā*-that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted to.' (Conclusion to para (b) above)."

(c) Sakka, King of Devas, I have said earlier: 'I declare that *upekkhā vedanā* is of two types-that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted to.' The reason for my above statement is this; should you understand that in resorting to a certain mentally neither agreeable-nor-disagreeable sensation, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not resort to that *upekkhā vedanā*.

Of those two types of *upekkhā vedanā*, should you understand that in resorting to a certain neutral sensation, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not resort to that neutral sensation.

Of those two types of *upekkhā vedanā*, should you understand that in resorting to a certain neutral sensation, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should resort to that neutral sensation.

Of the type of *upekkhā vedanā* that should be resorted to, there is the one that arises with initial application of the mind and with sustained application of the mind (*savitakkasavicāra upekkhā*). And there is also the one that arises without initial application of the mind and without sustained application of the mind (*avitakka avicāra upekkhā*). Of these two, the latter i.e. *avikkha avicāra upekkhā* is superior.

(Para (c) above explained)

"Sakka, King of Devas, it is for this reason that I have said: 'I declared that *upekkhā vedanā* also is of two types- that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted to.'

(Conclusion to para (c) above).

"Sakka, King of Devas, a bhikkhu who practises thus is one who works for the extinction of illusory perception (group of *saññās* associated with diffusing factor, *papañca*) that lead to Nibbāna where all perceptions cease."

When the Bhagava answered thus giving an analytical exposition of meditation of *vedanā*, Sakka was delighted and said, expressing his approval:

"Venerable Sir, that indeed is so. O Well-spoken One that indeed is so. Having learnt the Bhagava's answer I have been rid of all doubts about this question; all uncertainties have left me."

(In this connection, the Commentary discusses as follows some interesting points on the subtleties of the Dhamma.

In the present question Sakka asks the Bhagavā about the practice that leads to Nibbāna in a subjective manner. The Bhagavā answers in an objective way about the three kinds of sensation (i.e. method of insight-development through contemplation of *somanassa vedanā*, *domanassa vedanā* and *upekkha vedanā*. Since the Bhagava's answer consists of contemplation of three *vedanas*, the Commentary speaks of three questions *somanassa pañhā*, *domanassa pañhā*, and *upekkhā pañhā*, one on each of the three sensations.

The question asked by Sakka was: "by what way of practice does a bhikkhu work out the way to Nibbāna?" The Bhagavā does not give a straight answer such as, "In this way a bhikkhu practices the way leading to Nibbāna." Instead he replied, "Sakka, *somanassa devanā* is of two types: that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted to." This might strike as incongruent to those not conversant with the Buddha's various methods of teaching.

The Commentary elucidates this problem in the following way:

In this sixth question of Sakka, is the Bhagava's answer relevant to Sakka's question? (One might ask.)

The answer; yes, it is.

And the explanation is this: Sakka asks subjectively a way of practice to work out for attaining Nibbāna. It is a personal question. The Bhagavā gives the answer to suit the temperament of Sākka for working out the way to Nibbāna. The answer revolves around contemplation of the mind, which is suited to Sakka's mental makeup. The Bhagavā opens up the subject of meditation of mental phenomena with contemplating on the three kinds of *vedanā*. Therefore the answer is a relevant answer.

(This is an explanation in brief.)

To expand this:

For *devas*, the mind is a more appropriate subject for contemplation than the body. Amongst mental aggregate, *vedanā* is most vivid to perceive.

The physical composition of *devas* is more subtle than that of human beings. Being a result of superior *kamma*, their digestive capacity is also remarkably greater than that of human beings so that very rich deva nutriment can easily be digested. This means a need for regular feeding. When a *deva* misses a meal he feels the pangs of hunger very acutely. In fact it can lead to dissolution of the body like a lump of butter placed on a heated slab.

This shows that to a deva the truth of painful sensation is, *dukkha vedanā*, very easily perceivable. Similarly, the pleasant sensation due to superior kinds of deva pleasures that may be indulged in to greater and greater degree is also easily perceivable: this also holds true for neutral sensation *upekkhā vedanā* which is peaceful and wholesome. That is why the Bhagavā chooses the contemplation of the three kinds of sensation *somanassa vedanā*, *domanassa vedanā*, *upekkhā vedanā* as a suitable practice for Sakka.



This will be elaborated further: There is meditation for insight, *vipassanā*, into the physical aspect of one's body and meditation for insight, *vipassanā* into the mental aspect of one's body. Of these two main methods, the Bhagavā prescribes the former to those who have the capacity to perceive physical phenomena. It may be taught briefly or in an elaborate way. Usually, the essential nature of the Four (Primary) Elements is taught in detail as the meditation subject, *catu dhātu vavatthāna kammathāna*, on physical phenomena. To those who have the innate capacity to perceive mental phenomena, a suitable subject on mental phenomena is taught. In such a case the physical basis of the mind has to be contemplated first before proceeding to the contemplation of mental phenomena. In the case of Sakka too this was the procedure: physical phenomena was first touched upon briefly. However, in the recorded text of the Teaching that preliminary aspect is not specified, and the discourse on mental phenomena alone is on record.

With devas, mental phenomena are better perceived. So the three kinds of sensation are taught first. When mental phenomena is contemplated at the outset, there are three approaches: (1) through contact (*phassa*) (2) through sensation (*vedanā*), and through mind, (*citta*). (The three approaches are adopted only at the initial stage of meditation. Once the nature of mental phenomena is grasped and when the impermanence *anicca*, woefulness *dukkha* and unsubstantiality *anatta* of mental phenomena is contemplated upon, all mental phenomena come to be comprehended.

To explain this further:

(1) With some yogis, after contemplation of the body (i.e. physical phenomena) has been mastered in a brief manner or in an elaborate manner, the contact *phassa* (which is a mental phenomenon) falling on the physical phenomena that is under contemplation becomes evident.  
 (2) With some yogis, the sensation experienced in respect of the physical phenomena which is under contemplation becomes evident.  
 (3) with some *yogis*, the consciousness that cognizes the physical phenomenon under contemplation becomes evident. (In these three

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arising. Then he discerns that the five mental factors have the corporeal body as their basis. The body in the ultimate sense is the corporeality that has arisen, made up of the primary four Elements *bhūta rūpa* and secondary element (*upādāya rūpāni*). Thus the truth that contact and its associating four mental factors arise dependent on the body is understood. The basis where the mental factors arise is seen in its reality as physical phenomena or matter *rūpa*; and that the five associated factors headed by contact is mental phenomena or mind *nāma*; and that here is just mind and matter (*nāma* and *rūpa*) and nothing else. Between the two interrelated phenomena, matter comprises the aggregate of corporeality; mind comprises the four mental aggregates. Thus there are just the five aggregates (*khandā*). Indeed, there is no aggregate apart from mind and matter; there is no mind or matter apart from the five aggregates.

The yogi then contemplates: "What is the cause of the arising of the five aggregates?" He understands fundamentally and truly that the five aggregates arise due to ignorance (*avijjā*) craving (*taṇhā*) and *Kamma*(action). Thus he understands that the continued phenomenon of the five aggregates is the effect of this cause namely *avijjā*, *taṇhā* and *kamma* and that apart from cause and effect, there is nothing that can truly be called person or being, and that all are aggregates of conditioned phenomena. Thus, having comprehended that mind and matter arise from cause, the yogi continually contemplates on the impermanence, woefulness, and insubstantiality *anicca, dukkha, anatta* of mind and matter, thereby gaining insight into the mind matter complex stage by stage (This effort and its rewards indicate strong insight *balava vipassanā*.)

The yogi who has advanced to this high level of insight becomes very eager to gain *Magga Phala*. He strives for the development of insight, encouraging himself with the thought, "I am going to achieve *Magga, Phala, Nibāna* even today." When four appropriate factors, namely: weather, associates, food, and discourse that are conducive to his enlightenment are present together: he attains the Path-Knowledge. And even at one sitting of meditation the culmination of insight development may be realized and Arahatsip attained.

In the above manner the Bhagavā has already shown how a yogi to whom contact is comprehended, or sensation is comprehended, or consciousness is comprehended, may, through proper insight development, gain Arahatsip.

In *Sakka pañña Sutta* the Bhagavā discourses on contemplation of mental phenomena concentrating on sensation *vedanā* as the meditation subject appropriate for Sakka. This is so because devas including Sakka will not find either contact *phassa* or consciousness *viññāna* as comprehensible as sensation *vedanā*. Therefore sensation is appropriate subject of meditation for devas for gaining insight into mental phenomena.

To explain this further:

The arising of pleasant sensation, *sukkha vedanā*, and unpleasant sensation, *dukkha vedanā*, is very evident. When pleasant sensation arises, the whole body is permeated with it. One gets excited. There is a feeling of ease as if being fed with butter refined a hundred times over, or being applied on the skin with oil refined a hundred times over, or relieving heat by taking a bath with cool clear water contained in thousand pots. It causes the person who experiences it to exclaim, "Oh, this is pleasant, really pleasant!"

When unpleasant or painful sensation arises also it pervades the whole body causing great agitation and discomfort. It is as though lumps of red hot iron were inserted into the body, or as though molten iron were poured down over one's body, or as though a bundle of burning faggots were thrown into a forest of dried trees and grass. It causes the person experiencing it to groan painfully, "Oh, this is painful, really painful!"

Thus the arising of pleasant sensation and unpleasant sensation is quite evident.

This is not the case with neutral sensation *upekkhā vedanā*, which is not so evident. It is as though hidden by darkness. In the absence of any pleasant sensation or painful sensation, the yogi can only use his reason to understand the neutral sensation which is neither pleasant nor unpleasant. It is like a hunter chasing a deer making a reasoned guess

where the deer's hoof prints appear at one end of a slab of rock as ascending it, and appear at the other end as descending therefrom, and coming to the conclusion that the deer must have walked across the rock. 'Where pleasant sensation has been clearly noted in the yogis' awareness, and later unpleasant sensation also has been clearly noted, the yogi can, applying his reason, judge that during the moments when two kinds of sensation are not felt there has arisen in him a neutral sensation that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant. In this way the yogi comprehends neutral sensation, *upekkhā vedanā*.

Thus the Bhagavā first taught to Sakka contemplation of physical phenomena and then proceeded to the subject of the three sensations as method of contemplating mental phenomena. This method whereby a discourse on contemplation of physical phenomena is followed by a discourse on the three sensation as meditation subject is a common method used by the Bhagavā to suit the hearer in each situation. It can be found, besides the present discourse to Sakka, in many other discourses, namely. Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta (*Dīgha Nikāya*), Satipatṭhāna sutta, Cūlatanḥāsāṅkhaya Sutta, Mahā taṇhā saṅkhaya sutta, Cūla vedalla sutta, Mahā vedalla sutta, Ratthapāla sutta, Magaṇḍhiya sutta, Dhātuvibhaṅga sutta, Āneñjasappāya sutta (all in *Majjhima Nikāya*) and the whole of *Vedanā Sainyutta*.

The Commentary says: "In the *Sakkapañña Sutta*, meditation on the physical phenomena, being simply an object of sensation, is not expressly mentioned. Probably this is why it is not on record in the Pali text." This statement is rather terse and obscure. Its purport will therefore be brought out here:

The commentary says: "The Bhagavā taught to Sakka and other devas contemplation of physical phenomena first and then proceeded with contemplation of mental phenomena through the three sensations which was the way they could understand the Dhamma, considering their capacity (lit natural bent of mind) to comprehend." This statement might be challenged by certain persons pointing out the fact that there is no mention in the text that the Bhagavā taught contemplation of physical phenomena to Sakka. The answer lies in the fact that devas are highly perceptible to mental phenomena, and among all mental

phenomena, sensation is best understood by them. It is the Bhagava's method in preaching to those with a strong capacity to understand mental phenomena to make a preliminary discourse on physical phenomena just to provide a grounding for understanding mental phenomena, on which latter subject he would dwell at length. In the present case Sakka and his company had a strong capacity to understand mental phenomena and so the Bhagavā mentioned physical phenomena simply as an object of sensation, showing them what constitutes physical phenomena. And having stated it in a most brief manner, the Bhagavā taught the three kinds of sensation in an elaborate manner. Therefore, it must be noted that physical phenomena forms just a preliminary subject as object of sensation, and hence this fact is not recorded in the text. This is the purport of the terse commentarial statement referred to above.

Now we shall deal with the expositions of the Bhagava's elaborate manner of teaching the subject of meditation on the three kinds of sensation as stated in (a), (b) and (c) above. The explanation on them as contained in the commentary and the Sub-commentary will be condensed as best as we can.

Reference (a) above: (para 1)

"The mentally agreeable sensation that tends to increase demeritoriousness and to decrease meritoriousness (and which should not be resorted to)" means *somanassa vedanā*. This kind of pleasant sensation is called *gehasita somanassa vedanā*. (Visible object, sound, odours, tastes, tangible objects and thoughts (or ideas), the six sensuous objects serve as a house of craving and therefore termed 'geha'. This mentally agreeable sensation arises together with craving because of these sensuous objects. If one allows the repeated arising of that kind of sensation, demeritoriousness grows and meritoriousness wanes every day. That is why the Bhagavā says this *gehasita somanassa vedanā* is not to be resorted to.

Reference (a) above (para2)

"The mentally agreeable sensation that tends to decrease demeritoriousness and to increase meritoriousness (and which should

be resorted to)" means pleasure bent on renunciation, *nekkhammasita somanassa vedanā*. Herein, taking up the homeless life of a bhikkhu, attainment of jhana, realization of Nibbāna, Insight-knowledge, and all meritorious actions that break away from the hindrances are called *nekkhamma*, renunciation or emancipation from worldliness. Let me expand this: One sets one's goal as release from the round of rebirth and, leaving hearth and home, goes to the monastery, takes up the life of bhikkhuhood, establishes oneself in the Purity of the four kinds of bhikkhu precept *catupāri suddhi sīla*, practises the ascetic practice, meditates for concentration by *kasina* devices, attains the first Fine Material Jhāna, and cultivates Insight using that Jhāna as the foundation, all these practices are called acts of renunciation, *nekkhamma*. Pleasure derived from those activities are called pleasure bent on renunciation. If one cultivates the repeated arising of that kind of *nekkhamma sita somanassa vedanā*, demeritoriousness decrease and meritoriousness increases. That is why the Bhagavā said this pleasant sensation bent on renunciation should be resorted to.

(Note: *Geha sita somanassa vedanā*, that should not be resorted to, Pleasure of the senses arise together with craving for the six kinds of agreeable sense-objects that are cognized at the six sense-doors. As there are six sense-objects which constitute the bases of these mentally agreeable sensations, there are six kinds of such sense-pleasure.

Regarding the naturally agreeable sensation bent on renunciation, *nekkhammasita somanassa vedanā*, there are also six kinds based on the agreeable sense-objects of six kinds that cause the arising of the pleasant sensation beginning from the first step of renouncing householder's life to attaining of mundane and supramundane jhanas up to the third jhana. In the Scriptures the two categories of pleasant sensation, the six *gchasita somanassa vedanā* and the six *nekkhammasita somanassa vedanā* occur frequently. With regard to *domanassa vedana* and *upekkhavedanā* which will be mentioned in due course, the terms of six *gehasita* and six *nekkhammasita* will also appear frequently; it should be noted that these terms also are used with reference to the six sense objects.

Reference (a) above: (para 3)

In the third paragraph of (a), of the type of pleasant sensation, i.e. *nekkhammasita somanassa vedanā*, there is: firstly the one that arises together with initial application of the mind *vitakka* and sustained application of the mind *vicāra*. This refers to the pleasurable sensation that arises from the time of taking up bhikkhuhood till the attainment of the first jhāna.

And secondly, there is the one that arises without the initial application of the mind *vitakka*, and sustained application of the mind *vicāra*. This refers to the pleasureable sensation that arises at the attainment of the second and the third jhānas. The second is superior to the first. In this (third) paragraph the Bhagavā compares the two ways in which two bhikkhus many attain *Arahattaphala*.

To expand this statement:

The first bhikkhu, in contemplating the pleasant sensation that arises together with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind (i.e. pleasant sensation pertaining to the Sense Sphere *Kāmāvacara somanassa vedanā* and pleasant sensation pertaining to the First jhāna of the Fine material Sphere *Rūpa vacava pathama jhāna somanassa vedanā*), contemplates, "On what does the pleasant sensation depend?" And he perceives that it depends on the physical body. Then he proceeds to contemplate on the three characteristics (*anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*) of mental phenomena. (as has been described above). And in due course he attains *Arahattaphala*.

The second bhikkhu, in contemplating the pleasant sensation that arises without initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind (i.e. the second and the third jhāna of the Fine material Sphere, *Rupā vacara dutiya tatiya jhāna somanassa vedanā* and developing insight as mentioned earlier on won Arahathship .

In the above two cases the object of meditation of the second bhikkhu, the pleasant sensation not in association with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, is superior to the object of meditation of the first bhikkhu, the pleasant sensation associated with initial application of the mind and sustained



application of the mind. The thoughts of the second bhikkhu that contemplate on the mind-object (sensation) in its three characteristics, being not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, are superior to the thought of the first bhikkhu which are associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. In the matter of attainment of the Fruition-consciousness also, that of the second bhikkhu, being not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, is superior to that of the first bhikkhu which is associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind.

(These are some important points about (a) above.)

Reference (b) above (para 1)

"The unpleasant sensation which tends to increase demeritoriousness and decrease meritoriousness (and is therefore not to be resorted to)," refers to *gehasita domanassa vedanā*. When one does not get some desirable visible object, or sound, or odour, or taste, or tangible object, or thought cognized through or by the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body and the mind, one feels miserable. When these six kinds of sense-objects that one has enjoyed do not last, they are painfully missed by one who cherishes them. Thus unpleasant sensation *domanassa vedanā* arises in one on account of the six sense-objects. If these unpleasant sensations are allowed to arise repeatedly, demeritoriousness increases, and meritoriousness decreases. That is why the Bhagavā said that unpleasant sensation arising out of the six sense-objects should not be resorted to.

Reference (b) above: ( para 2)

"The unpleasant sensation which tend to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness (and should therefore be resorted to) means *nekkhammasita domanassa vedanā*, unpleasant sensation inclined to renunciation. To the bhikkhu who has renounced the worldly life and taken up the practice of insight-development through various methods of contemplation, visible objects, sound, odours, tastes, tangible objects, and thoughts are perceived as impermanent and subject to change; further, there comes the realization that in truth and

reality the six sense-objects in the past as well as at present are impermanent, subject to change, and are woeful. This realization is Insight-knowledge. Once the true nature of the six sense-objects is understood thus, the mind of that bhikkhu yearns for release from the six sense-objects which arise in the conditioned phenomena of mind and matter. Directing his mind to Nibbāna, he has an ardent desire, (*Pihā*, ardent desire a mild form of *lobha* (greed) in the ultimate sense) to attain the Supramundane.

(In this connection the Pali term *Pihā* needs some explaining. The expression 'the ardent desire to attain the Supramundane' does not mean that *pihā* takes the *Arahattaphala* as its object, because *pihā* is a mild form of *lobha* which primarily is a demeritorious factor. Not to speak of a demeritorious factor even meritorious factors divested of wisdom do not take Nibbāna as their object. Hence *pihā* does not take Nibbāna as its object. The fact is that the yogī had had hearsay knowledge of Nibbāna. The sublime attributes of Nibbāna has not only been learnt from other people, they have become imbued in the yogi's mind through book learning, meditation and insight development, and a yearning of Nibbāna has thus already been formed. This knowledge of course still remains in the province of concept (*paññatti*) only but a fairly close idea of Nibbāna is obtained by intelligent reasoning. As a matter of fact, *Jhāna*, *Magga*, *Phala*, *Nibbāna*, belong to the province of the Supramundane; they are therefore as subtle as they are profound even to get a true idea by a yogi who has not become an Ariya. At best only he can visualise the Supramundane and wish for attaining it, *pihā*.)

After the arising of the ardent desire to attain the Supramundane, the yogi tries towards his goal by cultivating Insight. If, in spite of these earnest efforts, the goal is still not reached the yogi gets frustrated. "Alas, how success evades me for all my efforts over such a long-period," he says to himself. The unpleasant sensation he now experiences is called *nekkhammasita domanassa vedanā*. The repeated arising of this kind of unpleasant sensation is conducive to success.

The more disappointed he is, the greater his resolution to attain his objective, which turns into a sufficing condition (*upanissa paccaya*) for success. Demeritoriousness decreases in him and meritoriousness increases. That is why the Bhagavā said that *nekkhammasita domanassa vedanā* should be resorted to.

### Reference (b) above ( para 3).

Although unpleasant sensation, *domanassa vedanā* is a mental factor definitely accompanied by initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind *savitakka savicāra*, the yogi is apt to take *gehasita domanassa vedanā* as the unpleasant sensation that arises together with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind *savitakka, savicāra*; and *nekkhammasita domanassa vedanā* as the unpleasant sensation that arises without initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, *avitakka avicāra*. Therefore, unpleasant sensation is mentioned in these two ways.

Let me expand this: In this Teaching, a bhikkhus cultivates *Vipassanā* meditation, Insight, after getting established in *Jhāna*, whether threshold *jhāna upacāra* or First *Jhāna*, and if he cannot attain *Magga Phala* he feels dejected *domanassa vedanā*. In such a case the *jhanas* which were used as ones for development of *Magga Phala* are called unpleasant *domanassa*, by way of a figure of speech because the *jhāna*-as preliminary steps in his course of the Path-practice are to him something he does not want. If, in spite of the disappointment, he perseveres and ultimately wins *Magga Phala* the supramundane dhamma that he realizes is (also) called *domanassa* in a figurative sense since it is the outcome of, or is caused by, the unpleasant sensation.

The yogi (bhikkhu) regarding his own thoughts associated with the initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind which cause his unpleasant sensation, or regarding his own thoughts which are not associated with initial application of the mind or sustained application of the mind which cause his unpleasant sensation as unpleasant sensation itself (associated with or dissociated with initial application of the mind as the case may be), then reflects: "Oh, how long it would be before I can successfully gain insight into unpleasant

sensation which arises together with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind?" Or as: "How long it would be before I can successfully gain insight into unpleasant sensation which arises without initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind?"

Further, he considers the Fruition-knowledge that is caused by unpleasant sensation associated with (or arising together with) initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind as attainment of Fruition *Phala samapatti*, though unpleasant sensation associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind; and the Fruition-Knowledge that is caused by unpleasant sensation not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind as attainment of Fruition through unpleasant sensation which is not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. Thinking thus, he reflects: "How long it would be before I can attain Fruition which is caused by unpleasant sensation associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind? Or Fruition which is caused by unpleasant sensation not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind?" He then enters upon a series of courses of rigorous practice extending from three months to six months, and then to nine months.

First of all, he commits himself to a three-month work schedule. During the first of the three months he allows himself to sleep two out of the three watches of a night, meditating during one watch of the night. In the middle period, the second month, he allows himself to sleep only one watch of the night, meditating during two watches of the night. In the third month he allows himself no sleep but meditates during the three watches of the night, alternating between walking up and down and sitting. It may be well if this course ends up in *Arahattaphala*. Otherwise, he does not relent but takes upon himself a six month course of rigorous practice.

In the six-month course, three periods of two months each are marked out, working portions and sleeping portion of the nights are adopted as in the three-month course. After the six-month course, if he

does not attain *Arahattaphala*, he bhikkhu does not relent, but enters upon a nine-month course of rigorous practice.

The nine-month course is made up of three periods of three months each. During the first period, the yogi allows himself to sleep two out of the three watches of the night and meditates during one watch. In the middle period he allows himself to sleep only one watch of the night, meditating during two watches. In the third period he allows himself no sleep but spends the whole night meditating, in alternating postures of walking up and down and sitting. After this manner of rigorous practice, if the bhikkhu still does not attain *Arahattaphala*, despondency sets in his mind. He reflects, "Alas, I am still not one of those who are invited to assemble at the yearly congregation where purity is admitted, *Visuddhi pavāraṇā*." He feels very sad like the bhikkhu elder Mahasiva of Gāmantapabbhara. Tears may flow down on his face.

### The story of Bhikkhu elder Mahāsīva.

In Sri Lanka there once lived a bhikkhu elder called Mahāsīva who had eighteen groups or sects of bhikkhus learning at his feet. Thirty thousand of his pupils had attained Arahatsip under his tutorship. One of the thirty thousand Arahats thought to himself: "Infinite qualities in terms of morality, etc. have I acquired. How about the qualities attained by my teacher Mahāsīva?" And he knew that his teacher was still a worlding. He reflected thus: "Alas, our teacher Mahāsīva has been the support of others, but is not the support of himself. I will now admonish our teacher." So thinking, he travelled by jhana in the air, descended near the bhikkhu elder's monastery, and drew near Mahāsīva, who was sitting at a secluded place. He made obeisance to the teacher and sat at a suitable place.

The teacher said to this pupil: "O! observer of the ascetic practice of eating from one bowl only: what calls you here?" (This is a term of endearment used by bhikkhu elders of yore to bhikkhus who practise Insight-meditation.)

The pupil: "Venerable Sir, I come to learn from you a discourse of appreciation, *ammodanā* for use at an offering ceremony."

"Not possible, friend."

"May I learn it at the place where you usually stop and consider the direction you should make for the day's alms-gathering?"

"Other bhikkhus will be putting their question to me there."

"May I learn it on the alms round?"

"There too other bhikkhus will be putting their questions."

"May I learn it where the venerable one robes himself fully (with the upper robe), or rearranging the robes for going to the village, or where the alms bowl is made ready for alms-gathering, or at the place of taking the gruel meal at the rest-house after the alms-round?"

"At those places, bhikkhu elders will be asking questions to clear up their doubts concerning Commentarial literature."

"May I ask on your return from the alms-round?"

"Then also other bhikkhus will be asking questions."

"May I ask on the way from the village to the monastery?"

"Then also other bhikkhus will be asking question."

"May I ask after your meal at the monastery? ... or at the place of seclusion when the venerable one washes his feet? ... or at the time the venerable one washes his face?"

"At those times also other bhikkhus usually ask questions, friend. From that time till the next day's dawn there are bhikkhus coming to me endlessly without a moment's break, friend."

"May I then ask at the time of the venerable one's cleaning the teeth and washing the face?"

"(Impossible friend,) other bhikkhus will be asking their question."

"May I ask when the venerable one enters the monastery and sits there?"

"Then also, there will be other bhikkhus asking questions."

"Venerable Sir, as a matter of fact, there should be a moment to spare when the venerable one sits in meditation in the monastery after having washed his face, during the moments of shifting the sitting posture for three or four times. From what the venerable says, would there be no time to die too? Venerable Sir, you are like the leaning board providing others support, but not being one's own support. My real purpose in coming to you is not to learn a discourse from you." So saying, he returned by going in the air.

### **The Bhikkhu elder Mahāsīva retires into the forest.**

Thera Mahāsīva then saw the real purpose of that bhikkhu's visit. "This bhikkhu has no use with Scriptural learning. He came here to admonish me. But this is not the time for me to go out into seclusion in the forest. I must wait till morning." He said to himself. He made ready to leave with bowl and robes kept handy. He taught the whole day and the first and middle watches of the night. When, in the third watch of the night, one of the pupils was leaving, he slipped out together with him (letting everyone think he was one of the pupils.)

Other pupils awaiting for the next class thought that the teacher was out to answer the call of nature. The student bhikkhu who went out together also took the teacher for a co-student.

Mahāsīva was confident that *Arahattaphala* should not take more than a few days to attain. He would come back from the forest seclusion after attaining Arahatsip. So he did not bid farewell to his pupils when he left the place on a thirteenth of Visakha for a cave known as *Gāmanta pabbhāra* (i.e. a cave in the vicinity of a village). By the full moon day he had not attained *Arahattaphala*. "I have thought I could attain *Arahattaphala* in a few days," he thought, "but the *vasa* period has arrived. I will spend the *vasa* here and will accomplish my task at the end of the *vasa*, on the *pavāraṇā* day." So, regarding three months as though it were three days, he went into ardent practice. But at the end of the three months he was still unable to attain Arahatsip. Mahāsīva reflected: "I had come here hoping to attain *Arahattaphala* in three days, but three months have passed without my attaining it. My

fellow-bhikkhus have joined the Sangha congregation of *Arahats* now." He felt miserable and tears streamed down his face.

Then he pondered thus: "Perhaps I have been indulgent: I have alternated the four bodily postures (i.e. lying, sitting, standing, walking) in my meditating work. I will now renounce the lying posture and will not wash my feet until I win *Arahattaphala*." So he kept away his cot at a corner and resumed meditation. Another *vasa* passed by, and no Arahathship was at hand. Each *vasa* ended not with enlightenment but with tears-tears of noble desire unfulfilled. In this way twenty-nine years marked by twenty-nine assemblies of the Arahats (at the end of each *vasa*) went by.

Young boys from the village noticed the ruptures that had developed on both the feet of Mahāsīva and they tried their best to patch them up with thorns. Then they joked between themselves, "Oh, how I envy those ruptured feet."

#### **A celestial maiden comes to the rescue.**

On the full moon day in the month of the Thadingyut, on the thirtieth year of his ardent practice Mahāsīva sat leaning against the board and took stock of the situation. "I have been at it for thirty years, and *Arahattaphala* is still beyond my reach. Clearly, Arahathship is not for me in this life. How I miss the opportunity of attending the congregation of *Arahats* together with my fellow bhikkhus. An unpleasant sensation, *domanassa vedanā* overwhelmed him. Tears came rolling down his face.

At the time a celestial maiden stood before him sobbing. The bhikkhu elder asked, "who is there weeping?"

"I am a *deva* maiden, Venerable Sir."

"Why do you weep like this?"

"Venerable Sir, me think weeping is the way to attainment of *Magga Phala* and I am weeping (following your example) in the hope of attaining one *Magga Phala* or two *magga phalas*.



At this the old bhikkhu's pride was rudely shaken. He said to himself: "Now, Mahāsīva, you have made yourself the laughing-stock of a young *deva* maiden. Does it become you?" A strong feeling of religious emotional awakening, *Sanvega*, overtook him. He redoubled his right endeavour and (soon) won *Arahattaphala* along with the four Discriminative Knowledges, *Paṭisambhidañāṇa*.

Now that he felt relaxed mentally, he thought of stretching himself awhile. He cleaned up his cot, filled his water pots, and sat at the head of the walk way, reminding himself the need to wash his feet that he had neglected for these thirty years.

### Sakka appears and washes Mahāsīva's feet.

Mahāsīva's pupils remembered their teacher on the thirtieth year of his departure and saw (by their special powers) that he had attained Arahathship now. Knowing what had crossed in the teacher's mind, they said, "It is ridiculous to let our teacher trouble himself to wash his own feet while his pupils like ourselves are living." Thinking thus, all the thirty thousand *Arahat* pupils travelled in the direction of the cave where Mahāsīva was sitting, all of them vying with one another to get the opportunity of washing their teacher's feet.

Mahāsīva however insisted that he must do the job he had neglected for thirty years himself. At that juncture Sakka thought to himself: "The bhikkhu elder is insisting on washing his feet himself, refusing them to be washed by his thirty thousand *Arahat* pupils. It is absurd that my revered one should bother to wash his own feet while a lay supporter like myself is living. I will go there and do the job." He took his queen Suja with him and appeared on the scene. Putting his queen at the front, he announced to the thirty thousand *Arahat* bhikkhus, "Make way, Venerable, Sirs, a woman is coming." He then made obeisance to Mahāsīva, sat squatting before him, and said, "Venerable Sir, let me wash your feet."

"O Sakka of the Kosiya clan, I have left my feet unwashed for thirty full years. Human body smells by nature. The smell is so pungent that even for a *deva* staying a hundred yojanas away from a human body, its

smell is as obnoxious as carrion tied around his neck. So leave the washing to me."

Sakka replied: "Venerable Sir, as for us the natural smell of the human body is obscured by the fragrance of your morality, which rises beyond the Sense Sphere deva realms, *Kamāvācara*, and reach the topmost realm of the Brahmas. . Venerable Sir, there is no fragrance that surpasses the fragrance of morality. Your morality has compelled us to render personal service to you." Then Sakka took firm hold of the Thera's ankle with his left hand and washed his soles with his right hand till they glowed like the soft soles of a child. After doing this personal service to the Thera, Sakka made obeisance to him and returned to his celestial abode. This is the story of the bhikkhu elder Mahāsīva:



In this way a yogi who finds: himself unable to attain Arahatsip feels (as in the case of Mahāsīva): "Ah, how I miss the opportunity of holding congregation with fellow-bhikkhus who are *Arahats*"; he becomes despondent suffering *domanassa vedanā*. When he attains *jhānas* or Insight-Knowledge or *Magga* or *Phala* as the outcome of, or caused by, that unpleasant feeling — which he considers either as associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, or not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind — those attainment, are called figuratively as unpleasant sensation with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, or unpleasant sensation without initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. It should be noted that the Bhagavā termed these attainments as figures of speech, taken from the point of view of result or that of cause.

Thus, according as the yogi's view of the unpleasant sensation, either as associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, or as not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, when in due course the unpleasant sensation leads to *jhāna* or Insight-Knowledge, or *Magga Phala*, these attainments are called figuratively as unpleasant sensation with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the

mind, or as unpleasant sensation without initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind.

In that context, where a bhikkhu contemplates the *jhāna*, whether neighbourhood absorption *upacāra jhāna* or the first *jhāna*, called unpleasant sensation with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind *savitakka savicāra*, as impermanent, woeful and unsubstantial, and considers, "Where does this unpleasant sensation originate?" he comes to understand that it has its origin in the body as its base. From this understanding he progresses, stage by stage to Arahatsip. (See the process of insight development on the practice for the understanding of Contact *phassa*, etc, discussed earlier on.)

If there is another bhikkhu who contemplates the second *Jhāna*, third *Jhāna* etc. which are called the unpleasant sensation which is not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind *avitakka avicāra*, as impermanent, woeful and unsubstantial, by stages he attains Arahatsip.

In the above two cases both have unpleasant sensation as the object of Insight meditation but the unpleasant sensation which is not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind is superior to the unpleasant sensation which is associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. Regarding the Insight-Knowledge gained from the meditation also, the former is superior to the latter. Regarding the fruition of the final Path-Knowledge (*Arahattaphala*) also, the former is superior. That is why the Bhagavā says that, of the two types of unpleasant sensation, the one that is not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind is superior. These are points to note concerning (b) above.

### Reference (c) above: (Para 1)

The neutral sensation *upekkhā* which tends to increase of demeritoriousness and decrease of meritoriousness (and is therefore not to be resorted to) means *gehasita upekkhā*, neutral sensation inclined to sense-pleasures. It means strong attachment to sense-pleasures. When some agreeable object arises at the six doors-eye, ear, nose,

tongue, body and mind, one is unable to overcome the defilements and falls prey to that sense-object just as a fly is 'caught' by (i.e. unable to let go) a lump of jaggery. One who relishes sense-pleasures is imprisoned by them.

Repeated resort to *gehasita upekkhā* tends to increase demeritoriousness and decrease meritoriousness. That is why the Bhagavā say that *gehasita upekkhā* should not be resorted to.

### Reference (c) above (para 2)

The neutral sensation which tends to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness (and should therefore be resorted to) means *nekkhammasita upekkhā* neutral sensation inclined to renunciation. It is a neutral attitude to both agreeable and disagreeable objects arising at the six sense-doors, i.e., eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. Agreeable sense-objects are not attached to. Disagreeable objects do not cause anger or vexation. Neither-agreeable-nor-disagreeable sense-objects do not cause bewilderment *moha* due to unbalanced attitude. The yogi contemplates all the six sense-objects as impermanent, woeful, and subject to change and thus discerns all of them as they really are. This neutral attitude is a form of neutral sensation which arises with wisdom in the mental process of the yogi. (In other words:) This evenness of attitude is also called indifferent feeling, equanimity *Tatramajjhataā*. It means both detached attitude to agreeable and disagreeable sense-objects. *Vedanupphekkā* and balanced attitude, equanimity, *tatramajjhataā* are taken as *upekkhā*.)

That being so, resorting to the six kinds of neutral sensation inclined to renunciation six *nekkhammasita upekkhas*, at all times, i.e. from the time of turning into a bhikkhu throughout all the stages of bhikkhu practice beginning with practice of Ten Reflections, *amassati*, till the attainment of jhanas- up to the fourth *jhāna*- decreases demeritoriousness and increases meritoriousness. Therefore the Bhagava says *nekkhammasita upekkhā* should be resorted to

**Reference (c) above (para 3)**

Of the two types of *nekkhammasita upekkhā*, namely: the one associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind *satakkā savicāra upekkhā*, (the neutral sensation that arises at all times from the time of turning into a bhikkhu throughout all the stages of insight-development through various contemplations up till the attainment of the first jhāna) and the one not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind *avitakka avicāra upekkhā* (at the attainment of the second jhāna etc.) the first one is superior to the second.

The above passage compares the Arahattaphala attained by two bhikkhus, i.e., in two ways of bhikkhu practice: (a) The first bhikkhu, in contemplating a neutral sensation associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind considers: "On what does this neutral sensation depend?" And he comes to the right understanding that it arises dependent on the body. From that understanding he proceeds to gain Insight-knowledge, stage by stage, until he becomes an Arahāt. (b) The second bhikkhu contemplating on the neutral sensation not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind (that arises at the second, the third, and the fourth jhanas) gains Insight-knowledge, stage by stage, until he becomes an Arahāt.

Of those two bhikkhus, the neutral sensation that serves as the object of meditation of the second bhikkhu, being not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, is superior to the neutral sensation that serves as the object of meditation of the first bhikkhu which is associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. Regarding the thoughts that arise in the two bhikkhus during their meditation, the thoughts that arise in the second bhikkhu, being not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, is superior to the thoughts of the first-bhikkhu which are associated with initial application of the mind sustained application of the mind. Regarding the attainment of the *Arahatta phala* won through contemplation of the neutral sensation, the attainment of the second bhikkhu, being not

associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, is superior to that of the first bhikkhu which is associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind

These are the points to note concerning (c) above.

### **Sakka is established in stream-entry knowledge.**

Having discoursed on pleasant sensation, unpleasant sensation and neutral sensation that lead to Arahatsip, the Bhagavā concluded the teaching with these words:

"Sakka, King of Devas, a bhikkhu who practises thus is one who works out the extinction of illusory perceptions associated with craving *taṇhā*, conceit *māna* and wrong view *diṭṭhi* that prolongs the suffering in *samsara* leading to Nibbana where all perceptions cease."

At that moment Sakka attained the fruition of Stream- entry.

### **The Benevolent desire, chanda, of the Buddhas.**

The benevolent desire of the Buddhas, the noblest intention is to bestow the highest blessing, the superior or exalted mind, never of inferior or lower type. Wherever the Buddhas make a discourse to an individual or to a congregation, they always show the way to the attainment of the highest Arahatsip. Amongst the hearers, some attain Stream-entry, some become Once-returner, some become Never-returner, and some attain Arahatsip, according to the sufficing condition, i.e., the ripeness of their past merit.

To bring in a simile here:

The Bhagavā is like the royal father, the hearers of the Bhagava's teaching are like the princelings. The father makes morsels of food in the size that he usually takes, and feeds them into the mouths of the princelings. The princelings take in as much food only of what their mouths can receive. Similarly, the Bhagavā disseminates the Dhamma in the highest level i.e. Arahatsip: From amongst the hearers some

attain the First fruition, some the second, some the third, and some the fourth i.e., Arahatsip, according to the capacity of understanding.

**Sakka is reborn as Sakka a second time.**

After winning Stream-entry, Sakka passed away in the presence of the Bhagavā and was reborn as Sakka for a second time.

There is an important point to note in this connection : When a *deva* passes away no corpse remains like in the case of a human being. The body ceases to exist, disappears just like a flame disappears. That indeed is so. When a human being dies the kamma-born corporeality *kammaja rūpa* disappears first. Seventeen thought-moments after the disappearance of kamma-born corporeality, mind-born corporeality *cittaja rūpa* disappears. Within a few moments nutriment-born corporeality *āhāraja rūpa* disappears since no external nutriment sustains it. Temperature-born corporeality *utya rūpa* however stays on for a long time, taking its own process. With *devas* it is totally different. This is so because *devas* have a type of rebirth quite different from human beings. They are born instantly as adults. When their kamma-born corporeality dissolves the remaining kinds of corporeality — mind-born, temperature-born, and nutriment-born corporeality — all dissolve simultaneously. The result is that no physical remains are there when a *deva* passes away. The body vanishes there and then .

Special note. the difference in the fact of the presence of the human dead body and the absence of the deva dead body at their passing away is a matter that calls for some basic understanding<sup>3</sup> of the arising of the aggregates of a human being and those of a deva at the moment of conception.

(i) At the moment of conception or rebirth (*paṭisandhi*) of a human being, three corporeality units (*kalapas*) each a mere speck of an atom,

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<sup>3</sup> Some basic understanding: Readers could enhance their understanding of this chapter by studying 'A Manual of Abhidhamma by Nārada Thera', Chapter Six of which deals with Analysis of matter containing sections on enumeration of matter, classification of matter, the manner of arising of material phenomana etc.

come into being, namely: the body decad (*kāyadasaka kalāpa*), the sex decad (*bhāvadasaka kalāpa*), the base decad (*vatthu dasana kalāpa*). The kamma-born corporeality and the mind-born corporeality, temperature-born corporeality and nutriment-born corporeality arise at the due moment. Whenever these four types of corporeality advance to the stage of static moment, *thīkhaṇa* each unit of the element of heat (*tejo dhātu*) inherent in those corporeal units continuously produces temperature-born corporeality, resulting in multiplication of *utuja kalāpas* and the growth of the human body. This continuous increment of the temperature-born corporeality has the effect of its constituting most of the bulk of the human body so much so that it is, so to speak, virtually "the owner of the house" of the human body, turning the three other types of corporeality (i.e. kamma-born, mind-born, and nutriment-born corporeality) into mere "guests at the house." This is the nature of corporeality in human beings as well as all other womb-born beings. When they die, the kamma-born corporeality, the mind-born corporeality and the nutriment-born corporeality in them vanish away, like guests in the house leaving the body; but temperature-born corporeality, which is like the owner of the house, remain for a long time.

(ii) In the case of *devas*, kamma-born corporeality arising at the moment of instant rebirth constitutes the whole of the *deva* body which is three *gāvartas* long, and is like the owner of the house while the three other types of corporeality (i.e., mind-born, temperature-born, and nutriment-born corporeality) are like guests at the house, sharing space within the *deva* body. Therefore when *devas* and *brahmas* who are reborn instantly as adults do not leave behind any remains of their body at death; the three types of corporeality other than kamma-born corporeality (like guests who cannot stay on in the house when the house is no more) vanish when the kamma-born corporeality dissolves at death. This is a profound matter. It is intelligible to those who have a grounding in the phenomenal processes of mind and matter.)

Since Sakka passed away and was reborn as Sakka even while listening to the discourse, no one among his celestial company knew



that it was not the same old Sakka. Only Sakka himself knew it, besides him only the Buddha knew it by his All-knowing Wisdom.

(End of answer to questions six, seven and eight.)

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### The ninth, the tenth, and the eleventh questions and answers.

Sakka now thought: "The Bhagavā has made it very clear to me about pleasant sensation, unpleasant sensation and neutral sensation just as clear butter oil has been extracted out of a lump of butter. But this evidently is the result, *Mugga Phala*, the Supramundane, for which there must be the cause by way of appropriate practice. Certainly, the Supramundane *Mugga Phala* cannot be had merely for the asking, like a bird soaring up the sky. There must be the practice that leads to the Supramundane. I shall now ask of the Bhagavā the preliminary practice whereby Arahathship is gained." So he asked the Bhagavā:

"Venerable Sir, in which way does a bhikkhu practise the Bhikkhu morality of Restraint (*Pātimokkha saṃvara sīla*)?"

On being asked thus, the Bhagavā replied:

"Sakka, King of Devas, (i) there are two kinds of bodily conduct – that which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted.

"Sakka, King of Devas, (ii) there are two kinds of verbal conduct – that which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted.

"Sakka, King of Devas, (iii) there are two kinds of quests – that which should be taken up, and that which should not be taken up.

"Sakka, King of Devas, (i) I have said: "There are two kinds of bodily conduct- that which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted." The reason for my saying so is this: should you understand that in adopting a certain mode of bodily conduct, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not adopt that mode of bodily conduct. (Bodily conduct that tends to increase demeritoriousness and decreases meritoriousness should not be

adopted. The same interpretation should be made in respect of the next two statements.)

Of the two kinds of bodily conduct, should you understand that in adopting a certain mode of bodily conduct demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases you should adopt that mode of bodily conduct. (Bodily conduct that tends to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness should be adopted. The same meaning should be taken in respect of the next two statements.)

"Sakka, King of Devas, that is the reason why I said: 'Sakka, there are two kinds of bodily conduct – that which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted.'"

(ii) "Sakka, King of Devas, I have said: 'there are two kinds of verbal conduct – that which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted.' The reason for my saying so is this: should you understand that in adopting a certain mode of verbal conduct, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not adopt that mode of verbal conduct.

"Of those two kinds of verbal conduct, should you understand that in adopting a certain mode of verbal conduct, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should adopt that mode of verbal conduct.

"Sakka, King of Devas, that is the reason why I said: 'Sakka, there are two kinds of verbal conduct that which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted.'

(iii) "Sakka, King of Devas, I have said; 'Sakka, there are two kinds of quests- that which should be taken up, and that which should not be taken up.' The reason for my saying so is this; should you understand that in taking up a certain quest, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not take up that quest.

"Of those two kinds of quests, should you understand that in taking up a certain quest, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should take up that quest.

" Sakka, King of Devas, that is the reason why I said; 'Sakka, King of Devas, there are two kinds of quests- that which should be taken up, and that which should not be taken up."

"Sakka, King of Devas, a bhikkhu who practises, thus is one who practises the bhikkhu Morality of Restraint (*Pātimokkhasamvara Sīla*)."

When the Bhagavā answered thus, Sakka was delighted and said, expressing approval: "Venerable Sir, that indeed is so. O Well-Spoken One, that indeed is so. Having learnt the Bhagava's answer, I have been rid of all doubts about this question: All uncertainties have left me."

Note; In the question six, seven, and eight, Sakka asked the practice that leads to Nibbāna through the cessation of illusory perceptions, and the Bhagavā replied by a discourse on the three kinds of sensation that are the fundamentals of the practice leading to Nibbāna. He distinguished between sensation that should be resorted to and sensation that should not be resorted to. Of those two types of sensation, the sensation that should not be resorted to is not the practice leading to Nibbāna; only the sensation that should be resorted to is the practice that leads to Nibbāna. Yet why does the Bhagavā discuss about the sensation that does not lead to Nibbāna? This is a likely question to be asked by one who does not see the Bhagava's purpose. However, the Bhagavā knows the disposition of Sakka such that if Sakka understands the need for abandoning the sensation that should not be resorted to, recognising it as a defiling factor, then he would be prepared to cultivate the sensation that should be resorted to, recognizing it as a cleansing factor. Thus, the discussing of both the types of sensation is conducive to Sakka's understanding. The Bhagava's method helps Sakka to adopt the proper practice.

In the present question on bhikkhu Morality of Restraint, (i e., restraint that is the obligatory virtue for bhikkhu), the mode of bodily conduct that should not be adopted, the mode of verbal conduct that should not be adopted, and the kind of quest that should not be taken up do not constitute bhikkhu Morality of Restraint. Yet only if one is able to abandon them could one fulfil the practice of bodily conduct that should be adopted, verbal conduct that should be adopted, and the

kind of quest that should be taken up because all of them are the factors that cleanse the mind. That is why the three defiling factors are discussed along with the three cleansing factors in pairs. This method, the Bhagavā knows, suits the disposition of Sakka in taking upon himself the proper practice.

Only when factors that ought not to be resorted to are made clear, would factors that ought to be resorted to become a mode of practice. That is the reason for the Bhagava's discussion of the pairs of useless factors and useful factors in the present set of questions on the Bhikkhu Morality of Restraint, just as in the previous set of questions on sensation.

In the present set of answers, only bodily conduct that should be adopted, verbal conduct that should be adopted, and the kind of quest that should be taken up constitute the bhikkhu Morality of Restraint. The bodily conduct, the verbal conduct, and the quest that should not be resorted to are defiling factors, and they must first be seen as such by Sakka.



Regarding the kind of quest that should be taken up, it may be spoken of in connection with the course of action *kamma* or in connection with the prescribed form of training precept. i.e.,

(i) Bodily conduct that should not be resorted to are three evil bodily actions, namely, killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct. This is speaking in terms of course of action. Physically committing the breach (lit, breach at the body-door) of the moral precepts laid down by the Buddha constitutes bodily conduct that should not be adopted. This is speaking in terms of precept.

Bodily conduct that should be adopted are: refraining from killing, refraining from stealing, and refraining from sexual misconduct. This is speaking in terms of courses of action. Physically restraining (lit, restraint at the body-door) from transgressing the moral precepts laid

down by the Buddha constitutes bodily conduct that should be adopted. This is speaking in terms of precept.

(The same distinction should be understood in respect of verbal conduct.)

(ii) Verbally committing four evil verbal actions such as lying, etc. is verbal conduct that should not be adopted. Refraining from transgressing the four evil verbal actions in one's speech is verbal action that should be adopted.

(iii) Quest *pariyesanā* involves physical and verbal actions. It is covered by bodily conduct and verbal conduct except that in defining the eight precepts with right-livelihood as the eighth *Ājīvathamaka sīla*, a specific term "quest" needs to be mentioned because these eight precepts involve actions at the body-door and verbal-door (i.e., physical actions and verbal actions), and not in the sky. Quest is essentially the effort needed in making the quest.

(a) Quest is of two kinds, ignoble and noble. The two kinds of quest are described in the *Pāsārāsī sutta*, *Mūlapaññāsa*. The gist of the teaching is this: where some one who himself is subject to birth, ageing, death and destruction seeks things animate (i.e., wife, children, servants, cattle, poultry, etc.) and inanimate (such as gold and silver etc.) which are also subject to birth, ageing and death, (i.e., arising, decay and dissolution) this amounts to ignoble quest *Anariya pariyesanā*, the quest that should not be taken up. If someone who is himself subject to birth, ageing and death, seeing the fault in seeking things animate or inanimate, and seeks the deathless dhamma (i.e., Nibbāna where no rebirth occurs) this is called noble quest *Ariya pariyesanā*, the quest that should be taken up.

(b) Explained in another way: There are five ways of seeking gains that are not proper, (for bhikkhus) namely: (i) By scheming, i.e., creating a favourable or highly admirable impression of oneself on the lay supporters; (ii) By 'talking up' or extolling the lay supporters, (iii) By hinting at a suitable occasion for making offerings (iv) By belittling the lay supporters for their alleged

close fistedness; (v) By pursuing gain with gain, i.e., by making gifts to lay supporters with the expectation of receiving their offerings.

There are also six places which a bhikkhu should not resort to, namely: (i) a spinster's house, (ii) a hemaphrodite's house, (iii) a liquor seller's house, (iv) a prostitute's house (v) a widow's or divorcee's house (vi) a monastery of bhikkhunis.

Not resorting to the five ways of seeking gains mentioned above, the six places described above, and the twenty-one ways that are not allowable quest, *anesanā*, – all these make up the kinds of quest that should not be taken up *Anariya pariyesanā*. Refraining from all these improper kinds of quest, and living on the food collected at the daily alms-round, is righteous way of seeking gains which constitute noble quest, *Ariya pariyesanā*.

Where a certain bodily conduct, etc., is not to be resorted to, if it is an act of killing, the conduct is improper right from the start such as procuring of lethal weapons or poison, or any effort connected with it. In the case of bodily conduct that should be resorted to, all the actions connected with it are proper right from the beginning. If one is disabled to perform a deed that should be resorted to, at least the intention should be made, for that intention may be carried through if circumstances permit, bringing it to a successful conclusion.

Explained otherwise:

- (i) Bodily conduct that can cause a schism in the Sangha like Devadatta's conduct is improper conduct that should not be resorted to. Paying devotion to the Triple Gem twice or thrice a day like the habit of the Venerables Sāriputta and Mahā Moggallāna is conduct that should be resorted to.
- (ii) Verbal conduct as giving orders to kill someone like that of Devadatta sending marksmen on a mission of assassination is conduct that should not be resorted to. Extolling the virtues of the Triple Gem like the habit of the Venerable Sāriputta and Mahā Moggallāna is verbal conduct that should be resorted to.

(iii) Ignoble quest as that of Devadatta is quest that should not be taken up. Noble quest as that of the Venerables Sāriputta and Mahā Moggallāna is quest that should be taken up.

Whereas Sakka puts only one question concerning Bhikkhu Morality of Restraint, the Bhagava's answer is threefold- bodily conduct, verbal conduct and quest; the commentary speaks of it as three questions.

The Bhagava's concluding statement. "A bhikkhu who practises thus – – –" purports to say that the bhikkhu who refrains from the bodily conduct, verbal conduct and quest that ought not be resorted to, and who takes up bodily conduct, verbal conduct and quest that should be taken up, is one who practises the supreme bhikkhu practice of morality incumbent on a bhikkhu, which constitutes the necessary condition that precedes Arahatsip.

(End of the ninth, tenth and eleventh questions and answers )

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### **The twelfth question and answer:**

#### **On the restraint of the faculties, *Indriya Saṁvara Sīla*.**

After receiving the Bhagava's discourse with delight, Sakka put the next question:

"Venerable Sir, how does a bhikkhu practise so as to keep his faculties well guarded?"

The Bhagavā answered as follows:

"Sakka, King of Devas, there are two kinds of visible objects cognizable by the eye, those that should be resorted to, and those that should not be resorted to.

"Sakka, King of Devas, there are two kinds of sound cognizable by the ear, those that should be resorted to, and those that should not be resorted to.

"Sakka, King of Devas, there are two kinds of odour cognizable by the nose, those that should be resorted to, and those that should not be resorted to.

"Sakka, King of Devas, there are two kinds of taste cognizable by the tongue, those that should be resorted to and those that should not be resorted to.

"Sakka, King of Devas, there are two kinds of tangible objects cognizable by the body, those that should be resorted to, and those that should not be resorted to.

"Sakka, King of Devas, there are two kinds of Dhamma object made up of mind and matter cognizable by the mind, those that should be resorted to, and those that should not be resorted to."

When the Bhagavā had made this brief exposition Sakka said to the Bhagavā:

"Venerable Sir, what the Bhagava has said in brief, I understand the meaning at length as follows: Venerable Sir, if a certain visible object cognizable by the eye tends to increase demeritoriousness and decrease meritoriousness, that visible object should not be resorted to. If (on the other hand) a certain visible object cognizable by the eye tends to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness, that visible object should be resorted to.

"Venerable Sir, if a certain sound cognizable by the ear tends to --- p --- a certain dour cognizable by the nose tends to --- p --- a certain taste cognizable by the tongue tends to --- p --- a certain tangible object cognizable by the body tends to --- p --- a certain thought about mind or matter cognizable by the mind tends to increase demeritoriousness and decreases meritoriousness, that thought should not be resorted to. If (on the other hand,) a certain thought about mind or matter tends to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness, that thought should be resorted to.

"Venerable Sir, being able to understand the meaning in detail of what the Bhagavā has said briefly, I am now rid of all doubts; there is no uncertainty in me."



(Note: Sakka had benefited from the previous discourses of the Bhagavā on the three kinds of sensation and on the three kinds of what is to be resorted to and what should not be resorted to. When the present brief answer from the Bhagavā was given he had the right understanding based on the Bhagava's previous preachings and accordingly began to address the bhagavā about his understanding.

The Bhagavā remained silent, allowing Sakka to go ahead what he had to say about the meaning of the brief statements. It was not the custom of the Buddha to allow such a thing if the hearer of a discourse is not competent enough to state how he understands it, or to allow a competent hearer if he is not willing to come forward with an explanation of what he understands of it. Here Sakka was competent as well as willing. Hence the Bhagava's permission.)

Now to elaborate on the various sense-objects as to their worthiness or unworthiness;

- (i) If a certain visible object tends to arouse defilements such as *rāga* attachment in the mind of a bhikkhu who sees it, that visible object is an unworthy one; he should not look at it. If a certain visible object arouses in him a sense of repulsiveness perception of repulsiveness, *asubha saññā*, or strengthens the conviction in him of the truth of the Dhamma *Saddhā*, in the teaching, or arouses the perception of impermanence, *anicca sankā*, then that visible object is a worthy one; he should look at it.
- (ii) If a certain song beautifully composed that is heard by a bhikkhu tends to arouse defilements such as *rāga*, attachment in him, that sound is an unworthy one; he should not listen to it. If, on the other hand, a certain song even coming from a potter's girl, enables the bhikkhu who hears it to reflect on the law of cause and effect and strengthens his conviction in the truth of the Dhamma *saddhā*, tending to disenchantment with sentient existence and thoughts of renunciation, then that sound is a worthy one; he should listen to it.
- (iii) If a certain odour tends to arouse defilements such as *rāga* attachment in the mind of a bhikkhu who smells it, that odour is

an unworthy one; he should not smell it. If a certain odour causes the bhikkhu who smells it to gain a perception of loathsomeness of the body, that odour is a worthy one; he should smell it.

(iv) If a certain taste tends to arouse defilements such as *rāga* attachment in the mind of a bhikkhu who tastes it, that taste is an unworthy one; he should not taste it. If a certain taste causes the bhikkhu who tastes it to gain a perception of loathsomeness *āhāre paṭikūllasāṃṃā* of the food swallowed; or if it sustains him to gain the Ariya Truth like in the case of Sāmaṇera Sīva, (nephew of Thera Mahā Sīva,) who became an Arahāt while taking his meal, then that taste is worthy one; he should eat it. (In this connection, we have looked for the name of Sāmaṇera Sīva in the Sub-Commentary and in the *Visuddhi magga* but do not find it. In the *Visuddhi magga* there is the story of Sāmaṇera Bhāgineyya Sangharakkhita who attained Arahātship while taking his meal (Vis. I, Chapter on *Sīla*)

(v) If a certain tangible object tends to arouse defilements such as *rāga* attachment in the mind of a bhikkhu who touches it, that tangible object is an unworthy one; he should not touch it. If a certain tangible object (which is proper for a bhikkhu) causes the bhikkhu still training himself to attain Arahātship through exhaustion of the moral taints (*asavas*) completely like in the case of the Venerable Sāriputta, etc., or is conducive to zeal, or serves as a good model for future bhikkhus, then that tangible object should be resorted to.

It is noteworthy in this connection that many bhikkhus of the Buddha's time denied themselves the luxury of lying down; for instance, the Venerable Sāriputta never lay on a bed (cot) for thirty whole years; the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna for as many years; the Venerable Mahā Kassapa for a hundred and twenty years; the Venerable Anuruddha for fifty years; the Venerable Bhaddhiya for thirty years; the Venerable Sona for eighteen years; the Venerable Raṭhapāla for twelve years; the Venerable Ānanda for fifteen years, the Venerable Rāhula for twelve years; the Venerable Bākula for eighty years; the Venerable

Nāḷaka (the one who practised self-denial *Moneya* to perfection) for as long as he lived. (i.e., till his final decease, *Parinibbāna*).

- (vi) If a certain Dhamma object about mind or matter tends to arouse defilements such as *rāga* attachment in the mind of a bhikkhu who thinks about that object; or tends to arouse covetousness in him, that thought is an unworthy one; he should not entertain such a thought. If a certain thought promotes kind feelings towards others such as, "May all beings be well, be free from trouble, etc.", as in the case of the three bhikkhu elders, that thought is a worthy one; he should nurture such a thought, such a Dhamma object.

### The story of the three Bhikkhu elders.

Once three bhikkhu elders made a vow among themselves on the eve of the rains-retreat period not to indulge in demeritorious thoughts such as sensuous thoughts (during the three-month *vasa* period) and made a certain monastery their rains retreat.

At the end of the rains retreat, on the *sangha* assembly day on the full moon of Thadingyut (October) Sangha Thera put this question to the youngest of the three; "How far did you allow your mind to wander during those three months of the rains-retreat?" To which the youngest of the *theras* replied: "Venerable Sir, during the three months I did not allow my mind to wander beyond the precincts of the monastery." The bhikkhu's admission implies that the mind wandered sometimes within the monastery precincts which may mean sense-objects such as visible objects that came into the monastery precincts but since there were no female visitors (lit., forms of uncommon nature) his mind had no occasion to wander about through unbridled thoughts.

The Sangha elder then asked the second thera; "Friend, how far did you allow your mind to wander during these three months of the rains retreat?" To which the thera replied: "Venerable Sir, during the three months I did not allow my mind to wander beyond my room."

Then the two junior *Theras* asked of the Sangha *Thera*: "Venerable Sir, how far did you allow your mind to wander during the three

months of the rains-retreat?" To which the Sangha *Thera* answered: "Friends, during the three months I did not allow my mind to wander outside of my body." That indeed was true; the Sangha elder did not do anything (i.e., physically verably or mentally) without being mindful of, without having first reflected on the action that was about to take place so that there was no moment left for any thought to wander forth outside the body. The two junior *theras* said to the senior most elder: "Venerable Sir, you are wonderful!"

The moral: the type of thought that occurred to these three bhikkhu elders is of the worthy type; a bhikkhu may well entertain such thoughts.

(End of the twelfth question and answer.)

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### **The thirteenth question and answer on the various elements.**

Thus having received the Bhagava's discourse with delight, Sakka, King of Devas, further asked his next question:

"Venerable Sir, do all samanas and brahmanas have the same teaching, the same practice, the same view, and the same ultimate goal?"

To this the Bhagava's reply was:

"Sakka, King of Devas, not all of the samanas and brahmanas have the same teaching, the same practice, the same view, and the same goal."

(Herein, Sakka puts this question because he has known, prior to his becoming an Ariya, that the so called samanas and brahmanas have diverse teaching, practices, views and goals which he now understands them as vain. He wants to know the reasons why there are such a diversity of teachings, practices, views and goals among them.)

Sakka further asked: "Venerable Sir, what is the reason for the diversity of teachings, practices, views, and goals among all samanas and brahmanas?"

And the Bhagavā replied:

"Sakka, King of Devas, all beings in this sentient world are of various dispositions. Whatever attracts their fancy, these beings hold on to it, firmly believing it to be the only truth, and rejecting all other views as vain. That is why all of the samanas and brahmanas have no common teaching, no common practice, no common view, and no common goal."

(Individual dispositions differ among persons. When one wants to go, another wants to stand; when one wants to stand another wants to lie down. It is difficult to find two individuals of the same disposition. If dispositions differ among one another, regarding even postures, how could views, practices and teachings be the same among them? The Bhagavā points out this diversity as the reason for the differences in teachings, practices, views and goals among samanas and brahmanas. )

#### (14) The fourteenth question and answer on the final crossing over.

Further, Sakka asked this question of the Bhagavā:

"Venerable Sir, do all samanas and brahmanas attain the Indestructible (i.e., *Nibbāna*) where they can find refuge and where all yokes, bonds are overcome? Do all of them practise the noble Ariya Path which is the right practice for the attainment of the Indestructible? Do they have the Indestructible as the final goal?"

(Sakka's question is about *Nibbāna* as the ultimate reality, and about whether holders of divert views take up the practice of the Ariya Path to attain *Nibbāna*.)

The Bhagavā answered:

"Sakka, King of Devas, not all samanas and brahmanas attain the Indestructible (i.e., *Nibbāna*) where they can find refuge and where all

yokes, bonds are overcome. Not all of them practise the noble Ariya Path which is the right practice for the attainment of Nibbāna; nor have the Indestructible as their final goal."

(Since individual disposition differ among the so-called samanas and brahmanas, their teachings, practices, views and goals differ. Therefore how could they attain Nibbāna, the ultimate reality as their common goal? The Bhagavā makes it clear in this reply that only those who practise the Ariya Path can attain Nibbāna.)

Sakka then put his last question thus:

"Venerable Sir, what is the reason that not all samanas and brahmanas attain the Indestructible (*Nibbāna*) where they can find refuge and where all yokes, bonds are overcome? Why is it that they do not practise the noble Ariya Path which is the right practice for attainment of the Indestructible? Why is it that not all of them have the Indestructible as their final goal?"

And the Bhagavā replied:

"Sakka, King of Devas, those bhikkhus who are free from defilements through the Ariya Path which causes the extinction of craving (in other words, those bhikkhus who are inclined to *Nibbāna* where all craving is extinct) attain the Indestructible (*Nibbāna*) where they find refuge and where all yokes, bonds are overcome. They are the ones who practise the noble Ariya Path which is the right practice to attain *Nibbāna*, the Indestructible. They have *Nibbāna*, the Indestructible, as their final goal. That being so, not all samanas and brahmanas attain Nibbāna the Indestructible where they find refuge and where all yokes are overcome. Not all of them practise the noble Ariya Path which is the right path to attain Nibbāna the Indestructible. Not all of them have *Nibbāna*, the Indestructible as their final goal."

(Thus took place a verbal intercourse between the noblest of *Ariyas* and Sakka, an *Ariya*, on the subject of *Nibbāna*, the ultimate reality. They spoke the language of the *Ariyas* which is magnificent as a fully blossomed sal tree. For us worldings that language and its meanings are not comprehensible because our field of knowledge does not go beyond the sense faculties. (In other words, our range of perception is limited

to our senses only.) The point the Bhagavā makes here is that only *Arahats* who have been liberated from defilements through the Ariya Path that destroys craving attain *Nibbāna*, the ultimate reality. Not all samanas and brahmanas attain *Nibbāna*.

The Buddha's Teaching has *Nibbāna* the ultimate reality as its culmination. Hence when the question of *Nibbāna* has been dealt with fully, there is the end of all questions.

On heaving the Bhagava's reply, Sakka was delighted and said, "Venerable Sir, that indeed is so. O Well-spoken One, that indeed is so. Having learnt the Bhagava's answer, I have been rid of all doubts about this question. I have no uncertainties now! "

(End of the fourteenth question and answer)



After receiving the Bhagava's discourse with much delight, Sakka, King of Devas said to the Bhagavā:

"Venerable Sir, craving is a disease, an open sore, a dart (thorn): Craving attracts all beings to endless existences, thereby sending them now to high planes of existence and then to low planes of existence.

"Venerable Sir, whatever question I did not have even the opportunity to ask of the so-called samanas and brahmanas outside this Teaching, the Bhagavā has given me the answer. The Bhagava has by this answer cleared up all darts of doubt that had long been troubling me."

The Bhagavā then asked Sakka:

"Sakka, King of Devas, do you remember having put these questions to other samanas and brahmanas?"

"Yes, I do, Venerable Sir."

"What was their answer? If it is not too much trouble, may we know it?"

"When the Bhagavā or someone as great as the Bhagavā ask (lit, sits before me), there is no trouble for me to answer."

"Very well, then Sakka King of Devas, let us hear what you have to say."

"Venerable Sir, I had put these questions to those samanās and brahmanās whom I took for forest dwellers. They were not only unable to answer my question but even asked me who I was (that could ask such profound questions). I said I was Sakka, King of Devas and then they (were interested and) asked me what merit I had acquired to become Sakka. I told them the seven meritorious acts, as I had learnt, that lead to Sakkahood. Then they were greatly pleased, saying, "we have seen Sakka in person, and we have also got Sakka's answer to our questions!" Indeed, Venerable Sir, those samanās and brahmanās were merely my pupils. I had never been their pupil.

"Venerable Sir, I am now, an *Ariya* disciple of the Bhagavā, a Stream Enterer who is for ever safe against the four miserable existences of *apāya* and whose fortunate destiny is thus assured, and who is on the way to the three higher *Maggas*."

### The delightful satisfaction of Sakka.

Then the Bhagavā asked Sakka whether he had previously experienced delightful satisfaction of this nature. Sakka replied, "yes, Venerable Sir, I remember having experienced delightful satisfaction of this nature previously."

"What kind of delightful satisfaction do you remember having experienced before?"

"Venerable Sir, in the past there took place a great battle between the devas of Tavatimsa and those of the Asuras. The Tavatimsa devas came out winners, and the Asuras were losers. Then, as victor, I was very glad to reflect on the fact that the Tavatimsa devas would now have the special privilege of enjoying both their own food pertaining to the Tavatimsa realm as well as the food pertaining to the Asura realm. (However) Venerable Sir, my delightful satisfaction then was pleasure bolstered up with armed might. It was not helpful for disenchantment with the wheel of existence, for destroying desire, for cessation of the



round of rebirth, for abandoning attachment, for special apperception, for an understanding of the Four Truths, for the realization of *Nibhāna*.

"Venerable Sir, the delightful satisfaction that I now have on hearing the Bhagava's discourse is of a (superior) kind that does not need bolstering up with armed might. It is indeed conducive to disenchantment with the wheel of existence, to destroying desire, to cessation of the round of rebirth, to abandoning attachment, to special apperception, to an understanding of the Four Truths, to the realization of *Nibhāna*."

### The six benefits for Sakka on attaining Stream-Entry Knowledge.

Then the Bhagavā asked, "Sakka, King of Devas, what benefits do you see (in your present status) so that you speak of its great delight?"

"Venerable Sir, I see six great benefits (in my present Ariyahood) and that is why I extol it so much. The six are.

- (i) *Idheva tiṭhamānassa devabhūtassa me sato  
Punarāyu ca me laddho evaṇ jānāhi mārisa.*

"O Venerable One who is free from *dukkha*, even while I have been listening to your discourse in this Indasāla Cave, I have been reborn as Sakka (by the name of Maghava) and will live thirty-six million years by human reckoning in the Tavatiṃsa deva realm. May the Venerable One who is free from *dukkha* take note of it. Venerable Sir, this is the first benefit that is behind extolling of my Ariyahood."

- (ii) *Cutāhaṃ diviyā kāyā āyuṇ hitvā anānusaṇṇi  
Amūlo gabbhameṣṣāmi yattha me ramatī mano.*

"O Venerable One who is free from *dukkha*, when I die from deva existence and have relinquished the thirty six million years' life by human reckoning of Tavatiṃsa deva existence, I shall without any bewilderment (at death) be reborn in the human world in a high class or clan of my own preference. Venerable Sir, this is the second benefit that is behind my extolling of my Ariyahood."

(When an Ariya passes away and takes another rebirth, he is never in a bewildered state. Mindful and with clear comprehension, he passes away from one existence to another which is always in a fortunate destination. If reborn in the human world, he always belongs to the royal (warrior) caste or brahmin caste . Sakka has a desire for such noble birth when he reappears as a human being.)

(iii) *Svāhaṃ amūḥhapaññassa vihariṃ sāsane rato  
Nāyena viharissāmi sampajāno paṭissato.*

"O Venerable One who is free from *dukkha*, taking delight in the Teaching of the Perfectly Enlightened One, I (known by the name of Maghava) shall (enjoying, physical health) dwell in mindfulness and clear comprehension befitting an *Ariya*.

"Venerable Sir, this is the third benefit that is behind my extolling of my Ariyahood."

(iv) *Nāyena me carato ca sambodhi ce bhavissati  
Aññātā viharissāmi sveva anto bhavissati.*

"O Venerable One who is free from *dukkha*, in me (known by the name of Maghava) who thus dwell in the noble practice of an *Ariya*, if *Sakadāgmi magga* arises, then, to gain still higher Path-Knowledge of *Anāgāmi magga* and *Arahatta magga* I shall dwell in still further practice of the Path. When *Sakadāgāmi magga* is attained that will be my last human existence.

"Venerable Sir, this is the fourth benefit that lies behind my extolling of my Ariyahood."

(v) *Cutāhaṃ mānusā kāyā āyuraṃ hitvāna mānusam  
Puna deva bhavissāmi devalokamhi uttamo.*

"O Venerable One who is free from *dukkha*, when I (known by the name of Maghava) pass away from the human existence and leave behind the human body, relinquishing the human life, I shall be reborn in the Tavatimsa deva realm as Lord of Devas.

"Venerable Sir, this is the fifth benefit that lies behind my extolling of my ariyahood."

(vi) *Te paṇḍitarā devā akanitthā yassasino*  
*Ante me vattamānamhi so nivāso bhavissati.*

"O Venerable One free from *dukkha*, those devas, the *Ariya* brahmas of the *Akanitthā* realm, the topmost of the planes of existence, is superior in all respects such as life span and knowledge to all other devas and brahmas. They have big followership. When I have my last existence I (known by the name of Maghava) shall be reborn in that *Akanitthā* brahma realm.

"Venerable Sir, this is the sixth benefit that lies behind my extolling of my Ariyahood."

(The six benefits that Sakka enjoys on hearing the discourse in the *Indasāla* Cave are:-

(i) Attaining Stream-Entry and instant rebirth, there and then, as Sakka again; (ii) On passing away from that Sakka existence, rebirth in a noble lineage in the human world in a non-bewildered state, his final enlightenment as an *Arahat* being limited to seven existences only; (iii) Continued practice of the path in his future existences without bewilderment; (iv) Attaining *Sakadāgāmi Magga* in a human existence which will be his last human existence; (v) On passing away from that last human existence, being destined to become Sakka (for the third time); (vi) Attaining *Anāgāmi Magga* as Sakka, and being reborn in progressively higher existences in the five Pure Brahma realms namely: *Aviha* realm, *Atappa* realm, *Sudassā* realm, *Sudassī* realm, *Akanitthā* realm; and to attain *Arahatship* in the *Akanitthā* realm.

The Sixth benefit which is to result in rebirth in the five Brahma worlds should be noted here particularly for the immense durations of sublime existence in the Pure Abodes: As an *Anāgāmi puggala* (Non - Returner) Sakka will enjoy the ecstasy of a Pure Brahma in the *Avihā* realm for a thousand aeons (*mahā kappas*); passing away from that realm, he will be reborn in the *Atappā* realm for two thousand aeons; then in the *Sudassā* realm for four thousand aeons; then in the *Sudassī* realm for eight thousand aeons; and thence in the *Akanitthā* realm for

sixteen thousand aeons - thus a total of thirty one thousand aeons of the ecstasy of the Brahma existence.

In the matter of the kind of extraordinarily prolonged existence full of ecstasy there are only three outstanding Ariya disciples under Gotama Buddha's Teaching, namely; Sakka, Anāthapīṇḍika and Visākhā. They enjoy similar life-span.

Sakka concluded with these words:

"Venerable Sir, it is because I see these six benefits that I extol the delightful satisfaction (of my attainment)."

Then Sakka repeated his former experience with the forest-dwelling samanas and brahmanas who failed to answer his questions, but how he had to teach them the seven modes of conduct leading to Sakkahood. (Please see his story related to the Bhagavā earlier on.)

Then he sang in praise of the Buddha in the following stanzas:

*Taṇhā sallassa hantāraṃ buddhaṃ appaṭipuggalaṃ  
Ahaṃ vande mahāvīraṃ buddhamādicca bandhunaṃ*

"To the Buddha, the unrivalled One, Knower of the Four Truths, kinsman of the Sun (having Gotama clan as common lineage) (or in an other sense, being father of the sun in the propagation of the Supramundane), the One possessed of great endeavour, who has destroyed all darts of craving, the Perfectly-Enlightened One, I (known as Maghava) make my obeisance with raised palms.

*Yaṃ karomasi brahmaṇo samaṃ devehi mārisa  
Tadaṃ tūyaṃ dassāma handa sāmaṃ karoma te*

"O Venerable One who is free from *dukkha*, formerly we had paid our tribute to the Brahma, as with other devas; but from today onwards we shall give our offerings to you. Now we pay our obeisance to you!"

*Tvameva asi Sambuddho tuvaṃ satthā anuttaro  
Sadevakasmim lokasmim natthi te paṭipuggalo*

"O Venerable One who is free from *dukkha*, you alone are the Perfectly-Enlightened One, Teacher of devas and men. There is none to

equal you in personal glory or in the embodiment of the Dhamma in all the worlds of sentient beings including the world of devas."

Sakka's reward to Pañcasakkha deva .

After singing in praise of the Buddha in those three stanzas, Sakka said to Pañcasikha:

"O Pañcasikha, through your good offices, we have the privilege of seeing the Homage-Worthy, the Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddha. I am greatly indebted to you for this. I appoint you to your father's office (as Chief of Gandhabba devas). You will be the (next) chief of Gandhabbas. I also betroth you to Sūriyavaschāsā, the maiden of exquisite features whom you deeply yearn for."

### Sakka's Joyous Utterance.

After that Sakka was so glad that he slapped the good earth (as though a person were to slap his friend's arm in intimate affection) and uttered these words of joyous expression thrice:

*Namo tassa bhagavato Arahato sammā sambuddhassa:*

"Veneration to the Exalted One, the Homage- Worthy, the Perfectly Self-Enlightened."

(In this connection, Sakka slapped the good earth because (he won the Supramundane,) while he remained on the earth and also because this great earth has produced such a marvellous personage as the Buddha, so that he had a profound regard for the good earth.)

After listening to the Bhagava's answers, Sakka acquired the Eye of the Dhamma, being able to dispel certain defilements and thereby understand that "whatever is in the nature of arising has the nature of perishing." He thus attained Stream-Entry, as also did the eighty-thousand devas who were in his company then.

This discourse, being a series of answers to Sakka's questions, is known (in the Piṭaka) as the Discourse Concerning Sakka's Questions, *Sakka Pañha*.

(End of Sakka Pañha Sutta, its background story)

**(Here ends Chapter Thirty-nine.)**

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## CHAPTER FORTY

### THE BHAGAVĀ DECLARES THE SEVEN FACTORS OF NON-DECLINE FOR RULERS.

(As we have said earlier on,) the Bhagavā spent the earlier twenty *vāsas* at various places and preached the noble Doctrine that led to the liberation of the multitudes; and spent the latter twenty four *vāsas* in Sāvatti only. After the end of the *vāsa* or rains-retreat the Bhagavā set out on journeys of three kinds of periphery (as described earlier on) and tamed those worthy of taming. The number of discourses and dialogues are as varied as they are wide so that they can not be treated fully within the confines of this work. Just as a drop or two of sea water would suffice to understand that the sea is salt, so also in this book only a few examples from the *suttanta* (i.e., discourses) can be given that should give the reader a fair idea of the richness of the Doctrine. Scholars who wish to gain further knowledge from the Buddha's extensive teachings are advised to read from the (Myanmar) translations of the Piṭaka (with the help of the Commentaries and Sub-commentaries We shall henceforth confine our narrative to the events and discourses that belong to the period extending from around the forty-fourth *vasa* onwards which was the period close to his realization of *parinibbāna*.)

At one time (when the Bhagavā had completed his forty-fourth *vāsa*) the Bhagavā of Illustrious Attributes was staying at the mountain abode up on Gijjakuṭa Hill near Rājagaha. (The place name Gijjakuṭa means 'Vulture Peak' probably derived from the shape of the peak, or from the fact that it was the roosting place of vultures.)

At that time King Ajātasattu (of Rājagaha) was very keen on invading Vesālī, the country of Licchavis. "I will exterminate them however powerful and mighty they may be, play havoc with them, cause their ruin," he was saying all the time, a haughty monarch as he was.

The reason for his deep-seated hatred of the Licchavis could be traced to some unhappy incidents thus:

Rājagaha and Vesali were two flourishing cities on either side of the River Gaṅga which flowed east and west, with Rājagaha on the

southern side and Vesāli on the northern side. There was a caravan station known as Paṭṭanagāma (The present-day Patna was probably founded on that place.) With Paṭṭanagāma in the middle, the region extending about half a *yojana* came under the domain of King Ajātasattu while the region of the same extent towards the other side of that region came under the domain of the Licchavis.

There were rich deposits of precious materials originating at the hillside near Paṭṭanagāma. As King Ajātasattu learnt about the treasures and was making plans to go there, the Licchavis got there first and took away all the treasures. When King Ajātasattu got there and learnt that the Licchavis had stolen a march on him, he went back home with great fury.

But in the following year too the Licchavis were ahead of King Ajātasattu in getting there and enjoying the find. King Ajātasattu's anger knew no bounds. He was obsessed with the thought of exterminating, destroying and ruining the mighty Licchavis. In all his four bodily postures he was cursing aloud. He even went so far as giving orders to his men to plan an expedition.

On second thoughts, however, he restrained his action. "War is disastrous to both sides. There is no clash of arms that do not result in loss of life (and property). By taking wise counsel I may not have harsh consequences. There is no one in the world greater in wisdom than the Buddha. Just now the Bhagavā is staying near my city, on his mountain abode on Gijjakuṭa Hill. I shall send a minister to the Bhagavā and seek advice, on my proposed expedition. If my plan is of any benefit to me the Bhagavā would remain silent; if it is against my own good the Bhagavā would say, "what good is it for the king to go on such an expedition?" Reflecting thus, he said to the brahmin Vassakāra (his Chief Minister):

"Here, brahmin, go to the Bhagavā. Pay homage at his feet and convey my message. Enquire after his health whether the Bhagavā is free from any affliction and disease, whether he is well and fit, and is well at ease. Say to the Bhagavā: 'Venerable Sir, King Ajātasattu of Magada, son of Queen Vedehī, pays homage at your feet. He enquires after the Bhagava's health-

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whether the Bhagavā is free from affliction and disease, whether the Bhagavā is well and fit, and is well at ease'. Then say to him: 'Venerable Sir, the king wishes to make war against the Vajjī princes, the Licchavis of Vesālī, and is making self-glorious declarations that he will exterminate the Vajjī princes, however powerful and mighty they might be, and that he will play havoc with them and cause their ruin.' And then carefully note what the Bhagavā says and report back to me. The Tathāgata never speaks false."

"Very well, Your Majesty," said the brahmin Vassakāra and drove to the Gijjakūṭa Hill amidst a splendid formation of carriages. Once there, he (ascended from the carriage) approached the Bhagavā, and after exchanging greetings and concluding courteous words of felicitation, sat at a suitable place. Then he said to the Bhagavā:

"Revered Gotama, King Ajātasattu of Magada, son of Queen Vedehī pays homage at your feet. He enquires after your health—whether you are free from affliction and disease, whether you are well and fit, and whether you are well at ease. Revered Gotama, King Ajātasattu wishes to make war against the Vajjī princes, the Licchavi of Vesālī, and is making self-glorious declaration that he will exterminate the Vajjī princes, play havoc with them, and cause their ruin."

### Seven factors of growth, non-decline for kings.

At that time the Venerable Ānandā was at the back of the Bhagavā, fanning him. (In this connection it may be pointed out that the Buddhas, by virtue of their infinite merit, do not feel too cold nor too hot. Ānanda's fanning the Bhagavā was merely an act of veneration.) When the Bhagavā had heard the brahmin's words he did not say anything to him but entered into a dialogue with the Venerable Ānandā thus;

(He said:) "Ānandā, do the Vajjī princes hold meetings frequently? Do they have meetings many times? What have you heard?"

(Ānandā:) "Venerable Sir, I have heard that the Vajjī princes hold meetings frequently, and that they have meetings many times."

**(i) The first factor of growth, non-decline.**

Ānandā, so long as the Vajjī princes assemble frequently and have many meetings, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

(Note: Frequent meetings' means three or more meetings every day. 'They have meetings many times' means never skipping a day without meeting.

The advantages of frequent meetings is that fresh information is always forthcoming from the eight directions. If up-to-date information is not forthcoming, unrest at remote places and border areas might go unnoticed at the capital; so also breach of law and order in the country might not be duly reported. If no prompt action is taken against lawless elements this will be taken as laxity on the part of those in authority and the law and order situation will deteriorate. This is a sure way of decline for rulers

If, on the other hand, frequent meetings are held, up-to-date information from all over the country can reach the capital and prompt action can be taken whenever necessary. The bad people will then know that they do not stand any chance against this sort of efficient administration and will disperse. This is a sure way of prosperity for rulers.)

**(ii) The second factor of growth, non-decline.**

"Ānandā, do the Vajjī princes assemble in harmony and do they disperse in harmony? Do they act in harmony in discharging their duties in the affairs of the Vajjī country? What have you heard?"

"Venerable Sir, I have heard that the Vajjī princes assemble in harmony and disperse in harmony, and that they act in harmony in discharging their duties in the affairs of the Vajjī country."

"Ānandā, so long as the Vajjī princes assemble and disperse in harmony and act in harmony in discharging their duties in the affairs of

the Vajjī country, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

(Note: 'To assemble in harmony' means never appearing late at the appointed hour of meeting on any excuse. When the time for the meeting is announced by gong or by bell, all turn up in time, leaving aside whatever activities they may be engaged in. If one happens to be taking his meal he must leave the table at once in the middle of his meal; if one happens to be dressing himself up he must attend the meeting even though not fully dressed up yet.

'To disperse in harmony' means leaving the meeting chamber all at the same time after the meeting has concluded. If some have left the meeting chamber and others were to remain the ones who have gone might harbour suspicion against those who remain, with the uneasy thought that they stay behind to make important decisions behind their back. This sort of suspicious speculation is poisonous for the rulers' mind.

In another sense: 'to disperse in harmony' means to be keen to undertake what is to be undertaken (as the follow up action consequent to the deliberations and decisions at the meeting). For example, if a rebellion needs to be quelled and someone is to take charge, everyone is eager to shoulder the responsibility.

'Harmony in discharging duties' means rendering every possible assistance among one another. For example, if one of the members is found to be falling short of his duty the others would send their sons or brothers to render help. Where a visitor needs to be entertained, the responsibility is not shirked but all join in the task. In meeting their individual social obligations too, whether for happy occasions or sad occasions, all the members act as one whole family.)

### **(iii) The third factor of growth, non-decline.**

"Ānandā, do Vajjī princes abstain from enacting ordinances that have not been enacted previously, and do they abstain from revoking what has been enacted previously, and do they follow the time-honoured Vajjī traditions and practices? What have you heard?"

"Venerable Sir, I have heard that the Vajjī princes abstain from enacting ordinances that have not been enacted previously, and that they follow the time-honoured Vajjī traditions and practices.

"Ānandā, so long as the Vajjī princes abstain from enacting ordinances that have not been enacted previously, and abstain from revoking what has been enacted previously, and follow the time-honoured Vajjī traditions and practices, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

(Note: 'Enacting ordinances' means imposing taxes and fines. Imposing fresh taxes and fines that were not done before, and not revoking traditional taxes and fines is an important principle for rulers. 'Following Vajjī traditions and practices' means acting in accordance with traditional code of justice. For instance, execution of accused persons without trial is a flagrant disregard of tradition and practice. Whenever fresh taxes and fines are enacted the people naturally resent it. They may even feel that they are fleeced and in that case they may leave the country in disgust and turn to robbery and crime in remote places, or some of the discontented lot may join gangs of bandits, cause strife in out of the way areas.

Revoking traditional taxes and fines will result in loss of revenue. This will render the rulers unable to meet state expenditures. The armed forces and civil servants will have reductions in their remuneration. This will lower their efficiency and the standards of their services will fall, effecting the might of the army.

If the time-honoured Vajjī traditions and practices are disregarded and people are executed without trial, relatives of the victims of injustice will bear grudge against the rulers. They may go to remote places and resort to crime themselves or may join gangs of bandits and roam the country. These are causes of decline for rulers.

In a country where the ordinances enacted are the same ones that have been traditionally enacted, the people will accept them without murmur. They will feel happy about their obligations and go about their normal activities, such as agriculture and trading.

Where rulers do not revoke traditional taxes and fines their revenues in kind and in money are flowing in every day. The armed forces and civil servants enjoy their usual remuneration; they are properly provided and made happy. Their services remain as trustworthy and dependable as in the olden days.

In Vajjī system of justice there were stages of careful scrutiny in the administration of criminal justice. When a man was brought before the authorities accused of theft, he was not put into custody but was properly examined. If there was no proof of theft he was allowed to go. If someone was suspected of a crime he was handed to the officials of the justice department. He was given a proper hearing and if found not guilty he was released. If the judges suspected him of the crime he was referred to a panel of learned persons well versed in social ethics. If the panel of learned persons found him not guilty he was released. If they considered him not free of fault he was referred to a review board of eight jurors (who belonged to the eight categories of families with an honourable tradition and who were free from the four kinds of improper official conduct. If the review board found him not guilty he was released; if he was not free from blame he was committed to the king through the Commander-in Chief and the Heir-apparent. If the king found him not guilty he was released. If he was not free from blame the traditional criminal code, 'dhammathat', was caused to be read in his presence. The code contained specific descriptions of acts of crime with specific punishments attached to them. The king ascertained the nature of crime the man had committed that answered the description in the list of crimes in the code, and the prescribed punishment was meted out to him.

The Observance of the Vajjī tradition described above was very reassuring to the people. When one of their kith and kin was punished for a crime the people did not blame the Vajjī princes. They knew the king had dispensed justice and that the fault lay with the perpetrator only. Being satisfied that they had full protection of the law, they went about their usual business honestly. This adherence to the time-honoured system of justice is thus a factor of progress for rulers.)

**(iv) The fourth factor of growth, non-decline.**

"Ānandā, do Vajjī princes treat their elders with courteous regard, deference, esteem and veneration, and do they consider that the advice of elderly people are worth listening to? What have you heard?"

"Venerable Sir, I have heard that the Vajjī princes treat their elders with regard, deference, esteem and veneration, and that they consider the advice of elderly people are worth listening to."

"Ānandā, so long as the Vajjī princes treat their elders with regard, deference, esteem, and veneration, and consider that the advice of elderly people are worth listening to, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

(The terms 'regard, deference, esteem and veneration', all denote a deep sense of respect, indebtedness, genuine affection and humility. 'To listen to their advice' means to seek their counsel twice or thrice every day

If young princes do not have a sense of respect for their elders and do not go to them for advice they will be ignored by the elders, and lacking proper guidance, they will tend to indulge themselves in sensual pleasures and forget their princely duties, thus leading to their ruin.

Where princes hold their elders in esteem the latter will advice them on state craft, pointing out the traditional practices. In military strategy they have practical experience so that in a given situation they can give sound guidance such as how to advance, how to retreat. Drawing on the rich experience and mature wisdom of their elders, the princes can thus carry on their proud tradition, perpetuating their national glory.

**(v) The fifth factor of growth, non-decline.**

"Ānandā, do the Vajjī princes refrain from carrying away by force women and girls and keeping them? What have you heard?"

"Venerable Sir, I have heard that the Vajjī princes do not carry away by force women and girls and keep them."

"Ānandā, so long as the Vajjī princes refrain from carrying away by force women and girls and keeping them, they are bound to prosper, there is no reason for their decline."

(Herein, where the rulers forcibly take any woman or girl without consent the people will be very angry. "They have taken away a mother from our house!" "They have taken away our girl whom we have nurtured with such great devotion!" "They have kept them at the palace!" People will complain. They will leave the country, go to the remote regions and become criminals themselves, or they may join gangs of bandits and roam the country. This is a cause of decline for rulers.)

Where the rulers do not forcibly take away women and girls and keep them, the people are free from molestation and anxiety and they go about their usual business. They contribute to the wealth of the rulers. So, restraint of rulers is a factor for their progress.)

**(vi) The sixth factor of growth, non-decline.**

"Ānandā, do the Vajjī princes hold in respect, reverence, honour, and veneration their traditional shrines within and without the city? Do they see to it that appropriate offerings and oblations are made at those shrines as of yore, without remiss? What have you heard?"

"Venerable Sir, I have heard that the Vajjī princes hold in respect, reverence, honour, and veneration their traditional shrines within and without the city. They see to it that appropriate offerings and oblations are made at those shrines as of yore, without remiss."

"Ānandā, so long as the Vajjī princes hold in respect, reverence, honour, and veneration their traditional shrines within and without the city, and see to it that appropriate offerings and oblations are made at those shrines as of yore, without remiss, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

(Where the rulers do not venerate the traditional shrines whether inside or outside of the city and are remiss in making the customary offerings and oblations that are due to them, the guardian spirits do not afford them protection. Although the

guardian spirits are not able to cause fresh misfortune to the people, they can aggravate the existing misfortune such as a worsening in coughs and headaches. In time of war they do not join forces against the enemy. Thus the rulers stand to meet with decline.

Where rulers do not neglect the customary offerings and oblations that are due to guardian spirits at the traditional shrines the latter give them protection. Although the guardian spirits are not able to bring fresh fortunes to the people they can attenuate the existing misfortune such as causing immediate relief in coughs and headaches. In time of war they join forces with the local combatants. They may cause delusion to the enemy into thinking that the local army is twice or thrice its actual numbers; or they may show up terrifying sights before the enemy. Keeping the traditional guardian spirits in their good mood through customary offerings and oblations is a factor of prosperity for rulers.)

**(vii) The seventh factor of growth, non-decline.**

"Ānandā, do the Vajjī princes see to it that Arahats are given suitable protection and security so that those Arahats who have not yet come to the Vajjī country may come, and so that those Arahats who have already come may live in the Vajjī country in a genial atmosphere? What have you heard?"

"Venerable Sir, I have heard that the Vajjī princes make careful provisions for the protection of and security for Arahats so that those Arahats who have not yet come to the Vajjī country may come and so that those Arahats who have already come may live in the Vajjī country in a genial atmosphere."

"Ānandā, so long as the Vajjī princes see to it that Arahats are given suitable protection and security so that those Arahats who have not yet come to the Vajjī country may come, and so that those Arahats who have already come may live in the Vajjī country in a genial atmosphere, they (the princes) are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."



(In this matter 'protection' means necessary measures to ensure safety 'Security' means safeguarding the peace and friendly atmosphere. For noble persons their protection and security need not be provided using a powerful armed guard. What is needed is to make sure that annoyance is not caused to these noble ones by such improper ways as felling of trees near their monastery, hunting or fishing in the vicinity. Careful provisions for the protection and security are intended to guarantee a genial atmosphere for Arahats. They reflect the friendly attitude of the Vajjī princes towards the noble ones.

Where the rulers of a country do not have a friendly attitude towards Arahats who have not yet come to their country it is due to their lack of faith in the Triple Gem. In that case when bhikkhus come to their country they would not welcome them, would not go to them and pay homage, would not converse with them cordially, would not ask questions concerning the Doctrine, would not listen to their discourse, would not make offerings to them, would not hear the joyous remarks of the donee-bhikkhus, and would not arrange for their stay. They earn the reputation that such and such a ruler has no faith in the Triple Gem; when bhikkhus come to their country they would not welcome them, ... p ... would not arrange for their stay. Due to this ill repute bhikkhus do not travel by the city gate of such a ruler, and if they cannot avoid using the road that passes by the city of that ruler, they would not enter the city. And thus there is no coming of Arahats who have not yet come to that city.

If those bhikkhus who have already come to that city do not find a genial atmosphere the bhikkhus will feel that they have come to a wrong place. "Who would live in such an unfriendly city where the rulers are so disrespectful?" they would say, and leave the place. Where a place is shunned by bhikkhus due to non-arrival of bhikkhus and departure of bhikkhus who have already come, there, the place becomes devoid of bhikkhus. Where bhikkhus do not stay, guardian spirits do not stay either.

Where guardian spirits do not stay, demons have the run of the place. Where the demons thrive strange diseases that are not known previously are caused by them. Opportunity for earning merit on account of seeing virtuous persons, seeking answers to doctrinal point, etc., is lost. This state of affairs is cause of decline for rulers.

The happy consequences of caring for the virtuous persons may be understood on the basis of the above unhappy consequences arising out of lack of such caring.)

Then the Bhagavā said to the brahmin Vassakāra, Chief Minister of Magadha:

"Brahmin, on one occasion I taught the Vajjī princes these seven principle of progress while I was staying at the Sārandada shrine in Vesālī.

"Brahmins, so long as these seven factors of growth, non-decline remain with the Vajjī princes, and so long as the Vajjī princes carefully abide by these seven principles, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

Then the brahmin Vassakāra replied to the Bhagavā: "Revered Gotama, careful abidance of just any one of those factors of growth would ensure the prosperity of the Vajjī princes, allowing no cause whatever for their decline; how much more so if they carefully abide by all the seven factors!

"O revered Gotama, it is not likely that King Ajātasattu will conquer the Vajjī country simply by making war upon it, unless he can successfully seduce the Vajjī princes or sow seeds of dissension among them.

"O revered Gotama, we shall go now. We have many affairs to attend to."

"Brahmin, you know the time to go ( i.e., go when you wish )."

Then the brahmin Vassakāra, being greatly pleased with the Bhagava's words expressed his delight, rose from his seat and departed.

(*Sārandada Shrine* was prebuddhistic shrine set up to propitiate a demon of that name. With the advent of the Buddha, a monastery was built on the site, hence the monastery still was known as *Sārandada Shrine*.)

The brahmin's suggestion of seduction was meant to resort to acts of friendliness towards the enemy with lavish presents and messages of good will and amity. When the enemy was led to thinking that Ajātasattu was a real friend and remained unprepared for war, then only Chief Minister would advise the king to attack

His second idea of sowing seeds of dissension also was another strategy to weaken the enemy. Both the two ideas flowed out of the Buddha's seven factors of growth.

It might be asked, "Did the Bhagavā know that the brahmin Vassakāra would benefit from the discourse?"

The answer is, "Yes."

"And then why did the Bhagavā make the discourse?"

He made the discourse out of compassion for the Vajjī princes. To elaborate: The Buddha knew with his supreme wisdom that if he did not give the discourse to the brahmin, King Ajātasattu would invade the Licchavī Country, capture the Liccha princes and destroy them in two or three days time. By giving the discourse, he would first use the strategy of sowing dissension among the Licchavī princes and move to destroy them only after three years.

Three more years of survival would provide the Licchavi's opportunity for more meritorious deeds that would stand them in good stead. Hence the discourse given out of great compassion by the Buddha.

### The fall of Vesālī

When brahmin Vassakāra returned from the Bhagavā and got back to the palace King Ajātasattu asked him:

"Teacher, what did the Bhagavā say?"

"Your Majesty, according to Gotama Buddha, the Vajjians cannot be captured unless through deceit or through causing a split between them."

"If we employ deceit, we shall have to suffer losses in our armed forces. We had better try to cause a split among them. But Teacher, how should we go about it?"

"In that case, hold a meeting at the palace and announce your intention to make war with the Vajjians. Then I shall pretend to disapprove of the idea and leave the council chamber. At that you should feign anger with me and blame me openly. Thereafter I shall send gifts to the Vajjians in open daylight which you should promptly find out and confiscate. Then, branding me as a traitor, you should, instead of inflicting physical punishment, appear to choose to disgrace me, shave off my head and expel me from the city. Then I shall speak out defiant words to the effect ' that I know the defence system of your city; I will lead the Vajjians to destroy the city walls and ransack the city.' At those impertinent words from me you should show great anger and order my immediate departure."

King Ajātasattu carried out Vassakāra's scheme in detail.

The Licchavī princes learnt that Vassakāra had left Rājagaha. But they had fears of him as a crooked person. "Let him not cross the Gaṅgā to our shore", they protested strongly. However, some of the Licchavis said, "Vassakāra is in his plight because he spoke in our defence." So the Licchavis allowed the brahmin to cross the Gaṅgā.

Brahmin Vassakāra came up to the Licchavī princes and on being asked the reason for his banishment he told them what had taken place at the Rājagaha court. The Licchavis were sympathetic with Vassakāra. They thought he was treated rather too severely for such a small offence.

"What was your official status at the Rājagaha court?" They asked of Vassakāra.

"I was the Judge (i.e., Minister of Justice)."

"Then you keep that post at our court," the Licchavis told him. Vassakāra proved himself a very competent Judge. The Licchavis then learned the princely arts from him.

### **Vassakāra sows disrent among the Licchavī princes.**

When brahmin Vassakāra had established himself as the royal teacher, he started to put his scheme into effect. He would call up a Licchavī prince in private and ask some trifling thing such as.

"Do youths under your Royal Highness do cultivating?"

"Yes, they do " (would be the natural answer.)

"Do they yoke a pair of oxen?"

"Yes, they do."

The dialogue did not go further. The two parted. But when one of the Licchavis who saw the private discussion asked the Licchavī who had conversed with Vassakāra about the subject of their discussion, and was told the truth, the inquirer naturally could not believe it. "There must be something that he is holding to himself," he thought. A wedge had been thus placed between the two princes.

On another day brahmin Vassakāra took another Licchavī prince to privacy and asked, "Your Royal Highness what did you have for breakfast today?" And that was all. When some other Licchavī prince asked about the meeting and was told the truth it struck him as queer. Another wedge had been laid at another place.

On another occasion brahmin Vassakāra asked of another Licchavī prince in private, "Your Royal Highness is said to be in straitened circumstances, is that true?"

"Who told you so?" asked the Prince.

"Prince so and so told me."

And so ill will between two innocent Licchavī princes was created.

Yet on another occasion, brahmin Vassakāra said to another Licchavī prince in private, "Your Royal Highness is called a coward by someone."

" Who dare call me a coward?" asked the prince.

" Prince so and so did."

Thus enmity arose between two innocent Licchavī princes.

After three years of insidious scheming, brahmin Vassakāra brought the Licchavī princes to such a state that no two princes had faith in each other. Then to test the effectiveness of his scheme he had a public proclamation made, by the beat of the gong, for an assembly of the Licchavi princes. Each bearing a grudge against another, none of the princes was prepared to work together in unison as usual. "Let the well-to-do princes attend; we are the wretched ones," some would say. Or, "Let brave men go; we are but cowards." And on these diverse grounds of disunity, the assembly did not take place

Brahmin Vassakāra then sent a secret message to King Ajātasattu that it was the time to attack Vesālī. Ajātasattu gave the war cry by the beat of the gong and marched out of Rājagaha.

The ruling princes of Vesālī heard the news. "We will not let them cross the Gaṅgā!" - they declared and an assembly was called, but nursing the old grudges, no one attended. "Let the brave ones go." etc., they would say in derision.

When Ajātasattu's forces had crossed the Gaṅgā, the ruling princes of Vesālī declared, "we will not let them enter our city. We will close our city gates and stand firm. Come! to our defences now!" They shouted and tried to convene an assembly. Yet there was no response.

Ajātasattu's army met no resistance whatever from Vesālī whose city gates remained open. They massacred all the Licchavī princes and returned to Rājagaha as conquerors.

This is the story of how Vesālī fell.

(The events leading to the fall of Vesālī and its utter destruction took place during the three years beginning with the year of the passing away of the Bhagavā and two years after that. The story is reproduced here as described in the Commentary in this connection. May the reader, the virtuous follower of the Buddha, visualize in his imagination the scene of brahmin Vassakāra learning from the Bhagavā the seven factors of growth, non-decline for rulers at the

mountain abode of the Bhagavā atop mount Gijjhakūṭa, and his departure ( in all satisfaction ) from there.)

### **The seven factor of non-decline of Bhikkhu.**

#### **(The first set of seven factor)**

Even when the Bhagavā was giving a discourse on the Seven factors of growth for rulers to brahmin Vassakāra, he had in mind making a similar discourse for the guidance of bhikkhus in the interest of the prolongation of the Teaching, (i.e., the threefold training) which will be conducive to release from the round of existences, and realization of Nibbāna and hence are more beneficial than the seven factors of growth for rulers which are merely mundane principles.

Accordingly, soon after the brahmin Vassakāra had left, the Bhagava said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Go, Ananda, and let all the bhikkhus living around Rājagaha gather in the assembly hall."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," said Ānandā and arranged for a full gathering of bhikkhus. He sent bhikkhus endowed with special powers to inform those bhikkhus who dwelled at some distance from Rājagaha, and went personally to those bhikkhus who were living near by. When the bhikkhus had gathered in the Assembly Hall, Ānandā approached the Bhagavā, made obeisance to him, and standing at a suitable place, said to the Bhagavā; "Venerable Sir, the community of bhikkhus is assembled. It is for the Bhagava to go as and when he wishes. "

Then the Bhagavā went to the Assembly Hall and, taking the seat prepared for him, addressed the bhikkhus thus:

"Bhikkhus, I shall expound to you the seven factors of non-decline. Listen and pay attention to what I am going to say in detail."

"Very well, Venerable Sir, the bhikkhus responded, and the Bhagavā gave this discourse:

"(i) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus hold frequent meetings and have many meetings, they are bound to make progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

- "(ii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus assemble and disperse in harmony, and attend to the affairs of the Sangha in harmony, they are bound to make progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- "(iii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus do not prescribe rules that had not been prescribed by the Buddha, and observe well the training rules (*vinaya*) prescribed by the Buddha, they are bound to make progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- "(iv) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus show respect, deference, esteem, and veneration towards the bhikkhu elders who are of long standing and senior in bhikkhuhood, who have acquired the position of leadership among the Sangha, and consider that the advice of those bhikkhu elders are worth listening to, they are bound to make progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- "(v) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus do not yield to the power, the influence of *Taṇhā*, craving which arises in them and which leads to rebirth, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- "(vi) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus are willing to go into seclusion in remote forest dwellings, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- "(vii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus remain established in mindfulness themselves so that those co-practitioners of the bhikkhu practice who cherish morality and who have not yet come might come, and those (of similar nature) who have already come might live in peace and comfort they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"Bhikkhus, so long as these seven factors of non-decline remain with the bhikkhus, and so long as the bhikkhus live by them, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.'

(The discourse is not concluded yet.) The above seven factors are called the first set of seven factors of non-decline of bhikkhus.



- (i) Of those seven the first factor of assembling often is essentially the same as the first principle of progress taught to the Vajjians. Unless bhikkhus meet together often they cannot get to know what is going on at various monasteries. For instance, a certain *simā* in a certain monastery may be flawed for having mixed boundaries so that valid Sangha functions cannot be held in them, or that certain bhikkhus at a certain monastery are practising medicine, or acting as messenger for lay persons, or taxing the patience of their lay supporters by too many wants; or are pursuing gain with gain etc.

When laxity of bhikkhu conduct is not taken note of by the Sangha, evil bhikkhus may take undue advantage of it, and multiply their numbers with adverse consequences for the Teaching.

By the Sangha frequently meeting in assembly promptly, a faulty *simā* can be put right by Sangha acts so that it can function according to the Vinaya. When evil bhikkhus have formed a community of their own, Ariya bhikkhus who have attained *Magga Phala* can be despatched to teach them the ways and practices of the Ariyas; *Ariyavaṃsa Dhamma*; evil bhikkhus can be chastised by sending bhikkhus adept at the Vinaya rules. In such case, evil bhikkhus will know that the Sangha are vigilant and that they cannot thrive. Thus the progress for the bhikkhus in the threefold training is assured.

- (ii) Bhikkhus assembling in harmony means promptly responding to a call for Sangha congregation to carry out any Sangha business such as clearing a pagoda precincts or doing repair work to the shrines, or making vows or imparting instructions under the Vinaya rules. On no account should the signal for gathering of the bhikkhus be treated slightly. All personal engagements such as stitching robes, or baking an alms-bowl, or repairing the monastery should be dropped for the moment to attend the assembly. This attitude of always giving priority to the business of the Sangha assembly assures harmony in bhikkhu assemblies.

Dispersing in harmony means to rise from the meeting all at once and to break up without exception. If some bhikkhus were to stay on, those that have left the assembly hall might harbour suspicious thoughts

against those staying behind. "Those bhikkhus have real business to discuss between themselves only"; such misunderstanding will arise.

Dispersing in harmony also may mean rising up together eagerly to take responsibility to carry out the resolutions made at the assembly such as participation in Sangha acts concerning *simas* or volunteering for chastising an errant bhikkhu.

Attending to the affairs of the Sangha in harmony means a readiness on the part of every bhikkhu to live as a community, never being selfish. For instance, if a guest bhikkhu arrives, he should be given a warm welcome instead of being directed to another monastery, or making undue inquiries about his identity. This is particularly important in respect of a sick bhikkhu needing shelter and attention. Finding bhikkhu requisites, alms-bowl or robes or medicine for the needy is also an act of harmonious discharge of bhikkhu obligation. Where there is a dearth of learned bhikkhus at a certain place and there is the danger of the Pāli text or the correct meaning thereof going to extinction, the bhikkhus of that place should find a competent bhikkhu to teach the text and interpret the meaning thereof, and he should be looked after properly, by way of the four bhikkhu requisites.

(iii) In the third factor of non-decline prescribing a bhikkhu undertaking which is not in accordance with the Doctrine amounts to prescribing something that had not been prescribed by the Buddha.

An example of such undertaking: There is a certain provision in the Vinaya rules called *nīsīdanasantata* rule or *Purāṇasantata* rule in the *Pārājika Pāli*, 2-Kosiya Vagga (the fifth rule at page 336, Myanmar translation). When the Bhagavā was staying in Sāvatti at the Jetavana Monastery the Bhagavā said to the bhikkhus: "Bhikkhus, I wish to remain in seclusion for three months. No bhikkhu shall come to me except the one who brings my meals." The bhikkhus then made an undertaking among themselves that any bhikkhu who went to the Bhagavā, other than the one bringing food for the Bhagavā, should be liable to *Pācittiya* offence, and breach of this offence should be conveyed to the Sangha. Now this is overdoing the Bhagava's orders. Those bhikkhus had no right to classify breach of the Bhagava's words

on that particular occasion as one of *Pacittiya* offence, nor any right to declare (by their own undertaking) the breach a cause for confession. Such undertaking is against the Dhamma Vinaya, and amounts to prescribing something which the Buddha had not prescribed.

Disregarding what the Buddha prescribed is best illustrated by the case of Vajjīputtaka bhikkhus of Vesālī when they tried to introduce ten unlawful rules of their liking in flagrant disobedience to the Buddha's Vinaya rules. That event took place on the hundredth year of the Buddha's passing away. (See *Vinaya Cūḷavagga Pāli, Satta Satikakkhandhaka*).

During the time of the Buddha there were bhikkhus Assaji and Punabbasuka who intentionally infringed minor rules of the Discipline. However trifling the offence might be, non-observance of what the Buddha prescribed is nothing but non-observance.

In the story of Puraṇasantata the Venerable Upasena Arahat, (brother of Sāriputta) refrained from making a (novel) undertaking as a bhikkhu rule of conduct. This is a case of not prescribing rules that had not been prescribed by the Buddha.

The Venerable Yasa who headed the Second Synod taught the Dhamma Vinaya to the bhikkhus. This is an instance of not disregarding the training rules prescribed by the Buddha.

On the eve of the First Synod a lively discussion took place among the Sangha whether minor offences should be dropped from the code of Vinaya because the Buddha, when his passing away was near, gave this option to the Sangha after he was gone. The Venerable Kassapa, head of the First Synod, made a formal proposal at the Sangha congregation to uphold all minor offences as prescribed by the Buddha. This is a case of observing well the training rules prescribed by the Buddha.

(iv) With reference to this factor of non-decline; bhikkhu elders would give spiritual guidance only to those bhikkhus who are courteous and reverential towards them and who approach them twice or thrice every day. To those who willingly seek guidance by showing their admiration, the bhikkhu elders would impart practical

wisdom handed down from generation of teachers and essential points in the Doctrine that are fit to be taught only to the sincere and devoted pupils. If the bhikkhus do not show due respect and regard to the bhikkhu elders they will be deprived of the five benefits such as morality, and the seven properties of the *ariyas*, and so stand to great loss and decline

Those bhikkhus who are courteous and reverential towards the bhikkhu elders and approach them twice or thrice every day, gain knowledge from them in many ways. They get practical instructions (in insight meditation) such as, "you should go forward thus (being mindful and with clear comprehension), you should go backward thus; you should look straight ahead thus; you should look sideways thus, you should bend the arm thus, you should stretch the folded arm thus; you should carry the great robe and alms-bowl thus, etc." The bhikkhu elders would impart to them practical wisdom handed down from generations of teachers and essential points in the Doctrine worthy of only sincere and devoted pupils. They would teach them the thirteen ascetic practices and warn them against pitfalls in doctrinal controversy by explaining to them the moot points contained in the Ten Points of Controversy (*Abhidhamma Piṭaka*). Thus being established as good pupils of worthy teachers, those bhikkhus will gain the five benefits such as morality fulfilling the task of Arahatsip, the fruit of becoming bhikkhu.

- (v) As regards the fifth factor of non-decline, a bhikkhu who goes about from village to village, town to town, ever closely at the heels of their donors for the sake of acquiring the four bhikkhu requisites, is one who yields to the power of craving. One who yields to craving is on the decline in the benefits of bhikkhu practice such as morality. One who does not yield to craving progresses spiritually beginning with morality.
- (vi) As regards the sixth factor of non-decline, a remote forest dwelling is a place away from human settlements (not necessarily to be in a forest). One must be willing to dwell in seclusion at such a place. That indeed is so. In a monastery close to a town or village, when

a bhikkhu rises from jhāna he hears human voices, male, female or children's voices which spoil the tempo of concentration.

At a forest abode one wakes up in the morning to the sounds of animals and birds (which make for peace and contentment) which creates delightful satisfaction, *pīti*, and by wisely reflecting on that delightful satisfaction one can attain *Arahatta phala*. Thus the Bhagavā speaks in praise of a bhikkhu sleeping at a remote forest dwelling even more than a bhikkhu in jhānic absorption living near a town or a village. This is because the Bhagavā sees the potential for easier attainment of Arahathship in the forest-dwelling bhikkhu. That is why he says that as long as bhikkhus are willing to dwell in seclusion in forest abode they are bound to progress spiritually; and that there is no reason for their decline.

(vii) Regarding the seventh factor of non-decline, resident bhikkhus who do not welcome co-practitioners of the bhikkhu-practice who cherish morality are those who lack in faith in the Triple Gem. This type of bhikkhu would not greet guest bhikkhus on arrival, would not offer a seat, nor would fan them to cool them nor would do any act normally expected of a host-bhikkhu. 'A monastery where such bhikkhus live earns the reputation it deserves that such and such monastery is a place where bhikkhus lacking in faith in the Triple Gem live, that it is unfriendly to guest bhikkhus, and inhospitable. That reputation keeps away guest bhikkhus from entering that monastery even though they may happen to be passing by it. Therefore virtuous bhikkhus who have not been there never come to it. Those virtuous bhikkhus who have come, not knowing the inhospitable nature of the monastery, will soon find out that the place is not the right one for them to stay long, and will go away in disgust. In this way that monastery will become a place where other virtuous bhikkhus do not care to settle down. The result is that the resident bhikkhus of that monastery will lack any opportunity of seeing virtuous ones who can show them the Doctrine that would dispel doubts in them, teach them the training precepts, and preach them the excellent Doctrine. Those resident bhikkhus will then hear no new

discourse, nor will they try to retain through constant recitation whatever they have learnt. Thus the benefits of bhikkhuhood such as morality will dwindle day by day.

Resident bhikkhus who wish to see guest bhikkhus arrive at their monastery are those that have faith in the Triple Gem, so they would cordially greet those virtuous bhikkhus who come to them, would offer lodging, and ask them to join them on the alms-round. They get an opportunity to learn the Doctrine from the guest bhikkhus and have their doubts dispelled. They can hear discourses on the excellent Doctrine. The monastery resided by this type of bhikkhus earns a good reputation as a place where bhikkhus with faith in the Triple Gem live, as a hospitable place that honours virtuous guest bhikkhus. That reputation attracts virtuous bhikkhus to it. When they come the resident bhikkhus do whatever acts of hospitality is due. They would pay respects to the visiting bhikkhus who are senior to them, or would sit on their own seats around the visiting bhikkhus who are junior to them, and then ask whether the visitor plans to stay or to move on to another place. If the visitor says he intends moving on, the resident bhikkhus would invite him to stay on, pointing out that the place is a suitable one for them and that alms-gathering would also be no problem for him. If the visitor agrees to stay on, then the resident bhikkhus get the privilege of learning the Vinaya rules where the visitor is proficient in the Vinaya; or learning the Suttanta where the visitor is proficient in the Suttanta. Abiding by the instructions given by the virtuous visitors, the resident bhikkhus attain Arahatsip with the Four Discriminative Knowledges *Paṭi sambhidā Ñāṇa*. As for the virtuous guest bhikkhus, they say gladly, "When we first came here we thought of staying only a few days but since the resident bhikkhus make our stay pleasant, we shall stay here for ten or twelve years." Thus the benefits of bhikkhuhood such as morality increase.

### **The second set of seven factors of non-decline.**

Further, the Bhagavā said to the bhikkhus; "Bhikkhus, I shall expound to you another set of seven factors of non-decline. Listen and pay good attention. I shall explain it in detail."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," the bhikkhus responded. And the Bhagavā gave this discourse;

- (i) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus do not delight in and concern themselves with mundane activities or transactions, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- (ii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus do not delight in and seek enjoyment in idle talk, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- (iii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus do not delight in, and seek enjoyment in slothfulness, and are not fond of sleeping, they are bound to progress (spiritually) there is no reason for their decline.
- (iv) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus do not seek enjoyment in company of associates, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- (v) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus do not have any evil desire to make pretentious claims to attainment or to virtue, and do not yield to such evil desire, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- (vi) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus do not associate with evil friends or evil companions, and are not favourably disposed towards evil companionship, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- (vii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus do not stop halfway (before attaining arahatship) after comprehending the Truth in a small way, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"Bhikkhus, so long as these seven factors of non-decline remain with the bhikkhus, and so long as the bhikkhus live by them, they are bound to progress (spiritually; there is no reason for their decline."

(The discourse is not concluded yet. (The above seven factors are called the second set of seven Factors of non-decline of bhikkhus.)

- (i) Of those seven factors, the first factor, 'mundane activities' means assigning a robe for use, stitching robes, reinforcing the layers of a robe, making needle-container, stitching a sling for the alms-bowl, stitching the girdle, stitching a water-strainer, making a circular stand for the alms-bowl, making potsherd for scraping the feet, or making a broom etc.

Some bhikkhus devote to these matters all the time. This, pointed out as the first factor, is not proper. A bhikkhu should apportion his time for such matters, but he should have time for learning, study, cleaning the pagoda precinct; etc., as well as mark out some time for, meditation. A bhikkhu who uses his time judiciously is not one who enjoys worldly affairs.

- (ii) "Idle talk" means speaking fondly about women or about men, and any other flippant speech that is not conducive to *Magga Phala*. A bhikkhu who indulges in such petty talk all the time is one who seeks enjoyment in idle talk. A bhikkhu who discourses on the Doctrine by day and by night, who answers doctrinal questions, is called 'a reticent bhikkhu, one who is disciplined in speech.'

The Buddha has said: *Sammipatitānaṃ vo bhikkave dvayaṃ karaniyaṃ dhammī vā kathā ariyo vā tuṅhābhāvo*: "For you, bhikkhus, there are only two things to do when you meet one another: talking about the Doctrine, and remaining silent in deep contemplation."

- (iii) A bhikkhu who is given to sloth and torpor even while going, sitting or lying down, is one who seeks enjoyment in slothfulness and is fond of sleeping. A bhikkhu who might have a cat-nap due to earnest effort at bhikkhu practice that tires his body is not one who is slothful and is fond of sleeping.
- (iv) A bhikkhu who feels uneasy in being alone but is fond of company, one or more to talk to, is one who seeks enjoyment in company. A bhikkhu who delights in being alone in all the four bodily postures and who is perfectly at ease while alone is not one who is fond of company.



- (v) A bhikkhu lacking morality may claim morality; such a bhikkhu is called one who has an evil desire. A bhikkhu who does not have pretention to morality is not one who has an evil desire.
- (vi) A friend is one whom one loves; a companion is one who lives, goes or eats together with oneself.
- (vii) A bhikkhu who does not rest contented with purity of morality, or attainment of Insight-Knowledge, or attainment of jhāna, or attainment of Stream-Entry, or attainment of a Once-Returner, or attainment of a Never-Returner, (but relentlessly strives to attain Arahatsip) is one who is bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for his decline.

### The third set of seven factors of non-decline.

Further, the Bhagavā said to the bhikkhus: "Bhikkhus, I shall expound to you another set of seven factors of non-decline. Listen and pay good attention. I shall explain it in detail."

"Very well Sir," the bhikkhus responded and the Bhagavā gave the discourse:

- "(i) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus are instilled with confidence or faith grounded on conviction, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- "(ii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus feel ashamed of doing evil, *hirī* they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- "(iii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus have fear of wrong doing, *ottappa*, they are bound to progress (spiritually) there is no reason for their decline.
- "(iv) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus have vast learning, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- "(v) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus are diligent, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"(vi) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus are established in mindfulness, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"(vii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus are endowed with Insight-Knowledge *vipassanā paññā*, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"Bhikkhus, so long as these seven Factors of non-decline remain with the bhikkhus, and so long as the bhikkhus live by them, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline."

(The discourse is not concluded yet. The above seven factors are called the third set of seven Factors of Non-decline of bhikkhus.

(1) Of these seven factors, the first factor of non-decline.

(*Saddhā*; Conviction or faith, is of these 4 kinds:

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| (a) <i>Āgamanīya saddhā</i> | (b) <i>Addigama saddhā</i> |
| (c) <i>Pasāda saddhā</i>    | (d) <i>Okappana saddhā</i> |

(a) Refers to the strength of conviction that arises in a *Bodhisatta*, due to the noble striving after Perfection in ten ways *pāramī*, liberality *cāga* and conduct *cariya*, without external prompting, which puts unshakable faith in anything that deserves faith.

(b) Refers to the unassailable firm conviction of an *ariya* in the Four Ariya Truths due to having penetrative knowledge of the Path. (As an example we may cite Surambatṭha, about whom we shall describe under the chapter on the Sangha Ratanā.)

(c) Refers to the depth of conviction in the Triple Gem such as that of King Mahākappina. When he hears the words "Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha," he has a deep faith in the noble qualities of the Buddha such as "The Buddha has analytical knowledge of all things," etc. and this faith arises in him without being tutored by others about the attributes of the Buddha, the Dhamma, or Sangha.

(d) Refers to conviction after considered judgment regarding the Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha when others make mention about them. After well considered judgment the holder of this kind of

faith has unshakable conviction in the Triple Gem like that of an *Ariya* who has realized the Truth.

In the present context about the first factor of non-decline, *Pasāda saddhā* and *Okappana saddhā* are meant.

(2-3): In the second and third *Aparihāniya Dhammas*, the distinction between *hiri* and *ottapa* should be understood by means of this analogy: Let us say there are two balls of iron, the first is cool but is smeared with human excreta, the second is a red hot iron ball. A wise man would not touch the first iron ball lest he would pollute his hand, and he would not touch the second one lest his hand would get burnt. Likewise, a wise person abhors evil because he detests it for its shameful quality; his sense of shame to do evil is *hiri*. He dreads evil because he is full of apprehension about the consequences, both here and in the hereafter; his dread to do evil is *ottappa*.

(4) In the fourth *Aparihāniya Dhamma*, "a person of vast learning" means (i) one who is well read in the Pāli texts and literature *pariyatti*, and (ii) one who has penetrative knowledge of the truth that is, one who has gained Supramundane Knowledge *paṭiveda*. In the present context the first meaning should be taken.

Of the type of persons well read in the *Piṭaka* there are these four kinds, (a) a bhikkhu who needs no guidance in the interpretation of the *Piṭaka*, (b) a bhikkhu who is fit to head a monastery, (c) a bhikkhu who can give advice and instructions to bhikkhunis. (For details about these three kinds of persons, see Commentary on the *Vinaya* entitled *Samantapāsādikā*, in the explanation on the *Pacittiya* in *Ovāda vagga*.) (d) a bhikkhu who, like the Venerable Ānandā, is conversant with the whole of the three Piṭakas and can explain and discourse on any point in them. In the context regarding the fourth *Aparihāniya dhamma*, this fourth kind of learned person is meant. Only such a person can become established in the Good Practice *Paṭipatti* the Good Penetration *Paṭiveda saddhama*, because *Pariyatti Saddhama* is the foundation for both of them.

(5) In the fifth *aprihāniya dhamma*, the diligent person fulfils two aspects of diligence, physical and mental. Physical diligence refers to a

loner who shuns company and cultivates, in all the bodily postures, the eight subjects<sup>1</sup> on which diligence should be built. Mental diligence refers to a yogi who distances himself from the six sense-objects and dwells in the eight stages of jhāna, and who in other moments, in all the bodily postures, allows no defilements to enter his mind which is constantly vigilant. So long as bhikkhus are diligent both physically and mentally, they are bound to prosper; there is no possibility for them to decline.

(6) In the sixth *Aparihāniya dhamma*, "established in mindfulness" means persons who have such power of awareness as being able to remember all deeds or words that they had done or spoken long ago, such as in the case of Thera Mahā Gatimbaya Abhaya, Thera Dīghabhāṇaka Abhaya, and Thera Tipiṭakasūlābhaya.

Thera Mahā Gatimbaya Abhaya: He was a precocious child. At the traditional ceremony for feeding him with the auspicious milk-rice, on the fifth day after he was born, he made the sound "Shoo! Shoo!" to scare away the crow that tried to poke its head into the rice-bowl. When he grew up into an elderly bhikkhu, his pupils asked him, "Venerable Sir, what earliest physical or verbal action of yours do you remember?" He related the event of his shooing away the crow when he was just five days old.

Thera Dīghabhāṇaka Abhaya: When he was just nine days old, his mother, in trying to kiss him, bent down on his face. The big hairdo adorned with lots of Spanish jasmin buds loosened itself, letting handfuls of the flower buds drop on his bare chest. He remembers how that dropping of buds caused him pain then. When asked by his pupils about his earliest memories, he recounted this event that he experienced as a nine-day old child.

Thera Tipiṭakasūlābhaya: When asked about his power of memory, this Mahā Thera said, "Friends there are four gates to the city of Anurāttha. After the closing of the three of these gates, when only the fourth gate was allowed for the use of the people, I would ask the

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<sup>1</sup> eight subjects on which diligence should be built *Viriyaṃbha Vattu*.

names of each one going out in the morning. When they reentered the city by the same gate in the evening, I could call up all of their names."

(7) In the seventh *Aparihāniya dhamma*. Insight means the comprehension of the rising and dissolution of the five aggregates *udayabbaya paññā*. In another sense, mindfulness or awareness mentioned in the sixth *Aparihāniya dhamma* and insight mentioned in the Seventh refer to Right Mindfulness and Insight which are the foundation of Insight development. (i.e., awareness and perception while meditating).

#### The fourth set of seven factors of non-decline.

The Bhagavā then continued with the further seven factors of Non-decline thus;

- "(i) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus cultivate mindfulness, *sati* which is a factor of (necessary condition for) Enlightenment, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- "(ii) ... Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus cultivate investigative Knowledge of phenomena, *dhamma vicaya* . . . p . . .
- "(iii) ... cultivate Effort, *vīriya* a factor Enlightenment, . . . p . . .
- "(iv) ... cultivate Delightful Satisfaction, *pīti* a factor of Enlightenment, . . . p . . .
- "(v) ... cultivate Serenity, *passaddhi*, a factor of Enlightenment, . . . p . . .
- "(vi) ... cultivate Concentration, *samādhi* a factor of Enlightenment, . . . p . . .
- "(vii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus cultivate Equanimity, *upekkhā* which is a factor of Enlightenment, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"Bhikkhus, so long as these seven Factors of Non-decline remain with the bhikkhus, and so long as the bhikkhus live by them, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline."

(The discourse is not concluded yet. In these seven Factors of Enlightenment which should be cultivated by bhikkhus for progress, the Bhagavā teaches Insight development pertaining to *Magga-Phala* both at the mundane and supramundane levels.)

### The fifth set of seven factors of non-decline.

The Bhagavā then continued with the further seven factors of Non-decline thus;

- "(i) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus cultivate the perception of Impermanence, *anicca*, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- "(ii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus cultivate the perception of Non-Self (*anatta*) , . . . p . . .
- "(iii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus cultivate the perception of the foulness or impurity of the body *asubha* . . . p . . .
- "(iv) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus cultivate the perception of the faults of the *khandha* aggregates, *ādīnava* . . . p . . .
- "(v) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus cultivate the perception of abandonment, *pahāna* . . . p . . .
- "(vi) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus cultivate the perception of detachment from desire, *virāga* . . . p . . .
- "(vii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus cultivate the perception of cessation, *Nirodha*, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"Bhikkhus, so long as these seven factors of non-decline remain with the bhikkhus, and so long as the bhikkhus live by them, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline."

(The discourse is not concluded yet. Herein, the perception of impermanence means perception that arises with concentrated reflection on the impermanence of mind and body. The perception of Non-Self should be understood likewise. Insight into the impermanent nature of conditioned phenomena that pertain to the

three spheres of existence is Insight-Knowledge *vipassanā paññā*; the perception of that knowledge is worth cultivating since it is perception associated with Knowledge. It should be noted that the word 'perception' essentially means 'knowledge'. The same method of the Buddha's teaching should be understood regarding perception of non-self, etc.

(Of the above seven factors, the first five are mundane; the last two are both mundane and supramundane.)

### **The six factors of non-decline of Bhikkhus.**

Further, the Bhagavā said to the bhikkhus; "Bhikkhus, I shall expound to you six factors of non-decline. Listen and pay good attention. I shall explain it in detail."

"Very well Sir," responded the bhikkhus. The Bhagavā gave this discourse;

- "(i) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus show by their bodily action their kind regards towards fellow-practitioners of the Pure Life, both openly and in private, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- "(ii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus show by their speech their kind regards towards fellow-practitioners of the Pure Life, openly and in private, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- "(iii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus keep an attitude of kind regards towards fellow-practitioners of the Pure Life, openly and in private, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- "(iv) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus share with virtuous fellow-practitioners of Pure Life, whatever they receive righteously (i.e., the four bhikkhu requisites), least of all, even the alms-food collected in their alms-bowl, without enjoying it alone, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"(v) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus, both openly and in private, remain in observance of the same moral precepts *sīla* which lead to liberation from bondage to craving, *taṇhā*, which are extolled by the wise, which are not subject to misconception, which make for concentration, and which are unbroken, intact, unblemished, unspotted, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"(vi) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus, both openly and in private, remain in Ariya-Knowledge which leads to *Nibbāna* and which leads one guided by it to the end of the unalloyed woefulness (*dukkha*) of sentient existence), they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"Bhikkhus, so long as these six factors remain with the bhikkhus, and so long as the bhikkhus live by them, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline."

Thus the Bhagavā taught the assembly of bhikkhus five sets of seven factors of non-decline and a set of six factors of non-decline.

Regarding factors 1,2,3 above,

Showing kind regards by one's physical action means doing any deed with loving-kindness. Showing kind regards by one's speech means speech uttered with loving-kindness. Keeping kind attitude towards others means thinking kind thoughts towards them.

In this text although the Buddha taught that a bhikkhu's deeds, words and thoughts are to be expressions of loving-kindness towards fellow-bhikkhus, the same principle should govern all actions of lay persons too. The Buddha addressed the bhikkhus here simply because in the four kinds of assembly the assembly of bhikkhus is the noblest.

Thus a deed of a bhikkhu's loving-kindness may consist in doing personal service to fellow-bhikkhus. In the case of a lay person, going to worship at a shrine or at bodhi-tree, or going to the monastery to invite the Sangha to an offering ceremony, warmly greeting the bhikkhus on their alms-round, offering a suitable seat, seeing the bhikkhu off on his return, etc, are deeds of loving kindness.



A verbal action of a bhikkhu's loving kindness may be expressed in terms of preaching the Rules of the Vinaya, showing the methods of meditation, preaching the Doctrine, teaching the *Pitaka* as the most important action. With lay person, stimulating and organizing one's friends to do meritorious acts such as going to a pagoda or to the bodhi tree to worship, going to hear a discourse on the Dhamma, or to offer flowers or lights at the shrines; urging them to abide by the ten moral actions; or to offer ticket alms-food or to offer robes for the *vassa* period, or to donate the four bhikkhu requisites to the Sangha; (and then having invited the Sangha for the offering,) to organize and urge the friends to prepare the food, to lay the seats, to provide drinking water, to greet the Sangha, to conduct them to the seats prepared for them, and above all, to remind them to have the right attitude in serving the Sangha. All these verbal activities spring from loving kindness.

A mental action of a bhikkhu's loving kindness takes the form of diffusing good will, after having made the morning's ablutions, seated at a secluded place, and wishing all bhikkhus in the monastery well, that they all be free from trouble and ill will. On the part of lay persons they should diffuse a similar spirit of good will to all the Sangha "may the Sangha be well, may they be free from trouble and ill will." Such an attitude constitutes mental action springing from loving kindness.

### **Overt action and action in private.**

#### **(a) Of Deeds.**

Examples of overt action: Helping in the stitching of robes of fellow-bhikkhus, whether senior or junior to oneself; the younger bhikkhus washing the feet of bhikkhu elders or doing other personal service such as fanning, worshipping him etc.

Example of action in private: Looking after the personal property of fellow-bhikkhus-whether senior or junior to oneself which have not been properly looked after by the owner, and in doing so, doing it without having any disrespectful opinion about the lack of care on the part of the owner, but doing it as if it were one's own property that needs looking after.

**(b) Of Words.**

Example of overt verbal action: Addressing another bhikkhu in reverential terms. eg, the Venerable Thera Tissa.

Example of verbal action in private: In inquiring after a certain bhikkhu elder, asking as, "Where is our venerable Thera Deva?" or "Where is our venerable Thera Tissa?" When is he expected here?" (etc.)

**(c) Of Thoughts.**

Example of overt mental action:

When one looks at a fellow-bhikkhu with endearing eyes in a clearly pleased expression this is the outcome of loving kindness in the looker's mind; it reflects his thoughts. (The facial expression itself is bodily action springing from loving kindness.)

Example of mental action in private:

Wishing Venerable Thera Deva or Tissa (etc. to be well, etc., is mental action in private, due to loving kindness.

Regarding the fourth factor of Non-decline above:

'To enjoy something alone' means either; not sharing something as an *article* that is obtained, or not sharing something with a certain person or persons. In the first case, the extent one is prepared to share something is an instance of enjoying something alone in respect of an article. In the second case, one has in mind, "I shall share it with bhikkhu so and so; but I shall not share it with bhikkhu so and so": this is an instance of enjoying something alone in respect of person.

In this fourth factor, a bhikkhu who regards any item received as an offering to the Sangha as common property of all virtuous bhikkhus co-resident with him, considers thus: "This alms-food is of great value (morally); I shall not give it to lay persons since that would amount to 'pursuing gain with gain'; I shall not enjoy it alone first. I shall offer it to the Sangha; if anything is left after all the Sangha have partaken of it I shall then eat it. For this food has been obtained with the intention of becoming common property of the Sangha." Accordingly he first

announces the meal time for all the Sangha by the striking of the gong. This noble practice under the Buddha's Teaching is called *Saraniya Practice*.

### The Noble practice of fraternal living. (*Sāranīya*)

#### Notes on *Sāranīya* Practice

What kind of bhikkhu is competent or qualified to take up this *Sāranīya* Practice? An immoral bhikkhu is not in a position to practise *Sāranīya*. Only a Bhikkhu endowed with morality can take up the practice; the reason is: virtuous bhikkhus cannot receive offerings from a bhikkhu of immoral conduct; they will always refuse it.

Only a bhikkhu with impeccable morality is qualified to take up the *Sāranīya* Practice. Once taken up; the practice must be fulfilled without break, flawlessly. The details of the practice are given below:

Where a bhikkhu gives discriminately the alms-food to his mother, or father, or Preceptor, or any such person, he is sharing it with someone whom he is bound to offer. But his sharing is not *Sāranīya* Practice: it is merely removing an impediment, *patibodha*, by fulfilling an obligation, as is termed in the Teaching. That indeed is so. For *Sāranīya* practice is of a superior nobler way of sharing which is suitable only for a bhikkhu who is free from impediments, obstructions, personal obligations.

A practitioner of *Sāranīya* may give in fulfilment of his practice the share of his alms-food to a sick bhikkhu, or to a bhikkhu tending a sick bhikkhu, or a guest bhikkhu, or a way faring bhikkhu or a newly-admitted bhikkhu who has not learnt the proper way to robe himself or to hold his alms-bowl. After giving the alms-food to these types of bhikkhus, if any alms-food is left, he offers it to the bhikkhus beginning from the senior most of the bhikkhu elders who should be allowed to partake of it as much as they like (and not in a small quantity only). If the food runs out and if there is time to collect alms-food for the day, he may go on another round of alms-gathering and then continue the distribution of whatever food he has collected. If there is any food left after the distribution he eats it. If none is left and if there is no time to

go on another round of alms-gathering he stays without any food for that day and his sole sustenance then is the delightful satisfaction *piti* derived from the successful undertaking of the *Sāranīya* practice.

(Note that although the text mentions of sharing with virtuous fellow bhikkhus, a practitioner of the *Sāranīya* practice may deny his alms-food to an immoral bhikkhu, or he may, out of pity, give it to him, in which latter case it is not by way of fulfilling the practice.)

In actual practice the practitioner of *Sāranīya* practice will find it not too difficult if it is to be undertaken in the company of bhikkhus skilful in the practice, but will find it rather hard if in the company of bhikkhus not so skilled. The reason is as follows:

Where the associate bhikkhus are skilful in *Sāranīya* practice, those who have collected alms-food themselves do not partake of the practitioner's food, (considering the trouble that would otherwise cause to the practitioner). Other bhikkhus who do not get alms-food elsewhere would partake of the food just to satisfy their need. Thus no unnecessary burden is placed on the practitioner. Where the associate bhikkhus do not know how stringent the *Sāranīya* practice is, those bhikkhus who have got alms somewhere else would, under the influence of greed, also partake of the food offered by the practitioner. Other bhikkhus who do not get alms-food elsewhere would take more than what they actually need. In such a situation the practitioner has to make repeated rounds of alms-collection with-in the (morning) time proper to do so, and has, more often than not, to go without food, all his collection having been distributed to others.

### **Twelve year's continuous practice is the norm.**

This (self-assigned) task of feeding one's associates must be pursued for twelve years without break so that it can be called a success. A full twelve years self-denial regarding daily sustenance is the unique character of this practice.

If, (upposing) on the last day of the twelve years there should occur the slightest vexation in the mind of the practitioner, then he fails. For instance, if the practitioner were away to bathe, leaving his alms-bowl

containing alms-food gathered by him, and if it was seen by a senior bhikkhu and its contents distributed according to seniority of bhikkhu hood and nothing were left in it, the practitioner must be able to take it in the proper attitude. Otherwise, if he had the slightest indignant attitude towards his associates for leaving nothing for him, his twelve year long practice goes to waste. If he is still willing, he has to start it all over again for twelve more years. In this respect the rule is as stringent as in the case of the probationary service period of *Titthiyaparivāsa*; once broken, a fresh period must be undergone by the incumbent.

If the practitioner under the same circumstances, instead of being vexed, feels joy to know that his fellow bhikkhus have partaken of all his food, his practice is then accomplished; it is a success.

### **The benefits of fulfilling the *Sāranīya* practice.**

(i) The primary benefit in fulfilling the *Sāranīya* practice is the abandonment of covetousness *issa* and stinginess *macchariya* through his prolonged cultivation of overcoming these defilements. (ii) His charitableness having been established, he is adored by everyone. (iii) Since a strong desire to act in charity has the benign effect of bountiful fruit, in the present existence, the practitioner is blessed with the four requisites all the time. (iv) The twelve-year long practice of offering food to virtuous fellow-bhikkhus out of his alms-bowl has the effect of rendering his alms-bowl an inexhaustible source of alms-food: he can give as much as he wishes out of it without depleting it. (v) As the result of giving priority to the senior most bhikkhu elders in his act of charity for such a long period every day, whenever the common acquisitions of offerings are divided the best things go to his lot. (vi) As the result of the gladdening effect he had produced in others through his act of self-denial in offering food in them, whenever famine visits the land, *devas* are ready to help him out.

Some stories related to the *Sāraṇīya* practice.

(1) *Thera Tissa feeds fifty wayfaring bhikkhus.*

Thera Tissa was a forest dweller who lived in the forest abode known as Sena. His place for the alms-gathering was a village called Mahāgiri. A group of fifty theras who were on a pilgrimage to the Nāgadipa Shrine went on the alms-round in Mahāgiri village but they collected none. As they were leaving the village they met with Thera Tissa, the local resident bhikkhu who was entering the village for alms-food. Tissa asked the fifty theras whether they had got alms-food. The Theras did not give a straight answer but merely replied, "Friend, we had been on the alms-round there." Tissa knew that the Theras had got no alms-food and so he said to them, "May the venerable ones wait here till I come back." The theras then said to him, "None of us fifty bhikkhus got an alms-food there. How could you alone get it?" "Venerable Sir," Tissa replied, "resident bhikkhus can manage somehow; though not possessing great power, they know where alms-food can be collected."

The fifty thera remained waiting there

As Tissa entered Mahāgiri village the very first house was ready with the alms-food, the lady of the house had milk rice prepared to offer to Tissa. As soon as Tissa called in front of her house she poured the milk rice into the alms-bowl to the full.

Tissa returned to the group of Theras and respectfully offered the alms-food, addressing to the seniormost bhikkhu, "May the venerable ones accept my offering." The Theras looked surprised. "Fifty of us had been in that village, none having collected any alms-food whatever. This bhikkhu has got milk rice in no time. How could it happen?" These thoughts, though not spoken out, were reflected in their expressions. Tissa then said to them. "Venerable Sirs, this alms-food is righteously obtained. Do not have any misgivings about it. The fifty theras partook of the rice meal to their satisfaction. After they had finished Tissa ate it to his satisfaction too.

After Tissa had finished his meal, the Theras asked, "Friend, when did you gain penetrative knowledge of the Supramundane?"

To this Tissa replied, "Venerable Sirs, I have not attained the Supramundane ."

"In that case, are you endowed with jhāna?"

"No, Venerable Sirs."

"Why, friend, you could easily get milk-rice where fifty of us failed to get even a morsel. Is that not a miraculous feat?"

Tissa was obliged to admit his attainment to dispel doubts in those bhikkhus. Since the attainment of *Sāranīya* is not supramundane dhamma (*uttarimanussa dhamma*), he considered it proper to admit to it. Venerable Sirs, I have fulfilled the *Sāranīya practice*. Since I had done that, I could provide food to even a hundred thousand fellow-bhikkhus out of my alms-bowl."

"O Virtuous One! Excellent it is! Excellent it is! this miraculous feat is just befitting a virtuous one like yourself."

This is an instance of the alms-bowl that has virtually become an inexhaustible source of food; the fourth benefit of *Sāranīya practice*. This story also proves the second benefit of being adored by everyone, and the third benefit of being blessed with the four requisites all the time. The Commentary picks up the story to exemplify the fourth benefit which is the most significant here.

## **(2) Thera Tissa at the national offerings ceremony.**

In Sri Lanka there was the Giribhaṇḍa Mahāpūjā, (an annual) festival of offerings held on Mount Cetiya which was a grand national occasion.) When Thera Tissa arrived there he inquired of fellow-bhikkhus which was the most significant item of offering (that year,). Being told that two finest fabrics intended for robe-making were the most significant item, Tissa said, "Those two pieces will come to my lot." This was overheard by an official who reported to the king, "your Excellency, there is a junior bhikkhu who says that the two fine fabrics will come to his lot." The king said, "That is what he imagines. But those fabrics are worthy of bhikkhu elders only." And he thought of making the offering of the fabrics to the bhikkhu elders.

When the procession of bhikkhu donees came along the king himself headed the offerings. The two choicest fabrics were placed foremost, ready to hand. But they did not come to the king's hand when he was presenting the gifts to the bhikkhu elders; other items only came to his hand. When Tissa came along the two pieces of fabrics strangely came to the king's hand. The king offered them to Tissa. He also signalled (by facial expression) to the official who reported to him about the fabrics to ask Tissa to sit there awhile. After the procession had passed by the king asked Tissa, "Venerable Sir, when did you become endowed with this special apperception?" Tissa did not want to have even a faint suggestion of having won *Magga Phala* and so he simply replied, "Great King, I have not attained the supramundane."

"But Venerable Sir, you had said even before the gift-making that the two fabrics would come to your lot."

That is true, O King, That was because since I had successfully completed the *Sāraṇīya* practice, whenever common property of gifts are distributed among the Sangha the choicest items always come to my lot."

"Venerable Sir! Excellent it is! Excellent it is! This miraculous happening becomes you well."

After respectfully paying obeisance to Tissa the king went back to the palace.

This is an example of the fifth benefit.

### (3) Therī Nāga.

At one time Sri Lanka underwent troubled times due to insurgency headed by one Brāhamaṇatissa. At a village known as Bhārata where Therī Nāga resided, the whole village fled the place for fear of insurgents, without letting it known to the Therī. Early in the morning Therī Nāga noticed the strange silence of the village and said to her pupils, "Bhārata village is stangely silent. Go and enquire what's the matter." The younger bhikkhunis went into the village and having seen that no one was left, reported it to their teacher.



Therī Nāga, said to her pupils: "Do not be alarmed or upset by the flight of the whole village. You go on as usual with your learning (the text, the Commentary) and meditation. When the time came for the alms-round she robed herself and went to the great banyan tree near the village gate, leading her eleven disciples. The guardian spirit of the banyan tree came down and offered the twelve bhikkhunis sufficient alms-food. He then said to them, "Venerable Ones, do not move away to another place. Come always to this banyan tree for your alms food."

Now, Therī Nāga had a younger brother, a bhikkhu by the name of Nāga. He assessed the situation and decided that Sri Lanka was no safe place and that he could not find sustenance here. So he left the monastery accompanied by eleven disciples meaning to cross the sea to the mainland. Before leaving Sri Lanka he went to bid farewell to his elder sister Therī Nāga. Learning of their arrival at Bhārata village, Therī Nāga went to see them and was told by Thera Nāga of his plan to cross over to the mainland. Therī Nāga then said to him, "Would the venerable ones stay at the monastery for tonight, and proceed the next day." The twelve theras accepted the invitation.

Therī Nāga collected the alms-food in the morning as usual from the banyan tree. She offered the food to bhikkhu Nāga and his company. "Venerable Therī, is this alms-food properly gotten?" bhikkhu Nāga asked his elder sister and then remained silent.

"Brother, this alms-food is righteously obtained. Do not have any doubts about this."

But bhikkhu Nāga was still doubtful; "Venerable Therī, would it be proper?"

### **The self-confidence of Bhikkhu Nāga.**

Thereupon, Therī Nāga took the alms-bowl and threw it upwards where it remained for awhile. Thera Nāga said, "Even if the alms-bowl stays aloft at seven palm-trees high, it is still the alms-food collected by a bhikkhuni, is it not Venerable Thera?" Then he said, "This disturbance and danger is not to last for ever. After the famine has passed, I who speak in praise of the contented nature of the *Ariyas* (with the four

requisites) will be asking myself, 'O virtuous one, trained in the ascetic practice regarding food, you have survived the B̄rahmanatissa scourge by eating the alms-food of a bhikkhuni. I shall not be able to bear such criticism of myself. (I must go now) you remain in mindfulness, Theris."

The guardian spirit of the banyan tree was watching. If bhikkhu Nāga partook of Therī Nāga alms-food he would say nothing to the bhikkhu; but if the bhikkhu were to refuse it he would intervene, and ask him to drop the idea of going away. When he saw that the bhikkhu refused the alms-food, he descended from his abode in the tree and asked bhikkhu Nāga to hand over the alms-bowl, and inviting him and his company to the foot of the banyan tree, offered them the meal on prepared seats. After the meal he got an undertaking from Bhikkhu Nāga not to go abroad. And from that day onwards the guardian spirit of the banyan tree offered meals daily to twelve bhikkhunis and twelve bhikkhus for seven year.

This is an example of the sixth benefit.

In this story Therī Nāga was unaffected by famine, thanks to her fulfilment of the *Sāraṇīya* practice whereas bhikkhu Nāga was helped by the guardian spirit on account of his morality.

(v) Regarding the fifth factor of non-decline, "morality that is unbroken, intact, unchequered and unspotted" is explained thus: for bhikkhus, there are seven groups of breach of morality in brief outline. Of the list of precepts to be observed, if the first precept or the last precept is broken it is called broken' (like in a piece of cloth whose edge are frayed); if the precepts in the middle are broken it is no more 'intact' (like in a piece of cloth that has holes in the middle part); if two or three precepts in a series are broken it is 'chequered' (like a cow whose skin is of different colours either on her back or underneath); if there is breach of precepts at alternate places it is 'spotted' (like a cow with spots). Morality to be unbroken, intact, unchequered, and unspotted must be such that no manner of breach of the above four ways occurs anywhere in the observance of bhikkhu precepts.

(See also volume one, Part One in *Anṇdīpanī*)

Morality that is flawless in those above four ways is sufficing condition for *Magga Phala*. One who is endowed with it is free from the bond of craving and is therefore a truly happy person. Since it is very pure, it is extolled by the Buddha and *Ariyas*. Since that morality is not conceived as a means of glorious future existences such as a *deva* of any specific name or unspecified name, it is not misconception due to craving for existence; or not wrongly conceived as something permanent or eternal, a misconception due to wrong view; it is said to be not subject to misconception. Further, since none of the four deviations (*vipattis*) can be alluded to this kind of morality, it is said to be not subject to misconception. Since it provides sufficient precondition for the attainment of approach concentration *uparicara samādho* and absorption concentration *appanā samādho*, it is also called morality conducive to concentration. Since the Four Purity in Morality, *catupārisudhi sīla*, of worldlings cannot in reality be equal as between one person to another, the fifth factor here is meant as morality of the Path, the supramundane *sīla* which is the same for all *Ariyas*. In the sixth factor also, Right View as the Path Factor is meant. (These six factors of Non-decline are taught by the Buddha also as the six *Sāraṇiya* factors, *vide* Aṅguttara (Twos); Dīgha, iii).

**The Buddha's repeated exhortations about  
*Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā***

During the sojourn at the Gijjakuṭa hill in Rājagaha, as his passing away was drawing near (only one year and three months hence), whenever the Bhagavā discourses to the bhikkhus, the following theme occurred repeatedly;

"Such is *sīla* (morality); such is *samādhi* (concentration) such is *paññā* (wisdom). Concentration that is developed through morality is highly efficacious and productive. Wisdom that is developed through concentration is highly efficacious and productive. The mind that is developed through wisdom is thoroughly liberated without any remnant from the moral taints or pervasive defilements (*āsavas*), namely *kammāsava*, the taint of sense-desire, *bhavāsava*, the taint of hankering after continued existence, and *avijjāsava*, the taint of ignorance of the Four Ariya Truths."

### The Buddha's Sojourn at the Ambalaṭṭhikā Garden.

Then the Bhagavā, after staying at Rājagaha as long as he wished, said to the Venerable Ānandā. "Come, Ānandā, let us go to the Ambalaṭṭhikā garden (Mango Grove)."

"Very well, Sir," the Venerable Ānandā assented.

(Note: The Bhagavā addressed Ānandā from among many bhikkhus surrounding him because Ānandā was always in close attendance.)

Having expressed his assent to the Bhagavā, the Venerable Ānandā signalled to the bhikkhus, "Friends, make ready with your alms-bowl and great robe. The Bhagavā intends to go to the Ambalaṭṭhikā garden."

Then the Bhagavā, accompanied by many bhikkhus, went to the Ambalaṭṭhikā garden where he stayed at the king's rest house. While there also, considering his approaching death, the Bhagavā discoursed to the bhikkhus on the same theme, i.e. :

"Such is *sīla* (morality); such is *samādhi* (concentration) such is *paññā* (wisdom). Concentration that is developed through morality is highly efficacious and productive. Wisdom that is developed through concentration is highly efficacious and productive. The mind that is developed through wisdom is thoroughly liberated without any remnant from the moral taints or pervasive defilements (*āsavas*), namely *kammāsava*, the taint of sense-desire, *bhavāsava*, the taint of hankering after continued existence, and *avijjāsava*, the taint of ignorance of the Four Ariya Truths."

Herein, in the passage, "Such is *sīla*, this is *samādhi*, such is *paññā*," morality (*sīla*) refers to mundane morality, i.e., the Fourfold Purity; *catupārisudhi sīla*, *samādhi* means mundane concentration at the threshold of perfect concentration, *upacāra samādhi* and perfect concentration *appanā samādhi* itself. *Paññā* means mundane Insight *vipassanā paññā*. All these three factors are the necessary conditions for *Magga-ñāna*.

"Concentration developed through morality "means supramundane concentration pertaining to *Magga* and *Phala*, *Magga* concentration

and *Phala* concentration. Concentration of *Magga* is highly efficacious because it leads to the fruition of the *Ariya's* Knowledge, *Ariya Phala*. (*Phala* means *direct* result.) It is also highly productive because it has the superb consequence *ānisaṃsa* of liberation or pacification. (*Ānisaṃsa* means *indirect* result or consequence.) The same interpretation should be understood for similar statement that follow. Concentration of *phala* produces the direct result of abandoning the burning defilements through tranquillity *paṭippassaddhi pahāna*, and gives the indirect result or consequence of the peace of cessation or extinction of defilements.

"Wisdom developed through concentration" means supramundane Knowledge (*Magga ñāṇa* and *Phala ñāṇa*) Its direct result and indirect result or consequence should be construed as in the case of concentration.

"The mind developed through wisdom" wisdom means mundance Insight *vipassanā paññā* and wisdom associated with *jhāna*; mind here means Supramundane consciousness of *Magga · Phala*. *Magga* consciousness completely eradicates defilements as abandoning through destruction *samuccheda pahāna*. *Phala*-consciousness thoroughly liberates one from the moral taints as abandoning through tranquillity *paṭipassaddhi pahāna*.

### The Bhagava's Sojourn at Nālanda.

Then the Bhagavā, after staying at the Ambalatṭhikā garden as long as he wished, said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Come, Ānandā, let us go to the town of Nālanda."

"Very well, Sir," the Venerable Ānandā assented, and called upon the bhikkhus to accompany the Bhagavā.

### The Venerable Sāriputta's Brave Utterance.

Then the Bhagavā, accompanied by many bhikkhus, went to the town of Nālanda and stayed at the mango grove of Pāvārika, the Rich Man.

At that time the Venerable Sāriputta approached the Bhagavā, and after making obeisance to the Bhagavā, entered into a stirring and remarkable dialogue with the Bhagavā:

(Sāriputta :) "Venerable Sir, as regards Perfect Enlightenment, I am convinced that there has never been nor there is, nor will there be any samana or brahmana who can excel the Bhagavā.

(Bhagavā:) You say solemnly and with certitude, like the brave sound of a lions roar, that as regards Perfect Enlightenment, you are convinced that there has never been nor there is, nor will there be any samana or brāhmaṇa who can excel the Bhagavā.

"How is it Sāriputta, do you know definitely in your mind the minds of those Homage-Worthy, Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddhas of the past so that you can assert, such was their practice of morality, such was their practice of concentration, *Samāddhi*, such was their wisdom *paññā*, such was their manner of abiding (in the sustained attainment of Cessation) such was their emancipation?"

"I have no such knowledge, Venerable Sir."

"How is it, Sāriputta, do you know definitely in your mind the minds of those Homage-Worthy, Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddhas of the Future, so that you can assert, such will be their practice of morality, such will be their practice of concentration, *Samāddhi*, such will be their wisdom *paññā*, such will be their manner of abiding (in the sustained attainment of Cessation), such will be their emancipation?"

"I have no such knowledge, Venerable Sir."

"How is it, Sāriputta, do you know definitely in your mind the mind of myself, the present Buddha, the Homage Worthy, the Perfectly Self-Enlightened, so that you can assert, 'Such is the practice of *sīla* morality of the Bhagavā, such is the strength of the concentration of the Bhagavā, such is the wisdom *paññā*, of the Bhagavā, such is the manner of the Bhagava's abiding (in the sustained attainment of Cessation), such is the emancipation of the Bhagavā?"

"I have no such knowledge, Venerable Sir."

"Sāriputta, if you do not have the *Cetopariya ñāṇa*, the faculty of reading another person's mind by which you can know definitely the minds of the Homage-Worthy, the Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddhas of the past, the future and the present, how can you say solemnly and with certitude, and sounding like a lion's roar, that as regards Perfect-Self-Enlightenment, you are convinced that there has never been, nor will there be any *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* who can excel the Bhagava?"

"Venerable Sir, I do not have the *Cetopariya ñāṇa*, the faculty of reading another person's mind by which I can know definitely the minds of the Homage-Worthy, the Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddhas of the past, the future and the present. But I do have the *Dhammanvaya ñāṇa*, knowledge by inference from personal experience".

"Venerable Sir, if I may give an example, let us say that there is a remote border town with its solid walls built on firm foundation which has only one arched gateway, and that there is a gate-keeper there, wise, prudent and intelligent, who would keep out strangers and would admit only person known to him. When he makes his rounds along the roadway that encircles the town he sees no breaks, no holes in the walls, not even one that would allow a cat to pass through it. Then he will come to the conclusion (rightly). 'that all big living things that enter or leave the town do so only by that single gateway.'

"In the same way, Venerable Sir, I am possessed of the *Dhammanvaya ñāṇa*, Knowledge by inference from personal experience. Venerable Sir, (thus I know that) all the Homage-Worthy, the Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddhas who had arisen in the past had abandoned the five Hindrances that defile the mind and weaken the intellect; had well established their minds in the four Methods of Steadfast Mindfulness; had correctly cultivated the seven Factors of Enlightenment; and had attained Supreme Perfect Self-Enlightenment.

(Perfect Self-Enlightenment, *Sammāsambadhi ñāṇa*, is a term encompassing the *Arahatta Magga ñāṇa* and the Ommiscience, *sabbannuta ñāṇa*, which pertain to the Buddhas only).

"Venerable Sir, (thus I know that) all the Homage-Worthy, the Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddhas who will arise in the future will abandon the five Hindrances *nīvaraṇa* that defile the mind and weaken the intellect; will well establish their minds in the four Methods of Steadfast Mindfulness *satipaṭṭhāna*; will correctly cultivate the seven Factors of Enlightenment; *bojjhaṅgam* and will attain Supreme Perfect Self-Enlightenment.

"Venerable Sir, (thus I know that) the Homage-Worthy, the Perfectly Self-Enlightened Bhagavā also, who has arisen in the world, has abandoned the five Hindrances; has well established the Bhagava's mind in the four methods of Steadfast Mindfulness; has correctly cultivated the seven Factors of Enlightenment, and has attained Supreme Perfect Self-Enlightenment.

"Venerable Sir, all these conclusions I make are due to the *Dhammanavaya ñāṇa*, Knowledge by inference from personal experience which I am possessed of."

(This was the stirring and remarkable dialogue that took place between the Venerable Sāriputta and the Bhagavā).

During the sojourn at the mango grove of Pāvārika the Rich Man in the town of Nālanda, also considering his approaching death, the Bhagava discoursed to the bhikkhus on the same theme, i.e.;

"Such is *śīla* (morality); such is *samādhi* (concentration) such is *paññā* (wisdom). Concentration that is developed through morality is highly efficacious and productive. Wisdom that is developed through concentration is highly efficacious and productive. The mind that is developed through wisdom is thoroughly liberated without any remnant from the moral taints or pervasive defilements (*āsavas*), namely *kammāsava*, the taint of sense-desire, *bhavāsava*, the taint of hankering after continued existence, and *avijjāsava*, the taint of ignorance of the Four Ariya Truths."



### The Bhagava's Discourse on Morality.

Then, after staying at the town of Nālanda as long as he wished, the Bhagavā said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Come, Ānandā, let us go to Pāṭali village."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," assented Ānandā, and called upon the bhikkhus to accompany the Bhagavā. Then the Bhagavā, accompanied by many bhikkhus, went to Pāṭali village.

When the lay devotees of Pāṭali village heard that the Bhagavā had arrived at their village, they were very glad. For they had the great good fortune of having to receive the Bhagavā even without asking for it. They had just finished building a guest-house. How appropriate it would be if their first guest was the Bhagavā himself! "We shall request the Bhagavā to accept our offering of the guest-house and listen to the Bhagava's words of appreciation of our good deed," they discussed among themselves. They approached the Bhagavā, made obeisance to him, and sat at a suitable place. Then they said to him, "May it please the Bhagavā to accept our new guest-house as his living quarters during his sojourn." The Bhagava showed his consent by remaining silent.

Having received the Bhagava's consent, the lay devotees of Pāṭali village rose from their seats, made obeisance to the Bhagavā, and went to their guest-house. They made it ready for use by furnishing it with floor coverings throughout, arranging separate seats, filling the big water pots and lighting up the lamps. They arranged with the mothers to feed their infants early that evening and to put them to bed. Then they came back to the Bhagavā, made obeisance to him, and stood on one side. They said to the Bhagavā,

"Venerable Sir, at the guest house, the floor has been covered throughout with floor-coverings, separate seats have been arranged, big water pots have been filled and lamps have been lit. May the Bhagavā proceed there when he wishes."

(Note: The new guest-house was built by the village at the centre of the village. The main purpose in building it was to house visiting officials of the Lacchavis and the Magadhans who often came and

stayed at Pāṭali village, it being a border village. It was a felt need for the village because they had to surrender their houses to the visiting officials for their temporary lodging for a month or so on each occasion. The new guest-house would now ease the situation. It was well arranged for the use of visiting officials with living quarters as well as strong rooms for the upkeep of treasures. At the time of the Bhagava's visit to the village it had just been completed. At first the villagers thought that the Bhagavā might prefer to dwell in the forest and so they did not make it ready to receive the Bhagavā there. Only when the Bhagavā consented to put up there, did the villagers prepare things to make it ready for the Bhagava's stay.)

Then, the Bhagavā, at evening time, rearranged his robes, and taking his alms-bowl and great robe, proceeded to the guest-house accompanied by the bhikkhus. After washing his feet he entered the guest-house where he sat against the middle post, facing east. The bhikkhus also washed their feet and entered the guest-house, and sat against the west wall, facing east, with the Bhagavā in front of them. The lay devotees of Pāṭali village also washed their feet and entered the guest-house, and sat against the east wall facing west, with the Bhagavā in front of them.

Then the Bhagavā discoursed on the five disadvantages<sup>2</sup> befalling an immoral person and the five advantages that bless a person of virtue thus:

"Householders, *five disadvantages* descend on an immoral person who lacks morality, and what are the five?

"(i) Householders, in this world, the immoral person, lacking moral virtue; suffers great loss in fortune through heedlessness. This is the first disadvantage befalling an immoral person who lacks morality

"(ii) Householders, furthermore, the ill repute of an immoral person lacking moral virtue spreads far and wide. This is the second disadvantage befalling an immoral person who lacks morality.

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<sup>2</sup> Disadvantage: *ādīnava*. Also translated as danger, fault.

"(iii) Householders, furthermore, an immoral person lacking moral virtue in the midst of any class of society, whether among the ruling class, or the recluses or the brahmin class, or the wealthy, looks diffident and uneasy. This is the third disadvantage befalling an immoral person who lacks morality.

"(iv) Householders, further more, an immoral person lacking moral virtue dies in a bewildered<sup>3</sup> state. This is the fourth disadvantage befalling an immoral person who lacks morality.

"(v) Householders, furthermore, an immoral person lacking moral virtue, after death and dissolution of the body, is destined to fall to the miserable existences of *niraya*. This is the fifth disadvantage befalling an immoral person who lacks morality.

"Householders these are the five disadvantages befalling an immoral person through lack of morality.

#### **Five advantages that bless a virtuous person.**

"Householders, five advantages bless a virtuous person for his being virtuous. What are the five?

"(i) Householders, in this world, a virtuous person, possessed of moral virtue, acquires great wealth through being heedful. This is the first advantage that waits on a virtuous person for his being virtuous.

"(ii) Householders, furthermore, the good reputation of a virtuous person possessed of moral virtue spreads far and wide. This is the second advantage that waits on a virtuous person for his being virtuous.

"(iii) Householders, furthermore, a virtuous person possessed of moral virtue, in the midst of any class of society, whether among the ruling class, or the recluses, or the brahmin class, or the wealthy, can hold up his head and look anyone in the face. This is the third advantage that waits on a virtuous person for his being virtuous.

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<sup>3</sup> Bewildered; *Sammulha*. The commentary explains this as delirium.

"(iv) Householders, furthermore, a virtuous person possessed of moral virtue dies without any bewilderment. This is the fourth advantage that waits on a virtuous person for his being virtuous.

"(v) Householders, furthermore, a virtuous person possessed of moral virtue, after death and dissolution of the body, is destined to the fortunate existences of devas. This is fifth advantage that waits on a virtuous person for his being virtuous.

"Householders, these are the five advantages that wait on a virtuous person for his being virtuous."

Although this discourse was addressed to lay persons it also applies to bhikkhus.

- (i) With a lay person, lack of moral virtue may lead to committing evil deeds such as killing. As he indulges in evil he tends to forget his usual means of livelihood, such as cultivation or trading, incurring great losses of property. Worse still, his evil deed might be illegal under the law proclaimed by the king such as killing of animals, and he is liable to criminal punishment. If he steals he also commits a crime equally liable to punishment. Thus his lack of moral virtue can bring him great losses of property. Similarly, a bhikkhu lacking morality, being heedless, loses virtue, loses the good Doctrine, the word of the Buddha, loses jhana, and loses the seven noble properties of *Ariyas*<sup>4</sup>.
- (ii) An immoral man earns a bad repute so that he is written off as an outcast, useless for this world and hopeless for future worlds. "This man is so stingy that he would not even take part in offering alms-food by drawing lots," this is the kind of name he builds up

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<sup>4</sup> 1. Seven noble properties of ariyas: *satta ariya dhanani*.

- (i) *Saddhā dhanam* – Faith in Three Jewels and *kamma*;  
(ii) *Sīla dhanam* – wealth of morality  
(iii) *Hirī dhanam* – wealth of shame for doing evil  
(iv) *Ottappa dhanam* – wealth of fear for doing evil  
(v) *Suta dhanam* – wealth of vast knowledge  
(vi) *Cāga dhanam* – wealth of charity, renunciation  
(vii) *Paññā dhanam* – wealth of *Magga Phala* attainments.

for himself. All the four kinds of assemblies see him in that light only.

Similarly, in the case of a bhikkhu who lacks moral virtue, the ill repute that such and such bhikkhu is loose in bhikkhu morality, does not take up serious learning of the good Doctrine, makes a living on practice of medicine, or similar methods of livelihood abhorred by the Buddha, and that his behaviour is marked by six kinds of disrespect, spreads among the four kinds of assemblies.

- (iii) An immoral lay person is always pricked by a guilty conscience for the misdeeds he has done. Therefore he does not dare to face the crowd. "Someone there might recognize me," he fears, "and I might be apprehended and sent up to the authorities." That is why in any of the four kinds of assemblies, he holds his face down, and his shoulders stooping, he would uneasily keep on scratching the earth with a stick. He keeps his mouth shut as far as possible. Likewise, an immoral bhikkhu feels uneasy to face an assembly which might have knowledge of his misdeeds, in which case he might have to face punishment under the Vinaya process such as excommunication. Therefore he goes into the assembly with great misgivings and speaks little. Some immoral bhikkhu, however, might put up a bold face and wander around amongst Sangha but in his heart he is feeling miserable only.
- (iv) An immoral one, whether lay person or bhikkhu, may put up pretences while living but on his death bed his evil deeds appear before him in their respective sense-doors. He feebly opens his eyes to see the present world, and then closes his eyes to see his on coming world where he finds no solace whatever. His imminent destination, the four miserable states of *apāya*, becomes vividly clear to him. He feels great pangs of conscience as if thrust by a hundred spears on his head. "Help me! Help me!" We would scream in desperation and then breathe his last. This is what the Bhagavā means by "he dies in a state of bewilderment."
- (v) The fifth disadvantages befalling an immoral one needs no explanation.

(The advantages that wait on a virtuous one may be known as the opposite of the above five disadvantages befalling an immoral one.)

The Bhagavā then went on late into the night instructing the lay devotees of Pāṭali village on other topics including the happy consequences of their donation of the guest-house, thereby pointing out the benefits of the Doctrine, exhorting them to set themselves up in the practice there of, and gladdening them in the practice. Then he sent them away, saying, "Householders, the night is far advanced; you may leave when you wish."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," the devotees of Pāṭali village said in assent, and making obeisance to the Bhagavā, departed respectfully. Then, not long after their departure, the Bhagavā retired in seclusion.

(Note: "The Bhagavā retired in seclusion" should be understood as referring to a separate part of the guest house screened off for privacy. A cot had been placed there for the Bhagavā, and the Bhagavā considered that the devotees would earn much merit if he were to use the guest house in all the four bodily postures. Therefore he lay on the cot on his right side and rested.)

### The founding of Pāṭaliputta.

At that time the brahmins Sunidha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha Kingdom were building a (fortified) city at the site of Pāṭali village to keep out the Vajjī princes. During that period many *devas* in groups of a thousand each, were occupying plots of land at Pāṭali village

In the location where the devas of great power were in occupation, there the officials responsible for the building of the city were inclined to build houses for princes and king's ministers of great power. In the location where the devas of medium power were in occupation, there the officials responsible for the building of the city were inclined to build houses for princes and king's ministers of medium power. And in the location where the devas of lesser power were in occupation, there the official responsible for the building of the city were inclined to build houses for princes and king's ministers of lesser power.

(Herein, among the city builders there were officials learned in the science of building-sites. They knew by their specialised knowledge the status of the proposed building-sites down to a depth of thirty cubits as to which area is in the occupancy of powerful serpents or nagas, which in the occupancy of demons, or which in the occupancy of evil spirits; or where a slab of rock is lying underneath, or where an old tree stump is hidden. Accordingly, those learned ones took necessary measures by reciting mantras or charms, so that they were able to proceed smoothly as if they were building the city in consultation with devas.

Another explanation: The officials responsible for the building of the city were possessed by the devas occupying the various location: *devas* would leave their bodies after the four corners of the building site have been marked out. Prospective human occupants endowed with confidence in the Triple Gem were possessed by the deva occupants of the sites who were equally endowed with confidence in the Triple Gem. Prospective human occupants who lacked confidence in the Triple Gem were possessed by the deva occupants of the sites who lacked confidence in the Triple Gem. The reason is this: the devas who were endowed with confidence in the Triple Gem influenced the mind of the prospective human occupants who had confidence in the Triple Gem, trusting that the new occupants would invite the Sangha to their newly built house and hear the sermon on the auspicious occasion and that they (the devas) would get the opportunity to see the virtuous bhikkhus and hear the Dhamma; they also expected the new occupants to share their merit of offerings made to the Sangha.)

The Bhagavā saw with his Knowledge of the Divine Eye (*dibba cakkhū*) how the devas in groups of a thousand each, were occupying plots of land at Pāṭali village. Then the Bhagavā arose at dawn and asked the Venerable Ānandā, "Who are those that are building a city at (the site of) Pāṭali village?"

Ānandā replied, "Venerable Sir, the brahmins Sunidha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha Kingdom are building a (fortified) city to keep out the Vajjī princes."

"Ānandā, the chief ministers are building the fortified city as though they were acting in consultation with the devas of the Tavatimsa realm.

"Ānandā, I have seen with my Knowledge of the Divine Eye how the devas, in groups of a thousand each, were occupying plots of land at Pāṭali village.

"Ānandā, in the locations where the devas of great power are in occupation, there the officials responsible for the building of the city are inclined to build houses for princes and king's ministers of great power. In the locations where the devas of medium power are in occupation, there the officials responsible for the building of the city are inclined to build houses for princes and king's ministers of medium power. In the locations where the devas of lesser power are in occupation, there the officials responsible for the building of the city are inclined to build houses for princes and king's ministers of lesser power.

"Ānandā, three catastrophies will bring about the downfall of the city of Pāṭaliputta: fire, floods, and internal dissension. (Thus the Bhagavā was predicting that a part of Pāṭaliputta would be destroyed by fire, a part of it would be washed away by the Gaṅga river, and a part of it would be destroyed by internal dissension.)

After saying those words, the Bhagavā went to the Gaṅga river to wash his face and awaited the time to go on the alms-round.

Then the brahmins Sunidha and Vassakāra remembered that since their king Ajātasattu was a lay supporter of Gotama the Samaṇa, it would only be proper if they were to invite the Bhagavā to an offering of a meal, because they would be seeing the Bhagavā in the village of Pāṭali. Further, they considered it a wise thing to request Gotama the Samaṇa to bless their city-building project with auspicious words, for then the black devils would be driven away from the city site. So the two brahmins went to the Bhagavā and stood at a suitable place. After exchanging memorable words of felicitation, they said to the Bhagavā, "May it please the revered Gotama and the company of bhikkhus to accept our offering of food for today." The Bhagavā by his silence signified his acceptance.



Then the Maghadan chief ministers, Sunidha and Vassakāra, knowing that the Bhagavā had accepted their invitation, went to the place where they were putting up, and having prepared the choicest food and delicacies, informed the Bhagavā by messengers who said, "Revered Gotama, it is time (to proceed); the food offering is ready."

Then in the morning time the Bhagavā rearranged his robes, and taking alms-bowl and great robe, went in the company of the bhikkhus to the place where the two Maghadan chief ministers Sunidha and Vassakāra were being housed, and sat at the place prepared for him. And the brahmins Sunidha and Vassakāra attended on the Bhagavā and the bhikkhus, offering the choicest food and delicacies with their own hands till the Bhagavā and the bhikkhus caused them to stop, signifying they had enough. When the Bhagavā had finished his meal and had removed his hand from his alms-bowl, the brahmins Sunidha and Vassidara took low seats and sat at a suitable place.

To the brahmins Sunidha and Vassakāra who were thus seated, the Bhagavā expressed his pleasure and appreciation by three stanzas: in Pāli (Here only prose translation is provided).

"Brahmins, when the wise man makes offerings of food to those possessed of virtue self-control and purity of life at the place where he has made his home, he should share the merit of his offering with the devas who are guardians of that place. If the devas are honoured thus, they give protection to him as their way of honouring him in return. If they are revered thus, they help him out of trouble as their way of revering him in return. That being so, that wise man comes under the protection of the devas who safeguard him just as a mother safeguards her own son. The person is blessed with auspiciousness at all times."

After expressing his pleasure and appreciation in these stanzas to the Maghadan chief ministers Sunidha and Vassakāra, the Bhagavā rose from his seat and left.

Then the brahmins Sunidha and Vassakāra followed the Bhagavā all along the route, thinking, "we shall call the gateway by which the revered Gotama leaves today the Gotama Gateway, and the landing

place by which the revered Gotama crosses the Gaṅga the Gotama Landing Place."

The gateway by which the Bhagavā left that day came to be known as the Gotama Gateway. Then the Bhagavā went to the river Gaṅga. At that time the river was full to the brim so that a crow on the bank might easily drink from it.

Then in the instant it might take a strong man to stretch out his bent arm or bend his out stretched arm, the Bhagavā vanished from this side of the Gaṅga and reappeared on the other shore together with the company of bhikkhus.

The Bhagavā saw the people who wanted to cross from one shore to the other, some of whom were looking for boats, some for log rafts, and some were making bamboo rafts. Then the Bhagavā, understanding the matter, uttered these joyous words in exultation;

"The *Ariyans* have crossed the deep and wide river of Craving, (*taṇhā*), by building the bridge of the Ariya Path, having over come the quagmire of moral defilement. As for the multitudes, they have to build rafts just to cross this insignificant river, the Gaṅga. However, the *Ariyas* who have crossed the river of Craving by means of the Ariya Path of eight constituents have no need to make rafts."

#### **The Bhagavā discourses on the Four Ariya Truths.**

Then the Bhagavā said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Come Ānandā, let us go to Koṭi village."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," Ānandā assented and then, called up the bhikkhus. The Bhagavā, accompanied by a company of bhikkhus, went to Koṭi village and dwelt there. (The village was called Koṭi because it was where the pinnacle of King Mahāpanāda fell there.)

During that time the Bhagavā discoursed to the bhikkhus on the Four Ariya Truths thus.

"Bhikkhus, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the Four Ariya Truths that I as well as yourselves have had to fare along the lengthy course of the round of

existences (*samsāra*) never stopping, but ever hanging, from one existence to the other repeatedly. What are the Four Truths that are not understood?

- (i) "Bhikkhus, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the Ariya Truth of *Dukkha* (*Dukkha ariya saccā*) that I as well as yourselves have had to fare along the lengthy course of the round of existences, never stopping, but ever changing, from one existence to the other repeatedly.
- (ii) Bhikkhus, . . . the Ariya Truth of the Origin of *Dukkha* (*Samudaya ariya saccā*) . . . p . . .
- (iii) Bhikkhus, . . . the Ariya Truth of the Cessation of *Dukkha* (*Nirodha ariya saccā*) . . . p . . .
- (iv) Bhikkhus, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the Ariya Truth of the way to the Cessation of *Dukkha* (*Magga ariya saccā*) that I as well as yourselves have had to fare along the lengthy course of the round of existences, never stopping, but ever changing, from one existence to the other repeatedly.

"Bhikkhus, now I have properly understood the Ariya Truth of *Dukkha* (*Dukkha ariya saccā*), I have penetrative knowledge of it . . . p . . . the Ariya Truth of the Origin of *Dukkha* (*Samudaya ariya saccā*) . . . p . . . the Ariya Truth of the Cessation of *Dukkha* (*Nirodha ariya saccā*) . . . p . . . I have properly understood the Ariya Truth of the way to the Cessation of *Dukkha* (*Magga ariya saccā*); I have penetrative knowledge of it. The Craving for existence, *bhavataṇhā*, has been completely uprooted, leaving no trace of it. In me, the craving for existence which is like a rope that drags one to renewed existence has become extinct. Now, for me there will be no more rebirth."

(Herein, "proper understanding" means Insight knowledge conforming to, and preceding *Magga ñāṇa*. It is mundane Knowledge, and is called *amubodhi* in Pāli. "Penetrative knowledge" means penetrative Knowledge of the Path, *Magga ñāṇa* itself that destroys the defilements. It is called *paṭivedha* in Pāli.)

After the Bhagavā had spoken the above words, he further said thus in verses:

"Passing from this existence to that, faring through the long course of *samsāra*, is necessitated by (is due to) lack of the Four Ariya Truths as they really are. I have fully understood those Four Ariya Truths. Craving for existence, that rope which drags one to rebirth, has been cut up completely. The root of *Dukkha* has been thus eradicated. For me there will be no more rebirth."

While the Bhagavā was staying at that Koṭi village also, considering his approaching death, he discoursed to the bhikkhus on the same theme, i.e.:

"Such is *sīla* (morality); such is *samādhi* (concentration) such is *paññā* (wisdom). Concentration that is developed through morality is highly efficacious and productive. Wisdom that is developed through concentration is highly efficacious and productive. The mind that is developed through wisdom is thoroughly liberated without any remnant from the moral taints or pervasive defilements (*āsavas*), namely *kammāsava*, the taint of sense-desire, *bhavasava*, the taint of hankering after continued existence, and *avijjāsava*, the taint of ignorance of the Four Ariya Truths."

### **The Buddha's discourse at Nātika village.**

#### **On those disciples whose spiritual progress is assured.**

Then, after staying at Koṭi village as long as he wished, the Bhagavā said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Come, Ānandā, let us go to Nātika village."

"Very well, Sir," assented Ānandā, and called up the bhikkhus for the journey. The Bhagavā went to Nātika village accompanied by many bhikkhus and stayed at a brick building.

(Herein, Nātika was a twin village founded by two cousin brothers (born of two brothers) who sited it near a reservoir. Thus the village got its name, "(village of relations", *nātika*, from which Pāli word, *n* became corrupted into *n*, and hence the name Nātika. In

that twin village there was a brick monastery which was the place of the Bhagava's sojourn.)

During that time the Venerable Ānandā approached the Bhagavā and asked these questions:

"Venerable Sir, at Nātika village, a bhikkhu by the name of Sāla has passed away. What is his destination? What is his next existence?"

"Venerable Sir, at (this same) Nātika village, a bhikkhunī named Nandā has passed away. What is her destination? What is her next existence?"

"Venerable Sir, at (this same) Nātika village, a devotee named Sudatta has passed away. What is his destination? What is his next existence?"

"Venerable Sir, at (this same) Nātika village, a devotee named Sujātā has passed away. What is her destination? What is her next existence?"

"Venerable Sir, at (this same) Nātika village, a devotee named Kukkuṭa . . . p . . . a devotee named Kalimba . . . p . . . a devotee named Nikāṭa . . . p . . . a devotee named Kaṭissaha . . . p . . . a devotee named Tuṭṭha . . . p . . . a devotee named Santuṭṭha . . . p . . . a devotee named Bhaddha . . . p . . . a devotee named Subhadda has passed away. What is his destination? What is his next existence?"

To these questions the Bhagavā answered one by one thus:

"Ānandā, due to the extinction of the *āsavas*, moral taints, Sāla the bhikkhu had realized in this very life Emancipation of mind (*Arahatta Pbala samādhi*) and Emancipation through Knowledge (*Arahatta phala paññā*) He died an Arahāt.

"Ānandā, through the eradication of the five Fetters that lead to rebirth in the Sensuous Sphere, the lower planes of existence, Nanda the bhikkhuni has been reborn spontaneously in the Brahma realm. She died an *Anāgāmi* a Never-Returner, with no possibility of returning (reverting) from that Brahma existence and will realize *parinibbāna*, the utter passing away, there.

"Ānandā, through the eradication of the three Fetters wrong view of five aggregates as a self, (*Sakkāya diṭṭhi*, uncertainty and doubts, *Vicikicchā* belief in religious practices outside of the Ariya Patta *Sīlabbataparāmāsa*) and the lessening of attachment (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*) and bewilderment (*moha*), Sudatta the devotee was a *Sakadāgāmi*, a Once-Returner. He will make an end of *dukkha* after being reborn in the human world only once.

"Ānandā, through the eradication of the three Fetters, (namely, the wrong view of the five aggregates as a self, uncertainty, and belief in religious practices outside of the Ariya Path), Sujātā the female devotee, was a *Sotapanna*, a Stream-Enterer, who is not liable to fall into the four miserable states of *apāya*, destined for the fortunate existences, and is firmly set on the path of spiritual progress marked by the three higher *maggas*.

"Ānandā, the devotee named Kukkuṭa . . . p . . . the devotee named Kalimba . . . p . . . the devotee named Nikāṭa . . . p . . . the devotee named Kaṭissaha . . . p . . . the devotee named Tuṭṭha . . . p . . . the devotee named Santuṭṭa . . . p . . . the devotee named Bhaddha . . . p . . . the devotee named Subhadda, through the eradication of the five Fetters that lead to rebirth in the Sensuous Sphere, the lower planes of existence, has been reborn spontaneously in the Brahma realm. He died an *Anāgāmi*, a Never-Returner, with no possibility of returning (reverting) from that brahma existence and will realize *parinibbāna*, the utter passing away, there.

"Ānandā, over fifty devotees from Nātika village who have died were *Anāgāmi*, Never- Returners by virtue of having eradicated the five Fetters that lead to rebirth in the sensuous Sphere, the lower planes of existence, destined for Spontaneous rebirth in the Brahma realm, with no possibility of returning (reverting) from that Brahma existence and they will realize *parinibbāna*, the utter passing away, there.

"Ānandā, over ninety devotees of Nātika village who have died were *Sakadāgāmi*, Once-Returners, who had eradicated the three Fetters (i.e., *sakkāya diṭṭhi*, *vicikicchā*, *sīlabbata parāmsa*) and had lessened attachment (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*) and bewilderment (*moha*). They will

make an end of *dukkha* after being reborn in the human world only once.

"Ānandā, over five hundred devotees from Nātika village who have died were Stream-Enterers through the eradication of the three Fetters (i.e., the wrong view of the five aggregates as a Self, uncertainty, and belief in religious practices outside of the Ariya Path). They are not liable to fall into the miserable states of *apāya*, destined for fortunate existence, and are bound to win the three higher *Maggas*.

### The Mirror Discourse.

"Ānandā, this ability to tell about the destination of people is something which anyone endowed with knowledge of the Dhamma can have in respect of himself. It is not a mysterious art that belongs only to the Tathāgata. Ānandā, if the Tathāgata were to be approached and asked as to the destination of every person who has died, it would be quite a botheration for him.

"As such, Ānandā, an Ariya disciple who possesses the Mirror of Wisdom can, if he wishes to, say of himself," I shall never be reborn in the realm of continuous suffering (*niraya*), or in the animal world, or in the realm of wretched spirits burning with thirst and hunger (*peta*), or in any of the four miserable states of *apaya*, I am certain to be reborn only in the fortunate existences. I am bound to attain the three higher *maggas*." I shall expound this discourse on the Mirror of Wisdom. Ānandā, what is this Mirror of Wisdom?

"Ānandā, in this Teaching, the Ariya disciple (i.e., male or female disciple) has unshakable confidence in the Bhagavā, being convinced that: (i) 'The Bhagavā is worthy of homage (*Arahaṃ*); he is Perfectly Self-Enlightened (*Sammāsambuddha*); he is possessed of perfect knowledge and conduct (*Vijjā caraṇa sampana*); he speaks only what is beneficial and true (*Sugata*); he knows all the three Worlds (*Lokavidhū*); he is incomparable in taming those who deserve to be tamed (*Anuttaro purisadamma sāratti*); he is the Enlightened One, knowing and teaching the Four Ariya Truths (*Buddho*); and he is the Most Exalted (*Bhagava*);

- (ii) The Ariya disciple has unshakable confidence in the Dhamma, being convinced that:

'The Dhamma expounded by the Bhagavā is well expounded (*svākkhāta*); its truths are personally apperceivable (*Sandiṭṭhika*); its practice (i.e., of the Ariya Path) yields fruit (*Akālika*); immediately; it can stand investigation (*Ehipassika*); it is worthy of being perpetually borne in mind (*Opaneyika*); and it can be seen, realized and enjoyed by the wise, each according to his own capacity (*Paccatam veditabba, viññāhi*).

- (iii) The Ariya disciple has unshakable confidence in the Sangha, being convinced that: 'The Order of Bhikkhus, the Sangha, are endowed with the right practice *suppatipanna*, i.e. Threefold Training in Morality, Concentration and Wisdom; they are endowed with straight forward uprightness, *ujjupatipanna*; they are endowed with righteous conduct, *Nyāya patipanna*; and they are endowed with conduct inspiring awe and respect, *samicipatipanna*. Thus conducting well in these four ways serving as four grounds for their worthiness, the Sangha comprising eight individual types of four pairs are worthy of offerings even brought from afar; worthy of offerings specially prepared for guests; worthy of offerings made for the sake of acquiring great merit, worthy of receiving obeisance; they are the incomparably fertile soil for all to sow the seed of merit, thus they are worthy in these five ways.

- (iv) The *Ariya* disciple is endowed with the moral precepts, *Sīla* which tend to liberation from bondage to Craving, which are extolled by the wise, which are not subject to misconception, which make for concentration, and which are unbroken, intact, unchequered, and unspotted, and which are cherished by the *Ariyas*.

"Ānandā, an Ariya disciple who is endowed with the above four factors of the Mirror of Wisdom can, if he so desires, say of himself, 'I shall never be reborn in the realm of continuous suffering (*niraya*); or in the animal world, or in the realm of wretched spirits burning with thirst and hunger (*Peta*) or in any of the four miserable states of *apāya*; I am certain to be reborn only in the fortunate existences. I am bound



to attain the three higher *maggas*.' This discourse is called the Mirror of Wisdom."

While at the brick monastery at Nātika village as well, the Bhagavā, considering his approaching death, discoursed to the bhikkhus on the same theme, i.e.,

"Such is *sīla* (morality); such is *samādhi* (concentration) such is *paññā* (wisdom). Concentration that is developed through morality is highly efficacious and productive. Wisdom that is developed through concentration is highly efficacious and productive. The mind that is developed through wisdom is thoroughly liberated without any remnant from the moral taints of pervasive defilements (*āsavas*), namely *kammāsava*, the taint of sense-desire, *bhavāsava*, the taint of hankering after continued existence, and *avijjāsava*, the taint of ignorance of the Four Ariya Truths."

### The Bhagava's sojourn at the Mango Grove of Ambapālī at Vesālī.

Then, after staying at Nātika village as long as he wished, the Bhagavā said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Come, Ānandā, let us go to Vesālī."

"Very well Venerable Sir," assented Ānandā, and called up the bhikkhus for the journey. The Bhagavā, accompanied by many bhikkhus, went to Vesālī and stayed at courtesan Ambapālī's mango grove.

At that time five hundred of the bhikkhus in the Bhagava's company were young men who had joined the Order recently, and were weak in diligence. They would soon be seeing Ambapālī who would be coming to greet the Bhagavā. In order that the young bhikkhus might not lose mindfulness on setting their eyes on the charming courtesan, the Bhagavā prepared their minds by giving a discourse thus:

"Bhikkhus, a bhikkhu should dwell in mindfulness and clear comprehension. This is our exhortation to you. Bhikkhus, how should a bhikkhu remain mindful? Bhikkhus, in this Teaching, a bhikkhu keeps his mind on the body with diligence, comprehension and mindfulness,

steadfast by contemplating it as body, so as to keep away sense-desires and distress that would otherwise arise in him. He keeps his mind on sensation with diligence, comprehension and mindfulness, steadfastly contemplating it as sensation . . . p . . . on the mind . . . steadfastly contemplating it as mind . . . p . . . He keeps his mind on mind-objects (*dhamma*) steadfastly contemplating them as mind-objects so as to keep away sense-desire and distress that would otherwise arise in him. Bhikkhus, this is how a bhikkhu remains mindful.

"Bhikkhus, how does a bhikkhu exercise clear comprehension? Bhikkhus, in this Teaching, a bhikkhu exercises clear comprehension in moving forward or back; in looking straight ahead or sideways; in bending or stretching out; in wearing the double-layered robe, or in carrying alms-bowl and robe; in eating, drinking, chewing, savouring food; in defecating and urinating; in walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking, speaking, or in remaining silent. Bhikkhus, this is how a bhikkhu should exercise clear comprehension.

"Bhikkhus, a bhikkhu should dwell in mindfulness and clear comprehension. This is our exhortation to you."

### **Ambapālī, the Courtesan.**

When Ambapālī, the courtesan, heard the news that the Bhagavā had arrived at Vesālī and was staying at her mango grove, she had the most excellent carriages harnessed for the great occasion (to go and see the Bhagavā), and mounting an excellent carriage accompanied by other excellent carriages, she left the city of Vesālī for her mango grove. After riding in the carriage as far as carriages should properly go, she dismounted from her carriage and approached the Bhagavā on foot. She made obeisance to the Bhagavā and sat in a suitable place.

To Ambapālī, the courtesan, seated at a suitable place, the Bhagavā pointed out the benefits of the Doctrine, exhorted her to set herself up in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened her in the practice. After the Bhagavā had pointed out to her the benefits of the Doctrine, exhorted her to gladden her in the practice, Ambapālī, the courtesan, said to the Bhagavā, "Venerable Sir, may it please the Bhagavā to

accept my offering of food for tomorrow, together with the company of bhikkhus." The Bhagavā accepted by token of his silence.

Then, Ambapālī, knowing that the Bhagavā had accepted her request, rose from her place, made obeisance to the Bhagavā, and left respectfully.

### The Licchavī Princes And Ambapālī.

When the Licchavī princes of Vesālī heard that the Bhagavā had arrived at Vesālī and was staying at the mango grove of Ambapālī, they ordered the most excellent carriages harnessed, and mounting excellent carriages, they left the city, accompanied by excellent carriages kept in reserve.

Some of the Licchavī princes were garbed in dark-blue uniform and, wearing dark-blue armaments, they took on a dark-blue appearance. Some of them were garbed in yellow uniform, and wearing yellow ornaments, they took on a yellow appearance. Some of them were garbed in red uniform, and, wearing red ornaments, they took on a red appearance. Some of them were garbed in white uniform, and wearing white ornaments, they took on a white appearance,

(Note: Not only were the dark-blue uniformed princes wearing dark-blue ornaments, they painted themselves in unguents of dark-blue colour. Furthermore, the chariots they rode in also were finished in dark-blue, studded with dark-blue gems, and harnessed by horses with embellishments of the same colour; even the whips and the flags fitted to the chariot were also of the same colour. The same applies to the remaining colour groups among the Licchavī princes.)

Then Ambapālī, the courtesan let her carriage bump against the carriages of the young Licchavī princes, axle against axle, wheel against wheel, yoke against yoke. Thereupon, the Licchavī princes said to Ambapālī, the courtesan, "Look, you Ambapālī, why do you let your carriage bump against the carriage of young Licchavī princes, axle against axle, wheel against wheel, yoke against yoke?"

"O my Princes! It is because I have invited the Bhagavā to an offering of meal tomorrow, together with the company of bhikkhus."

"Now then, Ambapālī, give us (in exchange) for a hundred thousand (the privilege to offer) this meal (to the Bhagavā)!"

"O my princes, even if you were to give me Vesālī together with its fief territories, I would not give up (the privilege to offer) this meal."

At those brave words of Ambapālī, the Licchavī princes, fluttering their fingers in admiration, exclaimed, "Oh men, we have been outdone by the young woman! We have been outdone by the young woman!"

Then the Licchavī princes rode on to Ambapālī mango grove. The Bhagavā saw the splendid sight of the Licchavī princes trooped in various colours, and said to the bhikkhus:

"O bhikkhus, let those bhikkhus who have never seen the Tavatīṃsa devas look at that array of the Licchavīs; let them look at them carefully; let them feast their eyes on the Licchavīs as if the Licchavī groupings were the Tavatīṃsa devas."

(In this context, the Bhagavā said to the bhikkhus, ". . . let them feast their eyes on the Licchavī as if the Licchavī groupings were the Tavatīṃsa devas," not in the sense of regarding the splendid sight as something to be cherished. It is said here to impress the bhikkhus about human glory that is comparable to the glory of celestial beings. It is a way of inspiring some of the bhikkhus as in the usual pattern of discourses (beginning with the benefits of giving *dāna kathā*, the benefits of observance of morality *sīla kathā*, including the fortunate existences in deva realms, *sagga khathā* culminating in the faults of sensual pleasure *kamanam ādinava kathā*).

And yet the question remains, "Why does the Bhagavā urge the bhikkhus to look at the Licchavīs that might lead some bhikkhus in the audience think that sight is something good, something to be cherished?" In many of the Buddha's discourses, the usual instruction is not to regard sense-objects such as visual objects, as something

beautiful *sūba*. But how is it that here the same instruction is not given?"

The answer is this: The Bhagavā says so in the interest of the bhikkhus. Let me explain this.

Some of the bhikkhus among the audience were not diligent in bhikkhu practice. The Bhagavā wishes to show to them that bhikkhu practice can lead to the sort of human glory possessed by the Licchavis. (compare this with the Bhagava's method of arousing the initial interest of Nanda in bhikkhu practice by taking him to the deva realms and showing the glory of devas.)

Further, the Licchavis would in due course furnish a concrete example of the impermanence of things. For these Licchavis, so high in their present state comparable even to Tavatimsa devas, are bound to meet their ruin in the hands of Ajātasattu. The bhikkhus who remember the greatness of the Licchavis will soon have occasion to see their downfall when these bhikkhus will gain insight readily into impermanence of sentient, leading to Arahatship with the Four Discriminative Knowledge. This is the second and more important reason for the Bhagava's urging the bhikkhus to have a close look at the Licchavī princes.

Then the Licchavī princes rode in their carriages as far as carriages should go and then they alighted from their carriages and walked towards the Bhagavā. They made obeisance to the Bhagavā and sat at a suitable place: To the Licchavī princes thus seated, the Bhagavā pointed out the benefits of the Doctrine, exhorted them to set themselves up in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened them in the practice. After the Bhagavā had pointed out to them the benefits of the Doctrine, exhorted them to get established in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened them in the practice, the Licchavī princes said to the Bhagavā, "Venerable Sir, may it please the Bhagavā to accept our offering of food for tomorrow together with the company of bhikkhus." Then the Bhagavā said to them, "O Licchavī princes, I have already accepted the offering of food for tomorrow by Ambapālī, the courtesan." Thereupon the Licchavī princes, fluttering their fingers (in

admiration), exclaimed, "Oh men, we have been outdone by the young woman! We have been outdone by the young woman!"

Then the Licchavī princes expressed their appreciation and delight at the Bhagava's discourse, rose from their seats, made obeisance to the Bhagavā and left the Bhagava's presence respectfully.

(In this connection it might be asked," Since the Licchavī princes had known (from Ambapālī) that she had invited the Bhagavā and his company to the next day's meal, why did they make the invitation to the Bhagavā?

The answer, is: (1) Because the Licchavis did not believe Ambapālī's word; and (2) because they set a high value on lay supporters' obligations. Let me explain his:

- (1) The Licchavī princes did not take Ambapālī's words at face value because they regarded her as a fallen woman.
- (2) Secondly, it is customary for lay supporters to invite the Sangha to a food offering when they are going home after listening to a discourse.

### **Ambapālī donates her mango grove to the Bhagavā.**

Then, after the night had passed, Ambapālī, the courtesan, having had the choicest food and delicacies prepared in her mango grove, informed the Bhagavā by messengers who said, "Venerable Sir, it is time (to proceed); the food offering is ready." Then in the morning time the Bhagavā rearranged his robes, and taking alms-bowl and great robe, went to the house of Ambapālī, the courtesan, accompanied by the company of bhikkhus, and sat at the place prepared for him.

(In this content, Ambapālī's house should be understood to mean the holiday home of hers in the mango grove, and not her permanent residence in the city of Vesālī. This fact is clearly indicated by her words to the Bhagavā which say, " . . . I give this grove in donation to the Buddha." The *Bhesajjakkhandhaka* of *Vinaya Mahā vagga* is also specific about this: it says 'that Ambapālī, the courtesan, offered food to the Bhagavā and his

company of bhikkhus at her holiday home in her grove, and donated her own mango grove to the Order of bhikkhus headed by the Bhagavā.)

Then Ambapālī, the courtesan, attended on the bhikkhus headed by the Bhagavā, respectfully offering the choicest food and delicacies with her own hands. After the meal, she sat at a suitable place and said to the Bhagavā, "Venerable Sir, I give this garden Grove in donation to the Order of bhikkhus headed by the Bhagavā." The Bhagavā accepted the donation and after giving a discourse on the Dhamma to Ambapālī, the courtesan, rose and departed.

While the Bhagavā was sojourning at the mango grove of Ambapālī in Vesālī, there too he repeatedly expounded the importance of morality, concentration and wisdom, the Threefold bhikkhu training.

#### The Bhagava's last Rains-retreat at Veluva village.

Then the Bhagavā, after staying at Ambapālī's mango grove as long as he wished, told Ānandā his wish to go to Veluva village in the vicinity of Vesālī and proceeded there accompanied by a big company of bhikkhus.

During his stay at Veluva village (which was about the full moon of Vesakha, in his forty-fifth *vasa*), the Bhagavā said to the bhikkhus:

"Bhikkhus, enter upon the rains-retreat period in the vicinity of Vesālī at the monasteries of your friends and acquaintances. As for me I am going to pass the rains retreat in this Veluva village."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," the bhikkhus replied, and they entered into the rains-retreat period (*vasa*) at the monasteries of friends and acquaintances in the vicinity of Vesālī. The Bhagavā himself entered into the rains-retreat period at Veluva village.

(The Bhagavā told the bhikkhus to dwell for the rains-retreat period in the various monasteries in the neighbourhood of Vesālī because Veluva village was too small to provide daily alms-food to this great number of bhikkhus whereas the many monasteries around Vesālī could collect alms-food without difficulty.

The reason for the Bhagava's orders to the bhikkhus to stay not far away from Vesālī was that he knew that he would enter *Parinibhāna* in the next ten months, so if the bhikkhus were allowed to go and dwell at far away places, some of them might not be able to pay their last respects to the Bhagavā when the Bhagavā passed away, and they would feel very sorry for the lack of any hint from the Bhagavā about his oncoming demise. By staying around Vesālī they could get the opportunity of listening to the Bhagava's discourses eight times a month. So it was out of compassion for the bhikkhus that the bhagavā limited the area of rains-retreat dwelling for the bhikkhus to the neighbourhood of Vesālī.)

### **The Bhagavā is afflicted with a very severe illness.**

After the Bhagavā had entered into the rains-retreat period at Veluva village he was afflicted with a very severe illness that caused excessive pain near unto death. He bore the pain and neutralised it by remaining mindful with clear comprehension. (i.e., through Insight Knowledge that reflects on the impermanence, woefulness, and unsubstantiality of sensation.) It now occurred to him: " It would not be proper for me to pass away in the realization Nibbāna without letting the attendant bhikkhus know, without taking leave of the Order of bhikkhus. It would be well for me to keep off this ailment by effort of Insight-meditation, *vipassanā bhāvanā*, precursor to Fruition-Knowledge, and then by abiding in the life-maintaining *Phala samāpatti* (sustained absorption in Fruition Knowledge)." Accordingly, the Bhagavā kept off the ailment through effort of Insight meditation and by abiding in the life-maintaining *Phala samāpatti*. Then the Bhagava's illness fell away.

(The continuous process of psycho-physical phenomena kept going by the force of kamma is called life maintaining effort (*jīvita saṅkhāra*). The prolonging of this process of psycho-physical phenomena through *phala samāpatti* is also called life maintaining effort *jīvita saṅkhāra*. This life maintaining process or effort is also life-sustaining process (*āyu saṅkhāra*).

The *Arahattaphala samāpatti* of the Buddha is of three kinds: *Maggānantara*, *valañjana*, and *āyusaṅkhāra* (or *āyupālaka*).



Of those three,

- (i) the three impulsion thoughts that arise immediately consequent to the Buddha's *Arahatta magga* thought process (the magga-impulsion thoughts having the character to fructify immediately, *akālika*) is called *Maggānantara phala samāpatti*.
- (ii) the sustained absorption that the Buddha may at any time later enter at will is called *vaḷañjana phala samāpatti*. This is the enjoyment of the peace of Nibbāna. The Buddha entered into this kind of absorption at any possible odd moments, even while the audience expressing appreciation by saying. "*sādhu, sādhu*" during a discourse.
- (iii) The Insight meditation entered into by the Bhagavā at Veluva village as the preliminary effort to enter into the absorption of *Phala samāpatti* is the same as the contemplation that the Bodhisatta had practised on the threshold of Enlightenment under the Mahābodhi Tree. It consists in contemplating the three characteristics of physical and mental phenomena. Having first established in this Insight-meditation, the Bhagavā made a solemn wish that he be free from any ailment for ten months up to the full moon of *Asalha* (May). After that he entered upon *Arahatta phala samāpatti*. This absorption of *Phala samāpatti* had the desired effect of the quelling of the severe illness and the freedom from all disease for ten whole months. Therefore this third type of *Phala samāpatti* is called life maintaining *samāpatti*. Details of the method of Insight-meditation preceding this *Phala samāpatti*, called, *rūpasattaka* and *namā sattaka*, may be gathered from *Visuddhi magga*, Chapter XXII.

Of the above three kinds of *Phala samāpatti*, the first two *Maggāntara* and *vaḷañjana* are referred to as *khanika phala samāpatti* in the Commentaries and Sub-commentaries while the third is called *jīvitasamkhāra* or *āyusamkhāra phalasamāpatti*.

The distinction between *khanika samāpatti* and *jīvitasamkhāra sampatti* should be noted.

*Khanika sampātti* is preceded by ordinary mode of entering into Insight-meditation whereas *Jivitasaiikhāra samāpatti* is preceded by a higher mode of Insight-meditation called *rūpa sattaka* and *nāma sattaka* requiring greater effort. These two types of Insight-meditation have therefore different effects on the *Phala samāpatti* that immediately follow them. The former can put off ailment only while the absorption lasts, just like a stone falling on a moss-covered surface of water can clear away the moss while the impact of the stone lasts, but will let the moss gather together on the spot later. The latter can put off ailment for a desired period (here ten months) just like when a strong man were to descend the lake, clear away the moss from the desired area so that the moss is kept away for some considerable time.

Having (thus) recovered from his illness, the Bhagavā came out of his monastery soon after his recovery, and sat in the shade of the monastery on the seat prepared for him. Then the Venerable Ānandā approached the Bhagavā, paid his obeisance to the Bhagavā and, having seated at a suitable place, said to the Bhagavā:

"Venerable Sir, I see the Bhagavā now at ease. I find the Bhagavā now in good health. But, Venerable Sir, although I now see the Bhagavā like this, when the Bhagavā was ill I felt heavy and stiff in my body; I could hardly distinguish between the directions; I got befuddled, unable to comprehend things such as the methods of steadfast mindfulness.

"However, I got a little comfort from the thought that the Bhagavā would not pass away so long as he had not left any instruction concerning the order of bhikkhus."

Thereupon the Bhagavā explained his position as against the Order of bhikkhus thus;

"Ānandā, what more could the Order of bhikkhus expect from me? For I have taught them without discriminating as the inner circle of disciples or outer circle of disciples. Ānandā, in the matter of the Teaching I do not keep back anything as if it were some secret held in the closed fist of a (mean) teacher. Ānandā,

if someone should desire that he alone should have sole control over the Order of bhikkhus, or that the Order of bhikkhus should rely on him alone, then it would be for such person to leave any instructions concerning the Order of bhikkhus. But Ānandā, I have no desire that I alone should have sole control over the Order of bhikkhus, or that the Order of bhikkhus should rely on me alone. Since I have no such desire, why should I leave any instruction concerning the Order of bhikkhus?

"Ānandā, I am now grown old, far gone in years, and have arrived at the last stage of life. I am turning eighty years of age. And just as an old worn out cart is kept going by additional efforts and care so my body is kept going by the additional effort of the life maintaining *Phala samāpatti*. Ānandā, it is (only) when the Tathāgata remains abiding in *Arahatta phala samāpatti*, unconcerned with material objects through the cessation of some (mundane) sensations, and through ceasing to attend to any signs of conditioned phenomena, that the Tathāgata's body is at ease (lit, at greater ease)."

"Therefore, Ānandā, let yourselves be your own mainstay; let yourselves, and not anyone else, be your refuge. Let the Dhamma be your firm ground, and let the Dhamma, and not anything else, be your refuge.

"Ānandā, how does the bhikkhu make himself his own mainstay, make himself and not anyone else, his refuge? How does he make the Dhamma his firm ground, and make the Dhamma, and not anything else, his refuge?

"Ānandā, in this Teaching, a bhikkhu keeps his mind on the body with diligence, comprehension and mindfulness, steadfastly contemplating it as body, so as to keep away sense desire and distress that would otherwise arise in him. He keeps his mind on sensation with diligence, comprehension, and mindfulness, steadfastly contemplating it as sensation . . . p . . . on the mind . . . p . . . steadfastly contemplating it as mind . . . p . . . He keeps his mind on mind objects (*dhamma*), steadfastly contemplating them as mind objects so as to keep away sense desire and distress that would otherwise arise in him.

"Ānandā, thus the bhikkhu makes himself his own mainstay, makes himself, and not anyone else, his refuge. Thus he makes the Dhamma his firm ground, and makes the Dhamma, and not anything else, his refuge.

"Ānandā, those bhikkhus who, either now or after I have passed away, make themselves their own mainstay, make themselves, and not anyone else, their refuge; who make the Dhamma their firm ground, and make the Dhamma, and not anything else, their refuge all such bhikkhus are sure to attain to the highest state (i.e., Arahatsip) among all the bhikkhus who cherish the Threefold Training."

Thus did the Bhagavā conclude the discourse culminating in *Arahattaphala*.

### The Demise of the Two Chief Disciples.

After spending the last rains-retreat period at Veluva village, at the end of the period, the Bhagavā left the village for Sāvatti, and travelling by stages, arrived at Sāvatti and went into the Jetavana monastery. (It was about the eighth day of the lunar month Tazaungmon, (November)).

On that day the Venerable Sāriputta, knowing that he had just seven days more to live, bade farewell to the Bhagavā and took a seven day journey to his native place, Nālaka village in the Province of Rājagaha. There in the brick house where he was born, the Venerable Sāriputta passed away and entered *parinibbāna* on the full moon day of Tazaungmon (November).

(The details of this event will be described in the chapter on the Sangha.)

After the funeral rites were finished, the Venerable Cunda, younger brother of the Venerable Sāriputta, collected the alms-bowl, robe, etc., that Venerable Sāriputta had used, and took them, together with the remains of Sāriputta, to Sāvatti. These relics were enshrined under the Baghava's instruction at Sāvatti. Thereafter the Bhagavā went to Rājagaha. When the Bhagavā was in Rājagaha, on the day of the new

moon in Tazaungmon. The Venerable Mahā Moggallāna entered *parinibbana*.

(The details of the event will be described in the chapter on the Sangha ).

The relics of the Venerable Maha Moggallāna were enshrined under the Bhagava's instructions at Rājagaha. After that the Bhagavā proceeded on his journey and, travelling by stages, arrived at Ukkacela. There at the landing place on the Gaṅgā river the Bhagavā gave a discourse concerning the demise of the two Chief Disciples (see *Ukkacela sutta, Saṃyutta III.*)

Then in the morning, the Bhagavā went into Vesālī on his alms-round, and after his meal, leaving the place of eating, he said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Ānandā, bring the leather sheet seat; let us go to the Capata shrine to spend the day there."

"Very well, Venerable Sir, " said Ānandā, and taking a leather sheet seat, followed closely behind the Bhagavā.

### **The Bhagavā gives hints about his passing away.**

Then the Bhagavā approached the Capata shrine and sat on the seat spread out for him. The Venerable Ānandā, making obeisance to the Bhagavā, seated himself at a suitable place. Then the Bhagavā said to Ānandā by way of clear hints:

"Ānandā, Whosoever has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the Four Bases of Psychic Power (*iddhipāda*) could, if he so wishes, live the maximum life-span or even beyond the maximum life-span.

"Ānandā, the Tathāgata has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the Four Bases of Psychic Power. Therefore, Ānandā, the Tathāgata could, if he so wishes, live the maximum life-span."

Although the Bhagavā thus gave clear hints, the Venerable Ānandā failed to grasp them. And so it did not occur to him to entreat the

Bhagavā along these lines (in these terms): "May the Bhagavā, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, well-being and happiness of devas and men, out of compassion for the world, live the maximum life-span! May the One who speaks only what is true and beneficial live the maximum life-span!" The Venerable Ananda's mind was like that of one possessed by Māra.

In this connection: the *Udena* shrine (*Udena cetiya*) was a temple built on the site where the demon Udena was traditionally propitiated. The other shrines (at *Veśālī*) likewise were traditional places of worship in respect of traditional deities.

Regarding the term ' *kappa* ' in this context :

"*Kappam vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesam vā.*"

is unanimously taken to mean *āyukappa*, 'life span,' of that time by the Commentators and Sub-commentators.

Only the Venerable Mahāsīva took different interpretation. According to him. "The Buddhas never make claims about their powers without some good cause. That being so, the Bhagavā could repeatedly resort to entering into the absorption of *Phala samāpati* and go on prolonging his life by ten-month periods up to the end of the present aeon which is marked by five Buddhas. (Yet why did the Bhagavā not choose to do so?) (The Bhagavā probably had thought thus:) Human beings born with the kamma-born corporeality are subject to decay. The Buddhas do not wish to present themselves with their descript bodies which naturally show up after the four-fifth of the life-span has passed. That is why it is customary for all Buddhas to pass away when they have attained four fifths of the life-span, when their physical appearance is still firm and inspiring for the devotees. There is also another practical consideration: if a Buddha were to survive most of his great disciples and were surrounded by youthful bhikkhus the people would say, "Oh!, what sort of disciples Buddha has!" These, the Venerable Mahāsīva maintains, are the practical considerations that the Buddhas take into account in not exercising their power of living on to the end of the aeon.

However, the Venerable Mahāsīva's views were not accepted by the Commentators, who take 'life-span' as the meaning of *āyukappa* on the authority of the *Pakinnaka desana atthakatha*.

(See Commentary on *Dīgha Nikāya*).

The view of the Venerable Mahāsīva was also rejected by the Sub-Commentary on *Mahāvagga (Dīgha Nikāya)*. It says: "Since the Mahāsīva's view contains a statement that human beings are subject to decay, which implies that decay cannot be postponed by psychic power. In that case it also implies that death cannot be prevented by psychic power. Therefore the argument is inherently unsound. Only the view taken by the Commentary should be taken as the sound view, and not that of Mahāsīva."

In this matter Mahāsīva would appear to take only one point as primary consideration, and that is that a Bodhisatta's resultant kamma at his last existence has the power to prolong life for an infinite period. And that view coupled with the authority of the Pāli (text) that the life maintaining *Phala samāpatti* of Buddhas can postpone fatal ailment, leads Mahāsīva to claim that if the Buddha so wishes, he might live on throughout the end of the present aeon.

Even though resultant-kamma of a Bodhisatta at his last existence is supposed to prolong life for an infinite period, that infinite period can be literally true only if the prevailing life-span is also an infinite period. But if the prevailing life-span is one hundred years, that (so-called) infinite period can last just one hundred years. That indeed is so because the power of kamma has its effect limited by the extent of the prevailing times, physical basis of the person, effort taken, and the plane of existence. That is why the *Pakinnaka desanā* of the ancient Commentary takes the meaning of *āyukappa* as the prevailing life-span. This view has also been maintained by the new Commentators such as Buddhaghosa, Dhammapāla, etc."

As regards the expression, "possessed by Māra," the twelve kinds of illusions (*vipallasa*) should be noted.

- (1) Impermanence *anicca* is held as permanence *nicca* through: (i) the illusion of perception, (ii) the illusion of thought, and (iii) through the illusion of views;
- (2) Pain *dukkha* is held as pleasure *sukha* through; (i) the illusion of perception, (ii) the illusion of thought, and (iii) the illusion of views;
- (3) Non-self *anatta* is held as Self *atta* through (i) the illusion of perception, (ii) the illusion of thought, and (iii) the illusion of views;
- (4) Loathsomeness *asubha* is held as lovely *Subho* through: (i) the illusion of perception, (ii) the illusion of thought, (iii) the illusion of views.

One who is free from all those illusion cannot fall victim to Mara's influence mentally. (The Venerable Mahā Moggallāna is an example). A worlding who has not rid of any of those illusion or an *Ariya* who has overcome some of those illusion but still have some remaining in him is liable to be possessed by Māra.

The Venerable Ānandā still had these four illusions: the illusion of perception and the illusion of thought that made pain appear as pleasure; the illusion of perception and the illusion of thought that made loathsomeness appear as lovely. Hence his being victimized by Māra.

The way Māra possesses his victim is by frightening him out of his wits either by creating a dreadful vision or a dreadful sound. When the victim is thus frightened he loses consciousness, leaving his mouth agape. Māra then would insert his hand through the opened mouth and take hold of his heart exerting pressure on it. The victim lies in a senseless state totally possessed by Māra.

In the case of the Venerable Ānandā, Māra could not insert his hand through the mouth and oppress the heart. He merely presented some dreadful sense object before Ānandā, under the influence of which Ānandā could not think of the significance of the Bhagava's intimation.

For a second time the Bhagavā said to Ānandā . . . p . . .

For a third time the Bhagavā said to Ānandā:

*TINI*



"Ānandā, pleasant is the city of Vesālī. And pleasant are the shrines of Udena, Gotamaka, Sattamba, Bahuputta, Sarandada, Cāpāta.

"Ānandā, whosoever has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the Four Bases of Psychic Power (*iddhipāda*) could, if he so wishes, live the maximum life-span or even beyond the maximum life-span.

"Ānandā, the Tathāgata has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up mastered; and fully developed the Four Bases of Psychic Power. Therefore, Ānandā, the Tathāgata could, if he so wishes, live the maximum life-span." Thus said the Bhagavā by way of clear hints.

Although the Bhagavā thus gave clear hints, the Venerable Ānandā failed to grasp them. And so it did not occur to him to entreat the Bhagavā along these lines (in these terms): "May the Bhagavā, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, well being and happiness of devas and men, out of compassion for the world, live the maximum life-span! May the Well-Spoken One live the maximum life-span!" The Venerable Ānanda's mind was like that of one possessed by Māra.

(Herein, it might be asked: "Why did the Bhagavā, knowing well that Ānandā was being possessed by Māra, repeated his words of intimation three times?"

The answer is this: the Bhagavā foresaw that later when Māra had released Ānandā, and regained his senses, Ānandā would entreat him to live the whole of the life-span; in that event the Bhagavā would have reason to blame Ānandā for his failure to make the request at the proper time and that this blaming would have the effect of attenuating Ānanda's grief.)

Then the Bhagavā said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Go now, Ānandā. Now you know the time to go." Very well, Venerable Sir," assented Ānandā, then, arising from his seat, he made obeisance to the Bhagavā and went to sit at the foot of a tree, not far away from the Bhagavā.

**Māra's request.**

Soon after the Venerable Ānandā had left the Bhagava's presence, Māra the Evil one approached the Bhagavā and, standing at a certain place, addressed the Bhagavā thus; "Venerable Sir, let the Bhagavā realize *parinibbāna* now, let the well-spoken one pass away! Venerable Sir, it is time now for the Bhagavā to pass away.

"Venerable Sir, the Bhagavā had said (to me) thus; 'O Evil One, I shall not pass away so long as my disciples, the bhikkhus, are not yet well versed in the Doctrine, not yet well disciplined (in the threefold Training), not yet sure of themselves (in the righteousness of their conduct), not yet possessed of wide knowledge, not yet able to memorize the Teaching, not yet able to practise according to the Teaching leading to the Supramundane, not yet able to take up the proper practice (i.e., the life of purity), not yet settled in their practice; not yet able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make evident their Teacher's doctrine that they have learnt; so long as they are not yet able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds such other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful Teaching."

"Venerable Sir, now that the Bhagava's disciples, the bhikkhus, are well versed in the Doctrine, are well disciplined (in the threefold Training), are sure of themselves, are possessed of wide knowledge, are able to memorize the Teaching, are able to practise according to the Teaching leading to the Supramundane, are able to take up the proper practice, are settled in their practice; are able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make evident their Teacher's doctrine that they have learnt; are able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds such other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful Teaching.

"Venerable Sir, let the Bhagavā realize *parinibbāna* now, let the Well-spoken One pass away! Venerable Sir, it is time now for the Bhagavā to pass away." (1)

"Venerable Sir, the Bhagavā had said (to me) thus: 'O Evil One, I shall not pass away so long as my female disciples, the bhikkhunis . . .

(p) (2)

' . . . my male lay-disciples . . . (p) (3)

' . . . my female lay-disciples are not well versed in the Doctrine, not yet well disciplined (in the threefold Training), not yet sure of themselves (in the righteousness of their conduct), not yet possessed of wide knowledge, not yet able to memorize the Teaching, not yet able to practise according to the Teaching leading to the Supramundane, not yet able to take up the proper practice (i.e., the life of purity), not yet settled in their practice; not yet able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make evident their Teacher's doctrine that they have learnt; so long as they are not yet able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds such other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful Teaching. "

"Venerable Sir, now that the Bhagava's female lay disciples are well versed in the Doctrine, are well disciplined (in the three fold Training), are sure of themselves, are possessed of wide knowledge, are able to memorize the Teaching, are able to practise according to the Teaching leading to the Supramundane, are able to take up the proper practice, are settled in their practice; are able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make clear their Teacher's doctrine that they have learnt, are able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds such other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful Teaching-

"Venerable Sir, let the Bhagavā realize *parinibbāna* now, let the Well-spoken One pass away! Venerable Sir, it is time now for the Bhagavā to pass away.

"Venerable Sir, the Bhagavā had said (to me) thus." O Evil One, I shall not pass away so long as this Teaching of mine which is the Practice of Purity is not yet sufficiently established among the disciples, not yet prosperous, widespread, reached the multitudes, and renowned, to the extent that it can be thoroughly made known by wise devas and men.'

"Venerable Sir, now that the Bhagava's Teaching which is the Practice of Purity is sufficiently established among the disciples, is now prosperous, widespread, has reached the multitudes, and is renowned to the extent that it can be thoroughly made known by wise devas and men.'

"Venerable Sir, let the Bhagavā realize *parinibbāna* now, let the Well-spoken One pass away! Venerable Sir, it is time now for the Bhagavā to pass away."

(This was the third time Māra requested the Bhagavā to pass away) The first time was during the eight week of Buddhist Sojourn in the vicinity of the Bodhi Tree, after the Buddha had won Perfect Self-enlightenment. At that time he said to the Bhagavā. "Venerable Sir, as the result of your fulfilling the Perfections, aimed at Buddhahood, you have now become the Buddha. You have won Perfect Self-Enlightenment. What benefit would be there (what good would turn out) from your wandering from town to town, village to village, preaching your doctrine for the welfare of the world of living beings? Venerable Sir, let the Bhagavā realize *parinibbāna* now, . . . (etc.)."

(For a second time) Māra, having seen that the Bhagavā had assented to Brahma Sahampati's request to preach the Doctrine, approached the Bhagavā who was sitting beneath the Ajapāla (Goat-herd's) Banyan Tree where the Bhagavā stayed for the seventh week after Enlightenment. He was feeling miserable at the prospect of his domain getting lost to the Buddha whose doctrine would lead the multitudes to Deathlessness. So (in spite of the Bhagava's promise to Brahma Sahampati), he decided to try to change the mind of the Buddha in an attempt to prevent the Buddha's propagating the Dhamma by making a second request to pass away, in words similar to the first request.

At that time the Bhagavā replied to Māra that so long as his disciples the bhikkhus, his female disciples; the bhikkhunis, his lay disciples, female lay disciples were not well versed in the Doctrine . . . (p) . . . were unable to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds such other doctrines as might arise, and expound the wonderful Teaching, he

would not pass away. Māra in his third request, therefore, referred to those reasons the Bhagavā gave on that second request.)

On being requested thus, the Bhagavā said to Māra the Evil One "Evil One, don't you worry; the *parinibhāna* of the Tathāgata will not be long in coming. Three months hence the Tathāgata will realize *parinibbāna*."

**The Bhagavā renounces the life-maintaining mental process.**

Then the Bhagavā, while at Cāpāla shrine, decided mindfully and with deliberation to give up the life-maintaining mental process, i.e, not to resume the absorption of *phala samāpatti* (at the end of three months). On the Bhagava's making that resolution, the great earth quaked with a hair-raising and gooseflesh-causing vehemence.

Then the Bhagavā, perceiving this phenomenal occurrence, uttered a joyous utterance in verse.

*Tula matulañca sambhavam  
 Bhava samñkhāra mavassaji muni  
 Ajjhatarato samāhito  
 Abhindi kavacamivatta sambhavam.*

"The Great Sage, having weighed the Infinite Nibbāna against the ephemeral nature of sentient existence, has cast off (by the Ariya Path) the resultant-producing volitions that cause fresh existence. With delight in Insight-meditation (reflecting on the three characteristics of the five aggregates) and with complete calm of mind, he has destroyed the tenacious defilements that enwrap him like a tight coat of chain-mail."

The meaning of the verse further expanded:

The Bhagavā gained the four *Ariya maggas* after cultivating meditation for calm and insight-meditation. As a brave warrior at the battlefield would cut loose with his sharp sword, the tight coat of chain-mail that he is wearing, so also the Bhagavā has completely destroyed the defilements with the four Path Knowledges. Just as when the tap-roots of a tree are cut off, the fruit-producing potential of the

tree is terminated, the moment the defilements are destroyed, the potential for rebirth that has been cumulating from the beginningless *samsāra* is terminated in the mental makeup of the Bhagava.

(Notes: In the statement, "The Bhagavā decided mindfully and with deliberation to give up the life-maintaining mental process," mindfully means the Bhagava's mind dwelled at all moments on the Four Foundations of Steadfast Mindfulness, namely, body, sensations, mind and mind objects. Reflecting wisely on these four Foundation, he recalled how he had borne the burden of the five aggregates over such a long, weary journey of *Samsāra*, and that now he was free from the burden; and that to enable him to cast aside this burden, he had for over four *asaṅkheyyas* and a thousand aeons fulfilled the Perfections, the requisite infra structure for the Ariya Path. Now that he was established in the Path which he had long aspired after, he was able to dwell on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, having had penetrative insight into the loathsomeness, woefulness, impermanence and insubstantiality of conditioned phenomena.

"With deliberation" means the Bhagavā pondered on the benefits he had brought for himself and for others. For his own benefit he had obtained his goal of Buddhahood at the foot of the Bodhi Tree. As for the benefit for others he had, by his preaching the Dhamma, caused the multitudes to gain liberation from the round of *dukkha*. He would be bringing an end to that mission in the next three months (i.e., on the full moon of *asaḥa* (May).

These thoughts which the Bhagavā considered led to the decision, by means of the Buddha. Knowledge, to give up the life-maintaining mental process.

In the expression "to give up the life-maintaining mental process," 'the life maintaining mental process,' *āyusaṅkhāra*, is a term capable of two meanings; the interaction of mind and matter kept going by the process that sustains life, conditioned by kamma, is one meaning. The *āyupālaka Phalasaṃpatti* that acts as a condition for prolonging life (as explained above at p 309 of the Myanmar original text) is the other meaning.

"To give up the life maintaining mental process" means the Bhagavā, was resolving that he would not reenter into the *Phala samāpatti* after three months; he would do so only up to the full moon *asaḥa*. By that resolution, the Bhagavā in effect renounced the condition for prolonging his life beyond three months.

When the Bhagavā thus renounced the life-maintaining mental process, the great earth quaked in six different ways: (i) swaying from east to west, (ii) swaying from west to east, (iii) swaying from south to north, (iv) swaying from north to south, (v) heaving up, and (iv) dropping down. This phenomenon occurred throughout the ten-thousand world systems, causing people terror with gooseflesh appearing and body-hairs standing up on them.

When the Bhagavā had relinquished the life-maintaining mental process, he felt delightful satisfaction with the thought that the burden of the body he had been carrying over the long course of *saṃsāra* was now to be laid aside in the next three months. Since the joy at this happy prospect was so intense that it could not be contained and (like a jar overfilled with oil) it found expression in the joyous utterance of the above stanza.

The fact that that stanza was the outcome of great joy makes it evident that in relinquishing the life-maintaining mental process the Bhagavā was not yielding to Māra out of fear. If it were so, how could such a joyous utterance come about? Only the happy prospect, foreseen by the Buddha Knowledge, that three months hence he would be laying down the burden of the five aggregates and making an end of all *dukkha*, brought forth that joyous utterance concerning his relinquishment.)

Then the Venerable Ānandā bethought himself: "O wonderful it is! O unprecedented it is! This hair-raising earthquake is monstrous indeed! It is really stupendous! And how rolling thunders echoed and re-echoed! What is the cause of great earthquakes? What conditions them?"

Then the Venerable Ānandā approached the Bhagavā, made his obeisance to him, and sitting at a suitable place, addressed the Bhagavā

thus: "O wonderful it is! O unprecedented it is! This hair raising, earthquake is monstrous indeed! It is really stupendous! and how rolling thunders echoed and re-echoed! Venerable Sir, what is the cause of such great earthquakes? What conditions them?"

### **Eight causes of earthquakes.**

And the Bhagavā said: "Ānandā, there are eight causes of, or conditions leading to great earthquakes. They are:

- (i) This great earth is supported by water, the water by air, the air by space. When very strong winds blow, the water is shaken. When the water is shaken, the earth is shaken. This is the first cause of, the first condition leading to, great earthquakes.
- (ii) Further, Ānandā, a *samaṇa* or a *brahmaṇa* who has great (mental) power, and who is accomplished in the supernormal powers of the mind, or a deva of great power, by developing intense concentration on the limited image of the earth element and on the boundless image of the water-element can cause the earth to shake strongly, to sway violently, and to convulse. This is the second cause of, the second condition leading to, great earthquakes.
- (iii) Further, Ānandā, on the occasion of a *Bodhisatta*, passing away in the Tusitā deva realm and descending into (i.e., conceiving) in the mother's womb, mindfully and with clear comprehension, this great earth shakes, quakes strongly, sways violently, and is convulsed. This the third cause of, the third condition leading to, great earthquakes.
- (iv) Further, Ānandā, on the occasion of a *Bodhisatta*, issuing from the mother's womb, mindfully and with clear comprehension, this great earth shakes, quakes strongly, sways violently, and is convulsed. This is the fourth cause of, the fourth condition leading to, great earthquakes.
- (v) Further, Ānandā, on the occasion of a Buddha attaining Supremely Perfect-Enlightenment, this great earth shakes, quakes strongly, sways violently, and is convulsed.



- (vi) Further, Ānandā, on the occasion of a Buddha expounding the Supreme Dhamma on the Four Ariya Truths, (his first sermon known as) the *Dhammacakka pavattana sutta*, the great earth shakes, quakes strongly, sways violently, and is convulsed.
- (vii) Further, Ānandā, on the occasion of a Buddha relinquishing, mindfully and with deliberation, the life maintaining mental process, this great earth shakes, quakes strongly, sways violently and is convulsed.
- (viii) Further, Ānandā, on the occasion of a Buddha passing away leaving no remainder of the five aggregates and enters upon *parinibbāna*, realizing the ultimate peace, this great earth shakes, quakes strongly, sways violently, and is convulsed.

"Ānandā, these are the eight causes of, the eight conditions leading to great earthquakes."

(The Bhagava's discourse is not yet ended. Some elaboration on the above eight factors:)

- (i) Earthquakes occur due to the unstable conditions of the elements of the cosmos. The great earth is supported by a mass of air which is ninehundred and sixty thousand *yojanas* thick. Above that mass of air, there is a mass of water which is four hundred and eighty thousand *yojanas* thick. Above that mass of water lies the great earth which is two hundred and forty thousand *yojanas* thick. The lower half of the thickness, i.e. a hundred and twenty thousand *yojanas*, of the earth is granite while the upper half of the same thickness is earth. When the elements become unstable and powerful winds blow across the surface of the normal mass of air, the mass of air is temporarily displaced so that its support of the mass of water is withdrawn. The mass of water then drops abruptly, leading to a sudden drop of the mass of the great earth. When the extra-ordinarily strong winds become calm again, the mass of air returns to its normal level, resumes its function of supporting the mass of water, and rises up again. This leads to the rising up of the great earth. Thus strong winds that blow due to unstable conditions of the elements are cause of earthquakes. This

phenomena is present all the time, occurring occasionally. This sudden falling and rising of the earth is not noticed because of the thickness of the great earth.

- (ii) Earthquakes due to powerful persons: Persons possessed of psychic power can cause earthquakes by means of that power. The method they employ is by entering into absorption of the jhana with water as the object of concentration and thereby causing the upheaval of the great earth. They cause the earthquake for some noble purpose, (eg.) the Venerable Mahāmoggalāna caused the Vejayanta pinnacled mansion of Sakka to shake for the purpose of arousing an emotional religious feeling in others; and *sāmaṇera* Sangharakkhita also did the same thing to inquire after something.

### The story of Sāmmaera Sangharakkhita.

Sāmaṇera Sangharakkhita (nephew of Venerable Mahānāga) was a remarkable *sāmaṇera* who attained *Arahattaphala* even while his head was being shaved at the time of entering into the Order of bhikkhus. He reflected whether there had appeared before any bhikkhu who could cause the Vejayanta mansion of Sakka to shake, and seeing none, he attempted at it. But he could not do it. Seeing his attempt fail, the deva maidens who belonged to the group of dancers at Sakka's palace ridiculed him. "Son, you are too young to try to do such a feat; this Vejayanta mansion is too strong for you," they said to him.

*Sāmaṇera* Sangharakkhita bethought himself: "I am being ridiculed by these celestial maidens because I lack proper instruction from a teacher." And so, he considered where his preceptor the Venerable Sāmuḍdika Mahānāga could be found, and knowing that the latter was spending the day in a cave underneath the great ocean, he went there and stood in worshipping posture before the bhikkhu elder.

"So you had failed to shake the Vejayanta mansion because you joined battle even before you learned how to fight," said the elder.

"Venerable Sir, I have not received any instructions from an able teacher," the *Sāmaṇera* said.

"Son, if such a person of psychic power as yourself cannot shake the Vejayanta mansion, who else could? Now, then, you have seen some dried piece of cow dung floating along the surface of water, haven't you? And remember, son, how the pan-cake maker retrieves her pan-cake from the frying pan by tearing off its edges first. Mark this example." These were the elliptical words from the teacher.

"That will do, Venerable Sir, " the *Sāmaṇera* said:

Then he made the wish, "Let the Vejayanta mansion be surrounded by water. And the *Sāmaṇera* went to where the Vejayanta mansion stood. On seeing him return, the celestial maidens remarked, "Here he comes round again, not satisfied with his disgrace. Yes, he is here again!"

When Sakka heard them he said to them, "Do not ridicule my son. He has received instruction from an able teacher. He will shake the mansion just now." *Sāmaṇera*. Sangharakkhita then touched the outside beam of the Vejayanta mansion with his big toe. The mansion swayed in all the four directions, sideways as well as back and forth. Thereupon the deva maidens cried, "Son, please stop! Let the great mansion alone!"

*Sāmaṇera* Sangharakkhita then let the Vejayanta mansion stand in its place, and standing above it, uttered the following three verses in ecstatic joy:

"Just today I have become a bhikkhu. I have today attained Arahathship even as my head was being shaved. And today I have been able to shake up Sakka's mansion, (having received instruction from my teacher.) Excellent and marvellous indeed is the Buddha, the Perfectly Self-Enlightened One;

Excellent and marvellous indeed is the Dhamma, that truly leads to emancipation: Excellent and marvellous indeed is the Sangha, the true Ariyas!:

(Three verses rendered combinedly).

..... ☆ .....

*TINI*

- (iii) The third cause (conception of a Buddha to be) and
- (iv) The fourth cause (birth of a Buddha to be) are due to the superb merit of the Buddha to be.
- (v) The fifth cause (the occasion of Enlightenment) is due to the power of the penetrative Knowledge of the Buddha.
- (vi) The sixth cause (the occasion of delivering the First Sermon) is due to the power of the Knowledge consisting in the power of exposition (i.e., expression) of the Buddha. On this great occasion the guardian spirit of the great earth showing his appreciation is figuratively said to be applauding by the great earth, according to the Commentary.
- (vii) The seventh cause is due to the power of the Buddha. Knowledge in relinquishing the life-maintaining mental process, out of weariness of sentient existence which is conditioned by cause. On this great occasion the guardian spirit of the earth sympathized with the Bhagavā (in the matter of decay and death incumbent on everyone, not excepting the Buddha) and showed his sympathy by the great earthquake.
- (viii) The eighth cause is due to the power of the Buddha's Knowledge that makes the Bhagavā very happy with the delightful satisfaction in having accomplished his mission that had taken him four *asaṅkkeyyas* and a hundred thousand aeons (*kappas*) for attainment of perfect Peace, *Amupādisesa Nibbāna*. As for the guardian spirit of the earth, it was occasion for grief and lamentation. The great earthquake then is an expression of his grief and lamentation. (Commentary and Sub-Commentary).

### Eight categories of assemblies.

When the Bhagavā discoursed on the eight causes of great earthquakes, the Venerable Ānandā, being of great wisdom, rightly concluded that the Bhagavā had relinquished the life-maintaining mental process that very day. The fact of Ānanda's appraisal of the situation was known by the Bhagavā but he did not allow Ānandā to

disrupt the discourse and continued with other topics such as the eight categories of assemblies, the eight *abhibhāyatana*s, and the eight *vimokkha*. (There are certain commentators who explain this action on the part of the Bhagavā as his strategy of alleviating the sorrow that would arise in Ānandā if the fact of the relinquishing the life-maintaining mental process were to be allowed to surface itself. The fresh topics that the Bhagavā takes up without interrupting are thus meant to occupy Ānanda's mind with matters other than the Bhagava's oncoming death.)

"Ānandā," said the Bhagavā, "there are eight categories of assemblies. There are: assembly of nobles, assembly of brahmins, assembly of householders, assembly of bhikkhus, assembly of the devas of the realm of the Four Great Kings, assembly of the devas of the realm of the Tavatimsa deva realm, assembly of the devas led by Māra, and assembly of Brahmas.

"Ānandā, I remember having attended hundreds of assemblies of nobles. In those assemblies I sat together with them, conversed with them, and had discussions with them. While I was among them, my appearance was like their appearance. and my voice was like their voice. In my discourses to them I pointed out to them the benefits of the Doctrine, exhorted them to get established in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened them in the practice. While I was thus discoursing to them, they did not know me: they wondered. "who is this one discoursing? Is he deva or man?" After I had by my discourse pointed out to them the benefits of the Dhamma, and gladdened them in the practice, I vanished from there. When I vanished too they did not know me; and wondered, "Who was that one that has vanished now? Was he deva or man?"

"Ānandā, I remember having attended hundreds of assemblies of brahmins . . . (p).

. . . assemblies of householders . . . (p)

. . . assemblies of bhikkhus. . . (p)

. . . assemblies of devas of the realm of the Four Great Kings . . . (p)

. . . assemblies of devas of the realm of Tavatimsa devas . . . (p)

. . . assemblies of devas led by Māra . . . (p)

"Ānandā, I remember having attended hundreds of assemblies of brahmas. In those assemblies, I sat together with them, conversed with them, and had discussion with them. While I was among them, my appearance was like their appearance, and my voice was like their voice. In my discourses to them I pointed out to them the benefits of the Doctrine, exhorted them to get established in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened them in the practice. While I was thus discoursing to them, they did not know me; they wondered, who is this one discoursing? Is he deva or man? After I had my discourse pointed out to them the benefits of the Doctrine, exhorted them to get established in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened them in the practice, I vanished from there. When I vanished too, they did not know me; they wondered, "Who was that one that has vanished now? Was he deva or man?"

"Ānandā, these are the categories of assemblies."

(the discourse is not ended yet).

(Herein : some examples of the great many assemblies of nobles are; the first meeting with King Bimbisāra after the Bhagavā had won Enlightenment (See Great Chronicles of the Buddhas, vol II), the Bhagava's first visit to Kapilavatthu and meeting with his kinsmen (see Great Chronicles, vol. II), the Bhagava's meeting with Licchavī princes as told in the Sunakkhatta vatthu, Saccaka vatthu (see Great Chronicles, vol III). Such meetings with nobles took place also in the other world systems, it should be presumed.

"My appearance was like their appearance" means not the colour of the skin, but the form, for nobles had various colours in skin, some white, some black, some dark tan like the bed bug. As regards the form the Bhagavā did not assume any particular guise, but remained his own self. Only the onlookers, the nobles, regarded them as one of them. (This reminds one the traditional presentation of the Buddha image in royal attire with reference to the Bhagava's taming of Jambupati.)

"My voice was like their voice" means the language that the Bhagavā used in speaking at the particular assembly. Regarding the voice itself, the Bhagavā had a voice like that of the Lord of Brahmas, a voice replete with eight marvellous qualities. When the Bhagavā happened to be seated on a throne the audience would think that their king was speaking in a sweet voice. Only after the Bhagavā had finished the discourse and left the assembly, the audience saw their real king and they were left wondering, "Who was there, sitting on the throne, who talked to us in Magadhī (or in Sinhalese, as the case may be) on the Dhamma in such a sweet voice, and who is gone now? Was he deva or was he man?" They did not know that it was the Bhagavā.

It might be asked, "Why did the Bhagavā discoursed on the Dhamma to those who did not recognize him? What benefit did he see there." The answer is, the Bhagavā preached them to prepare the ground for their enlightenment later. Let me explain this: Although those hearers of the Dhamma did not recognize the Bhagavā and did not take real interest in the Dhamma, since the Dhamma is replete with the excellent qualities such as "well - delivered," *svakhūto*, hearing it will serve as a necessary condition for enlightenment in future to gain *Magga Phala*.

As regards the great many assemblies of brahmins, we have examples in the Bhagava's encounters with Sonadanta, Kūṭadanta, etc. Similar assemblies of brahmins in the other world systems may also be presumed to have taken place.

It might be asked, "What benefit did the Bhagavā see in discoursing on the eight categories of assemblies?" The answer is: the Bhagavā discoursed on the eight categories of assemblies to illustrate the fact that he was fearless. Let me explain this: after describing the eight categories of assemblies, the Bhagavā continued. "Ānandā, in going among those eight assemblies the Tathāgata had no fear. That being so, how could anyone say that the Tathāgata was afraid of Māra who came to him alone? Ānandā, in relinquishing the life-maintaining mental process, the Tathāgata did so fearlessly, with mindfulness and clear comprehension."

(These words are contained in the *Pakiṇṇaka Dhamma Desanā Pāli* which was not recited at the Great Synods but was quoted by the Commentaries.)

### Eight ways of mastery of the mind through concentration.

Then the Bhagavā continued his discourse without break thus: "Ānandā, there are eight ways (*Abhibhāyatana jhānas*) of overcoming the opposite phenomena and sense-objects, i.e., the hindrances that mar clear mental vision (i.e., concentration). These are:

- (i) Someone (with an excellent mental capacity or intelligence) after having gained concentration at the preliminary or preparatory level on the colour of certain parts of his own body, concentrates his mind on small external forms of his choice (*kasina* objects) which may be either unblemished or blemished (i.e., whose colour may be either good or bad). His mind gets fixed on those small forms, gains mastery over them and thus dwells in *appanā jhāna*. After emerging from the jhānic absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees those forms. This is the first *abhibhāyatana jhāna*.
- (ii) Some other person (of similar intelligence), after having gained the preliminary concentration on the colour of certain parts of his own body, concentrates his mind on big external forms (as *kasina* objects) which may be either unblemished or blemished. His mind gets fixed on those big objects, gains mastery over them, and thus dwells in *appanā jhāna*. After emerging from the jhānic absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees those forms. This is the second *abhibhāyatana jhāna*.
- (iii) Some other person (of similar intelligence), without taking the colour of any part of his body as an object of preliminary concentration, concentrates on small external objects (*kasina* objects) which may be either unblemished or blemished as objects of preliminary concentration. His mind duly gets fixed on those small forms (as *kasina* objects), gains mastery over them, and thus dwells in *appanā jhāna*. After emerging from the jhānic



absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees those forms. This is the third *abhibhāyatana jhāna*.

- (iv) Some other person (of similar intelligence), without taking the colour of his body as an object of preliminary concentration, concentrates on big external forms (as *kasiṇa* objects) which may be either unblemished or blemished as objects of preliminary concentration. His mind duly gets fixed on those big forms, gains mastery over them, and thus dwells in *appanā jhāna*. After emerging from the jhanic absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees those forms. This is the fourth *abhibhāyatana jhāna*.
- (v) Some other person (of similar intelligence), without taking the colour of his body as an object of preliminary concentration, concentrates on external forms (as *kasiṇa* objects) that are dark blue, with a dark-blue colour, dark-blue hue, like the flax-blossom which is dark blue, with a dark-blue colour, dark-blue hue, or like Baranasi fabric with a smooth finish on both sides, which is dark-blue and has a dark-blue colour, dark-blue hue. He concentrates on external forms that are dark-blue, with a dark-blue colour, dark-blue hue, as objects of preliminary concentration. His mind duly gets fixed on them, gains mastery over them, and thus dwells in *appanā jhāna*. After emerging from the jhanic absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees those forms. This is the fifth *abhibhāyatana jhāna*.
- (vi) Some other person (of similar intelligence), without taking the colour of his body as an object of preliminary concentration, concentrates on external forms (as *kasiṇa* objects) that are yellow, with a yellow colour, yellow hue, or like Baranasi fabric with a smooth finish on both sides, which is yellow and has a yellow colour, yellow hue. He concentrates on these external forms that are yellow, with a yellow colour, yellow hue, as objects of preliminary concentration: his mind duly gets fixed on them, gains mastery over them, and thus dwells in *appanā jhāna*. After emerging from the jhanic absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees those forms. This is the sixth *abhibhāyatana jhāna*.

- (vii) Some other person (of similar intelligence), without taking the colour of his body as an object of preliminary concentration, concentrates on external forms (as *kasina* objects) that are red, with a red colour, red hue, like a flower of the tree *Pentapetes phocnicea* (*baṇḍhu jīvaka*) which is red, with a red colour, red hue, or like Bārānasī fabric with smooth finish on both sides, which is red and has a red colour, red hue. He concentrates on these external forms that are red, with a red colour, red hue, as objects of preliminary concentration, his mind duly gets fixed on them, gains mastery over them, and thus dwells in *appaṇā jhāna*. After emerging from the jhana absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees those forms. This is the seventh *abhibhāyatana jhāna*.
- (viii) Some other person (of similar intelligence), without taking the colour of his body as an object of preliminary concentration, concentrates on external forms (as *kasina* objects) that are white, with a white colour, white hue, like the morning star which is white, with a white colour, white hue, or like Baranasi fabric with a smooth finish on both sides which is white and has a white colour, white hue. He concentrates on these external forms that are white, with a white colour, white hue, as objects of preliminary concentration; his mind duly gets fixed on them, gains mastery over them, and thus dwells in *appaṇā jhāna*. After emerging from the jhanic absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees those forms. This is the eighth *abhibhāyatana jhāna*.

(The discourse is not yet ended ).

(*Abhibhāyatana jhāna*: *abhibhū*, overcoming opposite external states such as hindrances *āyatana*; a state of ecstatic bliss, *jhāna*. It is the *jhāna* that is possible for those with very sharp intellect who can achieve concentration quickly and thereby overcome all hindrances, and who are able to deal with either a small object or a big object of meditation, and gain mastery over it without difficulty.

To achieve the *abhibhāyatana jhāna*, a yogi may begin the preliminary or preparatory concentration by taking an internal form,

i.e., by concentrating on a certain part of his own body or an external form.

If he begins with an internal form he may choose any one of the four colours – dark-blue, yellow, red and white – that consist in the various parts of his own body. For example, if he concentrates on the dark-blue colour, he may concentrate on either his hair, or bile, or the pupil of the eye and impress his mind with the dark-blue colour, thinking, "dark-blue, dark-blue." If he concentrates on the yellow colour, he may concentrate on either the fat, the skin, the top of the hand, or the top of the foot, or the yellowish surface of the eye-ball and impress his mind with the yellow colour, thinking, "yellow, yellow." If he concentrates on the red colour, he may concentrate on either the flesh, the blood, the tongue, or the reddish surface of the eye-ball and impress his mind with the red colour, thinking, "red, red." If he concentrates on the white colour, he may concentrate on either the bone, the teeth, the finger nails, toe nails, or the whitish surface of the eye-ball, and impress his mind with the white colour, thinking, "white, white."

Internal forms can help set up only the preliminary concentration *parikamma*, and not the full concentration or *appanā bhāvanā*. The after image or reflex image that the yogi obtains after achieving the preliminary concentration is not sufficiently clear. To get the necessary unblemished reflex image *paṭi bhāga nimitta*, the yogi has to shift his object of meditation from an internal form to an external form. Then only can he get the desired sign or reflex image that can upgrade his concentration till he attains threshold concentration *upacāra* and full concentration *appanā* by stages.

The yogi who begins the preliminary concentration by taking an external form as an object of meditation can fulfil all the three stages of concentration (i.e., the preliminary stage *parikamma bhāvanā*, the threshold stage, *upacāra bhāvanā* and the jhānic stage *appanā bhāvanā*).

The objects of concentration may either be small or large. For the yogi who can achieve the *abhibhāyatana jhāna* is of very keen intellect so that he does not find any difficulty on account of the size of object of concentration. It is like that of a person of good appetite who can

eat a small amount or a big amount without difficulty. Whether the object of concentration is small or big, the yogi of this calibre achieves threshold concentration quickly and then immediately attains *appanā jhāna*, thus overcoming all opposing mental states such as hindrances.

Regarding the first four of the eight *abhihāyatana jhānas*, a small form as object of concentration is suitable for yogi who are ruminative in nature *vitakka carita*. A big form as object of concentration is suitable for yogi who have a bewildered nature *moha carita*. An external form of good colour is suitable for yogi who are irritable by nature *dosa carita*. An external form of bad colour is suitable for yogi who have a strong inclination towards sensuous desire, *rāga carita*.

These *abhihāyatana jhānas* were taught by the Bhagavā out of his own experience. As a matter of fact, he had practised them innumerable times. To some people outside the Buddha's Teaching an indefinite object can be quite daunting to be taken as a proper object of concentration, for an indefinite object may be as vast as the entire physical setting to the world of living things. As for the Bhagavā the extent of object of concentration is infinite. Nothing whatever can therefore daunt the Buddha's mind. In discoursing on the eight *abhihāyatana jhānas* to the Venerable Ānandā the Bhagavā intended to let the Venerable disciple understand the fearless nature of the Tathāgata.

"Ānandā," the Bhagavā continued, "the Tathāgata, who has dwelt in the eight *abhihāyatana jhānas* of such nature and has emerged from them has no fear or dread at all. That being so, how could anyone say that the Tathāgata was afraid of Māra who came to him alone? Ānandā, in relinquishing the life-maintaining mental process, the Tathāgata did so fearlessly, with mindfulness and clear comprehension."

(These words occur in the *Pakiṇṇaka Dhamma desanā Pāli* which was not recited at the Great Synods but was quoted by the Commentaries.)

**The eight stages of release, *Vimokkha*.**

Then the Bhagavā without any pause continued to the next subject, on the eight stages of release *Vimokkha*, in his discourse to the Venerable Ānandā thus:

"Ānandā, there are eight stages of release *vimokkha*. These are:

- (i) Having attained jhana by contemplating on one's own body, the yogi contemplates external forms as *kasiṇa* objects. This is the first Release.
- (ii) Not taking any internal object, i.e, without contemplating on one's own body, the yogi contemplates external forms (as *kasiṇa* objects). This the second Release.
- (iii) The yogi contemplates the brightness and clarity (*subha*) of the object of contemplation. This is the third Release.
- (iv) Having completely transcended all forms of perception to corporeality (*rūpasaññā*), all forms of consciousness arising out of contact between sense and sense-object, (*paṭighasaññā*) having disappeared and completely disregarding all other forms of multifarious consciousness (*nānattasaññā*), the yogi contemplates "that space is infinite," achieves concentration on that object of contemplation, and dwells in *Ākāsañācāyatana jhāna*. This is the fourth Release.
- (v) Having clearly advanced beyond the jhāna of Infinity of space, the yogi contemplates "that Consciousness is infinite," achieves concentration on that object of contemplation, and dwells in *Vīñāṇañcāyatana jhāna*. This the fifth Release.
- (vi) Having clearly advanced beyond the jhāna of the Infinity of Consciousness, the yogi contemplates "that nothing is there," achieves concentration on that object of contemplation, and dwells in *Ākiñcañcāyatana jhāna*. This is the sixth Release.
- (vii) Having clearly advanced beyond the jhāna of nothingness, the yogi (contemplates the subtle consciousness, achieves

concentration on it, and) dwells in the *nevasaññā nā saññāyatana jhāna*. This is the seventh Release.

- (viii) Having clearly advanced beyond the *jhāna* of either-consciousness-nor-non-consciousness, the yogi achieves and dwells in sustained attainment of Cessation in which all forms of Consciousness and sensation cease. This is the eighth Release.

"Ānandā, these are the eight stages of Release." (The discourse not ended yet.).

(*Vimokkha* means a total freedom from hindrances and opposing mental states that shroud the mind, a cultured state of ecstatic bliss which may be likened to the peaceful repose of a child in his father's bosom. This freedom or release lasts as long as the *jhana* lasts. *Vimokkha* also means unity of mind and object of meditation unhampered by any other thought.

Of those eight *vimokkhas* the first three are the *jhāna* of the fine material sphere (*rāpā vacara jhānas*)

Of those three, the first *vimokkha* is the *jhāna* of the fine material sphere, achieved by concentrating on internal as well as external objects. The second is the *jhāna* of the fine material sphere achieved by concentrating on external objects. The third is achieved by concentrating on material objects or *kasiṇas* of very clear and pure colour, namely: *nīla*, *pīta*, *lohita*, *adāta* (darkblue, yellow (golden), red, white. While the yogi is dwelling in this third stage of *jhāna*, he does not have such a thought as, "This is exquisite," and yet since his mind gets fixed on exquisite objects, it appears as if he is entertaining such a thought. Hence the text describes it: "He is concentrating that' this is exquisite."

The four successive *vimokkhas*- the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh- refer to the four *jhānas* of the Non-material sphere (*arūpa jhānas*). These four *arūpa jhāna* are called *vimokkha* because they are entirely free from perceptions of corporeality, and also because the yogi's mind, is in complete unity with the object of meditation, unhampered by any other thought.

The eighth *vimokkha* refers to *nirodha samāpatti*, It is called Release because while one dwells in *nirodha samāpatti* all mental phenomena headed by perception and sensation cease, i.e., the mental process is suspended altogether, and along with it mind born corporeality also ceases, so that one is totally free from being a conditioned state. This cessation of the four mental aggregates and mind-born corporeality lasts during *nirodha samāpatti*.

For those persons who find pleasure in the woeful round of rebirth and are satisfied with their sentient existence in the three sphere, Release is a dreadful idea. As for the Bhagavā it was a very pleasant thing to dwell in Release. He has no fear to experience Release. The Bhagavā discoursed on the eight stages of Release to let the Venerable Ānandā understand the fearless nature of the Tathāgata.

"Ānandā," the Bhagavā continued, "the Tathāgata who has dwelt in the eight stages of Release and has emerged from them, has no fear or dread at all. That being so, how could anyone say that the Tathāgata was afraid of Māra who came to him alone? Ānandā, in relinquishing the life-maintaining mental process, the Tathāgata did so fearlessly, with mindfulness and clear comprehension." (These also are the Bhagava's words to Ānandā, as continued in the *Pakiṇṇaka Dhamma desanā*).

**The Bhagavā relates the whole story about the relinquishing of the life-maintaining mental process.**

Having discoursed on the eight stages of Release, the Bhagavā continued his discourse without letting the Venerable Ānandā say anything:

"Ānandā, on one occasion, soon after I attained Enlightenment (in the eighth week after the Enlightenment). I was staying at the foot of the goat-herd's banyan tree near the bank of the Nerañjarā river in Uruvelā forest. At that time Māra the Evil One approached me and standing at a certain place, said to me thus;

"Let the Bhagavā realize *parinibbāna* now, let the Well-Spoken One pass away! Venerable Sir, it is time now for the Bhagavā to pass away.'

"Ānandā, when this was said, I replied to Māra the Evil One thus:

'O Evil One, I shall not pass away so long as my disciple, the bhikkhus, are not yet well versed in the Doctrine, not yet well disciplined (in the threefold Training), not yet sure of themselves in the righteousness of their conduct), not yet possessed of wide knowledge, not yet able to memorize the Teaching, not yet able to practise according to the Teaching leading to the Supramundane, not yet able to take up the proper practice (i.e., the noble Life of Purity), not yet settled in their practice; not yet able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make evident their Teacher's doctrine that they had learnt; so long as they are not yet able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds such other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful Teaching.'

'O Evil One, so long as my female disciples, the bhikkhuni's . . . (p)

'O Evil One, so long as my lay disciples . . . (p)

'O Evil One, so long as my female lay-disciples are not yet well versed in the Doctrine, not yet well disciplined (in the threefold Training), not yet sure of themselves in the righteousness of their conduct, not yet possessed of wide knowledge, not yet able to memorize the Teaching, not yet able practise according to the Teaching, leading to Supramundane, not yet able to take up the proper practice (i.e., the noble Life of Purity), not yet settled in their practice; not yet able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make evident their Teacher's Doctrine that they had learnt; so long as they are not yet able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds such other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful Teaching.

'O Evil One, I shall not pass away so long as this Teaching of mine which is the Practice of Purity is not yet sufficiently developed among the disciples, not yet prosperous, widespread, reached the multitudes, and renowned, to the extent that it can be thoroughly made known by wise devas and men.'



"Ānandā, Māra the Evil One, just now today came to me at the Cāpāta Shrine, and standing at a suitable place, again addressed to me thus;

'Venerable Sir, let the Bhagavā realize *parinibbanā* now, let the Well-Spoken one pass away! Venerable Sir, it is time now for the Bhagava to pass away.

'Venerable Sir, the Bhagavā had said to me thus: O Evil One, I shall not pass away so long as my disciples the bhikkhus . . . (p) . . . my female disciples the bhikkhunis, . (p) . . . my lay disciples . . . (p) . . . my female lay-disciples . . . (p) . . . O Evil One, I shall not pass away so long as this Teaching of mine which is the practice of Purity is not yet sufficiently established among the disciples, not yet prosperous, widespread, reached the multitudes, and renowned, to the extent that it can be thoroughly made known by wise devas and men.

'Venerable Sir, now that the Bhagava's Teaching which is the practice of Purity is sufficiently established among the disciples, is now prosperous, widespread, has reached the multitudes, and is renowned, to the extent that it can be thoroughly made known by wise devas and men.

'Venerable Sir, let the Bhagavā realize *parinibbāna* now, let the Well-Spoken One pass away! Venerable Sir, it is time now for the Bhagavā to pass away.'

"Ānandā, on being requested thus, I said to Māra: 'O Evil One, don't you worry: the *parinibbāna* of the Tathāgata will not be long in coming, Three months hence the Tathāgata will realize *parinibbanā*.'

"Ānandā, today at the Cāpāta shrine; the Tathāgata has decided, mindfully and with deliberation, to give up the life-maintaining mental process (three months from now)." Thus related the Bhagavā the whole story about the relinquishing of the life-maintaining mental process.

### The Venerable Ānandā entreats the Bhagavā to live on.

When the Bhagavā said this, the Venerable Ānandā entreated the Bhagavā thus:

"Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, wellbeing and happiness of devas and men, out of compassion for the world, live the maximum life-span! May the Well-Spoken One live the maximum life-span!"

Thereupon the Bhagavā said: "Enough, Ānandā, Do not implore the Tathāgata now. The time for such entreaty is past." For a second time the Venerable Ānandā repeated his entreaty and the Bhagavā rejected it in the same words. When for a third time the Venerable Ānandā repeated his entreaty the Bhagavā said to him;

"Do you have faith in the Enlightenment wisdom, *Bodhi Nāṇa* of the Tathāgata?"

"Yes, I do. Venerable Sir."

"Why, then, in spite of your belief, do you persist entreating me thrice?"

"Venerable Sir, I have been told by the Bhagavā himself thus:

"Ānandā, whoever has cultivated, practised, used as a medium, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the Four bases of Psychic Power (*iddhipāda*) could, if he so wishes, live the maximum life-span or even beyond the maximum life-span. Ānandā, the Tathāgata has cultivated, practised, used as a medium, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the Four Bases of Psychic Power. Therefore, Ānandā, the Tathāgata could, if he so wishes, live the maximum life-span or even beyond the maximum life-span.' (Venerable Sir, it is on account of those words of the Bhagavā that I make the appeal thrice)."

"Do you believe that, Ānandā?"

"Yes, Venerable Sir, I do."

"Ānandā, although the Tathāgata thus gave clear hints, you failed to grasp them. It never occurred to you to entreat the Bhagavā, 'May the Bhagavā, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, well being and happiness of devas and men, out of compassion for the world, live the maximum life-span! may the Well-Spoken One live the maximum life-

span!" Therefore, Ānandā, this failure to entreat me then is your own fault, your own omission.

"Ānandā, if you had entreated me then, the Tathāgata might have refused the entreaty twice but might have acceded to it on the third time. Therefore, Ānandā, this failure to entreat me then is your own fault, your own omission.

**The Bhagavā relates similar instances of omission on the part of Ānandā to allay his sorrow.**

- (1) "Ānandā, on one occasion, I was staying on the mountain abode on the Gijjhakuṭa hill in Rājagaha. At that time I had said to you: 'Ānandā, pleasant is the city of Rājagaha. Ānandā, pleasant is the Gijjhakuṭa hill. Ānandā, whosoever has cultivated, practised used as a vehicle (medium), taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the Four Bases of Psychic Power (*iddhipāda*), could, if he so wishes, live the maximum life-span or even beyond the maximum life-span. Ānandā the Tathāgata has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle (medium), taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the Four Bases of Psychic Power. Therefore, Ānandā, the Tathāgata could, if he so wishes, live the maximum life-span or even beyond the maximum life-span."

"Ānandā, although the Tathāgata thus gave clear hints, you failed to grasp them. It never occurred to you to entreat the Bhagavā, 'May the Bhagavā, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, well-being and happiness of devas and men, out of compassion for the world, live the maximum life-span! May the Bhagavā live the maximum life-span!'

"Ānandā, if you had entreated me then, the Tathāgata might have refused the entreaty twice but might have acceded to it on the third time. Therefore, this failure to entreat me then is your own fault, your own omission.

- (2) "Ānandā, on one occasion I was dwelling at the foot of Gotama banyan tree in Rājagaha . . . (p)

- (3) "I was dwelling at the Corapapāta cliff near Rājagaha . . . (p)
- (4) I was dwelling in the Sattapaṇṇi cave in the side of Vebhāra mountain (where the *Astonic scholaris* tree grows) near Rājagaha . . . (p)
- (5) I was at Kalasia at the side of the Isigili mountain near Rājagaha . . . (p)
- (6) at the ebony grove in the Sappasonḍika mountain range near Rājagaha . . . (p)
- (7) at the Tapodārāma monastery in Rājagaha . . . (p)
- (8) at Veluvana monastery where black squirrels are fed . . . (p)
- (9) at the mango grove of Jīvaka . . . (p)
- (10) at the Migadāya wood in Maddakucchi near Rājagaha . . . (p)

Ānandā, while I was dwelling at those places, too, I had said to you: (1) Ānandā, Rājagaha is pleasant . . . (2) Ānandā Gotama banyan tree is pleasant . . . (3) Corapāpta cliff is pleasant . . . (4) Sattapaṇṇi cave is pleasant . . . (5) Kalasia at the side of Isigili mountain is pleasant . . . (6) The ebony grove in the Sappasonḍika mountain range is pleasant. . . (7) Tapodārāma monastery is pleasant . . . (8) Veluvana monastery where black squirrels are fed is pleasant . . . (9) the mango grove of Jīvaka is pleasant . . . (10) the Migadāya Wood in Maddakucchi is pleasant. Ānandā, whoever has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, medium, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the Four Bases of Psychic Power could, if he so wishes, live the maximum life-span or even beyond the maximum life-span. Ānandā, the Tathāgata has cultivated, practised, used as (vehicle) medium, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the Four Bases of Psychic Power. Therefore, Ānandā, the Tathāgata could, if he so wishes, live the maximum life-span or even beyond the maximum life-span.

"Ānandā, although the Tathāgata thus gave clear hints, you failed to grasp them. It never occurred to you to entreat the Bhagavā, 'May the Bhagavā, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, wellbeing and happiness of devas and men, out of compassion for the world, live the

maximum life-span! May the Well-Spoken One live the maximum life-span!

"Ānandā, if you had entreated me then, the Tathāgata might have refused the entreaty twice but might have acceded to it on the third time. Therefore, Ānandā, this failure to entreat me then is your own fault, your own omission."

(a) "Ānandā, on one occasion, while I was living at the Udena Shrine in Vesālī, then too I said to you: "Ānandā, Vesālī is pleasant. The Udena shrine is pleasant. Ānandā, Whoever has cultivated, practised, used as a (vehicle) medium, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the Four-Bases of Psychic Power could, if he so wishes, live the maximum life-span or even beyond the maximum life-span. Ānandā, Tathāgata has cultivated, practised, used as a (vehicle) medium, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the Four Bases of Psychic Power. Therefore, Ānandā, the Tathāgata could, if he so wishes, live the maximum life-span or even beyond the maximum life-span.

"Ānandā, although the Tathāgata thus gave clear hints, you failed to grasp them. It never occurred to you to entreat the Bhagavā, 'May the Bhagavā, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, wellbeing and happiness of devas and men, out of compassion for the world, live the maximum life-span! May the Well-Spoken One live the maximum life-span!

"Ānandā, if you had entreated me then, the Tathāgata might have refused the entreaty twice but might have acceded to it on the third time. Therefore, Ānandā, this failure to entreat the Bhagavā then is your own fault, your own omission.

(b) "Ānandā, on one occasion, while I was staying at the Gotama Shrine in this very city of Vesālī - - (p)

(c) at the Sattamba shrine in this very city of Vesālī, . . .

(d) at the Bahuputta shrine in this very city of Vesālī. . .

(e) at the Sāranada shrine in this very city of Vesālī. . .

(f) "Ānandā, today, at the Cāpāla shrine, the Tathāgata has just said to you, 'Ānandā, Vesālī is pleasant, the Cāpāla shrine is pleasant. Ānandā, whosoever has cultivated, practised, used as a (vehicle) medium, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the Four Bases of Psychic Power could, if he so wishes, live the maximum life span or even beyond the maximum life-span. Ānandā the Tathāgata has cultivated, practised, used as a (vehicle) medium, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the Four Bases of Psychic Power. Therefore, Ānandā, the Tathāgata could, if he so wishes, live the maximum life-span or even beyond the maximum life-span.

"Ānandā, although the Tathāgata thus gave clear hints, you failed to grasp them. It never occurred to you to entreat the Bhagavā, 'May the Bhagavā, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, wellbeing and happiness of devas and men, out of compassion for the world, live the maximum life-span! May the Well-Spoken One live the maximum life-span!'

"Ānandā, if you had entreated me then, the Tathāgata might have refused the entreaty twice but might have acceded to it on the third time. Therefore, Ānandā, this failure to entreat the Bhagavā then is your own fault, your own omission."

(The Bhagavā related the fifteen previous instances of Ānanda's failure to entreat the Bhagavā to continue to live. That latest occasion, the sixteenth, took place at the Cāpāla shrine. All these cases of omission were pointed out here by the Bhagavā to attenuate the sorrow Ānandā was feeling that time. Of course, Ānanda's failure on all those various occasions was due to Māra's mischief.)

"Ānandā, have I not previously told you that it is in the very nature of things most near and dear to us that we must part with them somehow—even while we are living, or when death divides us, or when we are of different planes of existence? Ānandā, in this matter, how could one expect anything that has the nature of arising, of appearing, of being conditioned, and of dissolution, not to disintegrate? It is not possible for anyone to wish so.

"Ānandā, the Tathāgata has discarded, thrown up, given up, abandoned, thrown away, and relinquished the life-maintaining mental process. And the Tathāgata has spoken out in no uncertain terms that the *parinibbāna* of the Tathāgata will not be long in coming, that three months hence the Tathāgata will realize *parinibbāna*. There is no possibility of the Tathāgata, for the sake of living, to go back on his word. Come, Ānandā, let us go to the pinnacled hall at the Mahāvana forest.

"Very well, Venerable Sir," assented Ānandā.

Then the Bhagavā, accompanied by the Venerable Ānandā, went to the pinnacled hall at the Mahāvana forest. There he said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Ānandā, go and summon all bhikkhus living in Vesālī to come and assemble in the assembly hall." The Venerable Ānandā caused all the bhikkhus living in Vesālī to gather in the Assembly Hall. Then he went to the Bhagavā, made obeisance to him, and standing in a certain place, reported to the Bhagavā, "Venerable Sir, the bhikkhus are assembled. May the Bhagavā go to them when he wishes."

### Thirty-seven factors of the perpetuation of the teaching.

Then the Bhagavā went to the assembly hall, took his seat prepared for him, and addressed the bhikkhus as follows:

"Bhikkhus, the doctrines which I have perceived through Magga-Insight and which I have expounded to you should be mastered, resorted to, cultivated, put to constant practice. If you master, resort to, cultivate and constantly practise these doctrines, this Teaching which is the practice of Purity will endure long and perpetuate itself, thus making for the welfare of mankind, the preservation of the world, the benefit, well being and happiness of devas and men.

These doctrines are:

- (a) the four methods of steadfast mindfulness, (*satipaṭṭāna*);
- (b) the four supreme Efforts (*sammapadāna*);
- (c) the four Bases of Psychic Power (*iddhipāda*);
- (d) the five Faculties (*indriya*);

- (e) the five Powers (*bala*);
- (f) the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*);
- (g) the Ariya Path of Eight Constituents (*ariya magga*);

(These are the Thirty-Seven Constituents of Enlightenment, (*bodhipakkhiya*)).

"Bhikkhus, these thirty-seven doctrines (Constituents of Enlightenment) which I have perceived through Magga-Insight and which I have expounded to you should be mastered, resorted to, cultivated, and put to constant practice. If you master, resort to, cultivate and constantly practise these doctrines, this Teaching which is the Practice of Purity will endure long and perpetuate itself, thus making for the welfare of mankind, the preservation of the world, the benefit, well-being and happiness of devas and men."

Then the Bhagavā further said to the bhikkhus: "Now, look Bhikkhus, I exhort you: Decay is inherent in all compounded things, physical or mental. With mindfulness and diligence strive (towards the goal of liberation). The *Parinibbāna* of the Tathāgata will take place before long: three months hence the Tathāgata will realize *parinibbāna*."

Having said this, the Bhagavā further spoke these words (in verse);

"My age is now quite ripe (having, turned eighty).

Only a little (just three months) of my life remains.

I shall have to depart, leaving you behind.

I have made a refuge of myself.

"Bhikkhus, never be forgetful, be possessed of mindfulness, be pure in morality. Keep your mind collected, think right, and watch your mind ever closely against defilements.

"Bhikkhus, in this Teaching, (the Doctrine and Discipline) he who remains holding fast the Good Doctrine will be able to get rid of the cycle of rebirths and make an end of all ills (*dukkha*).



### The Bhagavā looks back like a noble tusker.

Then the Bhagavā, rearranging his robes in the morning, took alms-bowl and great robe and entered the city of Vesālī for the alms-round. After the alms-round, after having had his meal, he left the place of his meal. On leaving the place, the Bhagavā turned around and looked back towards Vesālī, like a tusker looking back. Then he said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Ānandā, this will be the last time the Tathāgata looks on Vesālī. Come, Ānandā, let us go to Bhaṇḍa village."

"Very well, Venerable Sir,": assented the Venerable Ānandā,

(In this matter, the statement about the Bhagavā "turning around to look back" would need some comment. The Buddha's anatomy is unique among human beings. Ordinary people have bones joined up by touching at the ends (end to end). Paccekabuddhas have bones joined by hooks formed at the end of each bone (hook to hook). The Buddha's bone structure is a set of chain-links (ring to ring). With the exception of the arms consisting of twelve big joints and fingers and toes with smaller joints, all other bones are joined as chain-links. That is why the Buddha is endowed with the physical might equal to the strength of ten thousand million tuskers or that of a hundred thousand million men of ordinary strength.

The bone structure being of chain-links, the Buddha's neck cannot turn back by itself alone. Therefore when the Bhagavā wants to look back he has to turn back the whole body, as an elephant does.

Although it was the Bhagava's intention to turn around to look back, due to the intervention of (the guardian spirit of) the great earth, that act was not actually carried out. For the great earth, as if unable to bear the sight of the Supreme Being turning around, rotated itself so that the Bhagavā stood with his person facing Vesālī. The great earth intervened as if it were saying, "O Great Lord, your fulfilling of the Perfections has been unique. So why should there be the need for the Bhagavā to trouble himself to turn around physically just to look back as with other ordinary people?" In any case the expression that "the

Bhagavā turned around to look back, like a tusker" was used with reference to the Bhagava's intention to do so.

It might be asked, "Why was Vesālī alone mentioned as the place the Bhagavā looked back as his last looking on a place, and not other places such as Sāvatti, Rājagaha, Nālanda, Pāṭali village, Koṭi village, Nātika village that he had made his last visit? Did the Bhagavā not look back on those places as well?

The answer is, no. If the Bhagavā were to be looking back on those various places, the uniqueness of the occasion would be lost.

There is also another reason: Vesālī was a doomed city. It was going to be destroyed after three year from the Bhagava's last visit there. The Bhagavā saw that if he made a turning around to look back like a noble tusker (on Vesālī), that place would be commemorated by the Licchavī princes "The Noble Tuskers-Turning-Around Shrine" which would bring great benefits to them for a long time. That was the object of the Buddha's decision to turn around to look back on Vesālī.

### The Bhagava's discourse at Bhaṇḍu village.

Then the Bhagavā, accompanied by a large company of bhikkhus, visited Bhaṇḍu village and took up his residence there. During his sojourn there he discoursed to the bhikkhus as follows:

"Bhikkhus, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of four Principles that I as well as yourselves have had to fare along the long course of the round of existences (Saṃsāra), going through from existence to existence. And the Four Principles are as follows:

- (i) Bhikkhus, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the Ariya Morality, the virtue of the Noble One (*Ariya Sīla*) that I as well as yourselves have had to fare along the long course of the round of existences, going through from existence to existence.
- (ii) Bhikkhus,...(p) the Ariya Concentration (*Ariya Samādhi*)...(p)
- (iii) Bhikkhus,...(p) the Ariya Wisdom (*Ariya Paññā*)...(p)

(iv) Bhikkhus, it is though not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the Ariya Liberation (*Ariya Vimutti*) that I as well as yourselves have had to fare along the long course of the round of existences, going through existence to existence.

"Bhikkhus, I have properly understood and gained penetrative knowledge of the Ariya Morality; I have properly understood and gained penetrative knowledge of the Ariya Concentration;....(p) of the Ariya Wisdom;...(p) of the Ariya Liberation. Craving for existence has been completely eradicated so that craving which drags one to renewed existence is extinct in me. Now there will be no more rebirth."

Then the Bhagavā further said to the bhikkhus (in verse), "(Bhikkhus;) Gotama Buddha, of vast followership, has correctly known these Principles of Supreme Morality Concentration, Wisdom and Liberation.

"Having gained penetrative knowledge of them through Magga Insight, he has (out of compassion) expounded them to the bhikkhus. The Teacher (of deva and men), endowed with the fivefold Eye of Wisdom, who has quelled all the fires of defilements, has made an end of all ills (*dukkha*) (in himself as well as his Arahāt disciples)."

During his sojourn at Bhaṇḍu village the Bhagavā, considering his approaching death, discoursed to the bhikkhus of the repeated theme as follows:

"Such is Morality, such is Concentration, such is Wisdom. Concentration developed through Morality is efficacious and productive Wisdom developed through Concentration is efficacious and productive. The mind that is developed through Wisdom is thoroughly liberated from the moral taints, namely, the taint of sense-desire, the taint of hankering after continued existence, and the taint of ignorance of the four Ariya Truths."

**The Discourse at Bhoga on the Four Great Authorities.  
(Mahāpadesas)**

Then after staying at Bhaṇḍu village as long as he wished, the Bhagavā said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Come, Ānandā, let us go to Hatthi village, ... to Amba village, ... to Jamba village, and thence the town of Bhoga."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," assented Ānandā. And the Bhagavā, accompanied by a large following of bhikkhus, arrived at the town of Bhoga, where he dwelled at the Ānandā shrine. During his sojourn there the Bhagavā discoursed to the bhikkhus on the Four Great Authorities (i.e., principles to assess the doctrines that are being alluded to persons of high esteem):

"(i) Bhikkhus, in this Teaching, if a bhikkhu should say thus: 'Friends, I have heard this exposition from the mouth of the Bhagavā. such and such is the Doctrine (*dhamma*); such and such is the Rule of Bhikkhu Conduct (*vinaya*); such and such is the Teaching of the Bhagava'-

"Bhikkhus, the words of that bhikkhu should not be readily accepted or readily rejected. The words and phrases stated by him (attributed to the Buddha) should be carefully noted. They should be collated with the *Suttanta* and compared with the rules of the *Vinaya*.

"If, on collation with the *Suttanta* and comparison with the *Vinaya* rules, the words and phrases as stated by the bhikkhu do not agree with the *Suttanta* or are not in line with the *Vinaya* rules, then it must be concluded that 'This certainly is not what the Bhagavā said. It is something wrongly learnt by the bhikkhu.'" And concluding thus, bhikkhus, those words should be rejected and ignored.

"If, on the other hand, the words and phrases as stated by the bhikkhu, on being collated with the *Suttanta* and compared with the *Vinaya* rules, are found to agree with the *Suttanta* and are in line with the *Vinaya* rules, then it must be concluded that, "This certainly is what the Bhagavā said. It is something correctly learnt by the bhikkhu.'" Bhikkhus, remember well this first directive principle regarding assertions attributed to a great authority (here, the Buddha)."

"(ii) And then, bhikkhus, in the Teaching, if a bhikkhu should say thus; "here is such and such monastery where the community of bhikkhus with a bhikkhu elder in charge. I have heard (this exposition) from that particular community of bhikkhus: such and such is the Doctrine; such and such is the *Vinaya*; such and such is the Teaching."

"Bhikkhus, the words of that bhikkhu should not be readily accepted or readily rejected. The words and phrases stated by him (attributed to the Sangha of a certain monastery) should be carefully noted. They should be collated with the *Suttanta*, and compared with the rules of the *Vinaya*.

"If, on collation with the *Suttanta* and comparison with the *Vinaya* rules, the words and phrases as stated by the bhikkhu do not agree with the *Suttanta* or are not in line with the *Vinaya* rules, then it must be concluded that, "This certainly is not what the Bhagavā said. It is something wrongly learnt by the Bhikkhu." And concluding thus, bhikkhus, those words should be rejected and ignored.

"If, on the other hand, the words and phrases as stated by the bhikkhu, on being collated with the *Suttanta* and compared with the *Vinaya* rules, are found to agree with the *Suttanta* and are in line with the *Vinaya* rules, then it must be concluded that, "This certainly is what the Bhagavā said, it is something correctly learnt by the bhikkhu." Bhikkhus, remember this second directive principle regarding assertions attributed to a great authority."

"(iii) And then, bhikkhus, in the Teaching, if a bhikkhu should say thus: "There is such and such monastery where many bhikkhu elders of wide learning who have memorized the Pāli (Texts), who abide by the Doctrine and the *Vinaya* rules, and who are thoroughly versed in the Fundamental Precepts for bhikkhus (*Pātimokkha*). I have heard (this exposition) from those bhikkhu elders themselves: such and such is the Doctrine; such and such is the *Vinaya*; such and such is the Teaching."

"Bhikkhus, the words of that bhikkhu should not be readily accepted or readily rejected. The words and phrases stated by him (attributed to

the bhikkhu elders) should be carefully noted. They should be collated with the *Suttanta* and compared with the rules of the *Vinaya*.

"If, on collation with the *Suttanta* and comparison with the *Vinaya* rules, the words and phrases as stated by the bhikkhus do not agree with the *Suttanta* or are not in line with the *Vinaya* rules, then it must be concluded that, This certainly is not what the Bhagava said. It is something wrongly learnt by the bhikkhu " And concluding thus, bhikkhus, these words should be rejected and ignored."

"If, on the other hand, the words and phrases as stated by the bhikkhu, on being collated with the *Suttanta* and compared with the *Vinaya* rules, are not found to agree with the *Suttanta* and are in line with the *Vinaya* rules, then it must be concluded that, This certainly is what the Bhagavā said. It is something correctly learnt by the bhikkhu? Bhikkhus, remember well this third directive principle regarding assertions attributed to a great authority.

(iv) And then, bhikkhus, in this Teaching, if a bhikkhu should say thus: "There is a certain Bhikkhu elder of wide learning who has memorized the Pāli (Texts), who abides by the Doctrine and the *Vinaya* rules, and who is thoroughly versed in the Fundamental Precepts for bhikkhus. I have heard (this exposition) from that bhikkhu himself: such and such in the Doctrine; such and such is the *Vinaya*; such and such is the Teaching."

"Bhikkhus, the words of that bhikkhu should not be readily accepted or readily rejected. The words and phrases stated by him (attributed to the learned bhikkhu elder) should be carefully noted. They should be collated with the *Suttanta* and compared with the rules of the *Vinaya*.

"If, on collation with the *Suttanta* and comparison with the *Vinaya* rules, then it must be concluded that "This certainly is not what the Bhagavā said. It is something wrongly learnt by the bhikkhu", And concluding thus, bhikkhus, these words should be rejected and ignored.

"If, on the other hand, the words and phrases as stated by the bhikkhu, on being collated with the *Suttanta* and are in line with the *Vinaya* rules, then it must be concluded that, "This certainly is what the Bhagavā said, It is something correctly learned by the bhikkhu".

Bhikkhus, remember well this fourth directive principle regarding assertions attributed to a great authority."

"Bhikkhus, remember well these four directive principles regarding assertions attributed to the Great Authorities".

### Miscellaneous points on the subject.

On this subject of four Great Authorities, the Commentary draws the attention of the reader to miscellaneous points touching on it. A brief note follows:

Herein,

- (i) there are the four directive principles concerning the four great authorities; (in *Dīgha Nikāya*)
- (ii) four directive Principles on the subject as taught in *Vinaya Mahāvagga*;
- (iii) four types of answers corresponding to four types of questions called the four *Vyakaraṇas*;
- (iv) the four *Vinayas*;
- (v) the three Great Synods.

#### (i) The four great authorities as taught in the Suttanta Piṭka.

There are what has been described above.

#### (ii) The four great authorities as taught in the Vinaya Piṭka. (*Matavagga*; 6 *Bhesajjakkhandhaka*)

Four directive principles are laid down by the Buddha regarding what sort of medicinal preparation is proper for bhikkhus;

- (a) Bhikkhus, a certain item of drug is not specifically mentioned by me as improper for use by bhikkhus, yet if it tends towards impropriety and rules out any possibility of its propriety, in the light of *Vinaya* rules, then consider it as being improper for use.
- (b) Bhikkhus, a certain item of drug is not specifically mentioned by me as improper for use by bhikkhus, and if, in the light of *Vinaya*

rules, it tends towards propriety and rules out any possibility of its impropriety, then consider it as being proper for use.

- (c) Bhikkhus, a certain item of drug is not specifically mentioned by me as proper for use by bhikkhus, and if it tends towards impropriety and rules out any possibility of propriety in the light of **Vinaya** rules, then consider it as being improper of use.
- (d) Bhikkhus, a certain item of drug is not specifically mentioned by me as proper for use by bhikkhus, and if it tends towards impropriety and rules out any possibility of propriety in the light of **Vinaya** rules, then consider it as being improper of use as proper for use by bhikkhus, and if it tends towards propriety and rules out any possibility of its impropriety in the light of *Vinaya rules*, then consider it as being proper for use.

### (iii) Four types of answer.

There are four types of answers to match the four types of questions:

- (a) A straight question is answered by a categorical statement. e.g. if the question is, "Is the eye impermanent?" the appropriate answer is, "Yes, the eye is impermanent."
- (b) A question requiring an analysis to answer e.g. "Is the eye the only thing that is impermanent?" The answer needs an analysis: "The eye is not the only thing that is impermanent: the ear also is impermanent; the tongue also is impermanent; etc."
- (c) A question to be replaced by question: e.g. "Is the ear to be regarded as being the same as the eye? Is the eye to be regarded as being the same as the ear?" The appropriate reply is: "In what sense is this question put?" Then if the inquirer says, "In the sense of seeing: is the ear capable of seeing as the eye is?" The answer then is: "No, it is not." If again, the inquirer says, "In respect of its impermanence: is the ear the same as the eye is?" The answer then is, "Yes, it is."
- (d) The type of question that is ignored. e.g. To believers in *atta*, there is *java* (life), *sarīra*, (body) which are mere names but



which do not exist in the ultimate sense, Therefore if the question is, "Is life the same as the body?" the proper answer is silence because one understands that the Bhagavā himself ignores such a question. The question is of the nature of saying. "the son of a barren woman", which is absurd.

#### (iv) The Four Vinayas.

- (1) *Sutta*: here refers to the Three Piṭakas.
- (2) *Suttānūloma*: the four *Mahāpadesas* Great Authorities described, in the Vinaya and the four *Mahāpadesas* described in the *Suttanta*.
- (3) *Ācariyavāda*: miscellaneous exposition in elucidation of the doctrines of the Buddha that were made even during the lifetime of the Bhagavā at different places. Since they explain the Pāli texts they were also called Commentaries (*aṭṭhakathā*). At the great Synods the bhikkhu elders recited the *Pāli* first and at the end of it they prescribed the respective Commentaries to each division of the texts as the regular syllabus for elucidation. These learned sayings which were miscellaneous discourses as well as Commentaries, being written by learned teachers, come to be known also as *Ācariyavāda*. These learned observations or treatises which are referred to as three different names--*Ācariyavāda*, *Aṭṭhakathā*, *Pakiṇṇakadesanā*-- were carried by the Venerable Mahinda to Sri Lanka. The Sri Lanka bhikkhu elders translated them into Sinhalese to ensure for Sinhalese bhikkhus the tradition against doctrines that might be introduced by other sects later. The Venerable Mahā Buddhaghosa studied the Sinhalese *Aṭṭhakathā*, (i.e. the *Mūla Pakiṇṇaka*) cleared up repetitive statements and condensed them wherever suitable, classified them under suitable headings appropriate to the Piṭaka texts, elucidating wherever necessary, and thereby produced a new Commentary in Māgadī, adding the traditional views held by bhikkhu elder (*Theravāda*) which came to be called 'own views', *attanomati*, wherever necessary. Thus, *Ācariyavāda*, the third of

the four *Vinayas*, is for practical purposes as used today, refers to (This new) Commentary.

- (4) *Attanomati*: this is a reference to the 'own views' i.e. considered opinions held by bhikkhu elders after following the principles contained in the *Sutta*, *Suttanuloma* and *ācariyavāda*. *Attanomate* is also known as *Theravāda*, the doctrines upheld traditionally by bhikkhu elders. Thus these four *Vinayas-Sutta*, *Suttānuloma*, *Ācariyavāda* and *Attanomati* - should be noted.

**(v) The three great synods.**

- (i) The first Great Council or Synod of five hundred Arahats headed by the Venerable Mahā Kassapa.
- (ii) The Second Great Council or Synod of seven thousand Arahats headed by Venerable Mahā Yasa.
- (iii) The Third Great Council or Synod of one thousand Arahats headed by the Venerable Mahā Moggaliputta.

These are the three great official Synods.

First, remember, (i) the four Great Authorities as taught in the *Suttanta*, (ii) the four Great Authorities as taught in the *Vinaya*, (iii) the four types of Questions and Answers, (iv) the four *Vinayas* and (v) the three Great official Synods.

Then apply them to practical problems thus: t

- (i) If a bhikkhu says, "This is the Doctrine; this is the *Vinaya*; this is the Buddha's Teaching", citing the authority of the Bhagavā, or of the Sangha, or of a number of bhikkhu elders, or a certain bhikkhu elder. To decide the veracity of his statement, apply the test of the four Great Authorities as taught in the *Suttanta*: if only the statement accords with these four Great Directive Principles, the statement should be taken as true. Otherwise it must be regarded as mere heresay, a case of irresponsible talk.
- (ii) Where a certain problem arises as to "whether a certain thing is proper for a bhikkhu or not," the test is the four Great Authorities as taught in the *Vinaya Mahāvagga*. (The Commentary on the

Vinaya Mahāvagga should be consulted for detailed information on the subject). If, on examining the subject of controversy or doubt in the light of the four Great Authorities taught in the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, it tends to agree with the rules, it should be accepted as being proper; otherwise it should be considered as being improper.

- (iii) If a question on the Doctrine arises - as illustrated above - the answer should be appropriate to the type of question taught as the four Types of Questions.
- (iv) Of the four Vinayas, if the assertion by someone is part of the *Suttanta Piṭaka* i.e. as contained in the three Piṭakas approved at the Synods, the statement should not be rejected for rejection of the *Piṭaka* amounts to the rejection of the Buddha himself. If the assertion is a *Suttā-nuloma* statement it should be collated with the *Suttanta* (i.e. the Pāli Tipiṭaka. If it agrees with the *Suttanta*, it should be accepted otherwise it should be rejected. As regards *Ariyavāda* or the miscellaneous exposition, there is the possibility the commentary not conforming to the Piṭaka due to slackness. Therefore *Āriyavāda* should be collated with the *Pāli Piṭaka*. Only if it agree with the *Pāli* should be accepted; otherwise it should be rejected as something carelessly said. *Attanomati* own opinion) is the weakest of authorities. It is to be accepted only if it accords with the *Suttanta* i.e. the *Pāli* text.
- (v) If someone quotes a passage as being part of the *Pāli*, "which had been approved by the Synod", it must conform to the texts approved at the three Great Synods. If it is not part of the *Pāli* text approved at the three Great Synods it is to be regarded as spurious.

(The above are miscellaneous points to remember.)

While the Bhagavā was staying at the Ānandā shrine in the town of Bhoga also, being thoughtful of his approaching death, he exhorted the Bhikkhus, where there was occasion to do so, in the following words.

"Such is Morality; such is Concentration; such is Wisdom. Concentration developed through Morality is efficacious and

productive. Wisdom developed through Concentration is efficacious and productive. The mind that is developed through wisdom is thoroughly liberated from the moral taints, namely, the taint of sense desire, the taint of hankering after continued existence, and the taint of ignorance of the Four Ariya Truths.'

### The story of Cunda, the Goldsmith's son.

Then, after staying at the town of Bhoga as long as he wished, the Bhagavā said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Come, Ānandā, let us go to Pāvā."

"Very well, Venerable Sir, assented Ānandā. And the Bhagavā, accompanied by a large following of bhikkhus, went to Pāvā where he dwelled in the Mango grove monastery donated by Cunda, the goldsmith's son.

(Cunda, the goldsmith's son was a very rich man, from his earlier meeting with the Bhagavā he had benefited from the Buddha's discourse and become a Stream - Winner. He built a big monastery in his mango grove and donated it to the Bhagavā. This was the last time the Bhagavā resided at the monastery.)

When Cunda, the goldsmith's son heard the news that the Bhagavā had arrived and was staying at his mango grove monastery he approached the Bhagavā, made obeisance to him, and sat in a suitable place. The Bhagavā pointed out to Cunda, the goldsmith's son, the benefits of the Doctrine, exhorted him to set himself up in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened him in the practice. After listening to the discourse, Cunda, the goldsmith's son, said to the Bhagavā, "Venerable Sir, may it please the Bhagavā to accept my offering of food for tomorrow together with the company of bhikkhus." The Bhagavā signified his acceptance by remaining silent.

Cunda, the goldsmith's son, knowing that the Bhagavā had accepted his request, rose from his seat, and making obeisance to the Bhagavā, left respectfully. The next day he had choice foods of hard and soft kinds prepared at his home, including tender pork *sūkara maddava*,

meat of a wild pig that was neither too old nor too young. Venerable Sir, it is time (to proceed): the food-offering is ready."

(Herein, the Pāli word for tender pork, *sūkara maddava*, is interpreted by some teachers as soft rice boiled with fine differently-tasting cow's milk, while others also say that it means a special food prepared with some delicious and highly nutritive concoction called *rasāyana*. They say that Cunda had this special meal prepared for the Bhagavā in the belief that it would not cause the passing away of the Bhagavā.)

Then in the morning the Bhagavā, taking alms-bowl and robe, went to the house of Cunda, the goldsmith's son, accompanied by the bhikkhus, and sat on the seat prepared for him.

Having seated thus, the Bhagavā said to Cunda, the goldsmith's son, "Cunda you may serve me the tender pork prepared by you; and you may serve the other food prepared by you to the company of bhikkhus."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," asserted Cunda, and accordingly served the personally prepared tender pork to the Bhagavā, and the other personally prepared food to the Bhikkhu Sangha.

After finishing the meal, the Bhagavā said to Cunda, the goldsmith's son, "Cunda, bury the remaining tender pork in a pit. Cunda, I see no one else besides me in all the celestial world of devas, Māra and Brahmas, or in this human world of samanas and brahmanas, rulers and men who, should he perchance eat it, could digest it well."; thus declared the Bhagavā categorically.

"Very well, Venerable Sir, assented Cunda, the goldsmith's son and accordingly buried the remaining tender pork in a pit. Then he approached the Bhagavā, made obeisance to him, and sat in a suitable place. And the Bhagavā gave Cunda, the goldsmith's son, a discourse on the Doctrine. Then the Bhagavā rose from his seat and departed.

Thereafter, subsequent to the meal offered by Cunda, the goldsmith's son, the Bhagavā became afflicted with a severe illness, an acute form of dysentery with discharge of blood, causing great pain near unto death.

The Bhagavā bore this pain with mindfulness and clear comprehension, without perturbation.

Then the Bhagavā said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Come, Ānandā, let us go to Kusināgara."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," assented the Venerable Ānandā.

(It should be noted here that the dysentery came upon the Bhagavā not on account of Cunda's food offering. It is meant here that the affliction came merely subsequent to the meal but not because of it. As a matter of fact, Cunda's specially prepared meal fortified the Bhagavā, If not for Cunda's highly nourishing food, the Bhagavā would not be able to withstand the onslaught of the severe illness. Thanks to Cunda's tender pork meal, the Bhagavā found strength to journey to Kusināgara on foot.)

#### The Bhagavā asks Ānandā to fetch drinking water.

Then the Bhagavā left the road and went to the foot of a tree. There he said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Ānandā, fold my double-layered robe fourfold and place it on the ground. Ānandā, I am weary. I shall sit down for a while."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," the Venerable Ānandā assented and he placed on the ground the double-layered robe folded fourfold. The Bhagavā sat on the seat thus prepared and said, "Ānandā, go and get some drinking water. Ānandā, I am thirsty. I want to have a drink of water." (1)

The Venerable Ānandā said, "Venerable Sir, five hundred carts have just now crossed the stream. The shallow water is disturbed and is flowing turbid. Venerable Sir, the Kakudhā river is not far off. There the water is clear, sweet, cool and free from muddiness. The river bank is also pleasant and inviting. The Bhagavā may take his drink of water at the Kakudhā river and also may cool his limbs there."

"Ānandā, go and get some drinking water. I am thirsty. Ānandā, I am thirsty. I want to have a drink. of water." (2)

The Venerable Ānandā again said: "Venerable Sir, five hundred carts have just crossed the stream. The shallow water is disturbed and is flowing turbid. Venerable Sir, the Kakudhā river is not far off. There the water is clear, sweet, cool and free from muddiness. The river bank is also pleasant and inviting. The Bhagavā may take his drink of water at the Kakudhā river, and also may cool his limbs there."

"Ānandā, go and get some drinking water. Ānandā, I am thirsty, I want to have a drink of water." (3)

After being commanded thrice by the Bhagavā, the Venerable Ānandā assented, "Very well, Venerable Sir, and taking the alms-bowl, went to the little stream. Then the shallow water which was flowing turbid after having been disturbed by the caravan, became mysteriously clear, pure and free from muddiness. Thereupon the Venerable Ānandā bethought himself:

"Wonderful indeed, and marvellous indeed, is the great power of the Tathāgata! This shallow stream which was flowing turbid due to the crossing of the caravan is, on my arrival, flowing clear, pure and free from muddiness."

With these thoughts of wonderment, the Venerable Ānandā took the drinking water in the alms-bowl, went back to the Bhagavā, and said:

"Wonderful indeed, Venerable Sir, marvellous indeed, Venerable Sir, is the great power of the Tathāgata! That shallow stream which was flowing turbid due to the crossing of the caravan just now, on my arrival there, was flowing clear, pure and free from muddiness. Now let the Bhagavā drink the water. Let the Well-Spoken One drink the water."

And the Bhagavā drank the water.

### The twelve *Saṃsāric* debts of the Bhagavā.

In this connection it would seem appropriate to mention briefly the twelve counts of recompense (which might be considered as twelve *saṃsāric* debts) the Bhagavā had to meet:

**(i) The First Recompense..**

In his former existence the Buddha-to-be was a drunkard named Munāli. He accosted Paccekabuddhā named Surabhi with a wild accusation: "This man is an immoral person who indulges in sense-pleasures in private."

For that evil verbal action he was reborn in the realm of continuous suffering (*niraya*). And in the last existence as the Bhagavā he was publicly accused by Sundarī, the wandering female ascetic as being luscious and having had an affair with her.

**(ii) The Second Recompense.**

In a former existence the Buddha-to-be was a disciple named Nanda to a Paccekabuddhā named Sabbābhibhu. He accused his teacher as a person of loose character.

On account of that evil verbal action he had to suffer for a hundred thousand years in the *Niraya* realm. When he was reborn as a human being many times he was unjustly accused of wrongdoing. In the last existence as the Buddha he was publicly accused by Ciñjamāna of a wanton person who had caused her pregnancy.

**(iii) The Third Recompense.**

The Buddha-to-be was once a learned brahmin teacher well versed in the three Vedas, a person of great esteem. While he was teaching the Vedas in the Mahāvana forest to five hundred pupils they saw in the sky a holy hermit named Bhima coming to the forest by means of psychic powers. (Instead of being inspired) the Bodhisatta told five hundred pupils that the recluse was a sensuous hypocrite. The pupils believed in what the teacher said and spread the teacher's view of the good recluse while he was going alms-collecting.

Those five hundred pupils were reborn as bhikkhu-disciples of the Bhagavā. Due to their slander against the good recluse as the five hundred pupils of the brahmin teacher in their former life, they were falsely accused of murdering Sundarī the wandering female ascetic, who was actually the victim of the ascetics. It should be noted that an



accusation against the disciples of the Bhagavā amounted to an accusation against the Bhagavā himself.

**(iv) The Fourth Recompense.**

In a previous existence the Buddha-to-be murdered his half brother on account of covetousness. He threw the younger brother into a ravine and then crushed him with a boulder.

For that evil deed the Bhagavā in his last existence became the victim of Devadatta's plot against his life; but since a Buddha is not liable to get killed, he suffered from a rock splinter at the big toe which was internally bruised when a huge boulder was dropped from the hillside by Devadatta.

**(v) The Fifth Recompense.**

In one of the former existences the Buddha-to-be was a scamp and when he met a Paccekabuddhā on the way he gave vent to frolicsome tendencies and threw stones at the noble personage.

For that evil deed the Bhagavā once came under attack by a band of archers sent by Devadatta who meant to kill the Buddha.

**(vi) The Sixth Recompense.**

When the Buddha-to-be was a mahout he threatened a Paccekabuddhā on his alms-collection with his elephant as if to trample on the Noble One.

On account of that misdeed the Bhagavā was once threatened with a drunken elephant named Nālāgiri in Rājagaha which was sent out (by Devadatta) to trample on the Bhagavā.

**(vii) The Seventh Recompense.**

In one of his former existences the Boddhistta was a monarch. Out of kingly conceit he executed a prisoner (not considering the Kammic consequences) personally by piercing him with a spear.

That evil deed brought him down to the realm of continuous suffering for a great many years. In the last existence the Bhagava had to

undergo treatment by his big toe being cut open by Zīvaka, the celebrated physician, to heal it (when it was hit by a splinter caused by Devadatta's wicked scheme).

**(viii) The Eighth Recompense.**

In a former existence the Buddha-to-be was born into a fisherman's family. He used to take delight in witnessing his relations hurting and killing the fish. (He did not do the killing himself).

As the result of that evil thought, in his last existence as the Buddha he often suffered from head-ache. (As for his relatives in that existence, they were reborn as Sakyans who were massacred by Viṭatūbha).

**(ix) The Ninth Recompense.**

When the Buddha-to-be was born as a human being during the time of Buddha Phussa's Teaching, he railed at the bhikkhu disciples of the Buddha saying, "You may eat only barley, but not rice."

That vituperation had the consequence, in the last existence, of the Bhagavā having to live on barley meal for the whole of the rains retreat (*vāsa*) period at the Verañjā brahmin village (where he stayed at the invitation of Brahmin Verañjā).

**(x) The Tenth Recompense.**

Once the Buddha-to-be was born as a professional boxer when he broke the back of his combatant.

As a consequence of that evil deed the Bhagavā in his last existence often suffered from back-ache.

**(xi) The Eleventh Recompense.**

When the Buddha-to-be was a physician in one of his former existences he purposely administered a drug causing loose bowels to a rich man's son who grudged him his fee.

On account of that evil deed the Bhagava in his last existence was afflicted with a severe dysentery with discharge of blood, prior to his passing away.

**(xii) The Twelfth Recompense.**

The Bodhisatta was once born as a Brahmin named Jotipala. He made blasphemous remarks about Kassapa Buddha saying, "How is it possible that this shoveling is Perfectly Enlightened? Perfect Enlightenment is a most rare thing."

That blasphemy had the consequence of delayed Enlightenment for the Bhagavā. For whereas other Bodhisattas won Enlightenment in a matter of days or months, Gotama Buddha-to-be had to go through six painful years in his quest for Truth.

These twelve consequences of the past blunders of the Buddha-to-be were related by the Bhagavā himself, vide: Khuddaka Nikāya, Therāpadana Pāli, 39, Avataphala Vagga; 10, Pubbakammapiḷḷitika Buddha apadāna.

**The story of Pukkusa, the Malla Prince.**

As the Bhagavā was sitting at the foot of the tree after having a drink of water, Pukkusa, a Malla prince who was a disciple of Ājāra Kālāma was on his journey from Kusināra to Pāvā. Seeing the Bhagavā sitting at the foot of a tree, Pukkusa of the Mallas approached the Bhagavā, made obeisance to him, and sat down in a suitable place. Then he addressed the Bhagavā:

"Wonderful it is, Venerable Sir, marvellous it is Venerable Sir, how the recluses remain in their tranquil state!"

"Venerable Sir, as it happened in the past, Ājāra Kālāma, while on a journey, left the road and sat down at the foot of a tree by the roadside to spend the day. Venerable Sir, at that time five hundred carts passed by Ājāra Kālāma, very close to him.

"Venerable Sir, a man who was following behind the five hundred carts went towards Ājāra Kālāma and asked: "Sir, did you see five hundred carts pass by?"

(Āḷāra) "Friend, I did not see them."

"Sir, how is it then? Did you hear the noise of those carts?"

"Friend, I did not hear the noise, either."

"Sir, how is it then? Were you asleep then?"

"Friend, I was not asleep, either."

"Sir, how is it then? Were you quite conscious then?"

"Yes, friend, I was quite conscious."

"Sir, you say you did not see nor hear the five hundred carts that passed close by you even though you were conscious and awake. Yet your double-layered robe is covered all over with dust, isn't it?"

"It is so, friend."

"Venerable Sir, after having that dialogue with Āḷāra Kālāma, that man thought thus: "Wonderful it is, marvellous it is, that the recluses remain in their tranquil state! This recluse Āḷāra, although conscious and awake, did not see nor hear the five hundred carts that passed close by him!" And saying how deeply he revered Āḷāra Kālāma, he went away."

Thereupon the Bhagavā said to Pukkusa of the Mallas, Pukkusa, what do you think of this? (i) Someone, though conscious and awake, does not see nor hear the five hundred carts that pass close by him. (ii) Another person, though conscious and awake, does not see nor hear downpour of rain with rumbling thunder, lightning and crashing thunderbolts (close by him). Now, of these two cases, which is the more difficult to achieve? Which is the more difficult to happen?

"Venerable Sir," replied Pukkusa of the Mallas, "To remain unseeing and unhearing the passing of carts close by oneself - be it five hundred, six hundred, seven hundred, eight hundred, nine hundred, a thousand, or even a hundred thousand carts - cannot be called difficult (compared to the other case). Indeed, it is much more difficult to remain unseeing and unhearing the downpour of rain with rumbling thunder, lightning and crashing thunderbolts (close by). It is more difficult to happen."

Then the Bhagavā said:

"Pukkusa, at one time I was living in a straw hut at the town of Āluma. During that time there was a downpour of rain with rumbling thunder, lightning and crushing of thunderbolts. A thunderbolt struck near my hut killing four oxen and two cultivators who were brothers.

"Then, Pukkusa, a large number of people came out from the town to see the place where the four oxen and two cultivator brothers got killed. Pukkusa, by that time, I had come out of the straw hut and was walking up and down in the open, near the hut,. Pukkusa, a man from that crowd drew near me, and after making obeisance to me, stood at a suitable place. Pukkusa, I asked that man, "Friend, why are there many people gathered?"

"Venerable Sir, four oxen and two cultivator brothers were struck by a thunderbolt and killed while it rained heavily with rumbling thunder and lightning. These people have come out to see (the damage). But, Venerable Sir, where were you (at that time)?

"Friend, I have been here all the while."

Venerable Sir, how is it, then? Did you see (what happened)?"

"Friend, I did not see it."

"Venerable Sir, how is it then? Did you here that sound?"

"Friend, I did not hear the sound, either."

"Venerable Sir, how is it then? Were you asleep?"

"Friend, I was not asleep, either."

"Venerable Sir, how is it then? Were you conscious?"

"Yes, friend, I was conscious."

"Venerable Sir, is it that, though conscious and awake, you neither saw nor heard the heavy rain, rumbling thunder and lightning, crashing thunderbolts?"

"That is so, friend."

"Pukkusa, at the end of the dialogue, the man thought: "Wonderful it is, marvellous it is that recluses (bhikkhus in this case) remain in their

tranquil state! The Bhagavā here, though conscious and awake, did not see nor hear the heavy rain, rumbling thunder and lightning, and crashing thunderbolts? And saying how deeply he revered me, he made obeisance to me and went away."

**Pukkusa of the Mallas makes a special gift to the Bhagavā.**

When the Bhagavā said these words, Pukkusa of the Mallas said to the Bhagavā:

"Venerable Sir, whatever high esteem, I had for Ājāra Kālāma. I now throw it away (as if I would throw away rubbish), in a strong wind, or let go (as if I would cast some worthless thing) down the rushing stream.

"Venerable Sir, Excellent (is the Dhamma)! Venerable Sir excellent (is the Dhamma)! It is as if, Venerable Sir, that which has been turned over has been turned up, or as if that which has been hidden is revealed, or as if a lost traveller is told the way, or as if a lamp is lit in a dark place so that those with eyes may see Visible objects- even so the Bhagavā has shown the Dhamma to me in various ways. Venerable Sir, I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in in the Dhamma, I take refuge in the Sangha! May the Bhagavā regard me as a lay disciple, one who has taken refuge in the Triple Gem, from this day to the end of life."

Then Pukkusa of the Mallas called a man and said to him, "O man, go and bring me the pair of fine golden-hued pieces of cloth that is specially reserved for ceremonial occasions. "And when the pair of lengths of fine golden-hued cloth were brought, Pukkusa the Malla prince offered them to the Bhagavā, saying, "Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā, out of compassion for me, accept this pair of fine ceremonial lengths of cloth."

The Bhagavā said: "In that case, Pukkasa, present one to me and one to Ānandā." And so Pukkusa the Malla prince presented one piece to the Bhagavā, and the other piece to the Venerable Ānandā.

(In this connection, one might ask, "Did the Venerable Ānandā accept Pukkasa's gift?" And the answer is, Yes. Then the inquirer might point

out to the previous agreement by Ānandā not to receive offerings originally made to the Bhagavā, (agreement to receive only four kinds of gifts and to refuse four kinds of gifts) made by him when he took up the charge of becoming personal attendant to the Bhagavā. The gift was accepted in this case as an exception on these three grounds:

- (i) Ānandā had by this true fulfilled his task as the Bhagava's personal attendant supremely well.
- (ii) This fact of his receiving the gift would stop others who might otherwise say that Ānandā had not served the Bhagavā well. So the Bhagavā did not favour him with any gift after twenty-five years of personal service.
- (iii) Ānandā understood that the Bhagavā let Pukkusa enjoy the benefit of making the gift to the Sangha, for giving to Ānandā amounted to giving to the Sangha. The Bhagavā also knew that Ānandā would not use the cloth himself but would present it to the Bhagavā.)

Then the Bhagavā pointed out to Pukkusa, the Malla prince, the benefits of the Doctrine, exhorted to him to set himself up in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened him in the practice. After thus being pointed out the benefits of the Dhamma, being exhorted to set himself up in the practice of the Dhamma, and being gladdened in the practice; Pukkusa the Malla prince rose from his seat and making obeisance to the Bhagavā, respectfully departed.

Not long after Pukkusa the Malla prince was gone, the Venerable Ānandā placed neatly the pair of fine golden-hued robes on the body of the Bhagavā. Once they were placed on the person of the Bhagavā, the pair of robes appeared to lose their splendour as against the natural splendour of the Bhagava's person. The Venerable Ānandā was awestruck. He exclaimed what he saw. Thereupon the Bhagavā explained him thus:

"Ānandā, what you say is true. Ānandā, what you say is true. There are two occasions when the natural colour of the Tathāgata's becomes exceedingly clear and his complexion exceedingly bright. These two occasions are:

The night, Ānandā, when the Tathāgata attains supreme Perfect Self-Enlightenment, and the night in which he passed away leaving no trace of the five aggregates, and realizes the Ultimate Peace. (*amupādisesa nibbāna*)

Ānandā, these are the two occasions on which the natural colour of the Tathagata's person becomes exceedingly clear and his complexion exceedingly bright.

Ānandā, today, in the last watch of the night, in the Sal grove of the Malla princes where the road to Kusināra turns, between the twin Sal trees, the Tathāgata's realization of *Parinibbāna* will take place."

Then the Bhagavā said, "Come, Ānandā, let us go to the Kakudhā river. "Very well, Venerable Sir," said the Venerable Ānandā in assent.

Then the Bhagavā proceeded to the Kakudhā river accompanied by a large number of bhikkhus. He entered the water, bathed in it, and drank the water. Back again on the river bank, he went to the mango grove by the river. There he said to the Venerable Cunda (the Venerable Ānandā was then left at the river bank drying (wringing) the loin cloth in which the Bhagava bathed): "Cunda, fold my double-layered robe fourfold and place it on the ground. I am weary. I need to lie down."

The Venerable Cunda assented respectfully, and placed the folded double-layered robe on the ground. And the Bhagavā lay down on his right side in a noble posture, with his left foot above the right foot, placed slightly beyond it, with mindfulness and clear comprehension, and keeping in mind the time of arising. The Venerable Cunda kept watch there, seated nearby.

### **The comparable merits of the two meals explained.**

When the Venerable Ānandā again came before the Bhagava's presence, the Bhagavā made the following special remarks about the last meal thus:

"Ānandā, it may happen that someone may cause unhappiness to Cunda the goldsmith's son by saying, 'Friend Cunda, the Bhagavā



## THE COMPARABLE MERITS OF THE TWO MEALS

passed away after he had eaten his last meal provided by you. How unfortunate, what a loss to you.'

"Should such a thing happen, Cunda should be solaced thus: "Honourable Cunda, the Bhagavā passed away after he had eaten his last meal provided by you. How fortunate, what good gain to you. Honourable Cunda these are the words I heard from the mouth of the Bhagavā himself: There are two offerings of food that surpass all other food offerings in their benefit, and whose merits compare well as between the two of them. The two offerings are: the food offered to the Tathāgata after eating which the Tathāgata attains Supreme Perfect Self-Enlightenment, and the food offered to the Tathāgata, after eating which the Tathāgata passes away leaving no trace of the five aggregates, and realizes the Ultimate Peace *anupādisesa nibbāna*. These two offerings of food surpass all other food offerings in their benefit, and whose merits compare well as between the two of them. These are the words I heard from the mouth of the Bhagavā himself. That being so, the Honourable Cunda, the goldsmith's son has in store for him: the merit that will ensure him long life, the merit that will ensure him good looks, the merit that will ensure him well being and happiness, the merit that will ensure him large followership, the merit that leads to the deva world, and the merit that ensures him pre-eminence."

Thus should Cunda the goldsmith's son be solaced.

Then the Bhagavā, comprehending the matter, uttered this stanza in exultation on the spur of the moment:., *udāna gāthā*.

In one who gives, merit grows, In one who is self-controlled, enmity cannot gather. One who has Insight Wisdom abandons evil.

One who is endowed with charity, morality, concentration and wisdom, having destroyed attachment, hatred and bewilderment, attains Peace.

(Herein the "equal merit" in Sujāta's milk-rice (at the Bodhi tree) and Cunda's tender pork might be a matter of controversy.)

One might ask: "At the time the Bhagavā ate Sujata's milk rice he had not destroyed attachment, hatred and bewilderment whereas at the time he ate Cunda's food-offering he was free from attachment, hatred and bewilderment. Thus the offeree's state of purity being not equal, how could merit in the offering be equal? "

The answer is this: the equal factors in both are :

- (a) both the meals lead to *parinibbāna*.
- (b) both enable the Bhagavā to dwell in the attainment of Jhāna.
- (c) both led to the same mode of contemplation, by the two donors.

Now to expand this:

- (a) After eating Sujātas milk-rice the Bhagavā extinguished the defilements and attained Buddhahood which is the "*Parinibbāna of kilesas*," realization of Nibbāna with the five aggregates remaining.

After eating Cunda's tender pork, the Bhagavā extinguished the rearing of the five aggregates which is the "*parinibbāna of khandha*," realization of Nibbāna with no aggregates remaining. Thanks to Sujāta's milk-rice, there arose in the Bhagava's physical system superior corporeality (*pañña rūpaṃ*) This gave strength to the mental system so that the Dhamma body, comprising the arising of Insight, the arising of *Magga*, and the arising of *Phala*, was able to destroy the defilements without difficulty, thus leading to *kilesa parinibbāna*.

Cunda's food-offering likewise provided proper sustenance to the Bhagavā and enabled him to renounce the five aggregates without difficulty, thus leading to *Khandha parinibbāna*.

- (b) On the day of Enlightenment, the Bhagavā, after eating the milk-rice offered by Sujāta, got the strength to dwell in the attainment of concentration comprising 2.4 million crores of

absorptions *deva sikavalañjana samāpatti* which was to become his daily routine. After eating Cunda's food offering also the Bhagavā was (in spite of his severe dysentery) able to keep up the daily routine of dwelling in the attainment of concentration comprising 2.4 million crores of absorptions.

- (c) Sujāta offered her milk-rice to the Buddha-to-be thinking him to be the guardian spirit of the great banyan tree (later to be called Mahābodhi Tree). But when she knew that it was the Buddha whom she made her offering and that he attained Buddhahood after having her meal of milk-rice and that the Buddha got sustenance for forty-nine days from her food-offering, she was intensely happy. "What a great fortune for me, what a great gain to me!" She contemplated repeatedly, thus increasing her meritorious thoughts of delightful satisfaction and joy. Similarly, when Cunda, the goldsmith's son, learnt that his food-offering was the Bhagava's last meal after which the Bhagavā realized the Ultimate Peace after passing away leaving no remaining aggregates, he was overjoyed. "What a great fortune for me, what a great gain to me!" he contemplated repeatedly, thus increasing his meritorious thoughts of delightful satisfaction and joy.

**On the daily routine of the Bhagavā in dwelling in the 2.4 million crores of sustained absorptions.**

As discussed in *Samyutta Tīkā*, Volume I (Sagāthā Vagga *Samyutta Tīkā*; Brahma *Samyutta*, 2: Dutiya vagga, 5. Parinibbāna Sutta, pp 251-252)

**According to some teachers. (Keci vāda)**

The Bhagavā, as of daily routine, dwelled in the absorptions of Great Compassion numbering 1.2 million crores of times, and the Arahatta-phala Absorptions numbering the same- thus dwelled in a total of 2.4 million crores known as *Deva sikavalañjana Samāpatti*.

(Another explanation:) With the Buddhas, the return to life-continuum thought-moment (*Bhavaṅga citta*) is very swift. Entering into and dwelling in a certain type of absorption as from one to another is an accomplished feat. To enter into absorption and to emerge from absorption, the Bhagavā needs just two or three thought-moments. That being so, it is routine for the Bhagavā to dwell in: 5 types of fine-material absorptions, 4 types of non-material absorptions, Appamaññā Samāpatti, Nirodha Samāpatti and Arahattaphala Samāpatti, thus making a daily total of twelve types of *samāpatti*. One hundred thousand crores of times for *each* of these twelve *Samāpattis* were entered into every morning, and the same number of absorptions repeated every afternoon, thus a daily routine of 2.4 million crores of absorptions took place every day. ( This is according to some teachers).

#### **According to other teachers: (Apare vāda)**

It was customary for the Bhagavā to dwell in the Absorption of Cessation (*Nirodha samāpatti*) every day. Entering into the Absorption of Cessation is to be preceded by insight meditation. With the Buddhas the subject of contemplation to develop insight-meditation leading to the Absorption of Cessation is *Paṭiccasamuppāda* (see the Great Chronicle of the Buddhas, volume II, about *Mahāvajira vipassanā*). This meditation procedure involves contemplating the twelve factors of *Paṭiccasamuppāda* in the forward order beginning from *avijjā* (ignorance), each for a hundred thousand crores of times. Thus 1.2 million crores of times are devoted to the twelve factors of Dependent Origination or *Paṭiccasamuppāda*. Then contemplating the same twelve factors in the reverse order involves another 1.2 million crores of times. The entering into the Absorption of Cessation, with *paṭiccasamuppāda* as the subject of contemplation, is therefore 1.2 million crores of times each for the forward and the reverse order of Dependent Origination, thereby taking up 2.4 million crores of times. (This is what other teachers say.)

Since the 2.4 million crores of times are devoted daily to the absorptions by the Bhagavā, what significance is there about these absorptions on the day of Enlightenment and on the day of passing

away? The significance, as pointed out in the sub-Commentary on *Matravagga, Dīgha Nikaya*, is that on these particular days the absorptions are built up on a more rigorous, mental discipline that requires contemplating seven aspects of physical phenomena (*rūpa sattaka*) and seven aspects of mental phenomena (*nāma sattaka*) in the preliminary insight-meditation.

### Kusināgara As Bhagava's Last Repose

Then the Bhagavā said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Come, Ānandā, let us go to the sal grove of the Malla princes where the road bends to Kusināgara town, on yonder bank of the Hiraññavati river."

"Very well, venerable Sir," the Venerable Ānandā assented, Then the Bhagavā, accompanied by a large body of bhikkhus, reached (at last) the sal grove of the Malla princes where the road bends to kusināgara town on the further bank of the Hiraññavati river. There he said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Ānandā, lay the couch with its head to the north between the twin sal trees, Ānandā, I am weary, and wish to lie down."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," assented the Venerable Ānandā, and laid the couch with its head to the north between the twin sal trees, And the Bhagavā lay down on his right side in a noble posture, with his left foot above the right foot, placed slightly beyond it, with mindfulness and clear comprehension. (Some noteworthy points may be presented at this point.)

On this journey from Pava to Kusināgara a very large body of Bhikkhu disciples, almost beyond count, had gathered around the Bhagavā because from the time the news of the Bhagava's imminent passing away had gone out of the small village of Veluva, all bhikkhus living at various places who had come to the Bhagavā did not disperse.

### The Twin Sal Trees.

In the Sal grove of the Malla princes where the couch for the Bhagavā was laid, there were two fine rows of sal trees at the north (where the head of the couch was placed) and at the south. Amidst these two rows there were a pair of sal trees at the opposite ends of the

couch whose roots, branches and foliage were intertwined so that they were referred to as twin sal trees. There was a couch used by the Malla princes in the sal grove and it was the couch that the Bhagavā commanded Ānandā to be laid for him, and which was duly complied with.

### The Bhagava's Exhaustion.

"Ānandā, I am weary, and wish to lie down." The significance of these words may be considered in the light of the Bhagava's natural physical might, which was equal to the strength of a thousand crore of elephants of the common run, equivalent to that of ten Chaddanta white elephants, or that of ten thousand crores of average men. All that marvellous might drained down with the dysentery like the water poured down into a funnel filter after Bhagavā had eaten Cunda's food. The distance from Pāvā to Kusināgara was a mere three *gāvata* (three quarters of a *yojanā*, a *yojanā* variously taken as seven and half to twelve and half miles), Yet the Bhagavā had to make twenty-five pauses on his journey. At the close of the last lap, on entering the Sal grove at sunset, he was overwhelmed by the ailments. Hence his admission of uneasiness and need to lie down was an ominous signal to the world that he was as good as dead.

### The Bhagava's choice of Kusināgara as his last repose.

Here one might be tempted to ask, "Why did the Bhagavā take as much trouble to get to Kusināgara? Were not other places fit to be his last repose? The answer is, there was no place which was actually unfit for that great occasion. But there were three reasons for the Bhagavā in choosing this insignificant town of Kusināgara as the place of his last repose. They are:-

- (i) The Bhagavā saw the following three eventualities: He considered: "If I were to pass away at any place other than Kusināgara, there would be no occasion to discourse on the *Mahāsudassana sutta*. This long discourse that took two sessions of recitals at the synod and which revealed that even as of a human being as, when the Bhagavā was a Buddha-to-be.

one could enjoy divine (celestial) glory on earth, would find a fitting setting only at Kusināgara. The discourse would kindle the interest of the hearers to do good deeds.

- (ii) "If I were to pass away at some place other than Kusināgara, Subhadda the wandering ascetic would get no opportunity of meeting me, in which case it would be utter loss for him. For he was fit to be enlightened only by a Buddha and not by a Buddha's disciple. That ascetic Subhadda would be there at Kusināgara, he would be putting (intelligent) questions to me, and at the end of my answers to his questions he would embrace the Doctrine, learn the method of practice for developing Insight, and would become the last Arahat during my lifetime.
- (iii) "If I were to pass away elsewhere, there would be bloodshed over the scramble for the relics of the Tathāgata. In Kusināgara, Brahmin Dona would be able to prevent such a catastrophe and the distribution of the relics would be effected peacefully."

Those were the three reasons why the Bhagavā took so much trouble to get to Kusināgara.

### **The Sal Trees and celestial beings honour the Bhagavā.**

As the Bhagavā lay there on the couch, the twin Sal trees burst forth into full bloom, though it was not the flowering reason, and in adoration of the Tathāgata, rained blossoms, continuously scattering them over the body of the Tathāgata.

Also, celestial *mandāvara* flowers fell from the sky continuously scattering themselves over the body of the Tathāgata, signifying the adoration of the Tathāgata by the celestial beings.

Also, celestial sandalwood powder fell from the sky continuously scattering themselves over the body of the Tathāgata, signifying the adoration of the Tathāgata by the celestial beings.

And, in adoration of the Tathāgata, celestial music wafted in the sky, celestial melodies resounded in the air above, in adoration of the *Tathāgata*.

### The best way of honouring the Bhagavā.

Then the Bhagavā said to the Venerable Ānandā: "Ānandā, the twin Sal trees burst forth into full bloom though it was not the flowering season, and in adoration of the Tathāgata, rain blossoms, continuously scattering them over the body of the Tathāgata.

"Also, celestial *mandāvara* flowers fall from the sky, continuously scattering themselves over the body of the Tathagata, signifying the adoration of the Tathāgata by the celestial beings.

"Also, celestial sandalwood powder fall from the sky, continuously scattering themselves over the body of the Tathāgata, signifying the adoration of the Tathāgata by the celestial beings.

"And, in adoration of the Tathāgata, celestial music wafts in the sky, celestial melodies resound in the air above, in adoration of the Tathāgata.

"Ānandā, all these forms of adoration cannot be called sufficient acts of honour, esteem, reverence, adoration or worship of the Tathāgata. Ānandā, the bhikkhu, or bhikkhuni, or the lay-disciple, or the female lay-disciple, who practices according to the Doctrine leading to the Supramundane, who conducts himself correctly in the practice, and who leads a righteous life, by such follower of the Tathāgata only is the Tathāgata best honoured, esteemed, revered, adored, and worshipped.

"Accordingly, Ānandā, train yourselves diligently with a firm resolve to practice according to the Doctrine leading to the Supramundane; conduct yourselves correctly in the practice, and lead a righteous life."

(Herein, the Sal trees raining down their blossoms should be understood as acts of adoration by the guardian spirits of those trees by shaking the branches.

"*Mandāvara* flowers bloom in the Nandā Lake (in the Tāvatiṃsā deva realm). The leaf of the plant is about the size of an umbrella, and the pollen collects in each flower as much as a basketful. Not only *mandāvara* flowers, but also other celestial flowers such as the Coral flower and other celestial flowers were strewn down by the devas who dwell around the regions



at the walls of the *cakkavāla*, Tāvatiṃsā deva realm and *brahma loka* so that there was a continuous sprinkling of celestial flowers.

Likewise, "celestial sandalwood" here should be understood to represent various other kinds of scented wood not only from deva realm but from realms of *nagas*, *garudas*, and other foreign lands of the human world, as well as all kinds of exotic natural scents in various forms such as gold dust, silver powders, minerals, rocks, etc. In short, all the sentient world celestial as well as terrestrial, was joined in sprinkling scented dust of all description continuously onto the reclining Bhagavā at Kusināgara.

"Celestial music" also represents a universal symphony played by musicians of all the sentient world extending to ten-thousand world-systems, including *devas*, *nagas*, *garudas* and human beings, that sounded in the sky of the world-system.

### **The celestial Garland of exceedingly large size.**

"Celestial melodies resounded in the air above": Behind the statement lies a touching story. It concerns Varuṇa and Vāraṇa devas who have exceedingly long life-spans. These devas, on learning that the deva who was the Buddha-to-be was going to be reborn in the human world, started making a garland for presentation to the Buddha-to-be on the day of his conception. Before they had finished making the garland they heard the news that the Buddha-to-be was conceived in the human mother's womb. So when other devas asked them for whom the garland was being made, they said "Our garland is not finished yet, so it has to be present to the Bodhisatta on the day he is born."

Again, when they learnt that the Bodhisatta was already born, the garland-making devas said, "Well, we will present it to the Bodhisatta on the day of his Renunciation." When, after twenty-nine years of life in the human world, the Buddha-to-be renounced the world, the garland-makers heard the news and

said, "We will present it to the Buddha on his day of Enlightenment." Then, after six years of the Bodhisatta's great Endeavour and the news of his Enlightenment reached the garland-making devas, they said, "We will present it to the Bhagavā on the day of the first sermon." After forty-nine days *satta sattāha* (seven various dwellings in absorption at seven different places) of *samāpatti*, when the first sermon was delivered at the Migadāvana forest, the garland-making devas said, "Well, we will present it to the Bhagavā on the day the Bhagavā displays the Twin Miracle." When the news that the Twin miracle had taken place reached the garland-makers, they thought of offering the garland when (after three months) the Bhagavā had descended from the Tavatimsa deva realm. And when the news of the Bhagava's descent from the Tavatimsa realm was received also, they thought of offering the garland on the day the Bhagavā relinquished his life-maintaining thought-process. But by that day the garland was still not finished, and so they said, "The garland is still not finished; we will honour the Bhagavā with it on the day of his passing away."

Now that the latest news of the Bhagavā lying on his death-bed reached the garland-makers and that at the third watch of that very night the Bhagavā would be passing away, the Varuṇa devas and Varaṇa devas exclaimed, quite bewildered, "How is that? Just today the Bodhisatta is known to be conceived in his mother's womb; just today he is born; just today he has renounced earth and home; just today the Bhagavā has attained Enlightenment; just today he has delivered his first sermon; just today he has displayed the Twin Miracle; just today he has descended from the Tavatimsa deva realm; just today he has relinquished the life-maintaining thought-process, and just today he is about to pass away! Should he not have tarried till breakfast time the next day? It is just too soon, too early, for such a great personage who has fulfilled the Ten Perfections supremely and has attained Buddhahood to pass away now."

Thus murmuring mournfully, the Varuna devas and the Vāraṇa deva came before the Bhagavā bringing with them the great garland, still unfinished, together with more flowers to go into its making. But they could not find any place in this world-system amidst the celestial crowds who had already gathered so that they were obliged to recede to the edge of the world-system, and had to keep the great garland hanging in the air above. Then those devas ran about the rim of the world-system holding on another's hands or embracing one another, all the while contemplating the noble attributes of the Triple Gem, and singing devotional songs on the thirty-two marks of the great man, the six-hued aura of the Bhagavā, the Ten Perfections, the five-hundred-and-fifty existences of the Bodhisatta, and the Fourteen Knowledges of the Buddha; and singing the refrain at the end of each song, "O, the Bhagavā with such great following and fame!" "O the Bhagavā with such great following and fame!" All these beautiful melodies were coming from those great devas so that celestial music resounded in the air above.)

Even while the Bhagavā was lying there on the couch, he saw the great gathering of devas and brahmas that filled this entire world-system from the earth's surface to the brim of this World-system and from its brim to the Brahma world. On seeing the zeal with which they were honouring the Bhagavā, the Bhagavā said the above words to the Venerable Ānandā. After mentioning the marvellous modes of worshipping the Bhagavā by the celestial beings (of the ten thousand World-systems,) the Bhagavā pointed out that the material offerings *āmisa pūjā* were not sufficient in themselves as the best way of doing honour to the Tathāgata, but that only following and practising the Doctrine is the best honour done to the Tathāgata. In saying those words the Bhagavā also implied 'that since the very beginning when, having been endowed with the eight factors required of a full-fledged Bodhisatta (as Recluse Sumedhā), he had aspired to Buddhahood at the feet of Dīpaṅkarā Buddha, lying face down-ward in the marsh, offering himself to be used by the Buddha and his company of four hundred thousand Arahats, all his fulfilling of the Perfections over four

*asaṅkheyyas* and a hundred-thousand *kappas*, were not for the purpose of being honoured by the celestial world in these flowers, perfumes and music, but was solely for the purpose of being honoured by his disciples following his Teaching, which is the best way of doing honour to him.'

(Herein it might be asked: "It is usual for the Bhagavā to extol offering of as insignificant an object as a sessamum flower, pointing out that if the offering is made with a consciousness of the Buddha's attributes, the benefit accruing from the offering would be infinite. Yet in this case (of the Varuṇa devas and Vāraṇa devas) why did the Bhagavā not welcome their offering (of the great garland)?

The answer is that the Bhagavā had in mind the true interest of the vast multitudes, and also the perpetuation of the Teaching. Let me explain this: The Doctrine lays down the three-fold training – *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*. If offering of material things were allowed too freely, then in future the disciples of the Bhagavā might neglect the practice of *samādhi* and *paññā*, they would neglect the practice of Insight meditation; the bhikkhu disciples would preach the merits of offerings of flowers and fragrant things and offering other material things only. Offering of material things cannot maintain the Teaching consisting essentially of the threefold Training even for one breakfast period. Indeed, thousands of splendid monasteries or thousands of splendid stupas cannot maintain the Teaching. These material donations merely lead only to mundane welfare.

It is the right practice of the Dhamma only that truly counts as honouring the Bhagavā. Indeed it is so. The Bhagavā desires for honouring him by practising the Dhamma, *Dhamma pūzā*. For by right practice alone can the Teaching be perpetuated. That was the reason why the Bhagavā extolled the practice of the Dhamma. (This is not the negation of the merit of material offerings.)

### **The practice conducive to the attainment of the Supramundane.**

The practice leading to the four *Maggas*, four *Phalas* and *Nibbāna*, the nine supramundane Dhamma, is the highest mode of honouring the Buddha. This practice in accordance with Dhamma, *Dhammānu dhamma paṭipatta* begin with getting established in the Triple Gem and

culminates in the highest-development that marks the change of the worldling into the lineage of the *Ariyas*, *Gotrabhū* the state of mental maturity which is, so to speak, the threshold of *Maggāñāna*.

A bhikkhu who indulges in the six kinds of disrespect (*agāraṇa*), disobeys the rules of bhikkhu conduct, and lives an improper life using the four requisites acquired unlawfully not according to the rules of *Vinaya*, is one who does not practice in accordance with the Dhamma. The bhikkhu who meticulously obeys every rule prescribed as bhikkhu conduct is one who practises in accordance with the Dhamma. These observations apply equally to bhikkhunis.

As for lay disciples, he who is in the habit of breaking the five precepts, (such as killing), also-known as 'the five *veras*' because non-observance of these precepts are inimical to one's own true interest; and who indulges in the ten courses of evil action, is called one who does not practise according to the Dhamma. The lay-disciple who is well established in the Triple Gem, who observes the five precepts, the ten precepts, who keeps fasting-day precepts on four fasting days and four days prior to them, who is in the habit of giving charity, who makes offerings of fragrant flowers to the Triple Gem, who looks after his parents and ministers to the needs of men of virtue - that man is called a lay-disciple who practises in accordance with the Dhamma. These observations apply equally to lay female lay disciples.

Honouring the Bhagavā by honouring the Dhammā *Dhammānu dhamma paṭipatta* is also called *nirāmisa pūjā*. This kind of doing honour to the Bhagavā alone contributes to the perpetuation of the Teaching. So long as the four categories of the Buddha's disciples - bhikkhus, bhikkhunis, lay male-disciples and lay female-disciples - are doing honour in this way the Teaching will shine forth like the full moon in the clear sky.)

### The Venerable Upavāṇa.

At that time the Venerable Upavāṇa was standing in front of the Bhagavā, fanning him. Then the Bhagavā said to the Venerable Upavāṇa, "Move away, bhikkhu, do not stand in front of me." The

Venerable Upavāṇa obeyed without delay, dropped the palm-leaf fan there, and stood at a suitable place.

Thereupon it occurred to the Venerable Ānandā thus: "This Venerable Upavāṇa had for a long time (during the first twenty years of the Bhagava's Buddhahood) been a close attendant on the Bhagavā, and yet at this period of his passing away the Bhagavā caused him to move aside, saying, "Move away, bhikkhu, do not stand in front of me." What might be the reason for the Bhagavā in doing so?" Therefore the Venerable Ānandā asked the Bhagavā:

"Venerable Sir, this Venerable Upavāṇa had for a long time been a close attendant on the Bhagavā, and yet at this period of the Bhagava's passing away the Bhagavā caused him to move aside with the words, 'Move away, bhikkhu, do not stand in front of me.' What is the reason for the Bhagavā in doing so?"

Then the Bhagavā, wishing to clear away from Ānanda's mind any idea of bhikkhu Upavāṇa being at fault and to make it clear that the Venerable Upvāṇa was not at fault, explained to him thus:

"Ānandā, (with the exception of the Asaññasatta Brahmas and Brahmas of the Non-material sphere) most of the devas and Brahmas of ten world-systems are gathered here at Kusināgara to see the Tathāgata. There is not within twelve *yojanas* in and around this Sal grove, a single space about the breadth of a tail hair (of a mountain goat) that remains unoccupied by powerful deva. [a]

"Ānandā, the devas are murmuring against Upavāṇa thus: 'We have come from afar to see the Tathāgata. It is only rarely that the Homage-worthy, Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddhas arise in the world. And tonight, in the third watch of the night, the Tathāgata is due to pass away. This powerful bhikkhu standing in front of the Bhagavā is obstructing our view. Alas, we are going to miss the chance of seeing the Tathāgata at his last hour.' This is the reason why I had asked bhikkhu Upavāṇa to step aside." [b]

(A note of explanation:—

*TINI*

[a] Within the space close to the Bhagavā, devas and Brahmas in their subtle corporeality in groups of ten each, occupied units of space which were a tail-hair in breadth. Beyond those groups of devas are brahmas, there were groups of devas and brahmas in groups of twenty each occupying space of the same breadth. And beyond those groups were similar arrangement of space occupancy with groups of thirty, forty, fifty and sixty devas and Brahmas. Even though tightly spaced, there was no deva or Brahma who got in the way of another either bodily or in their costumes; no one needed to ask another to clear the way for him or for her.

[b] Upavāṇa was a person of extra large size, about the size of an elephant calf. Moreover, he was wearing dust-rag robes, *paṇsakū*, which added to his bulk. So he was making an obstruction of himself by standing in front of the Bhagavā, a genuine cause of complaint on the part of the devas and Brahmas. It might be asked, "Did not the devas and Brahmas have power to see through the bhikkhu?" The answer is "No, they did not have." For although devas and Brahmas can see through a worldling, they cannot see through an Arahāt. The Venerable Upavāṇa was not only an Arahāt but a person of unique powers so that people could not come too close to him.

The cause and condition for the extraordinary powers of the Venerable Upavāṇa even amongst the Arahats was that he had been a guardian spirit at the shrine set up in honour of Kassapa Buddha.)

### The Guardian spirit of the shrine.

Ninety-one aeons or *kappas* before the advent of Gotama Buddha, Vipassī Buddha passed away leaving behind a single relic, a mass of golden hue. (It is customary for the Buddhas who appear during the human life-span of thousands of years to leave behind a single piece of relic at their passing away, which is enshrined by the people.) The people of those times built a shrine to house the relic a *yojanā* high,

with golden coloured bricks measuring one cubit by half cubit, two fingers' breadth thick. For cement they used crystal stone powder (used for eye lotion) mixed in sessamum oil.

In the construction of the shrine the devas belonging to terrestrial abodes raised a further *yojanā* above the shrine built by human beings, which was further raised by another *yojanā* by the devas of celestial abodes. Above that height the *Unhavalāhaka* devas, the *Abbhavalāhaka* devas, the devas of *Catumahārāja* realm and the devas of *Tāvatisā* realm added a *yajanā* respectively to the structure so that altogether the shrine in commemoration of Vipassī Buddha that encased a single piece of the Buddha-relic was seven *yojanas* in height.

When people came to that shrine to make offerings of flowers and other things the guardian spirit of the shrine took over the offerings and placed them suitably before the shrine even in the presence of the donors.

At that time in his previous existence, bhikkhu elder Upavāṇa was born as a wealthy brahmin. He came to the shrine to make an offering of golden-hued piece of cloth as a token of a robe for the Buddha. The guardian spirit placed the cloth beautifully at the shrine which pleased the brahmin donor greatly and who uttered his wish that in future he be reborn as a guardian spirit to a Buddha-shrine of this kind. At his death he was reborn in the deva realm.

During the time the future Upavāṇa was being reborn by turns in the deva loka and the human world, Kassapa Buddha had appeared in the world. When Kassapa Buddha passed away, the prevailing human life-span being immense (twenty-thousand years), only a single piece of Buddha-relic remained. This relic was treasured in a shrine one *yojanā* in diameter and in height. The future-Upavāṇa at that time became the guardian spirit of the shrine. After passing away from that life he was born in the deva realm again. At the time of Gotama Buddha he was reborn in a noble family, renounced householder's life leaving behind his wife and children, and became an *Arahat*.



Thus the cause and condition for Upavāṇa's extraordinary powers even among *Arahats* was that he had been a guardian spirit at the shrine erected in commemoration of Kassapa Buddha.

After the Bhagavā had thus explained to the Venerable Ānandā that the Venerable Upavāṇa was told to move aside in the crowd not because he was at fault but only to satisfy the devas, the Venerable Ānandā said to the Bhagavā: "Venerable Sir, what is the Bhagava's assessment of the state of mind that is present in the devas and brahmas?" (By this the Venerable Ānandā was enquiring how far the devas and Brahmas were able to bear the grief at the impending Buddha's decease.) The Bhagavā told Ānandā that the devas and brahmas were in a state of despondency thus:

"Ānandā, the devas who choose to remain in the air and are standing there (as if there was firm ground to stand on, having transformed the sky into firm ground by their divine power,) are wailing with dishevelled hair, their arms upraised; they fling themselves down, rolling (on the fancied ground) in all directions, all the while lamenting, "All too soon is the Bhagavā going to realize *parinibbāna*! All too soon is the Well-Spoken. One going to realize *parinibbāna*! All too soon is the Possessor of the Eye of Wisdom going to vanish from the world!"

"Ānandā, the devas who choose to remain on the earth and are standing on the ground (transforming the natural earth into supportable ground for their bodies of subtle corporeality) are wailing with dishevelled hair, their arms upraised; they fling themselves down, rolling in all directions, all the while lamenting, "All too soon is the Bhagavā going to realize *parinibbāna*! All too soon is the Well-Spoken one going to realize *parinibbāna*! All too soon is the Possessor of the Eye of Wisdom going to vanish from the world!"

"But those devas who are free from sensual attachment can bear it with fortitude in the keen contemplation 'that all conditioned things are impermanent by nature. And hence, how would it be possible to find any permanence in this conditioned nature?'"

(The devas' bodies are composed of subtle corporeality. The texture of the natural earth cannot support them; if they were to stand on it their bodies would seep into the earth like a lump of butter. On a certain occasion a Brahma named Hatthaka came to the Bhagavā and as he tried to stand there his body seeped into the earth. The Bhagavā had to remind him to transform his body into a gross kind of corporeality to be able to remain solid on the ground. The same situation holds true with devas. That was why the devas in this context needed to transform the natural earth to suit their subtle corporeality so that it became possible for them to roll on it.)

#### **Four places that inspire emotional religious awakening.**

Then the Venerable Ānandā said to the Bhagavā: "Venerable Sir, it was customary for bhikkhus who had ended the rains - retreat period in various parts of the land to pay homage to the Bhagavā. We used to have the privilege of meeting and honouring these bhikkhus whose presence inspired us. But, Venerable Sir, now that the Bhagavā would be no more, we shall not get the privilege of meeting these inspiring bhikkhus."

In the days of the Bhagavā, bhikkhus came to see the Bhagavā twice a year - before the rains - retreat period began and at the end of the rains-retreat period. They came to the Bhagavā before going into rains-retreat to learn the meditation method, and at the end of the rains-retreat period to report to the Bhagavā their attainments such as *Magga Phala*. In Sri Lankā also, as in the days of the Bhagavā bhikkhus used to assemble twice each year, before and after the rains-retreat period. Bhikkhus on this shore assembled at the Lohapāsāda Pinnacled Hall while bhikkhus on yonder shore (i.e., on the Mahāgāma side) assembled at the Tissa monastery donated by King Kākaṇṇatissa. Of those two groups, bhikkhus on this shore at the beginning of the rains-retreat period assembled at the Great Monastery (Mahāvihāra), bringing with them brooms and garbage-collecting baskets, where they carried out maintenance works to the Mahācetiya (the Great Shrine) such as mending the masonry work, white-washing, etc. Before they dispersed to the various places of their choice to pass

the rains-retreat period, after having finished their cleaning up operations, they agreed to meet at the end of the rains-retreat period at the Lohapāsāda Pinnacled Hall. At the end of the rains-retreat period they assembled again at the Lohapāsāda Pinnacled Hall where the Five Collections (*Nikāya*) of the Buddha's teachings were taught by the bhikkhu elders and recited by the students. Some bhikkhus attended the *Pāli* text sessions while others attended the *Aṭṭhakathā* sessions. Whenever the texts or the *Aṭṭhakathā* were wrongly recited, the teachers would ask the student where (under which teacher) he had learned it, and correct it. The same functions also took place on the yonder shore (i.e. on the Mahāgāna side) at the Tissa monastery.

Here the Venerable Ānandā was referring to these biannual functions that were customary during the Bhagava's times.

The Venerable Ānandā was careful in the observance of religious and social duties towards fellow-bhikkhus. Whenever he saw a bhikkhu elder come, he rose from his seat to welcome him. He would relieve the guest of the umbrella, alms-bowl and great robe and offer a seat to the senior bhikkhu. He would then sit down, make obeisance to the bhikkhu elder, and find a suitable lodging place for the visitor, and clean it up for occupation. Whenever he saw a bhikkhu of senior standing arrive also, he would welcome him, ask after his needs and render every possible help to him. It was because Ānandā was always desirous of being a useful, helpful and respectful bhikkhu to every other bhikkhu. This was his usual way, and hence he expressed his concern about the matter in the above words.

The Bhagavā knew how the Venerable Ānandā was feeling: "Ānandā is concerned about losing the usual privilege of seeing and knowing bhikkhus who are inspiring. Now I shall point out to him those places where he can see such bhikkhus easily by just staying there himself. And he said to the Venerable Ānandā:

"Ānandā, there are four places which are worthy of pilgrimage for persons with devotion to the Triple Gem which will inspire in them an emotional religious awakening. These are:

- (i) Ānandā, the Lumbinī Sal grove is one such place. A person of devotion, visiting there, reflects, "This is the place where the Tathāgata was born," and this reflection will inspire in him an emotional religious awakening; hence it is a place worthy of pilgrimage.
- (ii) Ānandā, the Mahābodhi, the Great Tree of Enlightenment, is another such place. A person of devotion, visiting there reflects, "This is the place where the Tathāgata attained Supremely Perfect-Enlightenment," and this reflection will inspire in him, an emotional religious awakening; hence it is a place worthy of pilgrimage.
- (iii) Ānandā, the Migadāvana forest is another such place. A person of devotion visiting there, reflects, 'This is the place where the Tathāgata set the Supreme Wheel of Truth turning; and this reflection will inspire in him an emotional religious awakening; hence it is a place worthy of pilgrimage.
- (iv) Ānandā, Kusināgara is another such place. A person of devotion visiting there, reflects, 'This is the place where the Tathāgata realized *parinibbāna*, the Ultimate Peace having passed away without leaving any trace of the five aggregates;' and this reflection will inspire in him an emotional religious awakening; hence it is a place worthy of pilgrimage.

"Ānandā, these are four places which are worthy of pilgrimage for person with devotion to the Triple Gem which will inspire in them an emotional religious awakening.

"And, Ānandā, there will come to these four places bhikkhus, bhikkhunis, lay-disciples and female lay-disciples who are devoted to the Triple Gem, reflecting, '(i) this (sacred place of) Lumbinī is the place where the Tathāgata was born; (ii) this (sacred place of) Mahābodhi is the place where the Tathāgata attained Supremely Perfect Enlightenment: (iii) this (sacred place of) Migadāvana is the place where the Tathāgata set the Supreme Wheel of Truth turning;' and (iv)

this (sacred place of) Kusināgara is the place where the Tathāgata realized *parinibbāna*, the Ultimate Peace, having passed away without leaving any trace of the five aggregates.' Ānandā, all those pilgrims, if they should die with devotion in their hearts while on pilgrimage to these four sacred places or shrines will, after their death and dissolution of the body, be bound for the fortunate destination; they will be reborn in the deva realm."

### The Venerable Ānanda's Questions.

Then the Venerable Ānandā put a series of questions to which the Bhagavā answered in detail.

"Venerable Sir, (asked Ānandā), how should we conduct ourselves with regard to women?"

(The Bhagavā replied:) "Not seeing them, Ānandā."

(Hence the best way, the Bhagavā says, is not to see any woman. That indeed is so. For if a bhikkhu stays with closed doors and windows inside the monastery, and if a woman were to appear at the door, there is no idea in him of attachment to the woman so long as he does not see her. But when he sees her, some thought of desire comes into his mind, the mind is agitated. That is why the Bhagavā says it is best for a bhikkhu not to see a woman.)

"Venerable Sir (asked Ānandā), if we should (unavoidably) see them, what should we do?"

"Do not speak to them, Ānandā."

"(On going for alms-collection in the mornings, women devotees usually come to offer alms-food. They will have to be seen by bhikkhus. In such a case, the Bhagavā says, "Consider the woman as if she were a fierce man with a sharp knife in his hand who says to you, 'if you dare to speak to me I will cut off your head;' or as an ogre who says to you, 'If you speak to me I will devour you.' Consider that if you were to speak to the fierce man or to the ogre your life is at stake for the present life only whereas if you were to speak to the woman whom you are obliged to see, you are liable to fall to the four miserable states. If a bhikkhu were to enter into conversation with a woman there occurs

familiarity. When there is familiarity, attachment arises. When the bhikkhu's mind becomes attached to a woman his morality is spoiled and it leads him to the four miserable states. That is why the Bhagavā says, "Do not speak to them.")

"Venerable Sir, if we have occasion to speak to them what should we do?"

"Ānandā, consider the woman to be your mother, or sister, etc., (as the case may be), and be mindful."

(A bhikkhu will on occasion be obliged to talk to a woman. She might want to know the day (regarding fasting days), or she might ask to have the precepts administered, or she might request a sermon, or she might like a doctrinal point cleared. On such occasions it is quite inadvisable for a bhikkhu to remain silent, lest he should be taken as a dumb bhikkhu or a dullard. If perforce a bhikkhu is obliged to talk to a woman, he should regard her as his own mother if the woman is of the age of his mother, or as his own sister if she is of the age of his sister, or as his own daughter if she is of the age of a daughter to him. See *Salāyatana Vagga Samyutta*, 3. *Gahapati Vagga*; 4. *Bhāradvāja Sutta* )

"Venerable Sir, after the Bhagavā has passed away, how should we perform as regards the remains of the Tathāgata?"

'Ānandā, do not trouble yourselves about doing honour to the remains of the Tathāgata. I exhort you, Ānandā, devote yourselves to the Noble Practice. Strive in all earnest without negligence, directing your mind towards Nibbāna. Ānandā, wise nobles, wise brahmins and wise householders are there, in deepest devotion to the Tathāgata, who will see to the task of doing honour to the remains of the Tathāgata.

"Venerable Sir, in what manner should those wise nobles, wise brahmins and wise householders perform regarding the remains of the Tathāgata?" (by this Ānandā means to say that those wise nobles, etc. would certainly be seeking advice from himself as regards the funeral rites, and so he wants to have a broad suggestion from the Bhagavā in the matter).

"Ānandā, it should be performed as in the case of treating the remains of a Universal Monarch."

"Venerable Sir, what is the procedure in the case of treating the remains of a Universal Monarch?"

"Ānandā, (the procedure is this:) the body of a Universal Monarch, (after his decease) is wrapped up in new cloth made in the province of Kāsi. Over that wrapping there should be a wrapping of carded cotton-wool (because cloth made in Kāsi is too fine to absorb oil and only cotton wool can absorb oil) Over the cottonwool wrapping there should be another layer of wrapping with new cloth made in Kāsi. Then another layer of wrapping with cotton wool should be made. In this way the body of the Universal Monarch is wrapped up in five hundred pairs of pieces of cloth in successive layers of cloth and cotton wool. Then it is placed in an oil vat wrought with gold, and covered with a lid wrought with gold. Then it is placed upon a funeral pyre built of various kinds of scented wood and the body of the Universal Monarch is cremated. Then they put up a shrine to the memory of the Universal Monarch at the junction of four highways. Ānandā, this is the procedure in performing in the case of the remains of a Universal Monarch."

### **Stupa in honour of the Buddha.**

"Ānandā, as is the procedure followed with regard to the relics of a Universal Monarch, so also should the procedure be followed with regard to the relics of the Tathāgata. A stupa to the honour of the Tathāgata should be erected at the junction of the four highways. People will make offerings of flowers or incense or scented powder, or pay homage, or will reflect on the Buddha's greatness in front of the stupa, and for such acts of devotion, those people will enjoy benefit and happiness for a long time.

### Four classes of persons worthy of a Stupa.

"Ānandā, there are four types or classes of persons who are worthy of honouring by a stupa to their memory. They are

- (i) A Tathāgata, the Homage-worthy, and Perfectly Self-Enlightened, is worthy of a stupa;
- (ii) A Paccekabuddhā is worthy of a stupa;
- (iii) An Ariya disciple of a Tathāgata is worthy of a stupa;
- (iv) A Universal Monarch is worthy of a stupa.

"Ānandā, on account of what special benefit is a the Tathāgata, the Homage-worthy, Perfectly self-enlightened, worthy of a stupa? Ānandā, a stupa in honour of a Tathāgata arouses in the pilgrims who visit there a keen sense of devotion, in the reverential thought, 'This stupa is a shrine to the memory of the Homage-Worthy, Perfectly self-enlightened Buddha.' Having reverentially recalled the memory of the Tathāgata there, after the death and dissolution of their body those pilgrims will be bound for fortunate destinations, they will be reborn in the deva realm. Ānandā, it is on account of this special benefit that a Tathāgata, Homage-worthy, Perfectly Self-enlightened, is worthy of a stupa.

"Ānandā, on account of what special benefit is a Paccekabuddhā worthy of a stupa? Ānandā, a stupa in honour of a Paccekabuddhā arouses in the pilgrims who visit there a keen sense of devotion, in the reverential thought, 'This stupa is a shrine to the memory of a Paccekabuddhā who discovered the four Ariya Truths by himself (without the guidance of any Teacher); Having reverentially recalled the memory of the Paccekabuddhā there, after the death and dissolution of their body, those pilgrims will be bound for fortunate destinations; they will be reborn in the deva realm. Ānandā, it is on account of this special benefit that a Paccekabuddhā is worthy of a stupa."



"Ānandā, on account of what special benefit is an *Ariya* disciple worthy of a stupa? Ānandā, a stupa in honour of an *Ariya* disciple arouses in the pilgrims who visit there a keen sense of devotion, in the reverential thought, 'This stupa is a shrine to the memory of an *Ariya* disciple of the Homage-worthy, Perfectly Self-enlightened Buddha.' Having reverentially recalled the memory of the *Ariya* disciple there, after the death and dissolution of their body, those pilgrims will be bound for fortunate destinations; they will be reborn in the deva realm. Ānandā it is on account of this special benefit that an *Ariya* disciple is worthy of a stupa."

"Ānandā, on account of what special benefit is a Universal Monarch worthy of a stupa? Ānandā, a stupa in honour of a Universal Monarch arouses in the pilgrims who visit there a keen sense of devotion, in the reverential thought, 'This stupa is a shrine to the memory of a Universal Monarch who lived (and ruled) by righteousness.' Having reverentially recalled the memory of the Universal Monarch there, after the death and dissolution of their bodies, those pilgrims will be bound for fortunate destinations; they will be reborn in the deva world. Ānandā, it is on account of this special benefit that a Universal Monarch is worthy of a stupa."

"Ānandā, these are the four types or classes of persons who are worthy of a stupa."

These were the questions put by the Venerable Ānandā and the detailed answers by the Bhagavā.

(In this connection, it might be asked, "Why is a Universal Monarch who lives and dies a lay person entitled to a stupa whereas a bhikkhu, though yet a worldling, who is possessed of virtue, not so entitled?")

The answer is the Bhagavā did not allow a stupa raised in honour of a virtuous bhikkhu who is still a worldling because that would be too commonplace. For if virtuous bhikkhus were declared by the Bhagavā as entitled to a stupa, even in Sri Laukā alone a great many stupas could be raised so that these shrines would be uninteresting A

Universal Monarch is a very rare personage and a stupa built in his honour will be awe-inspiring. However, although a virtuous bhikkhu who is a worldling is not entitled to a stupa he is entitled to funeral rites on the same scales as the honour that is accorded to an Arahāt at his *parinibbāna*.)

### The Noble Qualities of the Venerable Ānandā.

After the Bhagavā had given detailed answers to the Venerable Ānanda's queries, the Venerable Ānandā thought to himself :

"The Bhagavā has discoursed to me on the four places which inspire emotional religious awakening, and the benefits arising from pilgrimage to these places; he has answered to me about bhikkhu conduct regarding women; he has detailed to me the procedure about performing the last rites in honour of the Tathāgata; and he has explained to me about the four classes of persons worthy of a stupa. And just today the Tathāgata is going to realize *parinibbāna*."

These thoughts made him miserable. He felt like crying but, remembering that it would not be proper to make the Bhagavā unpleasant if he were to cry out near the Bhagavā, he retired into the assembly chamber and leaning against the door-post, he wailed, "I am still training myself for the three higher *Maggas*, and my teacher who has been so compassionate to me, is about to pass away."

Then the Bhagavā asked the bhikkhus, "Bhikkhus, where is Ānandā?"

"Venerable Sir, the bhikkhus replied, "The Venerable Ānandā has gone into the pavillion and leaning against the door-post, he wailed, "I am still training myself for the three higher *Maggas*, and my Teacher who has been so compassionate to me, is about to pass away!"

Then the Bhagavā said to a bhikkhu, "Go, bhikkhu, say to Ānandā in my words : 'Friend Ānandā, the teacher calls you'"

Responding to that bhikkhu's message, the Venerable Ānandā went to the Bhagavā and (making obeisance to the Bhagavā,) sat in a suitable place. To the Venerable Ānandā sitting there, the Bhagavā said, "Enough Ānandā, do not grieve, nor weep. Have I not previously told

you that it is in the very nature of things most near and dear to us that one must part with them somehow even while we are living, or when death divides us, or when we are of different planes of existence? Ānandā, in this matter, how could one expect anything that has the nature of arising, of appearing, of being conditioned, and of dissolution, not to disintegrate? It is not possible for anyone to wish so.

"For a long time, Ānandā, you have attended upon the Tathāgata faithfully whether in his presence or outside, with infinite kindness in deed, with the welfare and happiness of the Tathāgata at heart; faithfully whether in his presence or outside, with infinite kindness in words with the welfare and happiness of the Tathāgata at heart, faithfully whether in his presence or outside, with infinite kindness in thought, with the welfare and benefit of the Tathāgata at heart. Ānandā, you have earned much merit. Apply yourself to the task of Insight meditation, and you will soon attain Arahatsip."

Thus said the Bhagavā to console the Venerable Ānandā.

(Ānanda's personal service to the Bhagavā with infinite kindness in deed included all bodily activities such as preparing the water and toothbrushes for the Bhagava's morning ablutions. His infinite kindness in words included all courteous, respectful communication with the Bhagavā such as answering, "Venerable Sir, it is time for the Bhagavā to wash his face, etc." Taken in another sense, it also included words of appreciation and gladness on hearing the Bhagava's admonition. Infinite kindness in thought means after rising early and had had personal cleanliness attended to, Ānandā would sit in a secluded corner and wish the Bhagavā well: "May the Bhagavā be free from ailments, may he be free from harm, may he be at ease physically and mentally.")

Then, as if a strong man were to spread out the great earth that got folded somewhere, or as if a strong man were to stretch out the sky that got wrinkled, or as if a strong man were to push downwards Mount Cakkavalā which is a hundred and sixty-four thousand *Yojanas* high, or as if a strong man were to lift up Mount Meru which is a hundred and sixty-eight thousand *Yojanas* high, or as if a strong man were to shake up at its stem the Jambu Tree (Rose Apple Tree) which is a hundred *Yojanas* high and a hundred *Yojanas* wide to incite wonder

in the hearts of his audience, regarding the meritorious qualities of the Venerable Ānandā, the Bhagavā spoke thus to the bhikkhus.

"Bhikkhus, the attendant bhikkhus of the Homage - worthy, Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddhas of the past were as accomplished and devoted as my attendant Ānandā.

"Bhikkhus, the attendant bhikkhus of the Homage-worthy, Perfectly Self-enlightened Buddhas of the future will be as accomplished and devoted as my attendant Ānandā.

"Bhikkhus, Ānandā is wise and intelligent. He knows:" This is the proper time for the bhikkhus to approach and see the Tathāgata, or this is the proper time for the bhikkhunis to approach and see the Tathāgata, or this is the proper time for the lay male-disciple to approach and see the Tathāgata, or this is the proper time for lay female-disciples to approach and see the Tathāgata, or this is the proper time for the king, the king's ministers, or the teachers of other faiths or their adherents to approach and see the Tathāgata.

(Note that the Bhagavā does not say anything about other Buddhas of the present time because in no other world-system was another Buddha of Infinite attributes in existence.)

#### **Four Marvellous Qualities of Ānandā.**

"Bhikkhus, Ānandā has four marvellous and astounding qualities, they are:

- (i) If, bhikkhus, a company of bhikkhus should come to see Ānandā, they are gladdened by seeing him. If Ānandā should give them a discourse on the Doctrine, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, bhikkhus, at the end of his discourse, Ānandā remains silent, the company of bhikkhus is still unsatiated: (this is one marvellous quality)
- (ii) If, bhikkhus a company of bhikkhunis should come to see Ānandā, they are gladdened by seeing him. If Ānandā, should give them a discourse on the Doctrine, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, bhikkhus, at the end of his discourse,

Ānandā remains silent, the company of bhikkhunis is still unsatiated. (This is another marvellous quality)

(iii) If, bhikkhus, a company of lay male-disciples should come to see Ānandā, they are gladdened by seeing him. Ānandā should give them a discourse on the Doctrine, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, bhikkhus, at the end of the discourse, Ānandā remains silent, the company of lay male-disciples is still unsatiated. (This is another marvellous quality)

(iv) If, bhikkhus, a company of lay female-disciples should come to see Ānandā, they are gladdened by seeing him. If Ānandā should give them a discourse on the Doctrine, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of his discourse, Ānandā remains silent, the company of lay female-disciples is still unsatiated. (This is another marvellous quality.)

"Bhikkhus, these are the four marvellous and astounding qualities in Ānandā.

(All the four categories of disciples who came to see the Bhagavā came to the Venerable Ānandā. Many came to see him because Ānandā had a reputation of being absolutely dignified in bearing, pleasing in appearance, of wide learning, and was the pride of the Sangha. When they saw him in person they were gladdened because all the good things they had heard about Ānandā were found to be true. Ānandā would give a discourse fitting to each category of disciple. His talk was mostly courteous exchange of personal interest. To a company of bhikkhus he would ask, "Friends, are you doing well in health? Are you able to apply yourselves to the bhikkhu practice with proper attention? Are you able to do your duties towards your preceptors?" To a company of bhikkhunis he would ask, "Sister, do you observe well the eight weighty rules, *garudhamma*?" To lay male-disciples who came to see him, he would not ask such trite questions as "Donors, how is your headache? How is your stomach functioning now? How are your children or relatives doing in health? (etc.)" Rather, he would ask: "Donors, do you remain firmly committed to the Triple Gem? Do you observe the five precepts well? Do you keep fasting day precepts on eighth days each month? Do you look after your parents? Do you

minister to the needs of virtuous samanas and brahmanas?" These words that bhikkhus are obliged to say to those who come and see are the usual words that the Venerable Ānandā used when lay-disciples came to see him. With lay female-disciples also, Ānanda's courteous words are of the same nature.)

#### Four Marvellous Qualities of a Universal Monarch.

Bhikkhus, a Universal Monarch has four marvellous and astounding qualities, They are:

- (i) If, bhikkhus, a company of the ruling class should come to see the Universal Monarch, they are gladdened by the sight of him. If the Universal Monarch should give them a discourse, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of his discourse, the Universal Monarch remains silent, the company of the ruling class is still unsatiated. (This is one marvellous quality).
- (ii) If, bhikkhus, a company of brahmins . . . . p
- (iii) If, bhikkhus, a company of rich householders . . . p
- (iv) If, bhikkhus, a company of recluses should come to see the Universal Monarch, they are gladdened by the sight of him. If the Universal Monarch should give them a discourse, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of the discourse, the Universal Monarch remains silent, the company of recluses is still unsatiated. (This is another marvellous quality)

These are the four marvellous qualities of a Universal men.

"Bhikkhus, in the same way, Ānandā has four marvellous and astounding qualities. They are:

- (i) If, bhikkhus, a company of bhikkhus should come to see Ānandā, they are gladdened by seeing him. If Ānandā should give them a discourse, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of the discourse, Ānandā remains silent, the company of bhikkhus is still unsatiated. (This is one marvelous quality.)
- (ii) If, bhikkhus, a company of bhikkhunis . . . p
- (iii) If, bhikkhus, a company of lay-disciples . . . p

(iv) If, bhikkhus, a company of lay female-disciples should come to see Ānandā, they are gladdened by seeing him. If Ānandā should give them a discourse, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of the discourse, Ānandā remains silent, the company of lay female-disciples is still unsatiated. (This is another marvellous quality.)

Bhikkhus, these are the four marvellous and astounding qualities of Ānandā."

(The Bhagavā in these words compares Ānandā to a Universal Monarch.

The ruling class who come to the Universal Monarch includes both crowned kings as well as uncrowned kings. They come to see him because they have heard the good reputation of the Universal Monarch, such that, "The Universal Monarch is attractive and dignified in appearance, that he roams his realms by air to administer peace and justice, and that he rules by justice (alone). And when they see him in person they are gladdened because all the good things they have heard about the Universal Monarch are found to be true.

When the ruling class come to him, the Universal Monarch would ask them, "How is it, friends, do you abide by the ten points of kingly conduct? Do you protect and preserve the time honoured traditions of ancient rulers?" To the Brahmin visitors he would ask, "How is it, masters, do you teach the Vedas? Do the close pupils of yours learn the Vedas? Are you being honoured with sacrifices, are you being offered with new cloth, with milk-cows of variegated colours?" To the rich house holders who come to him he would ask, "How is it, O men, are you free from oppression by the rulers with unjust sentences or unjust taxes? Do you get regular rainfall? Are your harvests bountiful? To the recluses who come to him he would ask, "How is it, recluses, are you being offered your requisites without stint? Are you arduous in your religious undertakings?"

### The Bhagava discoursed on the Mahāsudassana Sutta.

After the Bhagavā had extolled the virtues of the Venerable Ānandā, the Venerable Ānandā said to the Bhagavā: "Venerable Sir, pray do not realize *parinibbāna* in this insignificant small town (Kusināgara). Venerable Sir, there are many other great cities such as Campā, Rājagaha, Sāvatti, Sāketa, Kosambī and Bārānasī. Let the Bhagavā realize *parinibbāna* in one of them. In these great cities there are many rich nobles, many rich brahmins and many rich householders who are devoted to the Tathāgata. They will carry out the task of honouring the relics of the Tathāgata.

"Do not say so, Ānandā Do not say, 'This insignificant small town', Ānandā."

"Ānandā, as it happened in the long, long past, there was a king called Mahāsudassana, a Universal Monarch, a Righteous Ruler over the four quarters of the earth, i.e., the four Island Continents bounded by four oceans, conqueror of all enemies, holding unchallenged sway over his territory, and endowed with the seven Treasures, the customary boon of the Universal Monarch. And Ānandā, this Kusināgara town was then king Sudassana's capital city named Kusāvati. From east to west it was twelve *Yojanas* long, and from north to south it was seven *Yojanas* broad.

"Ānandā, the capital city of Kusavati was prosperous and flourishing, populous and thronging with all sorts of people, and well provisioned. Just as, Ānandā, the celestial city of Ālakamandā, the seat of King Vessavaṇṇa (of the Four Great Kings) was prosperous and flourishing, populous with devas and thronging with all sorts of Yakkhas, and well provisioned, so, Ānandā, the capital city of Kusāvati was prosperous and flourishing, populous and thronging with all sorts of people and well-provisioned.

"The capital city of Kusāvati, Ānandā, was never silent by day or by night, (resounding) with ten sounds, namely, the noise of elephants, of horses, of carriages, the sound of big drums, of tabors, of lutes, of singing, of conches, of music-beats (with little gongs and cymbals), and of cries of "Eat, ye, drink, and chew."



(The ten sounds signify the peace and prosperity of Kusāvati. In some other towns, instead of the ten sounds, there were unpleasant sounds such as, "Dispose of the garbage, bring pick axes, bring baskets; or let us move to some other place, bring provisions, bring cooked meals; or make ready your shields and weapons, prepare yourselves for war! But in Kusāvati, such unpleasant sounds were never heard. Only pleasant welcome sounds of invitation to feasts and festivals were heard there.)

The Bhagavā discoursed on Kusāvati royal city beginning with, "Ānandā, the royal city of Kusāvati was surrounded by seven rings of fortifications, etc.", which, lasted for two recitals at the Synod (See *Dīgha Nikāya Mahāvagga*). Having concluded this long discourse on the grandeur of Kusāvati, the Bhagavā said to the Venerable Ānandā,

'Go you, Ānandā, enter Kusināra and announce to the Malla princes of Kusināra, "O Vāsetṭhas (Clan name of Mallas), tonight, in the third watch of the night, the *parinibbāna* of the *Tathāgata* will take place. Come, Vāsetṭhas, come! Do not let yourselves regret later with the thought, "The Tathāgata passed away in our territory, and yet we failed to take the opportunity of paying our respect at his last hour."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," assented the Venerable Ānandā, and went into Kusināra with a bhikkhu companion.

(In this connection, it might be asked, "Did the Malla princes not know about the arrival of the Bhagavā at Kusināra?" The answer is: "They knew it, of course". For wherever the Bhagavā went there always were some devas who were devoted to the Bhagavā and lay disciples, heralding the glad tidings that resounded in the neighborhood. On the particular evening the Malla princes were engaged in a meeting so that they could not go and see the Bhagavā on arrival. The Bhagavā sent Ānandā at that late hour because there was no monastery built for the Bhagavā in the Sal grove, and the Malla princes would have to provide shelter for the big company of Bhikkhus there. There was also the consideration that the Malla princes might, if not informed at that late hour, feel sad later that they had no news of the Bhagavā at his last moments.)

### The Malla Princes pay their last respects to the Bhagavā.

When the Venerable Ānandā got into the city of Kusināra the Malla princes were holding a meeting on a certain business at the Council Hall. The Venerable Ānandā went up to them and announced, as detailed by the Bhagavā :

"O Vāsetṭhas, tonight, in the third watch of the night, the *parinibbāna* of the Tathāgata will take place. Come, Vāsetṭhas, come! Do not let yourselves regret later with the thought, 'The Tathāgata passed away in our territory, and yet we failed to take the opportunity of paying our respect at his last hour.'"

On hearing the message brought by the Venerable Ānandā, the Malla princes, their sons and daughters, their daughters-in-law, and their wives were grief-stricken and sick at heart, and wailed, their hair dishevelled, their arms upraised; they flung themselves down rolling (on the floor) in all directions, all the while lamenting, 'All too soon is the Bhagava going to realize *parinibbāna*! All too soon is the Well-spoken One going to realize *parinibbāna*! All too soon is the Possessor of the Eye of Wisdom going to vanish from the world!'

Then the Malla princes, their sons and daughters, their daughters-in-law and their wives were grief-stricken and sick at heart, and they went to the Sal grove where they approached the Venerable Ānandā. Then it occurred to the Venerable Ānandā thus :

"If I were to let the Mallas of Kusināra pay homage to the Bhagavā one by one, the night will have passed into dawn before all of them had finished. It would be well if I should group them together in families and cause them, family wise, to pay homage to the Bhagavā, announcing, 'Venerable Sir, the Malla prince named such and such with children, wife, ministers and retinue, pays homage at the feet of the Bhagavā.'"

Accordingly, the Venerable Ānandā grouped the Mallas of Kusināra in families and caused them family-wise, to pay homage to the Bhagavā, announcing, "Venerable Sir, the Malla prince named such and such, with children, wife, ministers, and retinue, pays homage at the

Mallas of Kusināra to pay homage to the Bhagavā, finishing even before the end of the first watch of the night.

### The story of Subhadda the wandering ascetic.

At that time Subhadda, a wandering ascetic, was staying at Kusināra. He had heard the news, "Tonight, in the last watch of the night, the *parinibbāna* of the Samaṇa Gotama will take place." Then it occurred to Subhadda, the wandering ascetic thus: "I have heard already wandering ascetic teachers, and teachers of teachers declare that the Homage-worthy, Perfectly Self-Enlightened Tathāgatas arise in the world only once in a very long time. Tonight, in the last watch of the night, the *parinibbāna* of the Tathāgata Samaṇa Gotama will take place. A certain problem, an uncertainty, has arisen in my mind, and I am fully confident that the Samaṇa Gotama will be able to teach the Doctrine to me so that this uncertainty is cleared."

### Subhaddas' previous existence.

(Before we take up the previous existence of Subhadda, the wondering ascetic,) it is useful to know that there are three Subhaddas connected with the life story of Gotama Buddha. There is Subhadda, son of Upaka and Cāpā. And there is Subhadda the bhikkhu who entered the order of bhikkhus after being a householder who after the decease of the Buddha, was one of the company of bhikkhus that accompanied the Venerable Mahā Kassapa from Pāvā to Kusināra, who had the affront to declare that since the Bhagavā was no more, bhikkhus were free to conduct themselves as they pleased. The Subhadda in our story here is a wondering ascetic not a naked ascetic who came of a well known rich brahmin family, who was the last person that got enlightened in the Teaching of Gotama Buddha.

The reason for Subhadda's idea to see the Bhagavā at the eleventh hour may be found in the past merit of Subhadda that had the potential which entitled him to gain enlightenment only at such a late moment.

The peculiar nature of Subhadda's past merit will be discussed now. In one of their previous existences there were two cultivator brothers who were both charitable. But the elder brother had a desire to give in

charity at every stage of the cultivation of paddy which had nine different stages. Thus when the paddy plants were being sown he set apart some of the seeds for giving away in charity, which he cooked and made a '*seed-rice offering*' of them; when the paddy crop began to turn into rice he consulted with his younger brother to extract the milky juice of the formative rice and give away in charity. The idea was not acceptable to the younger brother who said, "Brother, why do you wish to spoil the young rice?"

Thereupon the elder brother, to be able to carry out his desire, divided the field equally with the younger brother and extracted the milky juice of the forming rice from his portion of the field, boiled it with ghee and clear top oil from sessamum, and give away in charity as '*The earliest-stage rice offering*.' When the rice took solid grain shape he pounded it and prepared '*soft rice-flakes offering*'. When it was time for harvesting, he made '*harvesting-time rice offering*'. When bundles of rice plants were made he selected the earliest bound plants into '*bundle-time rice offering*'. When the bundles of rice plants were piled up on the threshing ground he made the rice from the earliest-piled bundles into '*bundledheap rice offering*'. When the threshing of the bundles began he selected the first bundles to be threshed, took the rice and made an offering of '*threshing-time rice offering*'. After the rice grains were collected from the threshing floor and heaped up he selected the earliest samples of the heap and made a '*paddy-heap rice offering*'. When the rice grains were put into the granary he took the earliest samples and made a '*granary-time rice offering*'. In that manner he made rice offerings of rice for every cultivating season.

As for the younger brother, he made his rice offering only after the harvested rice was garnered.

In their last existences the elder brother was reborn as Koṇḍañña in the time of Gotama Buddha. When the Bhagavā viewed the world : "Who would deserve the privilege of hearing the first sermon?" He saw Koṇḍañña who in his previous existence had made nine various offerings of rice for every cultivating season. Therefore Koṇḍañña, (one of the five ascetics) deserved to have the privilege of hearing the first sermon entitled *Dhammacakka pavattana sutta*." Thus Koṇḍañña who

was the first human disciple to see the Dhamma, was called *Añānasi Kondañña* '*Kondañña who has understood*' who became a stream winner along with eighty crores of Brahmans at the end of the first sermon.

As for the younger brother, as the result of making late offerings, the thought of seeing the Buddha came to his mind only at the last hour. (See Commentary on *Digha Nikāya*).

When the time to reap the fruit of his previous merit arrived at last, Subhadda remembered the Buddha. He lost no time to go to the Sal grove. He approached the Venerable *Ānandā* and said:

"O Venerable *Ānandā*, I have heard from elderly wandering ascetics, who are teachers, teachers of teachers, that the Homage-worthy, Perfectly Self-Enlightened Tathāgatas arise in the world only once in a very long time. Tonight, in the last watch of the night, the *parinibbāna* of the Samana Gotama will take place. A certain problem, an uncertainty has arisen in my mind, and I am fully confident that the Samana Gotama will be able to teach the Doctrine to me so that this uncertainty is cleared. O *Ānandā*, pray let me have the chance of seeing the Samana Gotama!"

Thereupon the Venerable *Ānandā* reflected thus: "These ascetics who believe in doctrine other than the Bhagava's Teaching cling to their own views only. If the Bhagavā were to explain to this Subhadda at much length to make him forsake his own view, it would only strain the bodily and vocal energies of the Bhagavā, and Subhadda is not likely to renounce his own view. As it is, the Bhagavā is already weary." So he said, "Friend Subhadda, this is out of the question. The Bhagavā is weary. Do not pester (trouble) him."

At that reply Subhadda the wandering ascetic bethought himself, "The Venerable *Ānandā* is withholding his assent. But one must be patient to get what one wants." And so he said for a second time, "O *Ānandā*, ...." The Venerable *Ānandā* refused again. For a third time Subhadda made his appeal as before. And for a third time the Venerable *Ānandā* refused again.

The Bhagavā overheard the conversation between Subhadda the wandering ascetic and the Venerable Ānandā. Since he had made this exhausting journey to Kusināra for the sake of Subhadda, he called to the Venerable Ānandā: "Ānandā, it is not fitting to stop him. Do not prevent Subhadda from seeing me. Ānandā, let Subhadda have the opportunity to see the Tathāgata. Whatever Subhadda shall ask of me, he will ask for his information, and not for harassing me. When I answer what he asks he will readily understand my answer."

Then the Venerable Ānandā said to Subhadda the wandering ascetic, "Go, friend Subhadda, the Bhagavā has given you permission."

Then Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, approached the Bhagavā and offered courteous greetings to the Bhagavā. After exchanging memorable words of felicitation with Bhagavā, Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, sat down in a suitable place. Then he addressed the Bhagavā thus:

"O Revered Gotama, there are samaṇas and brahmanas who have large following, who have adherent sects, who are leaders of their sects, who are renowned, who are proponents of their own doctrines, and who are held in esteem by many people, to wit, (i) Pūraṇa Kassapa, (ii) Makkhali Goṣāla, (iii) Ajita Kesakambala, (iv) Pakudha Kaccāyana, (v) Sañcaya son of Belaṭṭha, and (vi) Migañṭha, son of Nāṭaputta. Do all of them understand what they maintain as the truth? Or do all of them have no understanding of what they maintain as the truth? Or do some of them understand the truth and some of them do not?"

(Subhadda's question essentially is about Buddhahood. He asks "Revered Sir, do Pūraṇa Kassapa and five other religious leaders who admit themselves to be all-knowing Buddhas, and who are held in high esteem by many people, are really the All-knowing Buddhas? Or are none of them Buddhas? Or are some of them Buddhas while others are not? For if they are really Buddhas the doctrines they preach must lead to liberation from the round of existences. Are all of their doctrines conducive to liberation? Or are none of their doctrines conducive to liberation? Or are some of their doctrines conducive to liberation while others are not?")

Now, the Bhagavas' intention in coming to Kusināra was to discourse on the Doctrine to the Malla princes in the first watch of the night, to discourse on the Doctrine to Subhadda in the middle watch of the night, to give admonition to the bhikkhu Sangha in the third watch of the night, and then to realize *parinibbāna* at the approach of dawn. In that tight schedule, it would be of no benefit to Subhadda to explain to him about whether the doctrines of the six religious leaders were conducive to liberation or not, and there would be no time for such a discussion. Therefore the Bhagavā chose to teach Subhadda the Middle Way as contained in the Ariya Path of Eight Constituents which could lead him to liberation. Accordingly he said:

"Subhadda, do not ask that. Leave aside that question : whether all of those (six religious leaders) know all the truth, whether none of them know all the truth, or whether some of them know all the truth while others do not.

"Subhadda, I shall expound to you the Good Doctrine leading to Nibbāna. Listen and pay careful attention. I shall speak in full.

"Very well, Revered Sir," assented Sabhadda, the wandering ascetic. And the Bhagavā gave this discourse:

"Subhadda, in whatever righteous Teaching, the Ariya Path of eight Constituents is not found, therein there is not found a samāṇa of the first stage, a *Sotapanna* bhikkhu, nor a samāṇa of the second stage, a *Sakadāgāmi* bhikkhu nor a samāṇa of the third stage, *Anāgāmi*, nor a samāṇa of the fourth stage, an *Arahat*.

"Subhadda, in whatever righteous Teaching the Ariya Path of Eight Constituents is found, therein there is found a samāṇa of the first stage, a *Sotapanna*, a samāṇa of the second stage, a *Sakadāgāmi*, a Samāṇa of the third stage, an *Anāgāmi*, a samāṇa of the fourth stage, an *Arahat*.

"Sabhadda, in this righteous Teaching of mine, there is to be found the Ariya Path of Eight Constituents. In this Teaching alone is found samāṇa of the first stage, a *Sotapanna*; in this Teaching alone is found a samāṇa of the second stage, a *Sakadāgāmi*, in this Teaching alone is

found a samaṇa of the third stage, an *Anāgāmi*?; in this Teaching alone is found a samaṇa of the fourth stage, an *Arahat*.

"All other creeds are devoid of the twelve categories of bhikkhus who comprehend the truth, namely, the four ariyas who have attained *Magga*; the four ariyas who have attained *Phala*; and the four Trainees who are cultivating Insight to attain the four stages of Path-knowledge.

"Subhadda, if these twelve bhikkhus (practise and) pass on the Teaching rightly, the world will not be void of *Arahats*.

"Subhadda, at the age of twenty-nine, I renounced the world and became an ascetic to seek the all-knowing truth (Enlightenment as a Buddha). It is over fifty years now, since I became an ascetic. Outside of this Teaching of mine, there is no one who cultivates Insight which is the prelude to *Ariya Magga*, there is also no samaṇa of the first stage (*Sotapanna*); there is also no samaṇa of the second stage (*Sakadāgāmi*); there is also no samaṇa of the third stage (*Anāgāmi*); there is also no samaṇa of the fourth stage *Arahat*.

"All other creeds are devoid of the twelve categories of bhikkhus (mentioned above) who comprehend the truth. Subhadda, if these twelve bhikkhus (practise and) pass on the Teaching rightly, the world will not be void of *Arahats*."

### **Subhadda the wandering ascetic becomes a Bhikkhu and attains Arahatship.**

When this was said by the Bhagavā, Subhadda; the wandering ascetic, said: "Venerable sir! Excellent (is the Dhamma)! Venerable Sir! Excellent (is the Dhamma)! It is, Venerable Sir, as if that which has been turned over has been turned up, or as if that which has been hidden is revealed, or as if a lost traveller is told the way, or as if a lamp is lit and held up in a dark place so that those with eyes may see visible objects even so has the Bhagavā shown the Dhamma to me in various ways. Venerable Sir, I, Subhadda, take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dhamma, I take refuge in the Sangha. Venerable Sir, may I be initiated into the Order in the presence of the Bhagavā; may I receive full admission into the Order."



When Subhadda made this appeal the Bhagavā said: "Subhadda, if a person who has been a believer in another faith wishes to receive initiation and admission into this Order as a bhikkhu, he has to live under probation for four months, and if at the end of the four months the bhikkhus are satisfied with him, he will be initiated and admitted into the Order, But in this matter, I recognize the difference in individuals (whether a person needs to go on probation or not.)"

"Venerable Sir;" replied Subhadda the wandering ascetic, "If a person, having been a believer in another faith and wishing to receive initiation and admission into the Order as a bhikkhu, has to live under probation for four months, and if at the end of the four months the bhikkhus are satisfied and grant him initiation and grant him admission, I'm prepared to live under probation (even) for four years. And at the end of four years, if the bhikkhus are satisfied with me, let them grant me initiation into the Order and raise me to the status of a bhikkhu."

Then the Bhagavā said to the Venerable Ānandā: "Well, then, Ānandā, let Subhadda be initiated into the Order."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," Venerable Ānandā replied.

Then Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Friend Ānandā, how fortunate you all are, what a boon you all have, that you all have been personally conferred by the Bhagavā the status of close discipleship.

{Here the actual words used by Subhadda were "that you all have been sprinkled by (or anointed by) the sprinkling of close discipleship." This idea of being dubbed a close disciple by the head of the religious Order was in the religious system of the wandering ascetics a great honour and privilege. }

Then the Venerable Ānandā took Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, to an appropriate place where he was wetted at the head with water out of a water container, and taught the method of reflecting on the loathsomeness of the body, particularly the group of five parts or aspects of the body with him as the filth. With the shaving of the head and the face, robing with bhikkhus robes, and administering of the

Triple Gem, performed in succession, the initiation was effected. After that Sabhadda was brought before the Bhagavā.

The Bhagavā caused Samanera Subhadda to be admitted into the Order as a full-fledged bhikkhu and then taught him the appropriate method of meditation. Then bhikkhu Subhadda sought seclusion in the Sal grove, went into meditation in the walking posture alone, i.e., walking up and down, with intent mindfulness, and striving arduously, became an *Arahat* during that very night, being endowed with the four Discriminations. Then he went to the Bhagavā and sat there in worshipping posture.

The Venerable Subhadda became one of the *Arahats*, and he was the last one to become an *Arahat* in the presence of the Bhagavā.

(Herein, "the last one to become an *Arahat* in the presence of the Bhagavā" may mean any one of the following: (i) one who was initiated into the Order during the time of the Bhagavā, who was admitted into the Order as a bhikkhu after the Buddha's decease who learnt Insight meditation, and won *Arahattaphala*; (ii) One who was initiated and admitted into the Order as a bhikkhu during the time of the Bhagavā who learnt Insight-meditation after the Buddha's decease and won *Arahattaphala*; (iii) One who was initiated and admitted into the Order as a bhikkhus who learnt Insight-meditation, and won *Arahattaphala* after the Buddha's decease. The Venerable Subhadda was one who was initiated and admitted into the Order, who learnt Insight-meditation and won *Arahattaphala* during the time of the Bhagavā. Thus he was the chief of those ones who became an *Arahat* in the presence of the Bhagavā.)

**The story of Subhadda, the wandering ascetic as per the commentary on the Dhammapada.**

What is related above about Subhadda, the Wandering ascetic, is according to the *Mahāvagga Pāli (Dīghanikāya)* and the Commentary thereon. The story of Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, as described in the Commentary on the Dhammapada is also briefly related below :

While the Bhagavā was lying on the couch, the death-bed, in the Sal grove, Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, thought to himself: "I have

referred my three questions to the wandering ascetics but have not done so to the Samaṇa Gotama because he is young. Now the Samaṇa Gotama is about to pass away. If I do not ask my questions to him, I shall have cause to regret later for failure to do so. "Musing thus, he went to the Sal grove where the Bhagavā was staying and requested the Venerable Ānandā to gain an audience with the Bhagavā. The Venerable Ānandā refused as related above. However, the Bhagavā said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Ānandā, do not prevent him. Let him put his question to me." He was accordingly admitted into the Bhagava's private quarters which was screened off from outside. Subhadda sat at the foot of the Bhagava's couch and addressed the Bhagavā thus:

"How is it, Revered Gotama,

- (i) Is it possible for a track to be present in the sky?
- (ii) Is it possible for Samaṇas who can quell the defilements to be present outside of the Teaching of Gotama Buddha?
- (iii) Is it possible for any conditioned thing to remain permanent?

The Bhagavā answered the above three questions in the negative in the following stanzas :

*Ākāseva padaiṇ natthi samaṇo natthi bāhire  
papañcābhiratā pajā nippapañcā Tathāgatā* (1)

*Ākāseva padaiṇ natthi samaṇo natthi bāhire  
saṅkhāra sassatā natthi natthi buddhānamiñjitarm* (2)

"Subhadda, in the sky, there is no track. Even so, outside the Buddha's Teaching, there is no bhikkhu (of the twelve categories) who can quell the defilements. All sentient beings, be they men, devas or brahmas, take delight in the three factors that tend to prolong *samsāra*, namely, craving, conceit and wrong view. All the Buddhas are free from these factors, (having overcome them at the time of Enlightenment at the foot of the Bodhi Tree)

"Subhadda, in the sky there is no track. Even so, outside the Buddha's Teaching, there is no bhikkhu (of the twelve categories) who can quell the defilements. There is no conditioned thing, (i.e., the five

aggregates) that remains permanent. All the Buddhas are unperturbed (either by craving, conceit, or wrong view)."

At the end of the discourse Subhadda, the wandering ascetic attained *Anāgāmi magga*. And the audience that were present also benefited from the discourse.

This is the story of Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, as told in the Commentary on the Dhammapada.

In this matter the two stories may be recompiled in this way :

Subhadda the wandering ascetic, posed his question as contained in the *Mahāvagga Pāli*, and after having listened to the Bhagava's answer to it, he further asked the three questions as mentioned in the Dhammapada. After hearing the answers thereto, he became *Anāgāmi*. Then he became a Buddha's disciple, got admission into the Order of bhikkhus, devoted himself to the three fold Training, and became an *arahat* before the Buddha realized *parinibbāna*.

### The Buddha's last words.

After Subhadda had become the last one to become an *Arahat*, the Bhagavā gave admonition, his last one, which he addressed to Ānandā, but was directed towards all the large gathering of bhikkhus.

"Ānandā, it may be that some of you will think, 'The Doctrine propounded by the Teacher is bereft of its profounder; we have now no Teacher.' But, Ānandā, despondency of such nature is uncalled for. Ānandā, the Doctrine and Discipline which I have taught and prescribed for you over these forty-five years, is to be your Teacher when I am gone." (a)

"Whereas Ānandā, bhikkhus now address each other by the term '*āvuso*' (friend), irrespective of seniority, they should not address each other like that after I am gone. A senior bhikkhu, Ānandā, should address a junior bhikkhu either by his given bhikkhu name or by his family name, or by the title of '*āvuso*'. And a junior bhikkhu should address a senior bhikkhu by the title, '*bhante*' or '*āyasmā*' (Venerable Sir)." (b)

"Ānandā, after I am gone, the Sangha may, if it wishes so, abolish lesser and minor. Rules of the Discipline." (c)

"Ānandā, after I am gone, let the Brahma penalty be imposed upon Bhikkhu Channa."

"But, Venerable Sir, what is the Brahma penalty?"

"Ānandā, let Channa say what he likes. No bhikkhu should make any remarks on what he says, nor should they admonish him, nor check him." (d)

((a) with regard to this first point: the Bhagavā means to say, "Ānandā, while I am living, I have taught you the five books of the *Vinaya*, namely, *Mahāvagga*, *Cūlavagga*, *Khandhaka*, *Parivāra* and the Twin Set of *Vibhaga*, together with miscellaneous Commentaries thereon, covering the seven classes of offences with the background cases for each type of offence within those seven classes, such as: 'This is an offence of a light nature; this is an offence of a grievous nature; this is a retrievable offence, this is an irretrievable offence; this is a definitely demeritorious offence, this is merely a nominal offence; this is an offence redeemable with the pardoning by the aggrieved party; this is an offence redeemable with the pardoning by the sect of bhikkhus concerned; this is an offence redeemable by the Sangha as a body, etc.' All these teachings coming under the *Vinaya Piṭaka* will, after I am gone, remain as your Teacher, discharge the function of the Teacher himself.

"Ānandā, while I am living, I have taught you the *Suttanta* encompassing the Thirty-seven Constituents of Enlightenment, comprising the Four methods of Steadfast Mindfulness, the Four Right Endeavors, the Four Bases of Psychic Power, the Five faculties, the Five Powers, the Seven Factors of Enlightenment, the Eight Constituents of the Path, together with elaborate details. All these teachings coming under the *Suttanta Piṭaka* will, after I am gone, remain as your Teacher, discharging the function of the Teacher himself.

"Ānandā, while I am living, I have taught you the *Abhidhamma* specifying in minute detail such as: 'These are the five aggregates, the

twelve sense-bases, the eighteen elements, the Four Truths, the twenty-two Faculties, the nine root causes, the Four nutriments, the seven kinds of Contact, the seven kinds of Sensation, the seven kinds of perception, the seven kinds of Volition, the seven classes of Consciousness. And of those dhammas I have given you classifications enumerating them under Dhamma pertaining to the Sense Sphere, dhamma pertaining to the Fine material sphere, dhamma pertaining to the non-material Sphere; dhamma that are included in the round of resultants; dhamma that are mundane, dhamma that are Supramundane.' Thus beginning from an enumeration of the dhammas such as the aggregates (*khandha*) the edifice of the *Abhidhamma* has been built up for you with an infinite variety of methods of analysis and synthesis comprising twenty-four books of the *Paṭṭhāna* (or the Great Book). All these teachings coming under the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* will, after I am gone, remain as your Teacher discharging the function of the Teacher himself.

These doctrines that I have taught you over forty-five years (*vāsa*) constituting the Dhamma and Doctrine is of three *Piṭakas*, five *Nikāyas*, nine divisions, numbering eighty-four thousand units. These eighty-four thousand units of dhamma factors are still with you. The Tathagata is the only one Teacher that will not be there any longer. While I am living you are under the guidance and supervision of only one Teacher; when I am gone, these eighty-four thousand units of the Dhamma factors which can be called eighty-four thousand Teachers will guide you, supervise you on my behalf." Thus the Bhagavā admonished and consoled the bhikkhus.

(b) Under the next point marked (b), the Bhagavā instructed the rule of social conduct among Bhikkhus

(c) Under the next point marked (c), the Bhagavā did not give an unequivocal directive to the effect that lesser and minor rules of the Discipline be abolished. Instead, he left the option to do so to the Sangha. Why did the Bhagavā leave the matter in an equivocal state? The answer is: the Bhagavā saw the strength of conviction and the strength of wisdom in the Venerable Mahākassapa. The Bhagavā saw that even if he were to give an unequivocal directive on the matter now,

the Sangha in council headed by the Venerable Mahākassapa would not agree to abolish any rule, even the lesser and minor ones. This is worth noting.)

After the Bhagavā had said those words to the Venerable Ānandā, he addressed the bhikkhus thus:

"Bhikkhus, in case there should be any uncertainty or misgiving in any one of you regarding the Buddha, or the Good Doctrine, or the Sangha, or the Path leading to Nibbāna, or the Noble Practice, ask me questions, bhikkhus, and do not leave an occasion for regret later, with the thought, 'We were there together with the Bhagavā, and yet we failed to clear our doubts by asking him our questions.'"

When the Bhagavā said this, the bhikkhus remained silent. The Bhagavā asked a second time, but the bhikkhus remained silent. When asked for a third time also the bhikkhus remained silent. Thereupon the Bhagavā said to the bhikkhus:

"It may be, bhikkhus that you do not ask questions because you have deference for the Bhagavā, thinking, 'we all are bhikkhu disciples under the Bhagavā, we owe the four requisites to the Bhagavā, we have had no uncertainty about the Buddha (etc.), and yet it is not proper for us to have uncertainty about him (etc.) at this last moment.' Bhikkhus, if that is so, then let each one tell his companion about his uncertainty or misgiving."

And still the bhikkhus were silent.

The Venerable Ānandā said to the Bhagavā: "Wonderful it is, Venerable Sir! Astounding it is, Venerable Sir! I believe that in this assembly of bhikkhus there is not a single bhikkhu who has uncertainty or misgiving regarding the Buddha, or the Dhamma, or the Sangha, or the Path, or the Practice."

And the Bhagavā said:

"Ānandā, you say this out of faith. But as for the Tathāgata it is a matter of knowledge that in this assembly of bhikkhus there is not a single bhikkhu who has uncertainty or misgiving regarding the Buddha, or the Dhamma, or the Sangha, or the Path, or the Practice.

"Ānandā, amongst these five hundred bhikkhus, even the least accomplished one is a *Sotapanna*, a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the four miserable realms, but is destined to gain the three higher *Maggas*. (This was said with the Venerable Ānandā in mind)

Then the Bhagavā said to the bhikkhus as his last admonition:

*Handa dāni, bhikkhave, āmantayāmi vo,  
Vayadhammā saṅkharā,  
Appamādena sampādetha.*

"Now, bhikkhus, I say this as my last exhortation: Decay is inherent in all compounded things. Hence, strive with mindfulness and diligence to complete the task."

This was the Bhagava's last exhortation. This was given even as he was on his death-bed. It is a most significant compression of all that he had taught over forty-five years into just one word, *appamāda*, mindfulness or diligence.

### The Buddha's *parinibbāna*.

Dear reader, worthy man and virtuous, you should take note here that after the Bhagavā had uttered these words "*appamādena sampādetha*" ("strive diligently with mindfulness"), no more word was uttered. The whole Sal grove fell silent. The Bhagavā was now engaged in mental activity only, preparing himself to realize utter cessation through passing away. His mind was now purely absorbed in meditation.

First the Bhagavā entered upon the first five material Jhāna (*rūpāvacara kriyā pathama Jhāna*). Rising from the first Jhāna, he entered upon the second jhāna. Rising from the second jhāna, he entered upon the third jhāna. Rising from the third jhāna, he entered upon the fourth fine material jhāna (*rūpāvacara kriyā cattuttha jhāna*). Rising from the fourth jhāna, he entered upon and became absorbed in the non-material jhāna of the sphere of Infinity of Space (*arūpāvacara kriyā ākāśānañcāyatana samāpatti*). Rising from the absorption of the sphere of Infinity of Space, he entered upon and became absorbed in the sphere of the Infinity of Consciousness (*viññānañcāyatana*



*samāpatti*). Rising from the absorption of the Sphere of Infinity of consciousness, he entered upon and became absorbed in the Sphere of Nothingness (*ākhiñcaññāyatana samapātti*). Rising from the absorption of the Sphere of Nothingness, he entered upon and became absorbed in the Sphere of Neither - consciousness - nor - non - consciousness (*nevasaññā nāsaññāyatana samāpatti*). Rising from the absorption of the Sphere of Neither-consciousness-nor-non-consciousness, he entered and became absorbed in Cessation (*nirodha samāpatti*) so called because consciousness and sensation cease during the absorption.

While the Bhagavā was absorbed in Cessation there was no breathing. When Ānandā noticed the stoppage of breathing he was alarmed and asked the Venerable Anuruddha, "Venerable Sir, is the Bhagavā dead?" the Venerable Anuruddha explained to Ānandā, "No, friend, the Bhagavā is only remaining in the absorption of Cessation which is marked by a complete cessation of consciousness and sensation."

("How did the Venerable Anuruddha know that the Bhagavā was absorbed in Cessation?" The answer: the Venerable Anuruddha was entering into and remaining absorbed in the first jhāna throughout the absorptions of non-material Sphere jhāna along with every step that the Bhagavā went through, entering into and rising from each jhāna, up to the absorption of the Sphere of neither-consciousness-nor-non-consciousness. Only when the Bhagavā became absorbed in Cessation Anuruddha did not join the Bhagavā in the mental exercise. Therefore he knew that the Bhagavā was remaining in the absorption of Cessation and he knew that during this kind of absorption death never takes place.)

Then the Bhagavā, rising from the absorption of Cessation, entered into and became absorbed in the sphere of neither-consciousness-nor-non-unconsciousness. Rising from the absorption of the Sphere of neither-consciousness-nor-non-consciousness, he entered upon and became absorbed in the Sphere of nothingness. Rising from the Absorption of the Sphere of nothingness, he entered upon and became

absorbed in the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness. Rising from the absorption of the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness, he entered upon and became absorbed in the Sphere of Infinite Space. Rising from the absorption of the Sphere of Infinite Space, he entered upon the fourth-fine material jhāna. Rising from the fourth jhana, he entered upon the third jhāna. Rising from the third jhāna, he entered upon the second jhāna, Rising from the second jhāna, he entered upon the first jhāna

(a few technical details:)

The Bhagava entered upon the first fine material jhāna with the following 24 objects of meditation.

(a) Concept of loathsomeness	10
(b) Concept of the 8 preliminary mental objects (Kasiṇa)	8
(c) Concept of corporeality group which is the mental object of mindfulness of the body	1
(d) Concept of out-breathing and in-breathing which is the mental object of <i>ānāpanasati</i>	1
(e) Three Concepts of boundless living beings which in the mental object of the three Brahmavihāra (Divine) Abidings of <i>Metta</i> , <i>Karuṇā</i> and <i>muditā</i>	3
(f) Concept of the limit of Space	1
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Total:	24

He entered upon the second and third fine material jhānas with the thirteen objects of meditation comprising the five out of six groups of the above table (i.e., minus (a) and (c) groups). He entered upon the Fourth jhāna with fifteen objects of meditation mentioned below:

(a) Concept of the 8 preliminary mental objects (kasiṇa)	8
(b) Concept of out-breathing and in-breathing	1
(c) Concept of boundless living beings which is the mental object of the Divine Abiding of Upekkhā (equanimity)	1

(d) Concept of the Limit of Space	1
(e) Four meditation objects of Non-materiality	4
Total:	15

This is only a broad outline. In fact, at the last moment, just before entering the utter cessation, the Bhagavā remained in the myriads of absorptions numbering 2.4 million crores which was his daily routine. (see pages 414-416 of the text) Like a traveller leaving home would bid all the family farewell with embraces and kisses, the Bhagavā dwelled in the bliss of the absorptions to the full before realizing *Parinibbāna*.

Then again, rising from the first jhāna, the Bhagavā entered upon the second jhāna. Rising from the second jhāna, he entered upon the third jhāna. Rising from the third jhāna, he entered upon the fourth jhāna. Rising from the fourth jhāna, he contemplated on equanimity and one-pointedness of mind, the two jhāna factors of the fourth jhāna, alternatively or both of them together. Then at the end of the reviewing impulsion (*paccavekkhaṇā mahā kriyā javana*), with the life-continuum thought-moment (*consciousness*) (which is associated with happiness, associated with knowledge, unprompted resultant of the first-order), which is *dukkha sacca* of neither meritorious nor demeritorious thought, the Bhagavā realized *parinibbāna* and made an end of *dukkha*.

(Note: There are two kinds of *parinibbāna*, namely

- (i) Passing away after the end of dwelling in jhāna where the incumbent *Arahat*, after entering upon jhāna and rising from it, he reverts to life-continuum thought moment, during which he passes away;
- (ii) Passing away after the reviewing impulsion where the incumbent *Arahat*, after entering upon jhāna and rising from it, he contemplates on the jhana and factors combinedly or separately, and at the end of such contemplation, which is the reviewing impulsion, he reverts to life continuum thought-moment, during which he passes away.

Of the above two kinds, the Bhagavā passed away after the second kind.

**End of Chapter Forty**

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## CHAPTER FORTY-ONE

### UTTERINGS THAT AROUSE EMOTIONAL RELIGIOUS AWAKENING

When the Bhagavā passed away, there occurred simultaneously a great earthquake, so terrible as to cause the body hair rise and goose-flesh appear on the skin. Rumbblings (of celestial big drums) reverberated in the sky.

When the Bhagavā passed away, at the moment of his passing away, Brahmā Sahampati uttered this stanza:

*Sabbe va nikkhi pissanti  
Bhūtā loke samussayam  
Yattha etādiso satthā  
Loke appaṭipuggalo  
Tathāgato balapatto  
Sambuddho parinibbuto*

"In this transient world  
Even such an incomparable person  
As the Self-Enlightened Tathāgata,  
The Teacher of men, devas and brahmas,  
Endowed with Ten Powers,  
Has to pass away.  
All beings in this world,  
When the time of death is due,  
Must lay down this body,  
A composite of mental and physical phenomena."

When the Bhagavā passed away, at the moment of his passing away, Sakka, King of the devas, uttered this stanza: -

*Aniccā vata saṅkhārā  
Uppādavaya dhammino  
Upajjhivā nirujjhanti  
Tesam vūpasamo sukho*

"Impermanent indeed are all conditioned things.  
They are in the nature of arising and dissolution.  
Having arisen; they cease to be.  
The realization of Nibbāna on their utter cessation  
Is blissful peace."

When the Bhagavā passed away, at the moment of his passing away, the Venerable Anuruddhā uttered this stanza:-

*Nāhu assāsapassāso  
Thita citassa tādino  
Anejo santimārabbha  
Yaṃ kālamakarī Muni*

"(Friend bhikkhus!)  
The Great Sage, Lord of the three worlds,  
Free of craving for existence,  
Has ended his span of life,  
Intent on the peace of Nibbāna.  
No more breathing in or out is there

*Asallīnena cittaena  
Vedanam ajjhavāsaya  
Pajjo tasseva Nibbanam  
Vimokkho cetaso ahu*

Of him who was steadfast  
Against the storm of worldly conditions.  
(Friend bhikkhus!)  
Our Teacher endured the physical pain with fortitude.  
Like the extinction of a flame when the fuel is exhausted,  
His mind has attained total liberation from all bonds "

When the Bhagavā passed away at the moment of his passing away, the Venerable Ānandā uttered this stanza which aroused emotional religious Awakening:

*Tadāsi ya hhiṃsanakam  
Tadāsi lomahaṃsanam  
Sabhā kāra va rūpete  
Sambuddhe parinibbate*

TINI

"At the moment of the passing away of our Teacher.  
Endowed with glorious qualities.

There was a terrifying earthquake.

Then at that moment, there occurred the hair-raising, goose  
flesh-causing earthquake (of six fold intensity)."

When the Bhagavā passed away, those bhikkhus who had not been able to abandon attachment and anger, i.e., the Stream-Enterers and the Once-returners, wailed, with their arms upraised; they flung themselves down, rolled in all directions, all the while lamenting, "All too soon has the Bhagava realized *parinibbāna*! All too soon has the Well-spoken one realized *parinibbāna*! All too soon has the possessor of the Eye of wisdom vanished from the world!"

But those Bhikkhus who had abandoned attachment and anger, i.e., the Never-Returners, bore the event with fortitude in the keen contemplation "that all conditioned things are impermanent by nature, and hence, how would it be possible to find any permanence in this conditioned nature?"

Then the Venerable Anuruddha said to the bhikkhus:

Enough, friend bhikkhus, do not grieve, nor weep. Had not the Bhagavā previously expounded to you that it is in the very nature of things most near and dear to us that we must part with them somehow even while we are living, or when death divides us, or when we are of different planes of existence? Friends, in this matter, how could one expect anything that has the nature of arising, of appearing, of being conditioned, and of dissolution, not to disintegrate? It is not possible for anyone to wish so.

"Friends, the devas are reproachful, saying, even if the Venerable ones cannot bear with it, how could they give comfort to others?"

At those words of the Venerable Anuruddha, the Venerable Ānandā asked: "But Venerable Anuruddha, according to your observation, what is the state of mind that is present in the devas and brahmas?"

"Friend Ānandā, the devas who remain in the sky are standing there (as if there was firm ground to stand on, having transformed the sky into firm ground by their divine power), and are wailing with disheveled hair, their arms upraised, they fling themselves down, rolling (on the fancied ground) in all directions, all the while lamenting, 'All too soon has the Bhagavā realized *parinibbāna*! All too soon has the well-spoken one realized *parinibbāna*! All too soon has the Possessor of the Eye of Wisdom vanished from the world!'"

"Friend Ānandā, the devas who remain on the earth are standing on the ground (transforming the natural earth into supportable ground for their bodies of subtle corporeality), and are wailing with disheveled hair, their arms upraised, they fling themselves down, rolling on the ground in all directions, all the while lamenting, 'All too soon has the Bhagavā realized *parinibbāna*! All too soon has the Well-spoken one realized *parinibbāna*! All too soon has the Possessor of the Eye of Wisdom vanished from the world!'"

"But those devas who are free from sensual attachment bear the event with fortitude, contemplating 'that all conditioned things are impermanent by nature, and hence how would it be possible to find any permanence in this conditioned nature?'"

Then the Venerable Anuruddha and the Venerable Ānandā spent the rest of the small hours of the night in religious discourse. They discussed the omnipresence of Death: "Friend, Death has no shame even to snatch away such a great unrivalled Teacher of the three worlds. How should any other beings of the common run expect any shame from Death? He would take away anyone without shame." Thus they were talking Dhamma and soon it was dawn.

Then the Venerable Anuruddha said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Go, friend Ānandā, enter Kusināra and tell the Malla princes, "O Vasetṭhas, the Bhagavā has passed away, Do now what you deem fitting?"

"Very well, Venerable Sir," the Venerable Ānandā, assented and he went into Kusināra accompanied by a bhikkhu.

At that time the Malla princes were engaged in a meeting at the Council Hall, discussing the details needed in connection with doing



honour to the Bhagavā who had passed away, such as flowers and incense to be arranged, seating places for the bhikkhu Sangha, offering of food, etc. Then the Venerable Ānandā went to the Council Hall and said to them: "O Vaseṭṭhas, the Bhagavā has passed away, Do now as you deem fitting."

On hearing the news from the Venerable Ānandā, the Malla princes their sons and daughters, their daughter-in-laws, and their wives were grief-stricken, and sick at heart, and wailed, their hair dishevelled, their arms upraised; they flung themselves down rolling (on the floor) in all directions, all the while lamenting, 'All too soon has the Bhagavā realized *parinibbāna*! All too soon has the Well-spoken one realized *parinibbāna*! All too soon has the Possessor of the Eye of Wisdom vanished from the world!

#### Last rites for the remains of the Buddha.

Then the Malla princes of Kusināra ordered their men to gather flowers, perfumes and all kinds of musical instruments in Kusināra. Then they went to the Sal grove where the body of the Bhagavā was, taking flowers, perfumes and all kinds of musical instruments, as well as five hundred sets of long cloth. And there they passed the day in song and dance by way of venerating, honouring, revering and paying homage to the remains of the Bhagavā. Flowers and perfumes were tastefully placed, canopies of cloth were made, and pavillions set up with long cloth. Then the Malla princes of Kusināra decided that it was rather late for that day to cremate the remains of the Bhagavā. "We shall perform the cremation tomorrow", they all agreed.

Then the second day also was passed in song and dance, by way of venerating, honouring, revering and paying homage to the remains of the Bhagavā, where flowers and perfumes were tastefully placed, canopies of cloth were made, and new pavillions set up with long cloth. In the same manner the third day also was spent, the fourth day also was spent, the fifth day also was spent; the sixth day also was spent.

Then, on the seventh day, the Malla princes of Kusināra conferred among themselves and decided thus:

"We shall cremate the remains of the Bhagavā south of the town, to which place we shall carry the body by the southern road and perform the ceremony with song and dance, flowers and perfumes, thereby venerating, honouring revering and paying homage to the remains of the Bhagavā"

Thereupon, eight senior most Malla princes of robust built, after washing their heads and donning new clothes, thinking, "We shall now lift up the body of the Bhagavā", exerted in unison to lift up the body of the Bhagavā, but the body did not budge. Then the Malla princes of Kusināra, being confident that the Venerable Anuruddha as the foremost bhikkhu in the power of Divine Eye should be able to explain it, asked him:

"Venerable Anuruddha, these eight senior most Malla princes, after washing their heads and donning new clothes, thinking, "We shall lift up the body of the Bhagavā, exerted in unison to lift up the body of the Bhagavā, but the body did not budge. What is the reason, what is the cause of this?"

"Vasethas, (it is because) you are working at cross purposes with the devas."

"What, Venerable Anuruddha, is the will of the devas?"

"Vasethas, your intention is this: 'We shall cremate the remains of the Bhagavā south of the town, where we shall carry the body by the southern road and perform the ceremony with song and dance, flowers and perfumes, thereby venerating, honouring, revering, and paying homage to the remains of the Bhagavā. The intention of the devas (however) is this: 'We shall cremate the remains of the Bhagavā east of the town near the Makutabandhana Shrine of the Malla princes, where we shall carry it first northwards by the northern road, hence via the North Gate into the town, there to the East Gate by the middle road, to the Makutabandhana Shrine, and perform the ceremony with song and dance, flowers and perfumes, thereby venerating, honoring, revering and paying homage to the remains of the Bhagavā'"

"Venerable Sir, let it be according to the wish of the devas."

At that time Kusināra, the home town of Malla princes, was thickly strewn with celestial Mandāvāra flowers everywhere even including fence borders and rubbish heaps.

Then the devas and the Malla princes of Kusināra carried the remains of the Bhagavā northwards by the northern road; thence via the North Gate into the town, thence to the centre of the town by the middle road, venerating honouring, revering and paying homage to the remains of the Bhagavā all along the route by both celestial and human dance and song, flowers and perfumes.

**Mallikā, widow of General Bandula, honours  
the remains of the Bhagavā.**

When the remains of the Bhagavā was thus being paid homage to in the town along the middle road Mallikā, widow of General Bandula, on hearing the news, awaited in front of her house with the famous Mahālatā great gown which she had not garbed herself with since the death of her husband. She had it cleaned and washed in perfumed water to decorate the body of the Bhagavā with it (as her unique way of honouring the memory of the Bhagavā).

(The Mahālatā great gown was a rare kind of dress which was possessed by only three outstanding persons-Visākhā, Mallikā and a robber called Devadānniya. This dress is referred to as Mallikā dress in these days.)

As the procession carrying the remains of the Bhagavā reached her door, Mallikā requested the people in the procession, "Princes, put down the body of the Bhagavā for a while here!" And (when they complied with her request, she placed the Mahālatā dress around the body of the Bhagavā. It fitted well with the body from head to foot. The golden-hued body was then resplendent with the bejewelled dress wrought with the seven kinds of gems.

Mallikā was throbbing with joy at the glorious sight of the Bhagavā's body garbed in her bejewelled dress. "Venerable Bhagavā, may I in all future existences in *samsāra* be blessed with a completely garbed person without the need to garb myself," thus did she make her wish on

that occasions. After she died she was reborn in the Tāvatiṃsa deva realm and her wish fulfilled. (Sec *Vimāna Vatthu*, Commentary on, *Paricchattakavagga, Mallikāvimāna vatthu*.)

Thereafter, the Malla princes carried the body of the Bhagavā with the Mahālatā dress on, and proceeded to the East Gate. They put it down at the Makuṭabandhana Shrine of the Malla princes on the east of the town.

### The funeral rites.

Then the Malla princes asked the Venerable Ānandā, "Venerable Sir, in what manner should the remains of the Tathāgata be properly dealt with?"

"O Vaseṭṭhas, it should be treated in the same way as is done to the remains of a Universal Monarch.?"

"Venerable Sir, what is the procedure in the case of treating the remains of a Universal Monarch?"

"Vaseṭṭhas, the body of a Universal Monarch is wrapped up in new cloth. Over that wrapping there should be a wrapping of carded cotton wool. Over the cotton wool wrapping there should be another layer of wrapping with new cloth. In this way the body of a Universal Monarch is wrapped up in five hundred pairs of pieces of cloth. Then it is placed in an oil vat wrought with gold, and covered with a lid wrought with gold. Then it is placed upon a funeral pyre built of various kinds of scented wood and then cremated. The relics 'after the cremation are then enshrined at the junction of the four highways. Vaseṭṭhas, this is the procedure in the case of treating the remains of a Universal Monarch."

"O Vaseṭṭhas, as is the procedure followed with regard to the relics of a Universal Monarch, so also should the procedure be followed with regard to the relics of the Bhagavā. A stupa to the honour of the Bhagavā should be erected at the junction of the four highways. People will come to the stupa and make offerings of flowers or incense or fragrant powder, or pay homage, or will reflect on the Buddha's attributes. And for such acts of devotion, those people will enjoy

benefit and happiness for a long time. These instructions were the Bhagava's instructions as has been described above.

Then the Malla princes of Kusināra ordered their men to collect cotton wool from the store-houses of the Malla princes. Then they treated the body of the Bhagavā as instructed by the Venerable Ānandā. They wrapped it up in new cloth. Over that wrapping they made a cotton wool wrapping, and over that they again wrapped it up with new cloth. In this way the body of the Bhagavā was wrapped up in five hundred pairs of pieces of cloth. Then they placed it in an oil vat wrought with gold, and covered it with a lid wrought with gold. Then they made a funeral pyre with various kinds of scented wood on which they placed the embalmed body.

### **The story of the Venerable Mahā Kassapa.**

When the funeral ceremony of the Bhagavā was thus taking place in Kusināra, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa had finished the alms round in the city of Pāvā. And with his mind set on going to Kusināra, he was on his way from Pāvā to Kusināra, accompanied by five hundred bhikkhus. On his way he left the road and sat underneath a tree together with his company of bhikkhus.

(He sat there not to pass the day (as of routine) but to take a rest. That will be explained: All the company of bhikkhus had been brought up in an easy way. So when they travelled on foot in the scorching heat of noon they were tired out. The Venerable Mahā Kassapa saw how tired his followers were. The journey was not long ahead. There was time for a rest and they would proceed in the cool of the evening and see the Bhagavā. That was what was in the mind of the Venerable Mahā Kassapa. He sat at the foot of a tree, had his great robe spread on the ground, and cooled his limbs with the water from his water-container. Some of the companion bhikkhus were meditating while others were discussing the glory of the Triple Gem.)

At that time a wandering ascetic was approaching them on the road from Kusināra heading for Pāvā. He was holding up a celestial

Mandāvāra flower above his head with a stick as the prop of an umbrella.

The Venerable Mahākassapa noticed the celestial Mandāvāra flower held in the ascetic's hand. He knew that this flower is not seen on earth at all times and that it appears on earth only on such rare occasions as when some person of great power carries out an exercise in his psychic power, or when a Buddha-to-be takes conception in his mother's womb, "But, he reflected, this is not the day when some powerful person is carrying out an exercise in his psychic power, nor is it the day the Buddha-to-be takes conception, nor the day he is being born, nor the day he wins Enlightenment, nor the day he delivers the Dhammacakka, the First-Sermon, nor the day he displays the Twin Miracle, nor the day he descends from the Tāvātimsā deva realm, nor the day he relinquishes the life-maintaining mental process. (Hence), our Teacher, being of ripe old age, this must be the day he has passed away."

The Venerable Mahā Kassapa wanted to (confirm his guess and) asked the wandering ascetic. But if he were to mention about the Bhagavā in his sitting posture it might be lacking in respect, so he thought, and therefore he rose up and moving a few steps away from where he was sitting, he covered his head with the dark brown robe made from dust heap rags which the Bhagavā had offered him in exchange, just as the chaddanta white elephant would cover his head with ruby-studded ornamental head-dress, and putting his ten fingers, with their luster aglow, together in the raised hands atop his forehead, he stood facing the wandering ascetic and asked him, "Friend, do you know our Teacher?"

Herein, it might be asked, "Did the Venerable Mahā Kassapa know the demise of the Bhagavā or did he not?" The Commentaries reject the idea that he did not know. The reasons for assuming that he knew are given by the Commentators thus: There was no reason to believe that the Venerable Mahā Kassapa did not know the demise of the Bhagavā since the

great earthquake that took place in all the ten thousand world systems could not go unnoticed by him.

The reason why he asked the wandering ascetic was this: "Some bhikkhus who were with him had seen the Bhagavā in person while others had not. Those who had seen the Bhagavā wanted to see him again (just because they had seen him before); those who had never seen the Bhagavā also wanted to see him because they had not seen him before.

"If someone did not break the news of the demise of the Bhagavā before they got to *Kusināra* and on their arrival there only they were to find the Bhagavā already gone, they would not be able to contain their grief and they would weep and wail and made a wretched spectacle of themselves, throwing away their upper garment, or donning the robes improperly, or beating their breasts. People seeing them would say, "The company of bhikkhu that come with the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, all rag-wearers, are crying like women. If they cannot restrain themselves how could they be able to give comfort to us?" And so I shall have to bear the blame for them. This is an out of the way place here. If on hearing the bad news these bhikkhus should cry, and cry as much as they like, the blame will not fall on me, {for no other follower of the Buddha is here to see them). If these bhikkhus are to receive the sad news early they would not (get the shock on arrival at *Kusināra* and) suffer grief." }

On being asked by the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, the wandering ascetic replied, "Yes, friend, I know of him. It is seven days now since *Samana* Gotama passed away. As a matter of fact, I have brought this celestial Mandāra flower from the place of his demise."

Thereupon, some of the bhikkhus who were with the Venerable Mahākassapa who had not abandoned attachment wailed with their arms upraised; they flung themselves down rolling in all directions, all the while lamenting, "All too soon has the Bhagavā realized *parinibbāna*! All too soon has the Well-spoken one realized

*parinibbāna!* All too soon has the Possessor of the Eye of Wisdom vanished from the world!"

But those among them who were free from sensual attachment bore the news with fortitude, contemplating that all conditioned things are impermanent by nature, and hence how would it be possible to find any permanence in this conditioned nature?"

### The story of Subhadda who became a Bhikkhu at a late age.

Now at that time there was an elderly bhikkhu in the company who became a bhikkhu only late in his life, named Subhadda. When the other bhikkhus were crying and wailing helplessly he said these ugly words to them: "Enough, friends. Do not grieve. Do not lament. Now only we all are well liberated from that great *Samana*. He had been hard upon us, always saying, 'This is proper for you; that is not proper for you.' Now we are free to do what we like, and equally free not to do what we do not like."

### Subhadda's grudge against the Bhagavā.

"Why did Bhikkhu Subhadda say those horrendous words?" it might be asked. The answer: "Because he bore a grudge against the Bhagavā."

Now to relate the story: Subhadda was a barber by profession before he became a bhikkhu. He had two sons, both *samaṇeras*, living together with him in the town of Ātuna, who were gifted with pleasant speech and well-known as skillful barbers. Once when the Bhagavā came to Ātuna from Kusināra with a company of one thousand two hundred and fifty bhikkhus, he got the news of the happy event and, intending to offer a great offering of rice gruel, he said to his two *samaṇera* sons, "Sons, the Bhagavā is coming to Ātuna with one thousand two hundred and fifty bhikkhus in his company. Go now, sons, carry your barber's tools with you, and collect, in vessels or in bags, at every house in the town whatever provisions - rice, oil, salt, and other eatables are available. Let us prepare rice gruel with those things and offer gruel to the Bhagavā."



Subhadda's two *samaṇera* sons obeyed the instruction of their father. Thanks to their melodious speech and skill of their profession, the townspeople sponsored them in their trade. Even those who did not actually need a hair cut or a hair-do submitted themselves to them. After the job was done they asked the *samaṇera* barbers, "Sons, what would you like as fees?" They would reply, "We are planning to offer rice gruel when the Bhagavā come to our town. So we want only the necessary ingredients to make rice gruel"

And the people were unstinting in their gifts to the *samaṇeras*. They did not even consider those gifts of rice, oil, salt and other eatables as fees. The provisions collected were of such an abundance that they could not carry them themselves home. The donors had to help carry them to their place.

Then with the arrival in Ātuna of the Bhagavā and entering the straw-thatched monastery, Bhikkhu Subhadda went to the village gate in the evening and announced to the towns people: "Disciples, I do not want any other thing but utensils to cook rice gruel from the provisions my young sons have collected. I also would like you to lend a hand in the preparation of the rice gruel." Then, after making ready the cooking place, he personally supervised the operations, with the dark-brown loin cloth and the dark brown upper robe on. He prepared a special kind of gruel worth a hundred thousand which was to be in solid state that had to be first eaten and then drunk. The gruel contained ghee, honey, molasses, fish, meat, nectar, fruit juices, etc. It smelt like hair pomade and was also suitable to be used as such. Besides this rich rice gruel, he also prepared honey-cakes.

Then the Bhagavā, rising early, and having finished the ablutions, went to the town of Ātuna, accompanied by a big followership of bhikkhus, for alms-round. The people informed Bhikkhu Subhadda, "The Bhagavā is now on the alms-round. For whom is the rice-gruel being prepared?"

Bhikkhu Subhadda in his usual garb of dark brown robes sat in the Brahma sitting posture (i.e., with his right knee-top placed on the ground) and holding a ladle and a big spoon in one hand, paid homage

to the Bhagavā and said, "May the Venerable Bhagavā accept my thick gruel as food offering."

The Bhagavā inquired after how the food had been made, what ingredients were used, etc., (as described in *Vinaya Mahāvagga*, 6-*Bhesajjakkhandha*) and being told of the facts, he reprimanded Bhikkhu Subhadda on a number of counts. The Bhagava then laid down fresh *Vinaya* rules: (i) *Akappiyasamādāna*, taking upon oneself improper activity which is liable to *dukkata* offence; and (ii) *Khura-baṇḍa parihaṇa*, keeping up the outfit of a barber by one who had been a barber which is also liable to *dukkata* offence.

He also enjoined the bhikkhus from accepting Bhikkhu Subhadda's rice gruel in these words:

"Bhikkhus, you have spent millions and millions of aeons in search of food. The food now offered by Bhikkhu Subhadda is improper for bhikkhus. If you take this food you will suffer in the four miserable states for thousands of existences. Bhikkhus, move away. Do not accept the food." After saying them, the Bhagavā proceeded to the alms-collecting area of the town. None of the bhikkhus accepted any of the thick gruel that Bhikkhu Subhadda offered.

Bhikkhu Subhadda was greatly disappointed, "This *Samāṇa* goes about declaring, 'I am Omniscient.' If he could not accept my offering, he ought to send someone to say so. My food is totally spoilt and wasted. Cooked food cannot last seven days at the most. If it were not yet cooked the provisions could have lasted for my whole life. This *Samāṇa* has ruined me. He is inimical (antagonistic) to me." Thus ruminated Bhikkhu Subhadda. He bore a grudge against the Bhagavā. But he knew that, 'This *Samāṇa* Gotama comes from the Sakyans, a superior social class. If I were to say anything I could only face oppression,' and so he did not murmur while the Bhagavā lived.

Now that he heard the news that the Bhagavā was no more, he felt at ease and was greatly pleased. Hence his vulgar remarks.

### The Venerable Mahā Kassapa's plan.

On hearing the wild remarks uttered by Bhikkhu Subhadda, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa was touched to the quick. It was as though his heart was dealt a blow, or as though he was struck by thunder on the head. "Alas, barely seven days have passed since the Teacher passed away. His golden-hued body is still in existence. How soon has such a bad bhikkhu, the scum of the religion, the thorn to the Order of bhikkhus arisen to threaten the existence of the Teaching that the Bhagavā had so painfully set up. If this wicked bhikkhu were to be left unchecked the number of his likes would grow to the detriment of the Teaching." Thus an emotional religious awakening occurred to the Venerable Mahā Kassapa.

Then the idea of convening a Council of bhikkhus to recite and approve the Doctrine came to him through the thoughts described as follows:

"If I were to expel on the spot this old bhikkhu, a later life entrant to the Order, deriding him and sprinkling his body with ash, the people would say, 'Even when the remains of Samaṇa Gotama are still in existence, his disciples are already in disharmony.' I must hold my patience.

For the teachings of the Bhagavā are at present like a big heap of flowers not strung up into garlands. Just as a loose heap of flowers could very well be blown away in all directions by winds, as time passes on and on, bhikkhus of Subhadda's sort would work havoc to the *Vinaya Piṭaka* by one or two rescissions at first, the *Suttanta Piṭaka* would be diminished by revocation at first of one or two dialogues; the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* would suffer by omission of one or two of the ultimate things at first out of the existing doctrines such as things pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere, things pertaining to the fine material Sphere, things pertaining to the Non-material Sphere, and things Supramundane. In this manner, the disappearance of the Teaching would come about, *Piṭaka* by *Piṭaka* in turn. If the Teaching rooted in the *Suttanta*, the *Vinaya* and the *Abhidhamma* were to disappear we (i.e., all the world) would have nothing to stand on: Where the branches of a tree are cut off, the guardian spirit of that tree can dwell

in the stem of the tree; if the stem is destroyed the spirit can dwell in the roots; but if the roots are destroyed then the spirit will be rendered homeless. If the three Baskets (*Piṭakas*) were to disappear there would be nothing that the followers of the Buddha could point out as their religion.

(To take another simile: The father demon has entrusted his demon son the charm that can make its holder invisible. If the demon son loses this charm through forgetfulness or by being robbed of it then he would be totally helpless. Similarly, if the *Piṭakas* were to be lost then we all are lost.) Therefore we shall convene a council of bhikkhus and recite the Doctrine and the Discipline. By doing so we would be putting the Teaching in proper order that would withstand assault just as flowers are carefully made into garlands.

"The Bhagavā had come to Kusināra after travelling three *gāvuttas* to enable me to pay my last respects to him there. He had admitted me into the Order of Bhikkhus after three chapters of admonition. He had given me the robes he was wearing in exchange for the robes I was wearing. When he discoursed on 'the practice with the similes of the moon, he referred to me by way of example. In those three events he showed his intention of leaving the custodianship of his Teaching to me. (Refer the three discourses concerning Admonition, in *Kassapa Saṃyutta*). So long as a true son of the Bhagavā as myself is living, let this wicked man not grow in his influence in this Teaching. Before depravity gets a footing, before depravity mars the true Dhamma, before newfangled rules gain ground, before spurious regulations obstruct the *Vinaya*, before miscreants hold sway, before upholders of righteousness are on the wane, before those people who misrepresent the Bhagavā become a strong force, before the faithful exponents of the Bhagavā's Teaching are on the wane, I shall see to it that a council is convened to recite and unanimously approve the *Suttanta*, the *Vinaya* and the *Abhidhamma*. When such a council is convened, bhikkhus will learn the Teaching as much as they are capable of, and discuss the *Vinaya* on the matters that are proper and that are improper. when such a session is held, this wicked old bhikkhu will know where he stands and will be duly chastised and he will never be able to show his face.

And (above all), the Buddha's Teaching will become well defined and it will prosper."

These thoughts occurred to the Venerable Mahā Kassapa. However, he did not confide his plan to any bhikkhus or to any other person. He simply consoled the lamenting bhikkhus by his discourse on the high doctrine thus:

"Enough, friend bhikkhus, do not grieve. Do not weep. Had not the Bhagavā previously expounded to you that it is in the very nature of things most near and dear to us that we must part with them somehow—even while we are living, or when death divides us, or when we are of different planes of existence? Friends, in this matter, how could one expect anything that has the nature of arising, of appearing, of being conditioned, and of dissolution, not to disintegrate? It is not possible for anyone to wish so."

### **The Mallas cremate the body of the Bhagavā.**

Then four of the senior most Malla princes (of robust physique) washed their heads, donned themselves in new clothes, and intending to set fire to the funeral pyre of the Bhagavā, ignited it; but, try as they would, the pyre did not catch fire at all.

(Herein, the pyre of fragrant woods was a hundred and twenty cubits high, when four strong men failed to ignite it, eight were engaged in it and when eight failed too, sixteen, and again thirty two men were put to the task. All devices to help ignite were also employed such as fanning and even blowing with the smith's bellows. But all in vain.

This may be explained: The eighty great disciples of the Buddha had great followership devoted to them, when these people numbering eighty thousand passed away they were reborn in the deva realms. Among those devas the devas who had particular devotion to the Venereal Mahā Kassapa when they were lay supporters of the bhikkhu, saw the critical situation- that their esteemed bhikkhu was still on the way from Pava to Kusinara. So they made their wish that this funeral pyre be not ignitable until the Venerable Mahā Kassapa arrived on the

scene. It was due to their will that no amount of human effort could ignite the funeral pyre.

Then the Malla princes asked the Venerable Anuruddha about the reason the funeral pyre remained unburnt. The Venerable Anuruddha replied to them, "The devas wish otherwise."

"Venerable Sir, what is the wish of the devas?"

"Vasetṭhas, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa is now on his way from Pava to Kusināra, in the company of five hundred bhikkhus. The devas have willed that until the Venerable Mahā Kassapa has worshipped at the Bhagavā's feet the funeral pyre of scented woods would remain unburnt."

"Venerable Sir, let the wish of the devas prevail," replied the Malla princes.

When the people heard that bhikkhu named the Venerable Mahā Kassapa was coming to pay homage at the feet of the Bhagavā, and that the funeral pyre of scented woods would not catch fire until the Venerable Mahā Kassapa arrived, they were agog with excitement. "Friends, is that Venerable Mahā Kassapa dark complexioned or fair-complexioned? Is he tall or short? How does he look? Friends, how could that be that while there lives such a great bhikkhu, the Bhagavā's passing away has taken place?" Some of them took perfumes and flowers and went out to meet the Venerable bhikkhu while others prepared the roadway he was coming along and stood there awaiting.

Then the Venerable Mahā Kassapa approached the funeral pyre of scented woods at the Makuṭabandhana shrine of the Malla princes in Kusināra. Wearing folded robe on one shoulder, with joined palms raised to his forehead, he walked around the funeral pyre keeping it on his right for three rounds. By his special powers he reflected on the embalmed body of the Bhagavā and knew for certain which end of the body was the Bhagavā's feet. And standing at the end where the Bhagavā's feet lay, he entered upon the fourth jhāna which is the prelude or bases of special apperception (power) and, rising from the jhāna, made the solemn wish, "May the Bhagavā's feet marked with a thousand spokes at the wheels cut open the golden casket together with

the multilayered wrappings of cotton-wool and five hundred pairs of pieces of cloth, and come out to lie on my head."

As soon as this solemn wish was made, the Bhagavā's feet cut open the five hundred layers of cloth (and cotton-wool) wrappings like the full moon appearing from the clouds. The Venerable Mahā Kassapa spread out his palms of pinkish red like the new bloom lotus, and holding the golden hued feet of the Bhagava firmly in the hands up to the ankles, placed the pair of feet on his head, thus paying homage in a most touching manner.

Witnessing the miraculous scene, the people raised a thunderous applause and made their offerings of perfumes, flowers and other things and paid their homage at the feet of the Bhagavā to their hearts' content. The five hundred bhikkhus who accompanied the Venerable Mahā Kassapa also wore folded robe on one shoulder and with their joined palms raised to their forehead, walked around the funeral pyre of scented wood keeping it on their right for three rounds, and paid homage at the feet of the Bhagavā.

After the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, the people and the five hundred bhikkhus had paid homage at the Bhagavā's feet as much as they liked, and at the instant the Venerable Mahā Kassapa let go the Bhagavā's feet, the lac-coloured feet of the Bhagavā returned to their former place inside the casket without any further wishing by the Venerable Mahā Kassapa. As the feet disappeared into the golden casket, not a piece of scented wood was bestirred. As a matter of fact, as when the Bhagavā's feet came out of the golden casket and as they re-entered it, nothing was disturbed, i.e., not a strand of cotton-wool, not a fibre of the cloth, not a droplet of oil, not a piece of scented firewood was caused to stir itself. When once the feet were inside the golden casket again, everything was perfectly intact.

But when the Bhagavā's feet disappeared from views like the setting of the sun or the moon beyond the western mountain, the people wailed. They presented an even more pitiable sight than they did at the passing away of the Bhagavā.

After the Venerable Mahā Kassapa and the five hundred bhikkhus had paid their last respect, the funeral pyre of scented wood burnt by itself all at the same time without human effort but by the power of celestial beings (This is called the combustion by the Element of Heat *Tejo*.)

Of the body of the Bhagavā' that had burnt itself, the outer (thinner) layer of the skin, the inner (thicker) layer of the skin, flesh, sinews and sticky substances did not remain in the form of ash or soot; what remained was only the relics that were formed out of the body. It is just like the case of burning clear butter which leaves no ash or soot. Out of the five hundred pieces of cloth that enwrapped the body of the Bhagavā, only the innermost one and the outermost one remained intact.

#### Notes on the Relics of the Buddha.

Relics of the Buddhas that appear in the aeons when human life spans are very long (by tens of thousands of years) are of one solid mass of golden colour. Our (Gotama) Buddha appeared in the period when human life span was short (a hundred years). The Bhagavā reflected thus before passing away: "My teaching has not spread to all directions at the time of my passing away. Let people from various places procure the relics from my body which may be as tiny as a mustard seed, enshrine them and make them a place of pilgrimage, and thus acquire merit leading to the good destination." With that compassionate thought, the Bhagavā willed that the relics of his body be split up into many pieces.

In this matter, relics of the Buddha are of two broad classes: the relics that do not break up into many, and those that break up into many. Of the two classes, seven items belong to the first category, namely, the four canines, the two collar bones, the frontal bone of the head. The remaining relics belong to the second category. About a basketful of the latter remained; (i) of these, the smallest are of the size of mustard seed, have the shape of the red jasmine buds, and have a total collection of



about six *Alhaka* measures<sup>1</sup>. (ii) The medium size relics are of the size of a broken rice, look like pearls, and have a total collection of about five *Alhaka* measures. (iii) The big-size relics are of the size of a grain of green gram, have a golden colour and a total collection of about five *Alhaka* measures. (See Commentary on the *Mahā Vagga*, *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Buddhavaṃsa Pāli*)

After the automatic combustion of the Bhagavā's body by the element of heat had occurred, there came down from the sky, through the agency of devas, huge columns of water, ranging in diameter from the thickness of a man's arms, that of a man's calf, and that of a palm tree, that quelled the fire arisen in the funeral pyre of scented wood, Fountains of water also sprang from the boughs of the Sal trees. To cope with the size of the pyre which was a hundred and twenty cubits high, thick columns of water with a diameter of a plough shaft sprang up from the ground on all sides of the pyre. The Malla princes of Kusināra brought scented water in gold and silver pots and sprinkled it on the pyre. Then they combed the ashes with ploughs fitted with eight golden and silver plough shares each, to scatter and cool down the ashes. A particularly wonderful thing here is that although flame were rising fiercely through the boughs, branches and foliage of the Sal trees around the funeral pyre, not a leaf or a blossom got burnt. Insects living in the Sal trees also were going about their own way, quite unharmed.

#### Last rites regarding the remains of the Bhagavā.

After the funeral pyre had been quelled of the fire, the Mallas assembled at the Council Hall to prepare for a grand ceremony. They pounded into a cosmetic paint, four ingredients, namely, the rhododendrons, the saffron, cloves and leaves of the gamboge tree which they applied to various parts of the Hall. Then they strew flowers, such as; the primrose, the red jasmine, white durva grass, the saffron and parched grain. They made a canopy and decorated it with gold and silver spangles and hang fragrant things, flowers and precious jewels all about the council hall.

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<sup>1</sup> *Alhaka* – A measure of capacity for grains.

Then they made a ceremonial roadway from the council hall to the Makuṭabandhara Shrine with half wallings of matting and long cloth on either side of the route, put up canopies all along it studded with gold and silver spangles. Fragrant things, flowers and precious jewels also were hung about. Fresh bamboo poles looking like solid pieces of emerald were set up along the route with five coloured flags fluttering in the breeze, vying with the fluttering paper streamers. The route was made smooth and clean. Banana plants, water pots filled with water, and oil lamps in their stands were set up at regular intervals. Then they put the gold casket containing the relics of the Buddha on the royal elephant fitted out with bejewelled ornaments. (The reader should visualize the ceremonial route which stretched between the council hall which was in the town of Kusināra and the funeral site at the Makuṭabandhana Shrine which lay to the east of the town.)

Then the Malla princes led, in a ceremonial procession with song and dance, the royal elephant bearing the golden casket containing the relics of the Bhagavā into Kusināra town, making offerings of flowers and incense in front of the relics. In the town, in the council hall they had erected a high platform called the Sarabha supported by sculpted figure of a lion (a platform decorated with seven kinds of jewels). There they placed the Bhagavā's relics above which the white ceremonial parasol was set up.

Around the council hall where the relics were placed in state, the security of the place was arranged in great elaboration. Around the council hall there were stationed an army of elephants standing close to one another. Outside this ring of elephants there was the cavalry with horses standing close to one another. And outside the ring of cavalry there was an army of chariots standing close to one another. Outside the ring of chariots, infantry men stood guard in a ring, in close formation. Outside the ring of infantry there were an army of archers, in close formation. And outside the ring of archers there were an army of lancers in close formation. Thus the security guard extended to a *yajana* on all sides which took on the appearance of one huge network of chain mail. For seven days the funeral celebrations were held in all gaiety.

The Malla princes staged these celebrations only a fortnight after the demise of the Bhagavā because during the previous fortnight they were busily engaged in attending to the bhikkhu Sangha's needs regarding their lodging and meals. Now they thought, "Now we shall celebrate the great occasion in gay festivities that are connected with emotional religious awakening for seven whole days. During those days of jollity we must make sure that the Buddha's relics are safe against any thief, and so we shall mount guard over the relics to the best of our ability." Hence the elaborate security arrangements.

### Distribution of the relics.

King Ajātasattu of Magadha heard that the Bhagavā had passed away in Kusināra. The news reached him in the following manner:

First the ministers of King Ajātasattu heard the news of the passing away of the Bhagavā and they said among themselves: "Even such a great person as the Buddha has passed away. Nothing in the world can make the Bhagavā alive again. Among worldlings, our King is unrivalled in the matter of devotion to the Bhagavā. If he were to learn this news in the normal course he is sure to die of a broken heart. So it behoves us to see that he does not die of this news." After conferring among themselves, they made ready three golden troughs filled with a concoction of four nutriments (i.e., sessamum oil, honey, butter and molasses). Then they said to King Ajātasattu:

"Your Majesty, we had had a bad dream. To overt the evil consequences of the bad dream we would advise Your Majesty to wear two layers of white cloth and lie in the trough immersed in the four nutriments with only the nose above the concoction."

The King believed the loyalty of his ministers and said, "Nobles, let it be as you say", and putting on two layers of white cloth, he lay immersed in the concoction in the trough with only his nose exposed.

Then an official, discarding the official garb (and in plain clothes), with dishevelled hair, with his face directing towards Kusināra where the demise of the Bhagavā had taken place, with joined palms raised addressed King Ajātasattu:

"Your Majesty, no one can escape death. The preserver of our lives, our shrine, the fertile field to sow our merit, the person worthy of sprinkling with ceremonial water on the occasion of the King's consecration and enthronement, Teacher of men and devas, has now passed away at Kusināra!"

As soon as he heard this news, King Ajātasattu fainted. His body was so heated with sorrow that the concoction in which he lay immersed simmered. Thereupon the officials removed the King from the trough and put him into a second trough filled with the concoction of four nutriments. King Ajātasattu regained consciousness and asked: "What did you say, my Nobles?"

"Your Majesty, the Bhagavā has passed away." And King Ajātasattu fainted again. The concoction in the trough simmered with the body-heat of the king. Then the officials removed the king from the trough and placed him into a third trough filled with the concoction of four nutriments. When King Ajātasattu came to, he again asked what was said to him. The news was repeated to him, and he fainted again. Then the officials took him out of the trough, bathed him in scented water, and poured down pots of cool clear water from his head.

When King Ajātasattu regained consciousness he stood up and throwing down his dishevelled dark hair on his broad back, beat his chest in desperation and holding firmly his golden-hued chest with his lac-coloured fingers as if to check its breaking asunder, wailed helplessly and ran out along the High Road like a lunatic.

Then King Ajātasattu, accompanied by a big company of embellished court dancers, left the town and went to the monastery in Jīvaka, Mango grove. There, gazing at the place where the Bhagavā used to deliver discourses, lamented:

"O the Exalted One, the Omniscient Buddha! Had you not discoursed to me on the Doctrine? Had you not removed the darts of sorrow from our hearts with your discourses? We are one of your disciples who go to you for refuge, who are established in the three Refuges. But now you do not speak a word to me!"

O Venerable Sir! In previous times, about this hour, I had had the good news of the Bhagavā and his big company of bhikkhus having gone to the various places in this Southern Island Continent. But now, I have only the bad news of your demise!"

Thus he went on lamenting the passing away of the Bhagavā recalling the glory of the Bhagavā in sixty stanzas.

Afterwards he bethought to himself, "Lamenting alone will get me nowhere. There is the more serious business of procuring the relics of the Buddha."

This is a more complete account of King Ajātasattu's reaction on hearing the news of the passing away of the Bhagavā.

Then King Ajātasattu of Magadha sent an envoy to the Malla princes of Kusināra, saying; "O Malla princes of Kusināra, the Bhagavā was of the ruling class; I too am of the ruling class. Therefore I am entitled to a share of the relics of the Bhagavā. I too shall build a stupa where the Bhagavā's relics will be enshrined and honoured."

After sending an envoy, King Ajātasattu thought, "It would be well and good if the Malla princes comply with our demand. But in case they should refuse, we will get relics by force." Accordingly, (i) he marched to Kusināra at the head of an array of the four wings of the armed forces, namely; elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers.

Similar actions of sending envoys were taken by: (ii) the Lacchavi princes of Vesālī, (iii) the Sakyans of Kapilavatthu, (iv) King Buli (Kābuli) of Allakappa, (v) the Koliyan princes, natives of Rāina.

Further, they also thought, "It would be well and good if the Malla princes comply with our demand. But in case they should refuse, we will get the relics by force." Accordingly, they marched towards Kusināra at the head of an array of the four wings of the armed forces, namely, elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers.

The Brahmin of Veṭṭhadīpa heard that the Bhagavā had passed away at Kusināra. He also sent an envoy to the Malla prices of Kusināra saying, "O Malla Princes of Kusināra, the Bhagavā was of the ruling class. I am also of the bramin class. Therefore I am entitled to a share

of the relics of the Bhagavā. I too shall build a stupa where the Bhagavā's relics will be enshrined and honoured." Besides sending an envoy the Brahmin also went to Kusināra with his followers.

The Malla princes of Pāvā, like King Ajātasattu, sent an envoy to Kusināra demanding their share of the relics. They also marched towards Kusināra in full battle array of the four wings of the armed forces.

{Of the seven rival claimants mentioned above, Pāvā was the closest to Kusināra, a mere three *gāvulas'* (three quarter yojana) distance. Yet they arrived last because they were engaged in more elaborate ceremonial arrangements. }

The seven rival claimants sent their respective envoys and at the same time surrounded the town of Kusināra, declaring that if their demands were not met they would wage war. The reply by the Malla princes of Kusināra was this:

"We did not ask by messenger to the Bhagavā to come to our place, nor personally went to the Bhagavā. As a matter of fact, the Bhagavā came here on his own accord and informed his arrival to us. Naturally, you will not part with whatever treasure that arises within your domain. In the world of devas and all sentient beings there is no treasure as noble as the Buddha. We have the greatest of treasures that has come to us. So we cannot by any means share it with you. You had been nourished by your (royal) mothers, and so have we. You are (brave) men, and so are we. If you would choose war, then so be it."

Thus there was vainglorious attitude on both sides. Tension was great.

(Should there be a war, the Mallas of Kusināra were bound to win because the devas that came to pay homage to the relics of the Buddha took the correct view that the relics were the legitimate property of the Kusināra Malla princes)

### Doṅa the Brahmin distributes the relics.

When Doṅa the Brahmin learnt the tense situation between the seven disputants he thought, "These princes are doing dishonour to the place where the Bhagavā passed away. This is most improper as no one is going to benefit from war: I will pacify them all." So he went to the scene, stood on a small mound and uttered a series of stanzas extolling the glory of the Bhagavā. His verses are known as *Doṅagajjita*, Panegyric to the Buddha by Doṅa. (which deals with the Buddha's endowment of root causes, of results or fruits of merit, and of being a benefactor to all beings, known as "the three endearments". At the Great Councils of approving the Pāli text, these verses took two reciting sessions or 'recitals, *bhāṇavāra*.'

(The story of how Brahmin Doṅa got the ability to versify such a weighty panegyric should be noted here. On a certain occasion, when the Bhagavā was travelling from Ukkatṭha to Setabya, he left his footprint with the solemn wish, "May this footprint of mine remain intact until Brahmin Doṅa has viewed it." and rested underneath a tree.

When Brahmin Doṅa came along on the way and saw the footprint he knew for certain that "this is the footprint of the greatest person among all beings including devas." Then he traced the track of the Bhagavā and met the Bhagavā (resting under the tree). The Bhagavā gave a discourse to him. The Brahmin Doṅa became devoted to the Bhagavā. Hence his ability to sing in praise of the Buddha at such length.)

Although the Brahmin's verses were as lengthy as two recitals, since the disputing princes were squabbling, they did not hear the first half at all. It was only when the second half was nearly over that they recognized the voice. "Well, this is our teacher's voice! Friends, this is the voice of our teacher, isn't it?" Then all the tumult died down out of respect for Brahmin Doṅa, for in all the Southern Island Continent in those days almost all youths of good families had been pupils of Brahmin Doṅa. Very few of them would not know him as a teacher. When Brahmin Doṅa knew that the princes were now paying attention to him he said to them:

*TINI*

"O Sirs, listen to one word of mine, Our Bhagavā was an upholder of forbearance. It would not be proper to make war over the matter of sharing the relics of him who was of such noble nature.

"O Sirs, let us all be united and in harmonious agreement. to divide the relics into eight parts. There are the multitudes devoted to the Buddha. Let there be stupas to his honour. everywhere across the land."

The squabbling princes assented. "Brahmin Master," they said, "in that case, do you yourself divide fairly the relics of the Bhagavā into eight parts."

Very well, Sirs, "Brahmin Doṇa agreed and caused the golden casket of relics opened. On seeing the golden-hued relics lying motionless inside the casket, all the princes lamented,

"O the All-Knowing Bhagavā! In previous times we used to see the resplendent sight of the Bhagavā with the golden complexion, marked with the thirty-two marks of the Great Man, emitting the six-hued rays, and embellished by the eighty lesser marks of the Buddha. But now we are seeing only the golden relics that remain of the Bhagavā. O what a misfortune for us!"

When Brahmin Doṇa saw that the princes in their grief would not notice him he snatched the right canine and hid it in his head gear. When the princes were in their stable senses he took eight-equal measures of the relics in a basket and distributed them, each sharing two *Aḥaka* measures, for the whole amount of the relics measured sixteen *Aḥakas*.

Even while Brahmin Doṇa was distributing the relics Sakka was watching. "Where is the right canine of the Buddha now, that of the Bhagavā, the expounder of the Four Truths that expelled all doubts in the minds of men and devas? Who has got it? He scanned the scene. And he saw the right canine hidden in the head-gear of Brahmin Doṇa. He thought, "This canine of the Buddha, such a cherished relic. I shall acquire it? And so he took it - a case of "the robber being robbed" from Brahmin Doṇa - placed it reverentially in a golden basket (chalice) and



took it to the Tāvatiṃsā deva realm where he enshrined it in the Cūlāmaṇi shrine.

After distributing the relics to the eight claimants Brahmin Doṇa felt with his hand to reassure himself about the hidden relic in his head gear but, alas! it was no longer there. But since he had stolen it for himself, he dared not ask anybody about it. If he were to claim his share now, the princes would say, "Master, you distributed the relics yourself. Why did you not think of yourself to get a share for yourself?" So he consoled himself with the thought, "the basket measure used in dividing up the relics has become sacrosanct. I shall be content with obtaining it. I shall put up a stupa enshrining it." And he said to the princes:

"O Sirs, let me keep the Aḷhaka-measure basket used in distributing the relics. I shall erect a stupa in its honour."

The princes agreed and so Brahmin Doṇa got the Aḷhaka-measure basket used in the division of the relics.

### **The Mauriya princes, the late comers to the scene.**

The Mauriya Princes of Pippalivana also heard that the Bhagavā had passed away, and they also, like King Ajātasattu, sent an envoy (to Kusināra to demand their share of the relics). and also marched on Kusināra in full array of battle with the four wings of their armed forces. They reached there late.

The Malla princes of Kusināra said to them, "There is no share of the Buddha's relics remaining. All the claimants have divided the relics among themselves. Take the charred pieces of firewood from the site of cremation." And the Mauriya princes had to take away the charred pieces of firewood on the site of cremation.

### **Raising the relic-stupas in reverence.**

- (i) King Ajātasattu of Magadha built a stupa at Rājagaha where he enshrined the relics of the Bhagavā in reverence.
- (ii) The Licchavī princes of Vesālī built a stupa at Vesālī where they enshrined the relics of the Bhagavā in reverence.

- (iii) The Sakyān princes of Kapilavatthu built a stupa at Kapilavatthu where they enshrined the relics of the Bhagavā in reverence.
- (iv) The Kābuli princes of Allakappa built a stupa at Allakappa where they enshrined the relics of the Bhagavā in reverence.
- (v) The Koḷiya princes of Rāma village built a stupa at Rāma village where they enshrined the relics of the Bhagavā in reverence.
- (vi) The brahmin of Veṭṭhadīpa built a stupa in his Veṭṭhadīpa country and enshrined the relics of the Bhagavā in reverence.
- (vii) The Malla princes of Pāvā built a stupa at Pāvā and enshrined the relics of the Bhagavā in reverence.
- (viii) The Malla princes of Kusināra built a stupa at Kusināra and enshrined the relics of the Bhagavā in reverence.
- (ix) Brahmin Doṇa built a stupa and enshrined the *aḥaka*-measure basket in reverence.
- (x) The Mauriya princes of Pippalivana built a stupa and enshrined the charred pieces of firewood from the site of cremation in reverence. Thus there came to be eight stupas of the Buddha-relics, with the ninth one, a stupa of the measuring-basket, and the tenth a stupa of charcoal, altogether making ten stupas.

### King Ajātasattu's stupa

#### It's erection and other connected details.

Of the above ten stupas we shall relate the events connected with the building of King Ajātasattu's Stupa as told in the Commentary and Sub-Commentary on *Mahā vagga (Dīgha Nikāya)*.

King Ajātasattu carried home his share of the relics in great ceremony. He prepared the twenty-five *yojana* stretch of the journey between Kusināra and Rājagaha a grand route of a width of eight *usabhas* which was leveled out. He made elaborate arrangements similar to what the Malla princes did with their passage route for the relics between the Makuta-bandhana Shrine and the council hall. Besides doing honour to the relics in the various ways, he arranged for

opening of stalls at various places all along the route for the crowds. The golden casket of relics was placed in a golden coffin which was carried in all pomp and honour, escorted by a big army of lancers.

Before the relics arrived home in Rājagaha King Ajātasattu ordered the people to assemble in a gathering five hundred *yojanas* wide. The festivities which started in Kusināra continued all along the route under the escort of his big army. Wherever golden-coloured flower trees were in bloom he placed the relics in the ring surrounded by the army of lancers and made ceremonial offerings, which lasted as long as the golden flowers were in bloom. Then the procession moved on from there. At every length of the ceremonial carriage as it proceeded along, the procession halted to hold festivities and to make offerings, which lasted for seven days. The procession thus moved on at leisurely pace so that it lasted seven years, seven months and seven days to get to Rajagaha.

Believers in wrong views raised an outcry that King Ajātasattu held funeral ceremonies on the passing away of samana Gotama against the wishes of the people and that these festivities caused neglect of work by the people who had to suffer hardships. In denouncing thus, eighty six thousand holders of wrong views were motivated by malevolent thoughts about the Triple Gem as the result of which they were reborn in the four miserable states.

The Arahats then reviewed the situation. The prolonged festivities over the carriage of the relics was causing transgressions of the Triple Gem among the people which was indeed undesirable. So they thought of seeking the co-operation of the devas to speed up the King's procession to Rājagaha. They requested Sakka, King of devas, "O Sakka, think of some way to speed up the carriage of the relics to Rājagaha."

Sakka replied, "Venerable Sir, there is no worlding who is as devoted to the Triple Gem as King Ajātasattu. He will not take my advice. But I can use other means. One possible way is to assume myself a terrifying appearance as Māra is wont to do, to cause terrible sounds to possess people, to cause people to sneeze, to cause people to lose appetite (also Māra's pet devices). When I use those means, the Venerable ones

should say to King Ajātasattu, 'O King, the prolonged festivities over the carriage of the relics has angered the devas. Speed up the procession to Rājagaha.' On your advice only would King Ajātasattu speed up his procession.

And Sakka did his part as suggested, causing terror among the people.

The Arahats then went to King Ajātasattu and said: "Great King, the prolonged festivities over the carriage of the relics has angered the devas. Speed up the procession to Rājagaha." King Ajātasattu replied, "Venerable Sirs, I cannot fully satisfy myself in honouring the relics yet. However, I will follow your advice." And so, he ordered his men to speed up the carriage of the relics to Rājagaha. This order was given on the day when seven years and seven months had elapsed on the way to Rājagaha. Now in the next seven days the procession reached its destination.

King Ajātasattu erected a stupa in Rājagaha in honour of the relics thus arrived. Other kings and brahmins who received their share of the relics or the measuring basket or charred firewood also put up stupas in honour of the relics, according to their means, in their own cities. These facts are on record, under the title "The Honouring of the Relics by Raising Stupas" which states: "King Ajātasattu of Magadha raised a stupa in Rājagaha in honour of the relics of the Buddha", which were as recited at the Second and Third Councils.

### **The Venerable Mahā Kassapa and King Ajātasattu co-operate in building a secret relic depository.**

After the various king and brahmins had erected various stupas at their own places where the Buddha - relics were enshrined the Venerable Mahā Kassapa by his special power of seeing into the future, saw:-

- (1) that those stupas were liable to be pilfered by holders of wrong views; and
- (2) that if a secret depository were to be built those relics would be discovered by King Asoka who should cause

the spread of the relics over the whole of the Southern Island Continent, to the great benefit of devas and men.

So the Venerable Mahā Kassapa went to King Ajātasattu and said solemnly "Great King, it would be highly advisable that a secret depository be built to safeguard the relics".

"Very well Venerable Sir," said King Ajātasattu, leave the matter of building a secret depository to me, but how should the relics in other places be collected?"

"Great King, the collection of the relics that are with the other kings and brahmins will be our responsibility, not yours."

"Very well, Venerable Sir, let the Venerable ones collect the relics. I shall build the depository."

Having reached this understanding, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa went around to the recipients of the relics, and explained to them his vision; and was able to collect the relics, leaving only an appropriate quantity of them for private worship at the various homes of the recipients. All the relics collected were brought to Rājagaha.

The relics at Rāma village was an exception. There the *nagas* were guarding the relics and were therefore secure against pilferers. The Venerable Mahā Kassapa foresaw that at a later time the relics of Rāma village would be enshrined when the Mahācetiya was erected at Mahāvihara Monastery in Sri Laṅkā. So that relics from that place were not among the relics collected and brought to Rājagaha. There at a site to the north east of the city the Venerable Mahā Kassapa made a solemn wish, "May the ground at this site be flawless and clean. If there be any rocks let them disappear now. Let no water arise here."

King Ajātasattu ordered earth digging work at that site. The earth dug up there were made into bricks. Then he built eighty stupas in honour of the eighty senior disciples. When asked what the project was, the king replied that it was the building project of stupas in honour of the eighty senior disciples. Nobody was allowed to know that the Buddha-relics were underneath.

### The enshrining of the relics in series of caskets.

At the depth of eighty cubits a copper platform was laid out over which a copper chamber the size of a (standard) stupa was built. Then a series of eight sets of containers of various sizes beginning from golden sandalwood caskets and eight sets of stupas of golden sandalwood were made ready, each to be encased in another by turn in the following order.

The relics of the Bhagavā were first put into a casket made of golden sandalwood. Then this was encased in a second casket of the same material. Then this was encased in a third casket of the same material. In this manner eight casket of golden sandalwood encased in one another in turn formed one casket of eight layers of golden sandalwood.

This eight-layered casket of golden sandalwood was enshrined in the series of eight stupas made of golden sandalwood, each stupa being encased in another in turn so that a stupa of eight layers of golden sandalwood was formed.

Likewise, this stupa of golden sandalwood was encased in a series of eight ivory caskets which formed one casket of eight layers of ivory caskets. This eight-layered ivory casket was enshrined in a series of eight ivory stupas, each being encased in another in turn, so that a stupa of eight layers of ivory stupas was formed.

Likewise, this ivory stupa was encased in a series of eight caskets wrought with seven gems, which formed one casket of eight layers of caskets of seven gems. This eight-layered casket of seven gems was enshrined in a series of eight stupas wrought with seven gems, each being encased in another in turn so that a stupa of eight layers of stupas of seven gems was formed.

Likewise, this stupa of seven gems was encased in a series of eight silver caskets which formed one casket of eight layers of silver caskets. This eight-layered silver casket was enshrined in a series of eight silver stupas, each being encased in another in turn so that a stupa of eight layers of silver stupas was formed.

Likewise, this silver stupa was encased in a series of eight emerald caskets which formed one casket of eight layers of emerald caskets. This eight-layered emerald casket was enshrined in a series of eight emerald stupas, each being encased in another in turn so that a stupa of eight layers of emerald stupas was formed.

Likewise, this emerald stupa was encased in a series of ruby caskets which formed one casket of eight layers of ruby caskets. This eight-layered ruby casket was enshrined in a series of eight-ruby stupas, each being encased in another in turn so that a stupa of eight layers of ruby stupas was formed.

Likewise, this ruby stupa was encased in a series of cat's-eye caskets which formed one casket of eight layers of cat's-eye caskets. This eight-layered cat's-eye casket was enshrined in a series of eight cat's-eye stupas, each being encased in another in turn so that a stupa of eight-layers of cat's-eye stupas was formed.

Likewise, this cat's-eye stupa was encased in a series of glass caskets which formed one casket of eight-layers of glass caskets. This eight-layered glass casket was enshrined in a series of eight glass stupas, each being encased in another in turn so that a stupa of eight layers of glass stupas was formed.

Thus systematically encased in turn, the outermost glass stupa had the size of the Thūpāsāma cetiya in Sri Laṅkā. The glass stupa was enshrined in a stupa set with seven gems. This again was sheltered inside in a golden stupa, which was again sheltered inside a silver stupa, and finally sheltered inside a copper stupa. Inside the copper stupa, seven jewels were strewn about as sand flooring above which thousand of flowers grown on land were scattered. Golden statuettes depicting the five hundred and fifty *jātaka* stories, the eighty senior disciples, King Suddhodana, father of Gotama Buddha, Queen Māyā devī, mother of Gotama Buddha, the seven remarkable birth-mates that were born or appeared at the birth of Gotama Buddha to-be, etc., were placed there in. Five hundred golden pots and five hundred silvers pots filled with water, five hundred golden streamers, five hundred golden lamps, five hundred silver lamps fitted with wicks of white cloth filled with scented oil, were also set up inside.

*TINI*

Then the Venerable Mahā Kassapa made a solemn wish, "May the flowers remain fresh, may the scents retain their fragrance, may the lighted lamps remain aglow." On a golden sheet he had the following inscription etched out and scaled:

"At some future date a prince named Piyadāsa will be enthroned as a righteous king by the name of Asoka. That King Asoka will spread these relics through the Southern Island Continent, Jambudipa."

After having carried out all forms of doing honour to the relics, King Ajātasattu close all entrances to the inner shrine wrought with seven jewels, the same was done to the golden shrine and the silver shrine that successively housed the inner shrine. He locked up the outermost shrine made of copper. Against the steel pad-lock he placed a big piece of ruby accompanied by an inscription that read: "Let some needy king of some future date utilise this ruby to meet the expenses of doing honour to the relics."

The Sakka, King of devas, said to Visukamma: My good Visukamma, King Ajātasattu had done his best for the security and preservation of the relics. You now see to the security of the depository."

Visukamma came down to the relic depository and set up a complex mechanism which emitted searing heat and which presented an awful sight with interconnected moving parts. The moving parts were of steel blades shining like grass which turned at the speed of whirlwinds and which were held by wooden statues of demons which guarded on all sides. All these complex set of rotating blades had only a single key-switch. Having thus made the relic depository secure, Visukamma returned to his celestial abode.

King Ajātasattu further put up stone walls around the depository as was usually erected in the construction of a masonry monastery. Atop the walls he covered the whole area with a rock platform which was covered up with earth. The earth was made into an even surface upon which a stone stupa was erected.



After making those elaborate arrangements for the relic depository, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, living to the end of the span of life destined for him, passed away. King Ajātasattu also was dead and gone to his next existence according to his kamma. People of those times also are dead and gone. Alas! all conditioned phenomena of mind and matter are of such impermanent nature, such unstable nature, such woeful nature.

### **King Asoka builds stupas at widely different places.**

After more than two hundred years from the year of the passing away of the Buddha, a prince named Piyadāsa was enthroned as King Asoka. He excavated the relics of the Buddha kept in the depository by the Venerable Mahā Kassapa and raised (many) stupas all over the Southern Island Continent, Jambudipa. This story is related below:-

King Asoka became a great devotee of the Buddha through the help and assistance of Samaṇera Nigrodha. His remarkable devotion to the Buddha and the Teaching found expresion in eighty-four thousand monasteries. After building them he said to the Sangha : Venerable Sir, I have built eighty-four thousand monasteries; where can I find the relics?"

The Venerable ones said: "Great King, we have heard about a relic depository built by the Venerable Mahā Kassapa and King Ajātasattu. But we do not know its exact location."

King Asoka first searched for the relics in Rājagaha. In the hope of finding the relics, he pulled down the original stupa built by King Ajātasattu but failed to find anything there. He restored the stupa to its original condition. Then he organized a company of four types of assembly, namely bhikkhus, bhikkhunis, lay-disciples and lay female-disciples, and went to Vesālī.

In Vesālī he searched for the relics inside the original stupa built by the Licchavī princes after pulling it down but found none. He restored the stupa to its original condition and tried his luck in Kapilavatthu. He failed again there and proceeded to Rāma village. The Nagas who had taken custody of the relics in Rāma village did not allow the stupa to be

pulled down. (All the implements that were used in the operation broke up into pieces.)

After the unsuccessful attempt at Rāma village King Asoka went to the other places where the relics were known to have been enshrined. He went to the Allakappa province, Veṭṭhadīpa province. Pāvā. Kusināra one by one, pulled down the stupas at each place but finding no relics in any, he restored all those stupas into their original condition and so went back to Rājagaha again.

Back in Rājagaha, King Asoka held a meeting with the four types assemblies and asked: “Is there anyone who has heard where King Ajātasattu had deposited the relics?”

An elderly bhikkhu said, “Great King, the exact location of the depository is not known. But I remember how my father, an elderly bhikkhu, said to me, ‘Come Samaṇera, in such and such an overgrowth of thickets there lies a stone stupa. Let us go and pay our homage there! We made offerings of flowers there. My father said then,’ Samaṇera, mark this place well. This all I know about it”.

(In this matter, some teachers say that as there were no bhikkhus present at the assembly who are possessed of psychis powers through jhāna they had to take note of what the elderly bhikkhu said. According to other teachers, however, there were bhikkhus possessed of psychic powers at that meeting but those bhikkhus were unwilling to win-fame and acclaim by revealing what they knew by their special apperception, and they thought that just by taking the slim clue from what the elderly bhikkhu said, the King would be able to trace the treasure:- (Sub-Commentary).

King Asoka was able to locate the spot. “This must be the place where King Ajātasattu deposited the relics”, he decided and ordered for excavations. Clearing away the overgrowth of vegetation, they found the stone stupa, and when the stupa and the earth underneath were removed the rock platform was revealed. Then tearing away the bricks and mortar, the depository came to view. They saw in wonderment the seven jewels spread out on the flooring, and the wheeling blades held in the hands of a formidable ring of demon statues.

King Asoka engaged necromancers to try to halt the protective mechanism but they could not solve the mystery of the whirling blades. Then King Asoka invoked the devas: "I intend to enshrine and honour these relics in the various monasteries numbering eighty-four thousand. May the devas do not cause hindrance to my sincere efforts!"

At that moment Sakka, king of devas, was on his round of travels and saw the event. He said to Visukamma, "My good Visukamma, King Asoka is now inside the precinct of the relic depository, wishing to get the relics. You now go and remove the protective mechanism." Then Visukamma took on the appearance of a young boy with five knots of hair. He went up to King Asoka with a bow in hand and said, "Great King, I shall remove those mechanical demons." The King (gladly) said "Go on, please, son!" Then Visukamma in the guise of a young boy sent a shaft aimed at the key spot in the mechanical device and all the demon status fell into pieces.

Then King Asoka inspected the padlock at the entrance and saw the inscription on the gold plate which reads: "Let some needy king of some future date utilise the ruby to meet the expenses of doing honour to the relics."

King Asoka was displeased with the inscription. "How dare anyone say of me as a 'needy' king!-" he remarked. Then after repeated efforts he removed the many obstacles placed at the entrance and got inside the relic depository.

He found the lamps lit some two hundred and eighteen years ago still alight. The brown lotus were as fresh as ever, and so were the bed of flowers strewn about the floor. The perfumes were as fragrant as freshly prepared.

King Asoka took hold of the gold plate on which the Venerable Mahā Kassapa had inscribed the words:

"At some future date a prince named Piyadāsa will be enthroned as a righteous king by the name of Asoka. That King Asoka will spread these relics throughout the southern Island Continent, Jambūdīpa."

He was exhilarated and cried out, "Friends! the Venerable Mahā Kassapa had rightly foreseen me!" And bending his left arm, he slapped it with his right hand thereby producing loud clapping sounds.

King Asoka then removed much of the relics, leaving only an appropriate amount in the depository for local worshippers. He closed all entrances to the depository carefully as previously done, and restored the whole edifice to its original condition. He rebuilt a new stone stupa about it. Then he enshrined the relics inside the eight-four thousand monasteries that he donated.

### Conclusion of the Chapters on the Buddha.

Dear readers, we have come to the end of the Chapter on the Buddha. You may have noticed in going through this chapter the seven (auspicious) days connected with the Buddha, namely: (1) the day of his conception, (2) the day of his birth, (3) the day he renounced the world, (4) the day he won Perfect Enlightenment., (5) the day he delivered the first sermon, the Dhammacakka pavattana sutta, (6) the day he passed away, and (7) the day his body was consumed by the Element of heat. These seven dates may be noted thus:

- (1) The Buddha-to-be was conceived on Thursday, the full moon of Wazo(*asaḥa*) in the 67th year of the Great Era.
- (2) He was born on 7th Friday, the full moon of Kason (*vesākha*) in the 68th year of the Great Era.
- (3) He renounced the world on Monday, on the full moon of Wazo (*asaḥa*) in the 97th year of the Great Era.
- (4) He won Perfect Enlightenment on Wednesday, the full moon of Kason (*Vesākha*) in the 103rd. year of the Great Era.
- (5) He delivered his first sermon on Saturday, the full moon of Wazo (*asaḥa*) in the 103rd year of the Great Era.
- (6) He passed away on Tuesday, the full moon of Kason (*vesākha*) in the 148th year of the Great Era.
- (7) His body was consumed by the Element of heat on Sunday, the twelfth waning day of Kason (*vesākha*) in the same year.

The Late Ledi Sayadaw composed the following rhymes on the above seven days for remembering and honouring the Buddha by the devotees:

1. Being implored in union by the devas and brahmas  
Of the ten thousand universes,  
Lord of the three worlds, object of my adoration,  
Descended (from Tusita deva realm)  
Into his royal mother's womb .  
On a Thursday, the full moon of *asaḥha*  
An occasion promising the peace for devas and men.
2. Ten months after conception,  
On a Friday, the full moon of *vesāḥha*,  
In the sixty-eight year of the Great Era,  
The Lord was born in the cool shade of Lumbinī Park  
When the great earth quaked  
To honour the ominous event  
That laid out the road  
To the City of Nibbāna for devas and men.
3. At the young age of sixteen,  
Being provided with three princely palaces (as seasonable/  
residences)  
He lived in regal splendour for thirteen years.  
Then at the youthful age of twenty-nine,  
Being overcome by a religious emotional awaking on seeing the  
four omens conjured up by devas,  
He went forth into a homeless life  
In the quiet seclusion of the forest.  
That was on a Monday, the full moon of *asaḥha*.
4. After six years of seclusion in the forest,  
Came the time for Perfect Enlightenment.  
On a Wednesday, the full moon of *vesāḥha*,  
Sitting on the Throne of Victory,  
With the Tree of Enlightenment as a majestic canopy,

He vanquished the vexatious hordes (of Māra).  
 Ten thousand universes cheered  
 The arising of the Exalted One,  
 The great event went heralding spiritual security  
 For denizens of the three worlds.

5. Making his way to Migadāvana Park,  
 The Buddha expounded the Doctrine,  
 The Dhammacakkapavuttana sutta,  
 To the Group of Five Ascetics  
 And an assemblage of devas and brahmas  
 Coming from ten thousand universes.  
 That was a Saturday, the full moon of *asaḥha*  
 When the great drum of the Dhamma was first sounded.
  
6. Then for forty-five years  
 The Buddha, by the Dhamma, ferried cross  
 To the yonder shore of safety  
 The multitudes of the three worlds  
 Belonging to ten thousand universes.  
 And at the ripe age of eighty,  
 In the year one hundred and forty-eight,  
 On a Tuesday, the full moon of *vesākha*,  
 Under the twin sal trees at Kusināra  
 In the Province of the Mallas,  
 The Buddha realized the ultimate Cessation,  
 That cast gloom on the ten thousand universes.
  
7. The remains of the Buddha, a wondrous golden corpse,  
 Burned by itself,  
 Thanks to the prior resolution of the Bhagavā,  
 Leaving for posterity eight portions of relics  
 That was a Sunday.  
 In the waxing moon of *vesākha*

8. Reflecting on the seven memorable days  
Connected with the Buddha,  
The Most Exalted One amongst the exalted,  
Lord of the three world,  
I pay my deepest devotion by deed, word and thought  
To the Great Master.  
And for this good deed,  
May every blessing come showering on me!

**End of Chapter Forty One.**

**This is the conclusion of chapters on  
the Jewel of the Buddha.**



## CHAPTER FORTY TWO

### THE DHAMMA RATANĀ

The Dhamma Ratanā is made up of the nine Supra mundane dhammas – the four *maggas*, the four *phalas*, *Nibbāna*; and *Priyatti*, all the Teachings of the Buddha forming the Tipitaka or the Buddhist Scriptures, together with the practice of the Doctrine *Paṭipatti* as delineated in the texts. It also implies the attributes of the Triple Gem. We shall begin this chapter with a discussion of the attributes of the Triple Gem in a treatment that is neither too concise nor too elaborate but that will cover all solvent features.

#### The Nine Supreme Attributes of the Buddha.

The Buddha is endowed with infinite noble qualities. However, for ready remembrance for the devotees among men, devas and brahmas, only nine special attributes beginning with *Arahaṃ* were specially taught by the Bhagavā in the various discourses. (The same applies to the teaching about the six supreme attributes of the Dhamma and the nine supreme attributes of the Sangha).

#### The nine supreme attributes of the Buddha in Pāli.

*Itipi so Bhagavā Arahaṃ Sammāsambuddho vijjācaraṇa sampanno sugato lokavidhū amittaro purisa dhamma sārathi satthā deva manussānaṃ Buddho bhagavā.*

#### Translation:

(The Myanmar Translation by Ashin Vepullābhidhaja Aggamahāpaṇḍita, Abbot of Vejayantā Brick Monastery, Kozaung-Taik Myingyan, is rather elaborate and ornate. Only its salient features are rendered into English here.)

The Buddha who has won perfect Enlightenment after fulfilling thirty kinds of Perfections *Pāramī*, and has destroyed all defilements is endowed with the attribute of:



(1) *Araham*,

- (a) being perfectly pure of defilements, so that no trace of them, not even a vague impression, is left to suggest their presence.
  - (b) being incapable of doing evil even where nobody could know of it,
  - (c) having broken up the spokes of the wheel of existence;
  - (d) being worthy of homage by all the three worlds, of men, devas and brahmas
- (2) *Sammā sambuddho*, being perfectly Self-Enlightened in that he truly comprehends the Dhamma by his intellect and insight and is able to expound it to others;
- (3) *Vijjācaraṇa sampanno*, being endowed with the three knowledges, namely, knowledge about past existences of all beings, the Deva Eye and the extinction of all moral taints, which knowledges are expandable into eight knowledges together with perfect practice of morality definable in fifteen ways;
- (4) *Sugato*, because the Buddha proceeds to *Nibbana* through the four *Maggañānas*; because the Buddha speaks only what is beneficial and true;
- (5) *Lokavidū*, because he knows the conditioned arising of all beings, the bases of their arising in the various planes of existence, and the conditionality of physical and mental phenomena;
- (6) *Amuttaro purisa dammasārathi*, because he is incomparable in taming those who deserve to be tamed;
- (7) *Sattādeva manussānaṃ*, because he is the Teacher of devas and men showing them the Path leading to *Nibbāna*;
- (8) *Buddha*, because he is the Enlightened One, knowing and teaching the Four Ariya Truths:
- (9) *Bhagavā*, because he is endowed with the six exalted qualities, namely, supremacy (*issariya*), knowledge of the nine supramundane factors, i.e., *Magga Phala Nibbāna (Dhamma)*,

fame and following (*yasa*), splendour of physical perfection (*siri*), power of accomplishment (*kāmma*) and diligence (*payatta*).

### The meaning of the above attributes explained.

Although the Buddha is endowed with infinite attributes only the above nine are declared in his discourses as the attributes of the Buddha to the various hearers of the deva and human worlds simply to meet the spiritual or intellectual capacity of the hearer. Each of the nine attributes should be taken as representative of a category of qualities which may be attributed to the Buddha. How the meaning of the nine attributes may be properly understood is given below, not too briefly and yet not too comprehensively.

#### (1) *Araham*.

Here the attribute in the abstract sense and the possessor of the attribute should be distinguished. The former refers to the natural states that arise in the mental process of the Buddha, while the latter refers to the particular continuum of the five aggregates wherein those attributes arise.

There are five beneficial qualities included in the attribute of *Araham*.

They are:

(a) It means the Buddha who has destroyed by the Supramundane Path, *Lokuttarā Magga*, all the defilements *Kilesās*, numbering fifteen hundred, without leaving a trace. Defilements may be compared to one's enemies that always work against one's interest and welfare. The defilements were present in the mind-body continuum of the Buddha-to-be; they are termed as, *ari*, enemies.

When the Buddha, after meditating on (Dependent Origination called) the *Mahāvajira vipassanā* (as mentioned earlier on), won Supreme Enlightenment on the Throne of Victory, the four Supramundane Paths enabled him to destroy all those defilements group by group. So the Supramundane Dhamma, the Four Ariya Paths, are the attribute called *Araham* whereas the Buddha's mind-body continuum of five aggregates is the possessor of that attribute.

(b) Then there is the derivation of the word *araham* from its root *araha*, meaning 'the one who has distanced himself from the defilements.' As explained under (a) above, the Buddha has destroyed all the defilements together with subtle proclivity to some form of habit without leaving a trace; not even a vague impression to suggest their presence. The defilements and the proclivity have no possibility of ever arising in the Buddha. It is in this sense that the Buddha has distanced himself from the defilements and the proclivities. He has banished them through and through. This absolute casting off of all defilements together with proclivities is the attribute of *Araham* and the Buddha's mind-body continuum of five aggregates is the possessor of that attribute. This attribute is derived from the four Ariya Paths.

(The above attributes explained under (a) and (b) above are not possessed by other *Arahats*; they are not entitled to be called *Araham*. The reason is this: all *Arahats* have destroyed all the one thousand five hundred *kilesas*, but unlike the Buddha, certain vague impressions or traces of their proclivity to some habits still remain with them.

The vague impression is some subtle proclivity remaining in the ordinary *Arahat's* mental makeup which can involuntarily cause some action to arise in him as in the case of a worldling. This is because of lingering tendencies for certain action that had repeatedly occurred in the previous existences of the *Arahat* concerned, in whom they remained as a residual force even after destruction of all defilements..

An example of this phenomenon is found in the Venerable *Pilindavaccha*, an *Arahat* who lived during the Buddha's times. He had been for five hundred successive existences a brahmin of a haughty clan. Members of that clan considered every person outside of their clan as a scoundrel and the future *Pilindavaccha* used to address all outsiders as "scoundrels". This habit became ingrained in him over so long a chain of existences that even after becoming an *Arahat* the Venerable *Pilindavaccha* could not help himself address all others - though inadvertently - as "you

scoundrel". This was not through any defilement of conceit of birth but merely habituated action of the past.

(c) *Arahaṃ* can be interpreted as "one who has no secret place for doing evil" (*a + raha*). There are some people who pose themselves as wise men or good men who put on appearances only but who are prone to evil in private. As for the Buddha, since he has destroyed all defilements absolutely together with proclivity to any habitual actions, there can be no secret place for him to do evil nor does he do any evil in any secret place. This noble quality of having no secret place for evil is the attribute of *Arahaṃ* and the Buddha's mind-body continuum of five aggregates is the possessor of that attribute.

(d) *Arahaṃ* can also mean "one who has broken up into pieces the spokes that make up the wheel of existences" (*ara + hata*). Existence in the three spheres - the Sensuous Sphere, the Fine material Sphere and the Non-material Sphere - are figuratively called "the carriage of the round of existences." The continuous arising of the aggregates *khandā*, and the sense-bases *āyatana* and elements, *dhātu* is figuratively called "the wheel of existences" which is the essential part of the carriage of the round of existences. In that wheel there are ignorance and craving for existence as its hub while volitional activities *puññābhisankhāra* that find their expression in meritorious volitions or meritorious actions pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere and the Fine material Sphere make up the spokes of the wheel that arises in the Sensuous Sphere and the Fine material Sphere. Likewise, demeritorious volitions *Apuññābhisankhāra* that cause demeritorious actions pertaining to the four miserable states of *Apāya* make up the spokes of the wheel that arises in the four miserable states. And likewise, meritorious volitions *Āneñjābhisankhāra* pertaining to the Non-material Sphere that cause meritorious actions make up the spokes of the wheel that arises in the Non-material Sphere.

Of the arising of those three types of volitional activities, ignorance and craving for existence are called the hub since the hub is where the turning of the wheel originates, forming thereby the cause of the samsaric cycle. Its force is passed on to the rim or tyre, figuratively, the result (that ends in aging and death), by

the spokes, the volitional activities. (In this first mode of presentation, the gist about the twelve factors of Dependent Origination is that Ignorance and Craving are shown as the hub of the wheel; aging and death are shown as the tyre; and the three type of volitional activities are shown as the spokes of the wheel of *saṃsāra*. The remaining factors of Dependent Origination are shown as the body of the carriage of the round of existences.

It is due to the presence of moral intoxicants (*āsavas*) that ignorance (*avijjā*) arises. Ignorance has its source or cause in moral intoxicants. As such, moral intoxicants can be seen as the axle that is fixed to the hub of ignorance and craving for ignorance.

Thus, in the wheel of *saṃsāra* with the axle of moral intoxicants fitted to the hub of ignorance and craving for existence, with the spokes of three types of volitional activities and the tyre of aging and death, which has been turning since the beginningless *saṃsāra*, that has borne the carriage of existence in the three spheres, the Buddha has, on his attaining perfect Enlightenment, broken up into pieces the spokes of the wheel by standing on the two feet of mental and physical endeavour, taking firm stand on morality *sīla*, and holding in his hand of conviction the pick axe of *Magga ñāṇa* (the merit that exhausts kamma).

Therefore the breaking up of the spokes of the wheel of *saṃsāra* by the pick-axe of the four *Magga ñāṇas* is the attribute of *Arahant*; the mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.

Another explanation:

The beginningless round of existences is called the cycle of *saṃsāra*. This cycle, if reviewed in its ultimate sense, is a set of twelve factors of Dependent Origination.

Ignorance being the source or cause of rebirth is the hub of the wheel. Aging and death being the end of a given existence is the tyre of the wheel. The remaining ten factors, having the hub (ignorance) and the tyre (aging and death) as their two extremities, are the spokes of the wheel.

The Buddha has totally destroyed those spokes of the wheel of *saṃsāra*. Therefore the breaking up of the ten factors of Dependent Origination by the four strokes of the sword of *Magga ñāṇa* is the attribute of *Arahaṃ* in this fourth interpretation. The mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.

(e) *Arahaṃ* can also be interpreted as "he who is worthy of homage by men, devas and brahmas." That is because the Buddha is the noblest person worthy of receiving the special offerings of the four bhikkhu requisites by all the three worlds. That is why when the Buddha arises in the world, powerful devas and men do not make their offerings and pay homage to any other deity but the Buddha.

Let us take some important instances of this fact: Brahma Sahampati made a special offering of a posy of flowers the size of Mount Sineru to the Buddha. Other devas and Kings such as Bimbisāra, Kosala, etc., made the greatest offerings they could afford to the Buddha; further, after the passing away of the Buddha, King Asoka spent ninety-six crores of money to build eighty-four thousand monasteries throughout the Southern Island Continent of Jambūdīpa. in honour of the Buddha.

Therefore the incomparable morality *sīla*, concentration *samādhi*, wisdom *paññā*, emancipation *vimutti* and knowledge leading to emancipation *vimutti ñāṇa dassana*, are the noble qualities that make the Buddha worthy of homage by men, devas and brahmas, that is, the attribute of *Arahaṃ*. The mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute. (The reader is asked to relate these five interpretations to the meaning of *Arahaṃ* given earlier.)

## (2) *Sammāsambuddha*:

(*Sammā*, truly, correctly, *saṃ*, on one's own; *buddho* knower of all knowable things.)

The Buddha discovered the Truth by his own intellect and insight unaided by anyone. Paccekabuddhas also discover the Truth by their

own intellect and insight. However they are not able to teach the Truth they discover to other persons, they do not deserve the epithet *Sammāsambuddha*. They are only called *Sam̐buddha*. The Ariya disciples come to know the Truth only with the assistance of some teacher and they are able to preach it to others, but since they do not discover the Truth by themselves they are also not called *sammāsambuddha*. They are only called *Sam̐ābuddha*. The Buddhas are *Sam̐buddha*, knower of the Truth and all knowable things through self-Enlightenment. They are also *Sam̐ābuddha* because they can teach the four Truths to their disciples each according to their capacity, and in the language they can understand. So, a combination of these two qualities makes the Buddha deserving of the title *Sammāsambuddha*.

Therefore, the four *Magga ñāṇas* that enable the Buddha to know unaided all knowable things with Omniscience at the highest level is this attribute called *sammāsambuddha*. The mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.

### (3) *Vijjācaraṇa sampanno*:

The One endowed with the three knowledges or the eight knowledges and the fifteen forms of perfect practice of morality.

The three knowledges are taught by the Buddha in *Bhayabherava Sutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya*, *Mullapaṃṃāsa*), the eight knowledges are taught by the Buddha in *Ambaṭṭha Sutta* (*Dīgha Nikāya*). The two ways of teaching knowledge in three categories and eight categories is adopted by the Buddhas through compassionate consideration of the mental framework of the hearers on each occasion.

### The Three Knowledges:

- (i) Knowledge of past existences, *pubbe nivāsa Ñāṇa*.
- (ii) Knowledge of the Deva Eye, *Dibbacakkhu Ñāṇa*.
- (iii) Knowledge of the Extinction of moral Intoxicants, *Āsavakkhaya Ñāṇa*.

**The Eight Knowledges:**

- (i) to (iii) above and
- (iv) Insight = knowledge, *Vipassanā Ñāṇa*.
- (v) Psychic power of the mind, *Manomayiddhi Ñāṇa*.
- (vi) Multifarious kinds of psychic power, *Iddhividha Ñāṇa*..
- (vii) Knowledge of the Deva Ear, *Dibbasota Ñāṇa*.
- (viii) Knowledge of reading the mind of others, *Cetopariya Ñāṇa*.

- (i) **Knowledge of past existences:** By this knowledge the Buddha can see the past existences of himself and other beings.
- (ii) **Knowledge of the Deva Eye:** By these knowledge the Buddha can see things at far away places, things concealed, and things too subtle for the ordinary human eye to see.
- (iii) **Knowledge of the extinction of moral Intoxicants:** This is *Arahatta Phala Ñāṇa* which extinguishes all the four moral intoxicants.
- (iv) **Insight Knowledge:** Understanding the impermanence, woefulness and unsubstantiality of all conditioned mental and physical phenomena.
- (v) **Psychic power of the mind:** Power to assume various forms through mastery of mind accomplished by Jhana practice.
- (vi) **Multi-farious kinds of psychic power:** Power to conjure up great numbers of various forms, human or otherwise.
- (vii) **Knowledge of the Deva Ear:** Power to hear sounds from far away places, sounds muffled up and sounds too subtle to hear by the ordinary human ear.
- (viii) **Knowledge of reading the mind of others:** The Buddha can know the mind of others in sixteen different ways.

Of the above eight knowledges, the fourth knowledge, Insight-knowledge, is knowledge pertaining to the sensuous Sphere. The fourth knowledge, knowledge of extinction of *āsavas* is Supramundane



knowledge. The remaining six knowledges pertain to the Fine-material Sphere, Jhānic powers called (*Rūpāvacara kriyā abhiññā Ñāṇa.*)

**The fifteen forms of perfect practice of morality, *Carana.***

- (i) Morality of restraint, *Sīla Saṅvara.*
  - (ii) Control of the faculties, *Indriyesugutta dvārata.*
  - (iii) Knowing the proper extent regarding food, *Bojane matanutā.*
  - (iv) Wakefulness, *Jāgariyā nuyoga.*
  - (v-xi) The seven properties of virtuous persons
  - (xii-xv) The four Fine Material Sphere Jhanas
- (i) **Morality of restraint:** Observance of bhikkhu precepts of restraint., *Pātimokkha Saṅvara Sīla.*
  - (ii) **Control of the faculties:** Keeping watch over the doors of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind with constant mindfulness so as not to allow any demeritoriousness to enter.
  - (iii) **Knowing the proper extent regarding food:** Knowing the proper extent in receiving alms-food and in enjoying it. In receiving alms-food the Buddha considers the degree of devotion of the donor. If the devotion is strong but the gift is small, the Buddha does not scorn the gift for its smallness but accepts it. Although the gift is big if the donor's devotion is weak, the Buddha accepts only a small amount of the gift, considering the weak devotion of the donor. If the gift is big and the donor's devotion is strong the Buddha accepts just an appropriate amount to satisfy his need, This is called knowing the proper extent regarding acceptance of alms-food. In enjoying the food thus collected, the Buddha never eats to the full but stops four or five morsels short of filling the stomach. More important, he never takes food without cultivating the bhikkhu's contemplation while eating.
  - (iv) **Wakefulness:** Wakefulness does not mean not just remaining without sleep The Buddha spends the whole day, the first watch of the night and the last watch of the night in meditation, while walking or sitting, thus keeping away the

hindrances. This purposeful waking is called wakefulness. Out of the twenty-four hours in a day the Buddha sleeps just four hours - between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. - to restore his energy; the remaining twenty hours are spent in meditation and bhikkhu practice.

(v to xi): The Seven Properties of virtuous persons :

- (a) Confidence in the Triple Gem, *Saddhā*.
- (b) Mindfulness, *Sati*.
- (c) Sense of shame to do evil, *Hiri*.
- (d) Sense of horror to do evil, *Ottapa*.
- (e) Wide learning (of the doctrine), *Bāhusacca*.
- (f) Diligence, *Vīriya*.
- (g) Knowledge, *Paññā*.

(xii - xv) The four Fine Material Sphere Jhānas: These refer to the four Jhānas of the Fine Material Sphere under the fourfold reckoning of Jhānas.

(The above fifteen forms of perfect practice of morality lead straight to *Nibbāna*, the Deathless Element, which as worldlings the disciples never have realized before: Hence they are called *Carana*.)

Knowledge (*vijjā*) and perfect practice of morality (*carana*) are complementary to each other. The former is like the eyes, whereas the latter is like the legs. To get to a desired place the eyes without the legs cannot accomplish it any more than legs without the eyes. Therefore knowledge and perfect practice of morality should be cultivated together.

(It might be asked, "Are not knowledge and perfect practice of morality attainable by the *Ariya* disciples?" The answer is yes and no. The *Ariyas* can attain them but they cannot be said to have the attribute of *vijjācarana sampanna* which belongs to the Buddha alone for the reasons given below:

There are two factors in this attribute, being accomplished in knowledge, and being accomplished in perfect practice of

morality. The Buddha's accomplishment of knowledge is the source of Omniscience. His accomplishment of perfect practice of morality is the source of his being the Compassionate One. Being thus accomplished in two ways, the Buddha by his knowledge knows what is beneficial to each individual being and what is not. Further the Buddha; by his perfect practice of morality extends his Compassion on all beings to cause them abstain from what is not beneficial to them and to adopt what is beneficial to them. His accomplishment of knowledge and accomplishment of perfect practice of morality therefore together make his Teaching the doctrine of liberation. It also ensures his disciples that their practice is the righteous, correct practice.)

Therefore, the accomplishment of knowledge and the accomplishment of perfect practice of morality combinedly are called the attribute of *Vijjācaraṇa sampanno*. The mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute. (Here go back to the meaning of this attribute given earlier on to ponder on it and recite it.)

#### (4) *Sugato*:

The Commentary explains this attribute in four ways:

- (a) *Su*, well; *gata*, gone. Thus the going, i.e., the attaining of the Ariya Path, hence the "One who has attained the Ariya Paths" is the first meaning: The Ariya Path is faultless or flawless and therefore is magnificent. Therefore the Buddha is called *sugata* because he proceeds to the haven from all dangers, by the magnificent Path, in an unattached attitude. (Under this interpretation, the Ariya Path is the attribute and the mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.)
- (b) *Su*, *Nibbāna* the excellent goal; *gata*, proceeds there by means of knowledge. *Nibbāna* is the excellent goal because it is the end of all strife and is the Ultimate Peace. Attaining that excellent goal with *Magga Ñāṇa* at one sitting is the Buddha's attribute. (Here the Ariya Path is the attribute and the mind-body continuum of

the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.) In both these two interpretations, proceeding to *Nibbāna* means having *Nibbāna* as object of thought. The going or proceeding here is by means of knowledge only and does not, cannot, connote the physical act of going which applies where a certain geographical place is the destination.

- (c) *Su: Sammā*, well; *gata*: gone to *Nibbāna* by means of Path Knowledge, *Magga Ñāna*. Here the adverb "well" denotes freedom from defilements. The going is well since the defilements destroyed by the four Path knowledges do not arise in the Buddha any more.

In all the three above interpretations the ultimate sense is the same: having *Nibbāna* as object of thought through the four *Maggas*. This is the first explanation of *Sugata* in the brief meaning given earlier on.

- (d) *Su: Sammā*, well; *gata*, speaks appropriately on appropriate occasions. Here *gada* is the root that is changed into *gata*. The appropriate speech or speaking well is further explained thus :

"There are six kinds of speech among people; of these six, four should be rejected, i.e., not resorted to, and only two should be adopted."

- (i) There is the kind of speech which is not true, which is not beneficial and not liked by the other party:

(e.g.: saying that a virtuous person is wicked.) The Buddha avoids this kind of speech.

- (ii) There is the kind of speech which is true but which is of no benefit to, and not acceptable to the other party.

(e.g.: calling a bad man a bad man, not intending to correct him but merely out of malice.) The Buddha avoids this kind of speech also.

- (iii) There is the kind of speech which is true, which is beneficial but is not liked by the other party to hear it. (e.g.: Referring to

Devadatta as the One heading for Niraya - spoken by the Buddha out of compassion for him.) The Buddha speaks this kind of speech when occasion demands it.

- (iv) There is the kind of speech which is not true, which is not beneficial to the other party, but is liked by him. (e.g.: quoting the Vedas and claiming that an evil deed such as killing will lead to the good destinations.) The Buddha avoids this kind of speech also.
- (v) There is the kind of speech which is true but is not beneficial to the other party, and he likes to hear it. (e.g.: a true statement which is going to drive a wedge between the other parties.) The Buddha avoids this kind of speech also.
- (vi) There is the kind of speech which is true, which is beneficial to the other party, and he likes to hear it. (e.g.: discourse on alms-giving, morality, etc., given on appropriate occasions.) The Buddha speaks this kind of speech when the occasion is appropriate.

Out of the above six kinds of speech the Buddha speaks only the third and the sixth kinds only.

Regarding the third kind above, if a statement is true and is beneficial to the other party, although he does not like to hear it, the Buddha would say it because it would benefit other people who hear it, and will be for the good of the world at large.

Thus if a statement is true and is beneficial to the hearer, the Buddha says it whether he likes to hear it or not. Therefore the Buddha is called *Sugata*, the One who speaks what is beneficial and true. The speaking of what is beneficial and true is the attribute, and the mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute. (refer to the brief meaning of this attribute given earlier on.)

### Abhaya Rājakumāra Sutta in brief.

The six kinds of speech are featured in *Majjhima Nikāya*, 1. *Gahapati vagga*, 8: *Abhaya rāja kumāra Sutta*; a brief account follows:

At one time the Bhagavā was staying in Veluvana monastery at Rājagaha. During that time, Prince Abhaya, son of King Bimbisāra approached his teacher Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta and, making obeisance to him, sat in a suitable place. Then Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta said to Prince Athaya:

"Go, Prince, to Samaṇa Gotama and accuse him with falsity in doctrine. If you can accuse him you will gain wide fame as one who can accuse even Samaṇa Gotama with falsity in doctrine."

"But, Venerable Sir," said Prince Abhaya, "how am I to accuse Samaṇa Gotama, who is so powerful, of falsity in doctrine?"

"Prince, go to Samaṇa Gotama and say this : "Venerable Sir, would you say something that is unacceptable or unwelcome to someone?" And if Samaṇa Gotama were to reply, Prince, the Tathāgata would say something that is unacceptable or unwelcome to someone," in that case you should say to Samaṇa Gotama, 'Venerable Sir, if that is so, what is the difference between the Venerable One and any other worldling? For any worldling would say something unacceptable or unwelcome to someone. (1)

"If on the other hand, Samaṇa Gotama replies, 'Prince, the Tathāgata would not say something that is unacceptable or unwelcome to someone.' in that case you should say to Samaṇa Gotama, 'Venerable Sir, if that is so, why did the Venerable One said to Devadatta, "you, Devadatta who is heading for the *niraya* realms, Devadatta who is going to suffer in the *niraya* realm throughout an aeon, Devadatta who is irredeemable? If I may add, the Venerable Devadatta is very angry and miserable at those remarks.' (2)

"Prince, if you only confront Samaṇa Gotama with the above question which allows no escape for him, that Samaṇa Gotama will be just helpless like a man who has swallowed a fish-hook."

(It took Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta four months to think out the above question with which to harass the Bhagavā. Then he taught it to his disciple Prince Abhaya. Before the Advent of the Buddha there were six religious teachers who led their own sects, claiming themselves as Buddhas. People could not discriminate truth from

untruth and went, (each after his or her liking) to those teachers. Only when the Buddha arose in the world, those adherents who possessed previous merit left them in big numbers and became disciples of the Buddha.

Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta was sore with the thought that-Samaṇa Gotama had won over his followers. He thought hard how to discredit the Buddha: "I must find out a question to confront Samaṇa Gotama with, a question so neat that Samaṇa Gotama would be caught in it helplessly." He fed himself well on the offerings of daily food sent to him from his royal disciple Prince Abhaya and spent days thinking of a problem that would confound Samaṇa Gotama. When a question came to his thought he turned it over in his mind and found a flaw which the Buddha would easily point out. And when he thought of another question he would later detect a flaw there, and had to drop it. And thus he spent four hard months in thinking out a 'really hard nut to crack? At last he got the question: "Would the Buddha speak something that would be unacceptable or unwelcome to someone?"

Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta was sure that he had found a question which Samaṇa Gotama would be quite at a loss to find fault either in its presentation or in its answer. He then thought about some suitable agent who would confront the Buddha. He remembered Prince Abhaya whom he believed was wise. So he taught the question to the prince and persuaded him to go and present it to the Buddha.)

Prince Abhaya was a censorious person and so gladly undertook to do what his master asked. "Very well, Master," he said, and after making obeisance to Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta, left him. He went to the Veḷuvana monastery where the Bhagavā was staying, and after making obeisance to the Bhagavā, he sat in a suitable place. Then he looked at the sun which was about to set. He thought, "It took four months for my teacher to formulate this question. If such a profound question were to be taken up point by point, there would be no sufficient time for today. "I will confront the Buddha tomorrow at my palace," he thought to himself. So he said to the Bhagavā, "Venerable Sir, may the

Venerable One, for the sake of my merit, kindly accept offering of food to the Venerable One and three bhikkhus (at my place) tomorrow."

(The number of three bhikkhus only being invited by Prince Abhaya is based on two considerations: (1) If a big company of bhikkhus were present on the occasion of his putting the question, even though the question itself is in a few words only, there might be wide discussions by the company and other matters and other discourses might arise, in which case controversy and heated debates might occur, (2) If no bhikkhus were invited to accompany the Buddha, people might think, "this Prince Abhaya is a stingy man. He knows the Bhagavā goes on the daily alms-round accompanied by hundreds of bhikkhus, and yet he invites only the Bhagavā.")

The Bhagavā accepted the invitation of Prince Abhaya by remaining silent. Prince Abhaya, having noted that his invitation was accepted, rose from his seat and, making obeisance to the Bhagavā, returned to his palace.

On the next morning the Bhagavā went to the palace of Prince Abhaya and took his meal there. After the meal was finished Prince Abhaya took his seat at a lower place and addressed the Bhagavā as taught by Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta thus :

"Venerable Sir, would the Venerable One say something that is unacceptable or unwelcome to someone?" The Bhagavā said to Prince Abhaya: "Prince Abhaya, regarding your question no single answer can be given in a straight yes or no. (The Bhagavā in effect said, "A speech of this nature as described by you may or may not be spoken by the Tathāgata. If by saying it there is benefit (to the other party) The Tathāgata would say it. If there is no benefit the Tathāgata would not say it.")

By this single statement the Bhagavā crushed the question like a mountain erect shattered by a thunder bolt, thus disposing of the weighty question which took four months for Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta to formulate.



Thereupon Prince Abhaya could no longer challenge the Bhagava and said to the Bhagavā: "Venerable Sir, by this question all Nigaṇṭha have gone to wreck and ruin!" "Prince, why do you say, 'Venerable Sir, by this question all Nigaṇṭha have gone to wreck and ruin'?" Prince Abhaya then recounted the whole episode about his visit to Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta and the mission he was assigned by his master.

At that time Prince Abhaya had on his lap his infant child who could only lie flat on its back. (The Prince placed the baby there on purpose. Wherever dogmatic persons enter into a debate on a matter of doctrine they used to keep something handy with them such as a fruit or a flower or a book. As the debate proceeds, and if one of the disputants is gaining his points, he would trounce the opponent relentlessly. But if the going is tougher than is expected and defeat is likely, he would pretend to be smelling the flower, or tasting the fruit, or reading the book that is in his hand, as if he was not following the trend of the arguments. Here Prince Abhaya placed the infant on his lap for the same purpose. He thought to himself, "Samaṇa Gotama is a great man who has won many a debate on doctrine. He is the one who quashes others' doctrines. If I were to win it is well and good. But if I should be cornered I would pinch the baby and announce, 'O friends, how the baby cries! Let us break the debate now and continue later.'"

The Bhagavā being infinitely wiser than Prince Abhaya chose to make the infant itself to trounce the prince. And even before Prince Abhaya could find time to pinch the baby, the Bhagavā asked Prince Abhaya thus : "Prince Abhaya, what do you think of this? You may answer whatever you think fit. Suppose this infant on your lap, either due to your negligence or to the negligence of its nurse, were to put a piece of wood or a potsherd or a broken piece of glass bottle, in its mouth, what would you do to it (the infant)?"

And Prince Abhaya answered: "Venerable Sir, I would take out the piece of wood or potsherd or broken glass from the baby quickly. If there should be difficulty in taking it out at the first attempt, then I would hold the baby's head fast with my left hand, and, with the bent forefinger of my right hand, I would dislodge the piece of wood or potsherd or broken glass from its mouth even if that operation might

draw blood. I would do it because I have great love and compassion on my baby."

"Prince Abhaya, on the same analogy - There are these six kinds of speech:

- (1) The Tathāgata does not speak that kind of speech which is not true, which is not beneficial and which is unacceptable to the other party.
- (2) The Tathāgata does not speak that kind of speech which is true but is not beneficial and which is unacceptable to the other party.
- (3) The Tathāgata would, if occasion demands, speak that kind of speech which is true, which is beneficial but which is unwelcome to the other party.
- (4) The Tathāgata does not speak that kind of speech which is not true, which is not beneficial, but which is welcome by the other party.
- (5) The Tathāgata does not speak that kind of speech which is true, which is not beneficial but which is welcome by the other party.
- (6) The Tathāgata would, if he sees benefit to the hearers, speak that kind of speech which is true, which is beneficial, and which is welcome by the other party.

"Prince Abhaya, out of those six kinds of speech, the Tathāgata avoids four of them and speaks two of them. This is because I have great good will and compassion on all beings."

(The gist is that the Buddha speaks what is beneficial and true regardless of whether the other party likes it or not.)

(The Commentary terms the fourth kind of speech above as *aṭṭhānīya kathā*, an absurdity, i.e., a speech that is not true, and not beneficial, but is liked by the other party, and illustrates it with the story of a rustic old man. It is related below for general knowledge.)

### The story of a Rustic Old Man.

A rustic old man was drinking in a liquor shop in town. A group of swindlers joined him and conspired between themselves to divest the old man of his possessions by trickery. They agreed among themselves, "We shall relate our experiences each in turn. Anyone who says he does not believe it will lose all his possessions to the story-teller and also become his slave." And they said to the old man, "Grand uncle, do you agree to this proposition?" The old man replied, "So be it boys, so be it."

Then the first town dweller at the drinking party related his story thus:

"Friends, when my mother conceived me she had a particular longing to eat the wood apple. And as she had no one to pick the fruit for her she sent me to pick a wood apple. Then I who was in my mother's womb went to a wood apple tree. As I could not climb up the tree I took hold of my two legs and threw them upwards into the tree as I would a wooden club. Then I went from one bough to the other and picked the wood apples. After that I found myself unable to climb down the tree and so I went back home, took a ladder and used it to get down. I gave the fruit, to my mother. They were of a size as big as a water pot.

All the wood apples were carried down the tree in my pouch fashioned from the loin cloth I was wearing. Out of my gathering of wood apples my mother ate sixty of them at one sitting till she satisfied herself with the special longing during conception. The remainder of the fruit after my mother had eaten were for distribution to all the villagers both young and old. The front room (living room) of our house is sixteen cubits wide, we stored the wood apples in it after removing all furniture from there. The fruit filled the room to the roof. The surplus fruit had to be piled up outside the house and it was as high as a hillock eighty cubits high. Now, friends, what do you say? Do you believe the story or not?"

The rustic old man remained silent. The town folks at the drinking party answered (in the positive). Then they asked the old man "Do you

believe the story? "The old man replied, "Well, this is a vast country. It is believable in this vast country."

The remaining men at the drinking party told their tall stories in turn. And then it was the old man's turn. "Now listen to my story," he said. "Not only are the houses in your town big and grand; houses in our village are also big and grand. I want you to note that our family specializes in cotton plantation. We have hundreds of acres under cotton crib.

Amidst the vast cotton plantation we had a particularly big cotton plant that grew to a height of eighty cubits. There were five branches in it. Of those five the four were fruitless, but the fifth one turning to the east bore a huge cotton pod as big as a water jar. From that pod with six compartments there bloomed forth six blossoms of cotton flower.

"I shaved myself, bathed, and after applying ungent to my body, I went to the cotton field and when I saw the six big cotton blossoms from the same pod I was very pleased. I reached out to them and plucked them. Then, Lo and behold! In place of those six cotton blossoms there were in my hands six strong slave men. Those six slave men of mine left me and ran away to other places. I have not seen them for a long time. Now only I have found them: they are none other than the six of you. You, my boy, is Nanda my slave. And you are Poṇṇa my slave. And you are Vaḍḍhamāna my slave. And you are Citta my slave. And you are Maṅgala my slave. And you are Poṭṭhinya my slave. Then the old man rose up suddenly and stood holding the six knots of the six men firmly in his hand.

The six town dwellers who were at the drinking party could not deny that the story was not true, for if they did, they would, under the terms of agreement, become slaves to the old man, all the same. The old man then took the six men to the court where they were officially branded as slaves and they remained so for as long as the old man lived.

This sort of nonsensical speech may be amusing but it is not true and is not beneficial. This kind of speech is never spoken by the Buddha.

Then Prince Abhaya said to the Bhagavā: "Venerable Sir, when wise princes, wise brahmins, wise householders and wise bhikkhus come to

you with their various questions do you have thought out beforehand answers to fit their possible questions? Or do the answers come to mind instantly?"

The Bhagavā said to the Prince, "Prince Abhaya, in that case I will put a question to you. You may answer it in any way you like. Now, what do you think of this? You are an expert in chariots, are you not?"

"That is true, Venerable Sir, I am an expert about the chariot and its various components."

"Prince, what do you think of this? If anybody should ask you and ask, 'what is this part of the chariot called?' Would you have the answer thought out beforehand, or would you answer it straight away instantly?"

"Venerable Sir, I am reputed as an expert about chariots. I am skillful about all the components of a chariot. All the components of the chariot are clear in my mind. Therefore any question concerning a chariot is at my finger tips.

"Prince, in much the same way, when wise princes, wise brahmins, wise householders, and wise bhikkhus come to me with their various questions, the answer comes to my mind instantly. This is because the Tathāgata is possessed of the *Dhamma dhātu*, which is Omniscience, the penetrating knowledge about all things knowable."

When this was said in a wonderfully amiable manner, Prince Abhaya was deeply impressed. He begged of the Bhagavā to be his refuge, the Dhamma to be his refuge, the Sangha to be his refuge, and became a disciple of the Buddha

(Later Prince Abhaya became a bhikkhu, and taking up bhikkhu practice ardently, he attained Arahātship with the four Discrimination *Paṭisambhidā*, the six special apperceptions *Chalabhiññā* and knowledge of five outstanding features, namely, penetration, facility, quickness, breadth and brilliance. (See details in Apadāna Pāli, Volume II).

**(5) Lokavidū:**

*Loka*, the five aggregate that are clung to (*Upādānakkhandhā*); (in another sense), the world of sentient beings (*Satta loka*), the world of conditioned, phenomena, (*Saṅkhāra loka*), the world as the bases of various planes of existence (*Okāsaloka*). *Vidu*, the one who has analytical knowledge and complete comprehension.

The *Visuddhimagga* explains *lokavidū* in two ways: Under the first method, *loka* is interpreted as the five aggregates that are clung to. These five are understood: (a) as being woeful (*dukkha*), (b) as originating in craving (*taṇhā*), (c) as ceasing when *Nibbāna* is realized; and (d) that the *Ariya* Path is the true path leading to *Nibbāna*, the cessation of the aggregates. Thus *lokavidū* means the Buddha that has complete knowledge about the five aggregates that are clung to.

In knowing about the world of the five aggregates that are clung to, the Buddha knows not only the five aggregates but knows them in their four aspects that make his knowledge complete and perfect. The four aspects are: (a) He understands that the five aggregates that are clung to are woeful indeed (*dukkha*): (b) He understands the originating aspect of these five aggregates that – craving is the origin of the five aggregates; (c) He understands *Nibbāna*, the cessation aspect of the five aggregates; (d) He understands the way leading to cessation, i.e., the *Ariya* Path. Thus the Buddha has a complete understanding of the five aggregates that are clung to. That is why the Buddha is called *lokovidū*. Under the first method, the complete all-round knowledge from the four aspects of the five aggregates of clinging is the attribute of *lokavidū*. The five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.

(2) Although the first method of interpretation is complete about the world of the five aggregates, the method does not describe *loka* fully yet. Therefore the Commentary gives a second interpretation.

Under the second method *loka* is taken to mean the world of sentient beings (*satta loka*), the world of conditioned phenomena (*saṅkhāra loka*) and the world constituting the bases for the various planes of existence (*okāsa loka*). *Loka* means that which rises and falls, that

undergoes rises and falls. In Abhidhamma point of view, the aggregates of living things are called *indriyabaddha khandā* (the aggregates connected with faculties). The aggregates of non-living things are called *anindriyabaddha khandā* (the aggregates divested of faculties).

- (1) The aggregates of living things are liable to attachment to visible objects, etc., and hence called *satta*. Since these aggregates form the bases of merit or demerit that rise and fall, they are (also) called (*loka*). Thus we have the term *sattaloka*.
- (2) The aggregates of non-living things such as the infinite world systems (*cakkavaḷā*), the bases of sentient existence (*bhūmi*) and mansions, etc., are the bases where sentient beings exist, whether they are liable to get frightened as in the case of worldlings, Stream Enterers and Once-Returners, or are free from fear as in the case of Non-Returners and Arahats, and are called *okāsa*. And since these bases are the places where sentient beings rise and fall, they are called *loka*. Thus we have the term *okāsaloka*.
- (3) Both the living things and non-living things are conditioned by causes and are called *saṅkhāra*. The world is subject to rising and falling, and hence called *loka*. Thus we have the term *saṅkhāraloka*. This *saṅkhāraloka* is fully understood by the Buddha.

We shall expand on this as explained in the *Visuddhimagga*: (2) *Eko loko sabbe sattā āhāraṭṭhitikā*. - "all beings have each its own conditioning factors; this is a world in itself." (*Paṭisambhidāmagga* quoted here). Therefore *loka* here means *saṅkhāraloka*. (This is because although reference is made to all beings, the crucial point here is the conditioned nature which is causing the rise and fall of all beings.)

The Buddha has full knowledge about the conditioned world in that he knows it (1) as a single factor that causes all conditioned things; (2) as two conditioned things, mind and matter; (3) as three conditioned things in the three kinds of sensation; (4) as four conditioned things in the four conditional factors, *āhāra*; (5) as five conditioned things in the five aggregates that are clung to; (6) as six conditioned things in the internal sense-bases; (7) as seven conditioned things in the seven stations of consciousness; (8) as eight conditioned things in the eight

worldly conditions; (9) as nine conditioned things in the nine bases of existence for beings; (10) as ten conditioned things in the ten corporeal sense-bases; (11) as twelve conditioned things in the twelve sense-bases; (12) as eighteen conditioned things in the eighteen elements.

(1) Just as the Buddha has full knowledge of the conditioned world so also he knows fully about the world of living beings in that (i) He knows the proclivities of individuals *āsaya*, (ii) He knows the latent tendencies in individuals *anusaya*; (iii) He knows the habitual conduct of individuals *carita*; (iv) He knows the leanings or dispositions of individuals *adhimutti*. He knows individuals who have little dust of defilements in their eye of wisdom, and he knows individuals who have a thick dust of defilements in their eye of wisdom. He knows individuals who have sharp faculties such as conviction, and he knows individuals who have dull faculties. He knows individuals who have a natural desire for liberation and individuals who have little desire for liberation. He knows individuals who are endowed with righteousness such as conviction and wisdom that facilitate them to win Path-knowledge, and individuals not so endowed. He knows individuals who are free from drawbacks in their previous deeds, defilements and resultants that mar the attainment of Path knowledge and individuals not so free.

(1) *Āsaya*: proclivities.

*Āsaya* means the mental bent or disposition of individuals. For example, a forest deer is naturally bent to live in the forest; he may go out to the fields to graze but his home is the forest. Similarly, individuals attend their mind to various sense-objects but after wandering about from object to object the mind of those who are bent on faring in the round of existences remain in wrong views, whereas the mind of those who are bent on liberation from the round of existences, are pure, and remain in knowledge. So wrong views and knowledge are called *āsaya*, proclivities.

The proclivity of wrong views *diṭṭhiāsaya* is again of two kinds: the proclivity towards the wrong view of annihilation *uccheda diṭṭhi* and the proclivity towards the wrong view of eternalism *sassata diṭṭhi*.



The proclivity of knowledge *paññā āsaya* also is of two kinds: Insight-knowledge tending to Path-knowledge *vipassanā paññā āsaya* and Path-knowledge itself which is the knowledge in seeing things as they really are *yathābhuta ñāṇa āsaya*.

In knowing the proclivities of individuals, the Buddha knows: (a) that this individual is bent on faring in the round of existences and has a proclivity towards the wrong view of annihilation; (b) that this individual is bent on faring in the round of existences and has a proclivity towards the wrong view of eternalism; (c) that this individual is bent on liberation from the round of existences, a pure being, and has Insight-knowledge; and (d) that this individual is bent on liberation from the round of existences and has Path-knowledge.

## (2) *Anusaya*: Latent tendencies

These are defilements that have not been eradicated by *Magga Ñāṇa* and are liable to arise perceptibly whenever circumstances prevail. These *anusayas* are of seven kinds. They are called the elements of latent tendencies. They are: (i) *Kāmarāgā (nusaya)* the seed element of greed, (ii) *Bhavarāgānusaya*, the seed element of attachment to existence, (iii) *Paṭighānusaya*, the seed element of hatred, (iv) *Mānānusaya*, the seed element of conceit, (v) *Diṭṭhānusaya*, the seed element of wrong view, (vi) *Vicikicchānusaya*, the seed element of uncertainty, (vii) *Avijjānusaya*, the seed element of bewilderment.

In knowing the latent tendencies of individuals, the Buddha knows: that this individual is full of the seed element of greed; that this individual is full of the seed element of attachment to existence, that this individual is full of the seed element of hatred, . . . p . . . , the seed element of conceit, . . . p . . . the seed element of wrong views, . . . p . . . the seed element of uncertainty, . . . p . . . the seed element of bewilderment.

*Anusaya kilesa*, it should be noted, is of three degrees according to its tendency to occur, namely: (i) latent seed element of defilements; (ii) defilements that have actually arisen with their three phases of arising (*upāda*), developing (or momentary presence (*thīti*)), and dissolution

(*bhaṅga*); (iii) defilements that have exploded into physical or verbal misconduct.

(Let us illustrate this:)

Supposing some worldling in whom defilements have not yet been eradicated by *Magga Nāṇa* were making an offering. Even during the meritorious act while sublime meritorious thoughts (*mahā kusala cittas*) are arising in his mind, if he were to meet with some pleasant sense-object, this circumstance tends to bring alive sensuous thoughts (seed element of greed) in the donor because (being a worldling,) he has not eradicated greed. When further contact occurs with the sense-object that is agreeable to him, that seed element of greed grows into decidedly defiled thoughts called *pariyutthāna kilesa*. Then if he checks himself with right attention, the thoughts defiled by greed may subside. If, however, instead of right attention, he is driven by wrong attention, the defiled thoughts become translated into wicked acts, either bodily or verbally. This is the explosive stage of the defilement of greed *vītikkaṃma kilesa*. This is an example of the way the defilement of greed grows from its latent tendency or seed element to *overt* acts in three progressive stages. The same principle also applies to other defilements such as hatred, etc.

### (3) *Carita*: habitual conduct

*Carita* means meritorious action or demeritorious action. In another sense, it refers to six kinds of habituated action or habitual conduct that occurs frequently in the present life, namely, attachment or greed (*rāga*), hatred or anger (*dosa*), bewilderment (*moha*), faith, wisdom (*Bhuddhi*), and cogitation (*Vitakka*).

(The two *Pāli* terms *carita* and *vāsanā* should be distinguished. The vague impression of habituated acts, whether good or bad, in previous existences that persist till the present existence, is called *vāsanā*. The kind of conduct, out of the six kinds described above, the one which is apt to occur for most of the time in the present existence is called *carita*.)

The Buddha knows the *carita* of every individual such as: this individual is predominantly of good conduct (*sucarita*); this individual is predominantly of evil conduct (*duccarita*); this individual is predominantly of greedy (lustful) conduct (*rāga carita*); that this individual is predominantly of hateful conduct (*dosa carita*); that this individual is predominantly of bewildered conduct (*moha carita*); that this individual is predominantly of faithful conduct (*saddhā carita*); that this individual is predominantly of wise conduct (*bhuddhi carita*); that this individual is predominantly of a cogitative conduct (*vitakka carita*). Further, the Buddha also knows the nature of those six types of conduct, the defiling conditions, the purifying conditions, the essential conditions, the results, and the consequences of those six types of conduct.

#### (4) *Adhimutti*: Leaning or disposition

*Adhimutti* means the natural disposition of individuals. There are two kinds of *adhimutti*, namely, the natural preference for or leaning towards evil (*hīnadhi mutti*), and the natural preference for, or leaning toward noble things (*paṇīṭadhi mutta*). People (generally) associate with persons of like nature; those of evil disposition associate with persons of evil disposition; those of noble disposition associate with persons of noble disposition.

The Buddha knows the type of leaning in every individual: whether a certain person is of evil disposition or of noble disposition.

Further, the Buddha knows the degree of disposition in each individual : whether it is high, or lower, or lowest. For disposition depends on the degree of faith, endeavour, mindfulness, concentration, and knowledge, which are the five Faculties.

Thus the Buddha knows fully about living beings in respect of the four proclivities (*āsaya*), the seven latent tendencies (*ānisaya*); the three volitional activities (*abhisankhāras*) or the six types of habitual conduct (*carita*), and the types and degrees of leaning or disposition.

(3) Just as the Buddha has complete knowledge of the world of living beings, he also has complete knowledge of the world of non-living

things - the places where living beings have their abodes such as the world systems (*cakkavāla*), mansions, forests and mountains, etc.

Let me expand on this:

A world system called *cakkavāla* or *lokadhātu* is bounded on four sides with tall mountains like a stone fencing. (*cakka*, circular; *vāla*, encircling ring of mountains.) The term *cakkavāla* comes to be so called because it is a world system encircled by rocky mountains. A world-system is 12,03,450 (one million two hundred and three thousand, four hundred and fifty) *yojanas* from east to west, and from south to north. The circumference of this world-system is 36,10,350 (three million six hundred and ten thousand, three hundred and fifty) *yojanās*.

In a world-system, the earth's thickness is 240,000 (two hundred and forty thousand) *yojanās*, the upper half of it being earth and the lower half being rock in structure.

The earth is supported by a mass of water which is 480,000 (four hundred and eighty thousand) *yojanās* in thickness. Beneath the mass of water there is the mass of air which is 960,000 (nine hundred and sixty thousand) *yojanās* supporting it. And beneath the mass of air is the infinite expanse of space. This is the foundational structure of a world-system.

At the centre of the earth's surface there arises Mount Sineru the lower part of which is submerged in the ocean that is 84,000 (eighty-four thousand) *yojanās* deep and rises 84,000 (eighty-four thousand) *yojanas* above the water.

Encircling Mount Sineru, there is the first ring of mountains called *yugandhara* (half) of which 42,000 (forty-two thousand) *yojanās* is submerged in the ocean and (half) of which 42,000 (forty-two thousand) *yojanās* rises up above the water. (1)

Beyond (the first) ring of *yugandhara mountains*, there is the (second) ring of mountains called *Isadhara* of which 21,000 (twenty-one thousand) *yojanās* is submerged in the ocean and 21,000 (twenty-one thousand) *yojanās* rises up above the water. (2)

Beyond the (second) ring of *Isadhara* mountains there is the (third) ring of mountains called *Karavīka* of which 10,500 (ten thousand and five hundred) *yojanās* is submerged in the ocean and 10,500 (ten thousand and five hundred) *yojanās* rises up above the water. (3)

Beyond the (third) ring of *Karavīka* mountains there is the (fourth) ring of mountains called *Sudassana* of which 5,250 (five thousand two hundred and fifty) *yojanās* is submerged in the water and 5,250 (five thousand two hundred and fifty) *yojanās* rises up above the water. (4)

Beyond the (fourth) ring of *sudassana* mountains there is the (fifth) ring of mountains called *Nemindhara* of which 2,625 (two thousand six hundred and twenty-five) *yojanās* is submerged in the ocean and 2,625 (two thousand six hundred and twenty-five) *yojanās* rises up above the water. (5)

Beyond the (fifth) ring of *Nemindhara* mountains there is the (sixth) ring of mountains called *Vinataka* of which 1,312 (thirteen hundred and twelve) *yojanās* is submerged in the ocean and 1,312 (thirteen hundred and twelve) *yojanās* rises up above the water. (6)

Beyond the (sixth) ring of *Vinataka* mountains there is the (seventh) ring of mountains called *Assakaṇṇa* of which 656 (six hundred and fifty-six) *yojanās* is submerged in the ocean and 656 (six hundred and fifty-six) *yojanās* rises up above the water. (7)

Between Mount Sineru and between the encircling rings of mountains there are seven rings of rivers called *Sīdā*.

In the ocean lying to the southern side of Mount Sineru there is the southern Island Continent called *Jambudipa*, called after the Rose Apple Tree growing at the forefront of the Island, and this Island is surrounded by five hundred lesser Islands.

Similarly in the ocean lying to the western side of Mount Sineru there is the western Island Continent called *Aparagoyāna*; on the northern side the northern Island Continent of *Uttarakuru*; and on the eastern side the Eastern Island continent called *Pubba videha*, each of them surrounded by five hundred lesser islands.

In the Southern Island Continent of Jambūdīpa, the Himavantā mountain is five hundred *yojanās* high and three thousand *yojanās* broad lengthwise and breadthwise. It is graced by eighty-four thousand peaks.

The Rose Apple Tree growing at the forefront of Jambūdīpa Island Continent is of these dimensions: its crown is fifteen *yojanās* across; from the ground up to the trunk where the big boughs branch out, the height of the trunk is fifty *yojanās*, the big boughs are each fifty *yojanās* long, each with a foliage a hundred *yojanās* across, and a hundred *yojanās* high.

Of the same dimensions have the following six other great trees which last till the end of the world system: the trumpet flower tree in the realm of Assuras at the old site of Tāvatiṃsā devas, at the foot of Mount Sineru; the silk cotton tree in the realm of Garudas, the nudea sessilifolia in the western Island Continent, the wishing tree in the northern Island Continent, the rain tree in the Eastern Island Continent, and the Indian Coral tree in the Tāvatiṃsā deva realm.

The circular ring of mountain that marks the limit of the universe has 82,000 (eighty-two thousand) *yojanās* submerged under the ocean and 82,000 (eighty-two thousand) *yojanās* rising up above the water.

The shape of the Jambūdīpa Island Continent is a trapezium (the shape of the front part of a bullock-cart); the western Island Continent is of the shape of a brass mirror (i.e., circular); the Eastern Island Continent is a crescent; and the Northern Island Continent is a square. The inhabitants of those Island Continents are said to have faces that have the same shape as that of the respective Island Continents). (Visuddhimagga Mahāṭikā, Volume I)

In each world-system there is (the mansion of) the Moon which has a diameter of forty-nine *yojanās*; (the mansion of) the Sun which has a diameter of fifty *yojanās*.

The realm of Tāvatiṃsā devas, the realm of Asuras, the *avīci niraya*, the jambūdīpa Island Continent - each of these four places is ten

thousand *yojanās* wide. They are called the Four Areas of Ten - thousand (*yojanās*) width.

The Northern Island Continent is seven thousand *yojanās* wide; the Eastern Island Continent is of the same size; the Northern Island Continent is eight thousand *yojanās* wide.

All the above features constitute one world-system. The void spaces where three of the world systems touch one another are the Lokantarika desolate regions.

In each world-system the three miserable states, namely, the animal world, the *petas'* realm and the realm of *asurakāyas*, have their abodes on the earth, side by side with the human world. Underneath the layer of earth lie the eight *niraya* realms, each below the other, and each surrounded by lesser realms of continuous suffering called *ussada nirayas*. The *niraya* realms, the animal world, *petas* and *asurakāyas* are called the four miserable states of *apaya*.

The human world is located on the earth. The deva realm of the Four Great Kings is located on the summit of Mount Yugandhara, at half the height of Mount Sineru. The Tāvatiṃsā deva realm is located on the summit of Mount Sineru. These two deva realms are therefore terrestrial. Above the Tāvatiṃsā deva realms lies Yāmā deva realm; above that realm Tusitā deva realm; above that realm lies Nimmānarati deva realm; above that realm lies Paranimmita vasavatti deva realm. These six deva realms together with the human world are called the seven fortunate Sensuous realms (*Kamā sugati bhūmi*). These seven fortunate realms and the four miserable states of *apaya* together are called the eleven Sensuous realms (*Kamā bhūmis*).

Above the six deva realms pertaining to the sensuous Sphere, there are three brahma realms of Brahmāpārisajjā (Brahmas' retinue), Brahmāpurohitā (Brahmas' Ministers) and Mahābrahmā (Great Brahmas) which are the three brahma realms pertaining to the first jhāna of the Fine Material Sphere (*Rūpā vacara*). They are on the same plane.

Above the three Brahma realms pertaining to the first jhāna of the Fine Material Spheres, there are the three brahma realms pertaining to

the second jhāna of the Fine Material Sphere on the same plane, namely, Parittābhā (Brahmas of limited radiance), Appamāṇābhā (Brahmas of measureless radiance), and Abhassarā (Brahmas of streaming radiance).

Above the three Brahma realms pertaining to the second jhāna of the Fine Material Sphere, there are the three Brahma realms pertaining to the third jhāna of the Fine Material Sphere on the same plane, namely, Parittasubhā (Brahmas of limited glory), Appamāṇāsubha (Brahmas of measureless glory), and Subbhakiṇṇa (Brahmas of refulgent glory).

Above these realms there are two Brahma realms (also pertaining to the Fine Material Sphere) on the same level, namely, Vehapphala ('very fruitful') and Asaññasatta non-percipient beings). Above these are the Avihā ('bathed in their own prosperity'), Atappā ('untormenting'), Sudassā ('fair-to-see), Sudassī ('clear-sighted') and Akanitṭha ('Supreme') - five pure Abodes, lying one above the other successively Vehapphala, Asaññasatta and the Five Pure Abodes pertain to the fourth jhāna of the Fine Material Sphere. Thus there are altogether sixteen brahma realms pertaining to the Fine Material Sphere.

Above the sixteen Brahma realms pertaining to the Fine Material Sphere, there are the four Brahma realms pertaining to the Non-material Sphere, namely, Ākāśānañcāyatana (Infinity of Space), Viññāṇañcāyatana (Infinity of Consciousness), Ākiñcaññāyatana (Nothingness), and Nevasaññānāsāññāyatana (Neither-consciousness nor-non-consciousness), lying one above the other successively.

Thus there are sixteen Brahma realms of Fine Material Sphere and four Brahma realms of Non-material sphere, altogether making twenty Brahma realms. When the eleven realms of the Sensuous Sphere are added to them, there are the thirty-one realms in a world-system. This is a brief description of their location.

In the foregoing manner, the Buddha has a complete knowledge of the infinite world-systems as bases for sentient existence. This complete and clear knowledge of the world of living beings, the world of conditioned phenomena and the world of non-living things is the



attribute of *lokavidū*. The five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute. (Refer to the brief meaning given earlier on).

**(6) *Anuttaropurisa damma sārathi*.**

*Visuddhimagga* gives *anuttaropurisadammasārathi* in two separate meanings: *anuttaro* explained as one attribute and *dammāsārathi* as another. And it also gives, as another interpretation, a combined meaning as one attribute. We shall describe both the interpretations here:

- (a) *Anuttaro*: The Buddha is incomparable in morality, etc., in all the world so that he reigns supreme in this attribute among the world of living beings: To explain this further: the Buddha reigns supreme in morality, in concentration, in wisdom, in emancipation, and in knowledge leading to emancipation. This supremacy is the attribute of *anuttaro*; the five aggregates of the Buddha is possessor of that attribute.
- (b) *Purisadammasārathi*: "He who tames those who deserve to be tamed." (*purisadamma*, those beings deserving to be tamed; *sārathi*, tamer, i.e., skillful teacher or instructor). Those deserving to be tamed include men, devas and Brahmas. For example, the Buddha tamed Apalāla the *Naga* king, Cūlodara the *Naga* king, Mahodara the *Naga* king, Aggisikha the *Naga* king, *Dhūmasikha* the *Naga* king, *Aravāla* the *Naga* king, *Dhanapāla* the elephant king, etc. and made them leave their savagery and get established in the Three Refuges. Then the Buddha tamed Saccaka the wandering ascetic, son of Nigaṇṭha; Ambatṭha, the young man; Brahmins Pokkharasāti, Soṇadanta and Kūṭadanta, etc. He also tamed powerful devas such as Ālavaka, Sūciloma, Kharaloma and even Sakka, the king of devas.

The Buddha not only tamed individuals from their savage stage into his disciples, but also uplifted those virtuous persons who had had purity of morality to attain the first *jhāna*, or the Ariyas who were Stream-enterers, to attain the three higher Maggas by showing the method of training so his 'taming' also includes leading already half tamed persons to Arahatsip. Therefore *purisadammasārathi* means

making savage beings to get established in the lower morality, and to guide those possessed of lower morality (i.e., half tamed) to attain the higher benefits leading to *Arahattaphala*. This knowledge of instructing others is the attribute of *dammasārathi*; the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.

In the combined interpretation of *anuttaro* and *purisadammasārathi*, only a single attribute is counted, to mean "the Buddha, who is unrivalled in taming those who are untamed" To explain this: when a horse tamer trains a horse, he does not and cannot train it into the desired state in a day. He has to train it over many days repeatedly. (The same holds true with other animals, elephants, bullocks, etc.) Even when a horse is supposed to be tamed it is not free from pranks. (The same holds true with other animals) But the Buddha can tame a person at one sitting (i.e., in the course of one dialogue) to attain the eight *Vimokkha jhānas* or attain *Arahattaphala*. When the disciple has attained *Arahattaphala* he becomes completely tamed never showing any more mad frolics. Therefore the Buddha is unrivalled in taming the untamed persons. The knowledge of tutoring untutored (i.e., ignorant) persons is the attribute of *anuttaropurisdammāsārathi*; the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.

### (7) *Satthādevamanūssānaṃ*.

This means the Buddha who guides men and devas to gain for themselves benefits at present, benefits in the future, and the ultimate benefit of *Nibbāna*. This is indeed so. The Buddha teaches, exhorts and instructs all beings to gain present benefits for some, to gain benefit in future existences for others and to attain the ultimate benefit of *Nibbāna* for others, each according to his or her sufficiency of past merit. Therefore the knowledge in helping men and devas to gain present benefits, benefits in the future, and the benefit of *Nibbāna* is the attribute of *satthādevamanūssānaṃ*. The five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.

Another explanation: the Buddha is like the master of a caravan, hence he is called *satthādeva manūssānaṃ*. To explain it further:

A wise leader of a caravan conducts the caravan safely over a difficult and dangerous journey. There are five kinds of difficult and dangerous journeys, namely, (i) a journey notorious for highway robbers; (ii) a journey through wild country where ferocious beasts such as lions or tigers roam; (iii) a barren stretch of land where food resources are not available; (iv) a journey over parched country with no water resources; (v) a journey passing through country infested with *yakkhas* (demons). Just as a good leader of a caravan safely conducts the caravan through the above five kinds of hazardous journey, so also the Buddha gives protection to the way-farers of the journey of life against the hazards of journey marked by rebirth, aging, disease and death, grief, lamentation, physical pain, sorrow and anguish, lust (attachment), hatred, bewilderment, conceit, wrong view and demeritorious acts, and conducts them to the safety of *Nibbāna*. Therefore, the Doctrine of the Buddha which lead beings to *Nibbāna* is the attribute of *sattḥādevamanussānaṃ*; the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.

(The attribute *sattḥādeva manussānaṃ* should not be taken only to mean to cover men and devas. The term *devamanussānaṃ* is used to give prominence to beings of the fortunate existences and who are fit to become liberated. However, the Buddha also gives appropriate guidance and counsel to animals so that they also benefit from it and are thereby equipped with sufficing condition to attain Magga Phala in their next existence or in the third existence. The Commentary gives the example of Maṇḍūka Devaputta which is related below.)

### The story of Maṇḍūka Devaputta.

At one time the Bhagavā was staying at a monastery, close by Gaggarā Lake near the city of Campā which served as his place for collecting daily alms food. One morning, on his usual Buddha-routine, of entering upon the absorption of Compassion, he saw that if he held a sermon in the evening a frog would come and get absorbed in the sound of the Dhamma speech, would be accidentally killed, and be reborn in the deva realm; and that the deva would come to the Tathāgata accompanied by his big retinue; and that would be seen by

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the large audience who would gain knowledge of the four Truths and so make an end of suffering. After having this foreknowledge through his absorption of Compassion, the Bhagavā went into the city of Campā for alms-round in the morning. When the morning meal was finished the Bhagavā went to the monastery, received the homage paid by the bhikkhus, and went into seclusion in his Scented chamber, spending the day in the bliss of the absorption of *Arahattaphala*.

In the evening, when the four kinds of assembly were gathered at the lecture hall near Gaggarā Lake, the Bhagavā came out of his Scented Chamber, took his seat in the lecture hall, and delivered a sermon.

At that time a frog came out from the lake, listened to the voice of the Bhagavā, and knowing that "this is the voice of the Dhamma", was absorbed in it. (Although animals do not have the capacity to understand the meaning of the discourse, at least they can know the voice as one of Dhamma or righteousness or as one of wrongness, as the case may be.)

Then a cowherd came upon the scene and being deeply impressed by the Bhagavā's splendour in delivering the sermon and the deep silence in which the audience were listening to the sermon, he stood there leaning on his staff in hand. He did not notice that there was a frog on whose head his staff was resting.

The frog died on the spot even while it was absorbed in the sweet voice of the Dhamma. As he died in full consciousness of the clear conviction in the goodness of the Dhamma, he was reborn in the realm of Tāvatiṃsā deva realm with a golden mansion twelve *yojanās* wide as his residence, waited upon by a large retinue of deva maidens. Then he pondered on his new state: "How have I got into this deva existence? I was just a frog in my previous existence. What merit sent me, a mere animal to this high state?" And he saw no other merit than his getting absorbed in the voice of the Buddha's sermon which was the voice of the Dhamma.

Then he went to the Bhagavā, while himself staying in his mansion, in the company of deva maidens. He and his deva maidens descended

from the mansion in full view of the human audience and stood before the Bhagavā in worshipping attitude.

The Bhagavā knew the deva as the frog that was stamped to death just a moment ago. Still, to let the audience realize the workings of kamma, as well as to show the abnormal psychic power of the Tathāgata (in seeing the past existences of all beings); he said to the deva in the following verse:

"Surrounded by a large retinue,  
Shedding resplendent light all around  
with such powerful possession of personal aura,  
who is it that pays homage to me?"

And the deva who, just a moment ago, had been a frog replied,

"(Venerable Sir,) in my previous existence  
I had been a frog  
Born and brought up in the water  
Even while I was absorbed in your voice of the Dhamma,  
A cowherd caused my death with his staff.

"(Venerable Sir,) just at the instant of my death,  
Due to the serenity of my mind in listening to the Bhagavā's  
voice

I was reborn a deva. And now (Venerable Sir,)  
See my glorious state, replete with retinue,  
my personal appearance and everything  
And, above all, my effulgence that reaches twelve *yojanās*!

"O Gotama, those who have for a long time  
Listened to the Dhamma taught by you  
attain the Peace of *Nibbāna* through Path-knowledge  
And become free from all sorrow."

Then the Bhagavā delivered a discourse in detail suited to the audience, judging their past merit that would serve as sufficing condition for enlightenment. At the end of the discourse eighty-four thousand beings comprehended the four Truths and made an end of suffering. The deva who had been a frog attained Stream-entry. He made obeisance to the Bhagavā, turned round with the Bhagavā on his

right, and also worshipping the Sangha, returned to the deva realm in the company of his large retinue of deva maidens.

### (8) Buddha.

He is called the Buddha because he knows fully all knowable things. In another sense, he is the Knower of the Truths and also makes the Four Truths known to people fit to know them. Hence he is called the Buddha.

The distinction between the second attribute of *sammāsambuddha* and the eighth attribute of *buddha* lies in that the former refers to the Four Truths while the latter refers to the All-knowing wisdom, *Sabbaiññitāñāna*. If, however, the attribute *buddho* is taken as supreme knowledge as the same for *sammāsambuddho*, then the former relates to the penetrative aspect (*Paṭiveda Ñāna*) of the Buddha's wisdom while the latter relates to the skillful aspect (*Desanā Ñāna*) of the Buddha's wisdom in enlightening others.

### (9) Bhagava.

This attribute of the Buddha is explained in a variety of ways in the *Mahā Niddeśa Pāli*. The Commentary also explains it in six different ways, while *Visuddhimagga Mahāṭīkā* gives seven different interpretations. Here we shall discuss the first method of explanation in the *Pāli* which is also the third method of explanation in the Commentary. This is the meaning generally given by Myanmar translators in their close literal renderings of the word, i.e., "he who is endowed with six forms of glory." (*Bhaga*, the six exalted qualities; *vanta*, being possessed of.)

The Buddha is called the Bhagavā because he is endowed with six exalted qualities (unattainable by the disciples) namely: (i) *Issariya* (ii) *Dhamma* (iii) *Yasa* (iv) *Siri* (v) *Kāmma* (vi) *Payatta*

#### (i) *Issariya*: Supremacy.

It means the innate power of the Buddha to bend things to his will. *Issariya* is of two kinds, *lokuttarācittissariya* and *lokīcittissariya*, supramundane will power and mundane will power.

As regards supramundane will power the Buddha has unsurpassed will power. In displaying the Twin Miracle, to get a stream of water from the desired part of his body, he enters into the preliminary absorption of *āpokasiṇa* and then makes the resolve, "May there be a stream of water" which is a separate impulsion thought process (*Adiṭṭhāna vīthi*). Then he enters into the preliminary absorption of *āpokasiṇa* again. Then the special apperception impulsion thought-process (*Abhiññāna vīthi*) arises that causes the stream of water appear from whatever part of his body as he has willed.

Thus to effect a stream of water from the desired part of his body, the Bhagavā has to go through four different thought-processes. Likewise, to get a stream of fire glow from the desired part of his body, the Bhagavā enters into the preliminary absorption of *tejokasiṇa* and then makes the resolve, "May there be a stream of fire" which is a separate impulsion thought-process. Then he enters into the preliminary absorption of *tejokasiṇa* again. Then the special apperception (impulsion) thought-process arises that causes the stream of fire appear from whatever part of his body he has willed.

Briefly speaking, to get a stream of water flow from the body, the Buddha has to go through four separate thought-processes. The same is required to get a stream of fire glow from the body. The mastery of the Buddha's will power is such that in going through the thought-process in entering into the preliminary absorptions, he can bring to a stop the thought-process in any number of thought-moments he chooses. The life continuum thought-moments (*bhavaṅga citta*) that have to intervene between the separate thought-processes are also limited to two. (Compare this to the case with the disciples who would need as many life-continuum thought-moments as they feel necessary.) The mastery in arranging the separate thought-processes and the life-continuum thought-moments as desired are the astonishing features of the Buddha's accomplishment in will power. This is the power in controlling mundane jhanic absorption.

Likewise in Supramundane consciousness of *Arahattaphala* the Buddha has unsurpassed power of will. Due to this power he enters into the absorption of *Arahattaphala* at such little odd moments when

he takes a pause between making a point in his discourse and going on to the next, during which the audience would be saying "*Sādhu*" ("good!"). As a matter of fact, there is not the shortest of odd moments when the Buddha does not dwell in the absorption of *Arahattaphala*. (see *Aṭṭhasalinī Mūlaṅkā*). This is how the Buddha has amazing control of will power in Supramundane consciousness.

In the Scriptures *eight mundane features of the Buddha's will power* are generally cited. The eight are: briefly described below:

- (a) *Animā*: The Buddha can transform himself as small as small can be, even to an atomic size. This was the power he employed in taming Brahmā Baka, where assuming the power of invisibility was the bet between them.
- (b) *Mahimā*: He can transform himself as big as big can be, even making himself taller than Mount Sineru (to any conceivable size up to one that might cover up the entire world system), and still appear proportionate and glorious. This was the power he employed to impress the Lord of Asūra (who had previously thought he might have to look down on the Buddha because of his own enormous size).
- (c) *Laghimā*: He can levitate at will and travel in the air due to this power which causes lightness of the body comparable to his lightness (buoyancy) of the mind.
- (d) *Patti*: He can travel to any far away place at will. Ordinary people lacking in this power cannot travel bodily to far-off places as fast as their mind can travel. The Buddha can travel even to the deva realms and brahma realms bodily in an instant.
- (e) *Pākamma*: He can accomplish anything that he wishes. In the eight assemblies he resolved to appear as one of their kind (i.e., among devas in deva realm he appears as a deva, etc.) (see chapter 41 on the Passing Away of the Buddha). In preaching the Doctrine to the inhabitants of the other world-systems he assumes the form, the voice, etc., of one of the kings of those places.



- (f) *Īsitā*: Dominating the will of others. All the Buddha-routine is accomplished through this power, all beings having to fulfill the wishes of the Buddha.
- (g) *Vasitā*: Mastery of psychic powers and absorptions. This is the power used to tame very powerful and arrogant individuals such as Uruvela Naga, overpowering their own powers in every respect such as emitting fire, vapour, etc.
- (h) *Yatthakāmasāyitā*: He has complete control over jhānic absorptions and in displaying miracles being able to terminate them as he wills. It is this power which accomplishes the Twin Miracle of fire and water — strewing out of the various parts of his body with fire glowing from the upper part of the body while water flowing from the lower part of the body, and then suddenly even when the audience are watching in awe, making fire glowing from the lower part of the body while water is flowing from the upper part of the body, etc.

The above eight powers of the will in mundane consciousness are included in *Iddhividha abhiññā*, knowledge by which supernormal powers are accomplished. The Buddha stands unrivaled in this knowledge.

These eight mundane powers and the mastery in mundane will power and Supramundane will power mentioned above together are called the first of the six exalted qualities, i.e., *Issariya*, supremacy.

#### Verse in adoration of the exalted quality of supremacy.

"O Exalted One! Your *Arahattaphala* consciousness is marked by the mastery of Supramundane will power as well as the eight forms of mastery of mundane will power such as in turning yourself into an infinitesimal form. O Exalted One! May this be my humble adoration to you!"

#### (ii) Dhamma : Knowledge of the Nine Supramundane Factors.

This glorious quality is the knowledge of the Buddha in his unique attainment of the nine factors of the Supramundane Sphere, namely, the

four Maggas, the four Phalas and *Nibbāna*, that destroy all defilements so completely that no faint suggestion of their presence due to past habits remains. The meaning is obvious.

**Verse in adoration of the exalted quality of Dhamma.**

"O Steadfast One! You are imbued with the four Ariya Maggas, the four Ariya Phalas, And *Nibbāna*.

That destroy all defilements,  
Leaving not the faintest trace.  
O Glorious font of the Dhamma!  
May this be my humble adoration to you!

**(iii) *Yasa*: fame and followership.**

The glorious reputation surrounding the Buddha is no empty boast but true to its every detail, and well deserved. In that sense the Buddha's reputation is pure, unadulterated, un-inflated. There are certain personages of wide repute, deserving of them but their repute does not reach the three worlds (i.e., the human world, the deva world, the Brahma world).

The reputation attributed to the Buddha is such that the achievers of non material absorptions, (*Arūpa Jhāna*) can remain in the non material Brahma world (*Arūpa Brahmā*) and contemplate on the nine supreme attributes of the Buddha. Since the Buddha's fame reaches even the non material Brahma world, it hardly needs saying that this fame spreads in the Fine material sphere and the Sensuous Sphere.

**Verse in adoration of the exalted quality of fame and following.**

"O Steadfast One!  
You are attributed with glorious fame  
Spreading over the three worlds,  
Purely deserved by you.  
O paragon of personal repute!  
May this be my humble adoration to you!"

**(iv) *Sirī*, Splendour of physical perfection.**

The Buddha's glorious quality of physical perfection is such that all men, devas and Brahmas can never satisfy themselves in gazing at his superb appearance. For he is endowed with the thirty-two marks of the Great man as well as eighty lesser characteristics. Those who come to see the Bhagavā have to go away only because the proper time to stay before the Bhagavā's presence has run out but they feel uncontented with feasting their eyes on the sheer majesty of the person of the Bhagavā.

**Verse in adoration of the exalted quality of physical perfection.**

"O Resplendent One!  
 You are endowed with physical excellence  
 In every aspect  
 That makes you the cynosure of all men, devas and brahmas.  
 O fairest of all men!  
 May this be my humble adoration to you!"

**(v) *Kāma*: Power of accomplishment.**

The Buddha accomplished all he sets out to accomplish and the steadfast purpose, the steady effort underlying this power of accomplishment, is called *kāma*. Since as Bodhisatta Sumedhā, he received the assurance of future Buddhahood from Buddha Dipaṅkara, he had set his mind on leading humanity to liberation:

"May I become enlightened and may I be able to lead the multitudes to enlightenment (*Buddho bodheyyaṃ*).

"May I gain liberation from the round of rebirth, and may I be able to lead the multitudes to liberation (*Mutto moceyyaṃ*).

"May I cross over to the shore of safety and may I be able to ferry across the multitudes to the shore of safety (*Tiṇṇo tāreyyaṃ*)."

That earnest desire, that steadfast purpose, had never waned in the Buddha. It was that purposefulness that led him to attain perfect Enlightenment through *Magga Phala*, thus fulfilling his earnest desire.

He has thus gained Enlightenment, has gained liberation from the round of rebirth, and has crossed over to the safe shore that is *Nibbāna*.

There are some people who may have earlier desired for the good and welfare of oneself as well as of others. But once their welfare is fulfilled, they are apt to forget about others' welfare, or are unable to carry out their set purpose concerning others. The Buddha attaining Buddhahood is reinforced by the Path-Knowledge in devoting himself to the originally set task of helping others. This Zeal is the principal cause of his accomplishment in making the multitudes see the Four Truths, enabling them to cross over to the safe shore of *Nibbāna*. Therefore the steadfast wish (*adhigama chanda*) that is responsible for the glorious accomplishment of the Buddha's mission both for himself and for others is *Kāma*.

**Verse in adoration of the exalted quality of accomplishment.**

"O Steadfast One! You have long wished for the good of yourself as well as of others.

That earnest wish has found fulfilment now.

O Achieving One! May this be my humble adoration to you!"

**(v) *Payatta*: Diligence.**

*Payatta* means unrivalled diligence. (Consider the fivefold Buddha routine<sup>1</sup> carried out untiringly every day.) His untiring zeal in keeping

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<sup>1</sup> **Five fold Buddha routine:**

1. Early morning routine — Going on alms-round, acceptance of meals by donors, appreciating discourses to donors.
2. After meal routine — Advice to Sangha, meditation practice suitable for each bhikkhu, short rest, survey of loka to see sentient beings ready for liberation, discourse to laity in the afternoon.
3. First watch of the night — Bathing, slight rest, discourse to Sangha.
4. Middle watch of the night — Discourse to devas, Brahmas.

up the fivefold Buddha routine earned him the love and esteem of the living world. The Right Effort *Samma vayana* that entitles him to the warm regard of the whole living world is the glorious quality of *Payatta*.

**Verse in adoration of the glorious quality of diligence.**

"O Diligent One!

You are possessed of Right Effort,

That steadfastness which won the highest esteem by the whole world.

O steadfast One!

May this be my humble adoration to you!."

**Miscellaneous remarks about the attributes of the Buddha.**

The attributes of the Buddha are infinite. Out of them the nine (or ten) supreme attributes are mentioned in the Scriptures for easy understanding and memorizing by men, devas and Brahmas.

**The Buddha's attributes in a nutshell.**

All of the Buddha's glorious attributes can be put into two main categories: (1) The attributes that proclaim the accomplishment of the Buddha for himself (*attahita sampatti*) and (2) the attributes that stand testimony to the Buddha's service to the general weal of the multitudes, (*parahita paṭipatti*).

In the first category there are two aspects, (i) the success the Buddha achieves in overcoming the defiling tendencies, and (ii) the endowment of a variety of Knowledges. (The innate powers of the Buddha that he is invested with flow from these two sources.)

In the second category of the Buddha's attributes too, there are two aspects: (i) the severity of effort in preaching the Dhamma to the multitudes purely out of compassion, untinged with any expectation of

5. Last watch of the night — Walking exercise, sleep four hours 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., survey of loka for sentient beings ready for liberation.

gain or fame; and (ii) the infinite patience in wishing well even to persons antagonistic to him and in awaiting the ripeness of time on the part of the hearers to comprehend his teaching. The Buddha's acceptance of offerings of the four bhikkhu requisites is another form of doing useful service to the donors who thereby gain great merit. Thus the nine attributes such as *Araham*, are taught to signify the two above aspects of his own accomplishments and his service for the welfare of others.

The nine supreme attributes are read into the above two aspects in the following way:

*Araham* clearly describes the Buddha's success in getting rid of all defilements.

*Sammāsambuddha* and *Lokavidū* clearly describe the Buddha's endowment of variety of knowledges. (Here, it might be asked, "Does *Lokavidū* also not stand for Perfect Self-Enlightenment?" The answer is "Yes, it does" However, there is this distinction: *Sammāsambuddho* stands for the efficacy of Perfect Self-Enlightenment while *Lokavidū* signifies the efficacy of the Buddha's discriminating knowledge about the mental framework of his hearers such as tendencies, etc. Hence two different attributes are proclaimed.)

*Vijjācaraṇa sampanno* completely conveys the comprehensive accomplishment of the Buddha for himself.

*Sugata* proclaims both the Buddha's accomplishment for himself and the achievement in working for the welfare of others, together with the underlying cause of both.

*Anuttaropurīṣadammasārathi* and *satthādevamanussāna* clearly demonstrate the Buddha's achievement in bringing the welfare of others:

*Buddho* brings out the meaning of accomplishment for own self as well as accomplishment for the good of others. (After mentioning *Sammāsambuddho*, the Buddha further proclaims *Buddho* because the former indicates his penetrative knowledge whereas the latter conveys his knowledge in imparting knowledge.)

*Bhagavā* highlights both the Buddha's accomplishment for himself and the success in bringing the welfare of others.

Considered in another light, the supreme attributes of the Buddha fall under three categories, namely: (i) Attributes that are root causes (*hetu*), (ii) attributes that are results (*Phala*), and (iii) attributes that bring welfare to others (*sattū pakāra*). (These three may be called success in root cause, success in result, and success in welfare of the world.)

The first four attributes - *Araham*, *Sammāsambuddho*, *Vijjācaraṇasampanno*, *Lokavidū*, - portray the root causes of attributes that the Buddha is endowed with.

*Anuttaropurisasammasārathi* and *Sattādevamoruṣṣānaṃ* clearly describe the Buddha's success in working for the good of others.

*Buddho* clearly points out to the Buddha's endowment of happy root cause as well as accomplishment for the good of others.

*Sugata* and *Bhagavā* reveal the endowment of the three kinds of success, i.e., in root cause, in result and in the welfare of the world.

(These two modes of explanation are taken from *Visuddhimagga Mahāṭikā*, Volume I)

### Contemplation of the Buddha (*Buddhā nussati Bhavanā*).

Those Myanmar devotees who can just read Pāli and know only the Myanmar Language should commit to memory the nine attributes of the Buddha in Pāli and Myanmar as given above. They should recite each of them at a speed neither too slowly nor too fast, reflecting on its meaning. One who reflects on the attributes of the Buddha, while doing so, prevents the arising of thoughts of lust, hatred and bewilderment, besides gaining concentration which clears the mind of lethargy and distraction, and rendering it possible for a righteous thought-process to arise through the equanimous attitude of straight mental exercise.

When the concentration gets stronger through this meditation practice, the hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) fall off, and defilements are quelled

and consequently, five faculties such as faith (*saddhā*) become very pure and effective. The repeated reflection on the Buddha sharpens initial application of the mind (*vitakka*) and sustained application of the mind (*vicāra*). When these two factors are functioning well, delightful satisfaction (*pīti*) arises. Due to the delightful satisfaction, serenity of mental concomitants and serenity of mind arise, as the result of which physical and mental uneasiness (defilements associated with subtle forms of distraction) are quelled. When there is serenity of mind and serenity mental concomitants, happiness that causes the arising of concentration becomes pronounced. The thought-process being enriched by happiness is firmly fixed on the object of meditation.

Thus the factors involved in meditation beginning from initial application of the mind become more and more efficient stage by stage. The mind is neither retarded nor distracted so that the medium attitude of mental exercise or equanimity is maintained and the five faculties such as faith are functioning in a balanced way. Now the five factors of *jhāna*, viz, initial application of the mind, sustained application of the mind, delightful satisfaction, happiness and one-pointedness of mind, arise simultaneously at every thought moment with the great meritorious consciousness (*mahā kusala citta*) of the contemplation on the Buddha which is mental cultivation pertaining to the sensuous sphere (*Kāmā vacara bhāvanā*). Thus neighbourhood concentration or threshold concentration (*upacāra jhāna*) is achieved. When this concentration arises together with the great meritorious consciousness of the contemplation of the Buddha which is mental cultivation pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere, the meditator is called one who has achieved *upacāra jhāna* of the contemplation of the Buddha.

(Contemplation of the Buddha can at best reach the level of threshold or neighbourhood concentration (*upacāra jhāna*) pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere only, and not *appana (rūpā vacara) jhāna*, why is it so? It is because the attributes of the Buddha are ultimate dhammas and are too profound to be fully concentrated up to the *appanā jhāna* stage. It is like a vessel that cannot remain stable on very deep waters.

It might then be asked in contemplating the attributes of the Buddha, the names of the ultimate dhammas of the nine attributes such as



*Arahaṃ* etc., are still made objects of contemplation. Why are these names said to be ultimate dhammas? The answer is, again, that the attributes of the Buddha are so profound that although at the initial stage of meditation these names (such as *Arahaṃ*) are made as objects of meditation, when concentration is developed, the mind passes on from mere names to ultimate reality.

Again, one might further ask, "Are not some ultimate dhammas such as the first non-material consciousness (*paṭhamā rūppa viññāṇa*) used as object of meditation and *appanā jhāna* such as the second non-material jhāna achieved thereby?" That is true, but that is a case of single object of meditation. The attributes of the Buddha are not a single object. They are a complex variety. So the comparison is not valid.

It may then be questioned, "A yogī contemplating on the thirty-two aspects or parts of the body, although starting with a number of them, after concentration becomes developed, fixes his mind on a single aspect or part only and achieves the first Fine Material jhāna. Then why is the same process not true in the case of the contemplation of the Buddha?" This is not an appropriate analogue. For although there are as many as thirty-two aspects or parts of the body all of them have a single reality-loathsomeness of the body which truly becomes the object of meditation leading to achievement of *appanā jhāna*. In the case of the attributes of the Buddha, they are replete with meaning in a variety of ways, and hence concentration achievable belongs only to the sensuous Sphere, and only up to *upacāra jhāna* stage.

"Why not concentrate on only one of the nine attributes then?"

The answer is: when concentration becomes developed the attributes of the Buddha are comprehended by the yogī so that he cannot fix his mind on any one of them only because his faith grows so much as to know no bounds.

### Benefits of contemplation of the Buddha.

A virtuous one who repeatedly contemplates the attributes of the Buddha has exceptional esteem of the Buddha comparable to the

Ariyas's devotion to the Buddha. Repeated recollection of the Buddha so develops his mind that he has a stable mindfulness. The profundity of the Buddha's attributes on which his mind is trained makes him a person of profound wisdom. The nine attributes in themselves are the fertile field for sowing merit, therefore constant recollection of them is highly meritorious.

Reflection on the Buddha is a mental exercise conducive to delightful satisfaction (*pīti*), one of the seven factors of Enlightenment. The yogi becomes possessed of much delightful satisfaction, first of the feeble kind but, later, of an ecstatic kind. The mindfulness that dwells on the attributes of the Buddha overcomes fear, therefore the yogi becomes indifferent to fear and dread, great or small. Since this mental exercise has the nature of warding off physical pain, the yogi acquires a kind of tolerance to pain. He also feels that he is together with the Buddha. The body of one whose mind is absorbed in the thoughts of the Buddha is like a shrine containing the Buddha so that it becomes worthy of adoration. His mind is always inclined to Supreme Enlightenment.

The yogis' mind is constantly reminded of the attributes of the Buddha with the result that any evil thought that might arise is driven away before evil word or deed is committed, being shameful to do it, and being abhorrent to do it in the presence of the Buddha. Contemplation of the Buddha is a basis for gaining *magga phala*. If the yogi does not gain *magga phala* in this existence for want of sufficient past merit he is reborn in the fortunate existences.

These are the benefits of contemplating the Buddha as explained in *Visuddhimagga*. For greater details the reader may consult *Subhūti Thera Apādāna* in the *Thera Apādāna Pāli* (and Myanmar translations).



### The Six Supreme Attributes of the Dhamma.

*Svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo sanditthiko akāliko ehi passiko opaneyyiko paccattam vedetabbo viññūhi*

- (i) The Dhamma consisting of Magga Phala *Nibbāna* and *Pariyat* is well-expounded, *Svākkhāto*, because: (a) it is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle and excellent at the end in the utterance of each word in strict accordance with the six rules of grammar and ten rules of articulation of the Magadan tongue; (b) and (c) because it shows the middle way avoiding the two extremes, and because it quells the fires of defilements and completely extinguishes them; (d) because it explains the nature of Permanence, Stability, Pacification and Deathlessness.
- (ii) The Dhamma, i.e., the four *Maggas* the four *Phalas* and *Nibbāna*, is *sanditthiko* because it is practiced and realized by the *Ariyas* who have thus exhausted the defilements; and also because it is the instant destroyer of defilements to win the laurels of victory.
- (iii) The Dhamma, the nine Supramundane factors, are *akāliko* because it fructifies immediately in that the fruit (*Phala*) of the Path (*Magga*) is attainable without a moments delay.
- (iv) The Dhamma is *ehipassiko* because it is clearly visible like the majestic moon in a clear sky free of mist, smoke, cloud etc., or like the Manohara gem that is found on Mount Vepulla, inviting all to come and see for themselves.
- (v) The Dhamma is *opaneyyiko* because the four *Maggas* serve as the raft for crossing over to the safety of *Nibbāna* while *Phala* and *Nibbāna* bestow upon the *Ariyas* with the realization of a safe haven.
- (vi) The Dhamma is *paccattam vedetabbo* because it must be realized through individual effort by the wise.

**The meaning of the above attribute explained.**

(i) In *Svākkhāta*, Dhamma refers to the Doctrine (*Pariyat*), the four *Maggas*, the four *Phalas* and *Nibbāna* (the *Pariyat* and the nine supra mundane factors).

The *Pariyat* is excellent at the beginning, excellent at the middle and excellent at the end because it is perfect in meaning and in words and because it proclaims the threefold training and the Ariya Path, *Magga* as the pure and complete way of practice.

The *Pariyat* is perfect because even within a single stanza its first line is perfect, and therefore perfect at the beginning; its second and third lines are perfect and therefore perfect at the middle; its fourth line is perfect and therefore perfect at the end. In a discourse, it has an introduction that makes it perfect at the beginning. It has a conclusion that makes it perfect at the end. And the middle portion with its logical connections between various points makes it perfect at the middle. In a discourse consisting of a number of connected thoughts the first-connection of logical relationships is perfection at the beginning. The last connection of logical relationship is perfection at the end. The remaining logical relationships are perfection at the middle. (These remarks are for *Suttanta Piṭaka*.)

(In another way:) In the *Suttanta* and *Vinaya Piṭakas* all of the discourses mention the place where the event took place (*Savatthi*, *Rājagaha*, etc.) which is perfection at the beginning. The compatibility of the discourse with the natural bent of the hearers on that particular occasion, the incontrovertible truth contained in the meaning of the discourse, the substance, and the illustrations make the middle perfect. The benefit gained by the audience through their faith and conviction, the proper conclusion of the theme, make the end perfect.

In brief, the whole of the *Pariyatti Dhamma* comprising the Three *Piṭakas* essentially proclaim Morality, Concentration, Insight-wisdom, *Magga Phala* and *Nibbāna*. They pronounce the true Buddha, the true Dhamma, the true Sangha. They clearly prescribe the noble and correct practice that leads to Buddhahood, or Perfect Self-Enlightenment, Paccekabuddhahood and Arahatsip or enlightenment as a disciple.

Thus the three *Piṭakas* have the intrinsic excellence of the beginning in Morality; the intrinsic excellence of the middle in Concentration and Insight-wisdom; the intrinsic excellence of the end in *Nibbāna*. Or taken in another light, they are excellent at the beginning through Morality and Concentration; excellent at the middle through Insight-wisdom, and *Magga*; and excellent at the end through *Phala* and *Nibbāna*.

Or put it in another way, they are excellent at the beginning by declaring the true Buddha, excellent at the middle by declaring the true Dhamma, and excellent at the end by declaring the true Sangha. Again, anyone who takes up the practice as shown in the *Pariyatta Dhamma* or the Three *Piṭakas* can attain any of the three classes of Enlightenment, and are therefore excellent at the beginning through Perfect Self-Enlightenment; excellent at the middle through Paccekabuddhahood, and excellent at the end through Enlightenment as a disciple.

The Buddha' Doctrine requires his disciples two steps to take: the first step is for them to listen attentively with a certain faith, and the second is to take up the practice of the Dhamma. When the above steps are taken in their order and the proper practise is done, a disciple attains *Arahattaphala*. Therefore, in listening to the Doctrine, if you have the ultimate objective of *Arahattaphala*, you gain the knowledge of what has been heard, *Sutamaya ñāṇa* the repeated arising of which can put away the hindrances of the mind. Hence paying good attention to the Doctrine is excellence at the beginning. If you take up the Practice of the Dhamma after repeatedly listening to it, you get the calm that comes with concentration *Samatha Sukha*, and then if pursued correctly, you gain insight into phenomena which gives you peace and satisfaction *Vipassanā Sukha*. Thus the practice of the Dhamma is excellence at the middle. Since proper practice leads to *Arahattaphala*, the result of the practice is the excellent at the end. In this way is the *Pariyat* Doctrine excellent at the beginning, at the middle and at the end, and therefore it is truly acclaimed as *Svākkhāto*.

The Buddha's *Pariyat* Doctrine clearly chalks out two modes of the practice, the practice conforming to the teaching *sasana brahma cariya*, and the noble practice of the Path, *magga brahma cariya*. (Of

those two, the first refers ordinarily to the threefold training and kindred teachings while the second refers to the very essence of the threefold training and the successful measure of the threefold training, namely, the *Ariya Magga*.) In teaching these two modes of the practice the Buddha defined the Noble Practice in terms of the deepest significance in meaning. For instance, if a religious teacher were to give emphasis on such mundane words as gruel, rice, or men or women, those terms do not have any intrinsic value that can lead to the ending of the woefulness of the round of existences. So such words do not carry any significant meaning from a truly religious point of view. The Buddha rejects giving emphasis on those mundane terms but expounds the Four Foundations of Steadfast Mindfulness (*Satipathāna*), the Four Earnest Endeavours (*Sammappadhāna*) etc. in detail which have the effect of gaining release from the round of existences. Thus the *Pariyat* Doctrine defines the Noble Practice in these significant absolute terms, replete with profound meaning.

Further, the Noble Practice is expounded in words and phrases that are perfect. In this matter there are ten important rules of enunciation of words. They are:

- (i) *Sithila akkharas*, unstressed words (eg.) ka, ca, ṭa
- (ii) *Dhanita Akkharas*, strongly stressed words (eg.) kha, gha, In the five-letter groups of Pāli alphabet, the second five letters and the fourth five letters are strongly stressed words.
- (iii) *Dīgha akkharas*, letters associated with long vowels, (eg.) kā, kū, ke, ko
- (iv) *Rassa akkhoras*, letters associated with short vowels, (eg.) ka, ki, ku
- (v) *Garu akkharas*, 'weighty' words all the *dīgha akkharas* and short sounding words with conjunct-consonants trailing behind belong to this class. (eg.) In *santa* (sa anta): the short-sounding word (*sa* becomes *san* here, which is a *garu akkhara*,
- (vi) *Lahu akkhara*, all other short-sounding words (*rassa akkharas*) with no conjunct-consonants.

(vii) *Niggahita akkharas*: words uttered with a closed mouth (the sound produced by closing the mouth without letting the sound and the air caused by the respective organ of speech escape is called *niggahita*.)

(viii) *Vinutta akkharas*: words uttered with the mouth opened (eg.)  
Kā

(ix) *Sambandha akkharas*: two successive words with a connected sound (eg.) In *upasampadā pekkho*, no pause is to intervene between *dā* and *pek*, but the whole word is to be uttered without break in between.

(x) *Vavatthita akkharas*: separately sounded words (eg.) In *suṇātu me*, there must be a pause between *suṇātu* and *me*.

The above ten rules are called the Ten *Vyañjana buddhis*. *Vyañhana* means words uttered as vocal expressions of the mind. *Vyañjanabhuddhi* means the mind and mental concomitants that cause the utterance of words. The words thus uttered also are called *Vyañjanabhuddhi* in a metaphorical sense.

It is not all the languages that conform to the above ten rules of enunciation. For instance, in Tamil only one or two of the rules are met with. In Kirāta there are no labial sounds. In Yun every word is pronounced heavily. In Pārasika (Pādasika) all words are pronounced as *niggahīta*. A discourse made by anyone in those tongues is therefore deficient in the linguistic aspect.

The Buddha expounds the *Pariyat* Doctrine in accordance with the ten rules of enunciation. Hence the *Pariyat* Doctrine the Noble Practice is perfect in words and phrases. (The perfection of the words and phrases is discussed along the grammatical rules such as *Netti*, etc., in *Visuddhimagga* and the great Sub-commentary, other Commentaries and Sub-commentaries. Here we are not going into these details.)

Furthermore, the *Pariyat* Doctrine expounded by the Buddha is perfect because it contains the five qualities, namely, Morality, Concentration, Wisdom, Emancipation and Insight leading to

emancipation so that there is no essential thing or no other pure element to add to it.

Again, the *Pariyat* Doctrine expounded by the Buddha is perfect in the sense that there is nothing that is harmful and is to be discarded, for it has no trace of the defiling things such as wrong view or conceit, but is purely productive of liberation from the woeful round of existences. In another sense, there is no flaw whatever in this *Pariyat* Doctrine since it is not something that is delivered to anyone with an eye on material gain or for fame and applause. Therefore it is pure in all aspects.

Thus the *Pariyat* Doctrine preached by the Buddha is truly well expounded (*Svākkhāta*) because of its perfection in meaning, in words and phrases, and is by its very nature perfectly pure, laying down the Practice of Purity in its two fold modes.

Taken in yet another light, the *Pariyat* Doctrine preached by the Buddha is well-expounded because it does not deviate from the avowed claim. Consider this: Holders of doctrines other than the Buddha's preach their gospel of impediments which are not truly impediments, and their gospel of emancipation which are not productive of emancipation. Hence their doctrines deviate from the avowed claim, and are therefore not well-expounded, but only ill-expounded.

The veracity of the Buddha's *Pariyat* Doctrine is never called in question. What the Buddha declares as impediments to the attainment of *Jhāna Magga Phala*, *Nibbāna* are truly impediments. What the Buddha declares as factors conducive to emancipation are truly so. Nowhere does the *Pariyat* Doctrine deviate from its avowed claims. That is why the *Pariyat* Doctrine is truly well-expounded, *Svākkhāto*.

The above two interpretations of the attribute of *svākkhāta* is all the more remarkable when they are seen in association with the four kinds of Perfect Self-confidence of the Buddha (*cātuvesārajjañāṇa*). The Commentaries usually relate *svākkhāta* with these four factors (Knowledges). The four are given below:



**The four kinds of perfect self-confidence (*Vesārajja ñāṇa*).**

- (1) The Buddha made his bold admission that "I am the Supremely Enlightened Buddha endowed with the All-knowing Wisdom," and truly is he possessed of the All-knowing Wisdom.
- (2) He made his bold admission that "I am an *Arahat* who has destroyed all the defilements," and truly is he an *Arahat*.
- (3) He boldly declared with his All-knowing Wisdom that "Such and Such factors are impediments to go to good destinations, to *jhāna*, *magga phala*," and truly are those factors impediments.
- (4) He boldly declared with his All-knowing Wisdom that "Such and such factors are those that lead to emancipation from the woeful round of existences," and truly are those factors productive of emancipation.

(1) That being so, there is no one who can challenge the Buddha on good grounds saying, "You claim to be Omniscient, but you do not know such and such thing." And there is indeed not a single thing that the Buddha does not know that would provide good ground for anyone to make such a challenge. Knowing himself thus unassailable, the Buddha has perfect self-confidence that his attainment of Perfect Enlightenment is truly perfect; and this self-confidence gives him great delightful satisfaction coupled with the reviewing Knowledge of his own attainment. [This is one kind of Perfect Self-confidence (Knowledge) dependent on his successful Knowledge.]

(2) Likewise, there is no one who can call in question the Buddha's claim about purity. No one can challenge him: on good grounds saying, "You claim to be completely pure, yet you still have such and such impurity or defilement." For there is indeed no defilement that the Buddha has not rid himself of that would provide good ground for anyone to make such a challenge. Knowing himself thus unassailable, the Buddha has perfect self-confidence that his purity is truly perfect; and this self-confidence gives him great delightful satisfaction coupled with the reviewing Knowledge of his purity. [This is one kind of Perfect Self-confidence (Knowledge) dependent on his successful abandonment of defilements.]

(3) Likewise, there is no one who can challenge the Buddha on good grounds, saying, "The factors that you declare to be obstructions against going to the good destinations, to *Jhāna*, *Magga*, *Phala*, *Nibbāna*, have no obstructing effects on those who resort to them." For there is indeed no impediment that fails to obstruct achievement of due results of the practice of the Dhamma. Knowing himself thus unassailable, the Buddha has perfect Self-confidence that what he has declared to be impediments are truly impediments to the Noble practice; and this self-confidence gives him great delightful satisfaction coupled with the reviewing Knowledge of his own Doctrine. [This is one kind of perfect Self-confidence (knowledge) dependent on his special accomplishment in imparting knowledge.]

(4) Likewise, there is no one who can challenge the Buddha on good grounds, saying, "The factors that you declare to be leading to emancipation from the woefulness of the round of existences do not lead to emancipation of those who take up those factors." For there is no factor of emancipation that does not bring emancipation to the diligent. Knowing himself thus unassailable, the Buddha has perfect self-confidence that what he has declared to be emancipating factors are truly emancipatory; and this self-confidence gives him great delightful satisfaction coupled with the reviewing Knowledge of his own Doctrine. [This is one kind of perfect Self-confidence (Knowledge) dependent on the peaceful security of the Dhamma.]

The above four kinds of Perfect Self-confidence of the Buddha are called the four *Vesārajjañānas*. Of these four, the first two go to prove the fact that the Doctrine expounded by the Buddha is well-expounded in that it is excellent at the beginning, at the middle and at the end; it is perfect in meaning and in wording; it need not be either added to or expunged, it is perfectly pure in its prescription of the Noble Practice in its two modes. (which is the first interpretation of *svākkhāta* above).

The two of later kinds substantiate the fact that the Doctrine is well-expounded because whatever is declared as impeding factors are truly impediments and also because whatever is declared as contributory factors to emancipation are truly emancipatory (which is the second

interpretation above). (This is how the *pariyatti* dhamma the Doctrine, is *svākkhāto* or well-expounded).

The Supramundane is well expounded in that it leads to *Nibbāna* through the practice of the four Paths declared by the Buddha thus: This is the correct practice, the way to *Nibbāna*, and this is *Nibbāna* that is attainable by this practice." (This is how *Magga* and *Nibbāna* are well expounded)

Of the three aspects of the Supramundane, i.e., *Magga Phala Nibbāna*, the *Ariya Magga* is well expounded in that it avoids the two extremes and steers the middle course as the correct practice. The Fruition (*Phala*) of the Path (*Magga*) i.e., the ordinary Fruitions attained by an *Ariya*, which are four in number, are the factors where no burning defilements exist. And the declaration of this truth that, "The four *Phalas* are the factors where no burning defilements remain," is the attribute of its being well-expounded. *Nibbāna* is permanent, deathless, the ultimate unconditioned element and this *Nibbana* is declared by the Buddha in terms of permanence, deathlessness, etc. is the attribute of its being well-expounded. (This is how *Magga Phala Nibbāna*, the Supramundane factors, are well-expounded.)

## (2) *Sandiṭṭhiko*.

This attribute only relates to the Supramundane *Sam*, self, *diṭṭha*, the truth realisable by the *Ariya*.) All *Ariya*, be he a Stream-Enterer, or a Once Returner, or a Never-Returner, having destroyed the various defilements each according to his status, have no business of harming oneself or harming another, or harming both because they are not subject to defilements such as attachment (*rāga*). Therefore they have no bodily pain. Since the defilements are extinct they are free from mental pain. On pondering over this bodily and mental ease, the *Ariya* perceives that his freedom from physical and mental troubles is due to the absence of defilements such as attachment which he has destroyed through Path-Knowledge. He knows it from personal experience and not from hearsay. Thus the *Ariya Magga* is perceivable by the *Ariya* by his own experience, i.e., it is *sandiṭṭhiko*.

Explained in another way, an *Ariya*, through the *Magga ñāṇa* (Path Knowledge) attained by him, experiences its fruition or *Phala ñāṇa* and realizes *Nibbāna*. Just as a person with good-eye-sight can see visible objects so also an *Ariya*, by mean of his reviewing Knowledge *Paccevakkaṇā*, perceives his own *Magga ñāṇa*, its Fruition, and *Nibbāna*. Thus the whole of the nine factors of the Supramundane are said to be perceivable by *Ariyas* by their own experience, hence it is *sandiṭṭhiko*.

Another interpretation: (*Sam*, that which is extolled; *diṭṭha*, through *Magga* knowledge; the dhamma that overcomes the defilements). As we say "the king who conquers the enemies by means of his chariot", so also it is through *Magga-ñāṇa* that which is the condition, overcomes the defilements. *Nibbāna*, through *Magga ñāṇa* which makes it its mind-object, overcomes the defilements. Thus all the nine factors of the Supramundane, through *Magga ñāṇa* which is worthy to be extolled, overcome the defilements, and are *saṃdiṭṭhiko*. (refer to the meaning of the attribute given above.)

Yet another interpretation: when the nine Supramundane factors are fully comprehended through a good grasp of the mental cultivation and realization, and through the reviewing Knowledge, then all the whole set of factors that constitute the vicious circle of rebirths fall away completely. (Remember how the *Ariyas* make an end of *dukkha*, uprooting all defilements, through clear comprehension of the nine Supramundane factors.)

Here the interpretation is: "that the Supramundane dhamma are worthy of comprehending."

(*Sandiṭṭhaṃ arahatīti sandiṭṭhiko*.)

*Sam diṭṭhaṃ*, 'for comprehending'; *arahati*, 'is worthy'; (worthwhile); *iti*, 'therefore'; *saṃdiṭṭhiko* 'it is worth-while knowing')

The Supramundane dhamma are worthwhile comprehending by anyone who means to make an end of *dukkha*. The Supramundane dhamma are therefore indispensable for those who wish to break the bonds of the woeful round of existences. There is no other way to

attain emancipation. Hence the Supramundane dhamma are truly *samditthiko*.

### (3) *Akāliko*.

This attribute relates only to the *Ariya* path. Refer to the meaning of *akāliko* given above. The *Ariya* Path fructifies without delay, and so it is timeless in bringing benefit. Consider mundane merit and its benefit which must take a day or at least a few hours to fructify, even if it is the type of merit bearing fruit at present. With the Supramundane *Ariya* Path it is not so. No time elapses between the arising of *Magga ñāṇa* and the fruition thereof, *Phala ñāṇa*. The Path knowledge gives rise to the Fruition Knowledge immediately. Hence the Supramundane *Magga* is timeless in its fruition, *akāliko*.

The important point to note in respect of this attribute is that according to *Abhidhamma*, in a *Magga* thought-process, *Magga* consciousness arises just for one thought-moment after which not a wink intervenes before *Phala* consciousness arises, which is the Fruition of the Path-Knowledges. An *Ariya* who attains *Magga* is a "*Magga-attainer*" just for a single thought-moment after which he is a "*Phala-attainer*" in no time. This is because the thought-process of the arising of the Path and its Fruition come in a continuous uninterrupted flow. Hence the Myanmar rendering describes the process that a *Magga-attainer* is called a "younger brother" to a *Phala-attainer* only in a technical sense.

### (4) *Ehipassiko*.

The nine Supramundane factors are real things in the ultimate sense. They exist in truth and reality. They are beautiful things because they are pure, not defiled by mental taints. They are worth inspection. "Come, see for yourself, experience it yourself! Try it out yourself!" They seem to be inviting. For example, if you have nothing worthwhile in hand to show such as a piece of gold or silver, you cannot invite others, "Come and see what is here." Again, if you have something horrible or detestable in hand, such as excreta, you cannot gladly invite

others to come and see it. Rather, something detestable or impure is only kept hidden and is not displayed.

The nine Supramundane factors are real things in the ultimate sense. They are like the full disc of the moon in a clear sky, or like a big ruby placed on a white velvet cloth. These dhamma are stainless, spotless, perfectly pure. They are therefore worth inspection, worth appreciation. They invite anyone to testify for himself their presence and their true worth.

### (5) *Opaneyyiko.*

Worldlings do not have the experience of the Supramundane. Their mind has never attained *Magga*-consciousness and *Phala*-consciousness. Therefore they have never realized *Nibbāna*. It is just because they have never attained *Magga* consciousness and *Phala*-consciousness and never realized *Nibbāna* that they wallow in the mire of the woeful round of existences endlessly. If the lowest level of the supramundane Knowledge as Stream-Entry is attained, if *Sotapatti Magga*-consciousness has ever arisen in one, the yogi as an *Ariya* has realized *Nibbāna* as clearly and unmistakably as he has seen something with his own eyes. Once this realization has taken place, he can make an end of all *dukkha* (i.e., the woeful round of rebirths) in utmost seven further existences in the fortunate destinations.

On one occasion, the Bhagavā placed a pinch of dirt on his finger-nail (by simply wishing it to happen so) and said to the Bhikkhus: "Bhikkhus, which is greater this pinch of dirt on my finger-nail or the great earth?"

And the bhikkhus replied, "Venerable Sir, the dirt on the finger-nail is infinitesimal; the great earth is far greater beyond comparison."

"Similarly, bhikkhus," said the Bhagavā, the number of existences that have been prevented from arising by *Sota-patti Magga* by an *ariya* disciple is as great as the great earth; the number of existences that remain to arise for him is as little as the pinch of dirt on my finger-nail (only seven at the most).

Thus the Supramundane factors have the effect of cutting down the role of the farer in *saṃsāra* into a few further existences only, with the ultimate effect of total release from *saṃsāra*, according to the attainment of each individual *Ariya*. That being so, a virtuous one wishing to make an end of *dukkha* should give top priority to gain *Magga Phala*. Even if one's head be on fire, the extinguishing of the fire is not such a matter of urgency as the gaining of Path-Knowledge because fire on the head can destroy the present life only whereas the fire of defilements within can cause endless trouble throughout *saṃsāra*. The Supramundane dhamma should be borne in mind diligently until Path-Knowledge with its fruition is attained. *Nibbāna* should be made the mind-object with diligence. Thus the nine Supramundane factors are worthy of being constantly borne in one's mind, *opaneyyiko*.

#### (6) *Paccattaṃ Veditabbo*.

Under this attribute three types of *Ariyas* should be noted, namely, (i) the *Uggahaṭitaññū*, who attains *Magga Phala* after hearing the gist of a discourse on the Dhamma, (ii) the *Vipacitaññū*, one who realizes *Magga Phala* after hearing an explanation of the Dhamma, and (iii) the *Neyya*, one who gradually comes to comprehend the truth after getting further elaboration and guidance.

All the three types, after attaining the Path, know for themselves, that they have taken up the Noble Practice, that they have attained the Path, the Fruition, and have realized *Nibbāna* through their own experience. For the eradication of defilements is to be accomplished directly by oneself. A close disciple cannot discard his defilements through the attainment of the Path by his master. Nor can he dwell in the Fruition of the Path through the attainment of the Fruition by his master. Neither can he make *Nibbāna* his own mind-object through the master's making *Nibbāna* his (the master's) mind-object. Only by the attainment of *Magga* by one's own self can one get rid of the defilements within oneself. Dwelling in the Fruition is possible only when one has attained the Fruition-Knowledge oneself. *Nibbāna* also is likewise a matter for direct experience, and not realizable through another's experience. Thus the nine Supramundane factors are not to be considered as ornaments

that adorn other people (and have no real benefit to oneself) but are only the property of the *Ariyas* who only can enjoy them. Since they pertain to the wise, these factors are beyond the pale of fools.

Thus the nine Supramundane factors are the property of the *Ariyas* who alone can realize them in their mind and enjoy them, *paccattamveditabbo*.

### Contemplation of the Dhamma.

The yogi who wishes to contemplate the Dhamma should commit to memory the six attributes of the Dhamma in *Pāli* and translation as given above. He should recite each of them at a speed neither too slowly nor too fast, reflecting on its meaning. One who reflects on the attributes of the Dhamma, while doing so, prevents the arising of thoughts of lust, hatred and bewilderment, besides gaining concentration which clears the mind of lethargy and distraction, and rendering it possible for a righteous thought-process to arise through the medium attitude of mental exercise, i.e., equanimity.

As the concentration gets stronger through this meditation practice, the hindrances fall off and consequently the defilements are quelled. The five Faculties such as conviction become very pure and effective. The repeated reflection on the Dhamma sharpens the initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. When those two factors are functioning well, delightful satisfaction arises. Due to the delightful satisfaction, serenity of mental concomitants and serenity of mind arise, as the result of which physical and mental uneasiness are stilled. When there is serenity of mind and serenity of mental concomitants, happiness that causes the arising of concentration becomes pronounced. The thought-process being enriched by happiness is firmly fixed on the object of meditation. (i.e., the Dhamma.)

Thus the factors involved in meditation beginning from initial application of the mind become more and more efficient stage by stage. The mind is neither lethargic nor distracted so that the medium attitude of meditative practice is maintained and the five Faculties such as conviction are functioning in harmony. The five factors of *jhāna*,



namely, initial application of the mind, sustained application of the mind, delightful satisfaction, happiness and one-pointedness of mind, arise simultaneously at every thought-moment with the great meritorious consciousness of the Contemplation of the Dhamma which is mental cultivation pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere. Thus neighbourhood concentration or threshold concentration, *upacāra jhāna*, is achieved. When this concentration arises together with the great meritorious consciousness of the contemplation of the Dhamma which is mental cultivation pertaining to the Sensuous sphere, the yogi is called one who has achieved *upacāra jhāna* of the contemplation of the Dhamma.

(The possible questions relating to *upacāra jhāna* and their answers should be treated along the same lines as in the case of contemplation on the Buddha.)

### Benefits of contemplating the Dhamma.

A yogi who contemplates the Dhamma repeatedly is imbued with the intrinsic value of the Dhamma in its being worthy of constant companionship so much so that he feels a deep sense of awe and gratitude towards the Buddha, the fount of the Dhamma. For never was this Dhamma propounded by any other teacher. Thus, through the habitual contemplation of the Dhamma, one naturally becomes devoted to the Buddha exceeding other person's devotion. Therefore his devotion to the Buddha is comparable to that of the *Ariya*. He gains a stable mindfulness, a profound wisdom, and much merit. He becomes possessed of much delightful satisfaction, first of the feeble kind but later, of an ecstatic kind. He becomes indifferent to fearful things, great or small. He becomes tolerant to pain. He feels that he is in the company of the Dhamma. The body of one whose mind is steeped in the Dhamma is like a shrine worth paying homage to. His mind is always inclined to and desirous of attaining the nine Supramundane factors. Being constantly aware of the attributes of the Dhamma, he is incapable of allowing himself to commit evil, through shame and dread to do it, whenever occasion for it arises. Contemplation of the Dhamma is a sure basis for gaining *Magga Phala*. If the yogi does not attain

*Magga Phala* in this existence for want of sufficient past merit, he is reborn in the fortunate existences. These are the benefits of contemplating the Dhamma.

**A special point to note.**

The Commentary says that of the six attributes of the Dhamma, only first one, *svākkhāto*, relates to the Doctrine as expounded by the Buddha, and that the remaining five relate to the nine Supramundane factors. *Visuddhimagga Mahāṭīkā* (Volume I) discusses this matter in another light which is briefly reproduced below :

Although the Commentary says that in specific terms the five attributes beginning with *sandiṭṭhiko* belong to the Supramundane, they can also be considered as belonging to the Doctrine or *pariyatti dhamma* on the following grounds :

A wise person who is learned, who has memorized much *Pāli*, who is of very stable mindfulness, can perceive the Doctrine as being excellent at the beginning, etc and so the Doctrine is *sandiṭṭhiko* as *sandiṭṭhiko* is defined as "*Sandiṭṭhiya jayatīti sandiṭṭhiko*" --- "that the knowledge of the Doctrine can be a tool to conquer believers of other doctrines" - it is specifically *sandiṭṭhiko*. In conquering the defilements, knowledge of the Doctrine is a contributing factor and so the Doctrine is by inference *sandiṭṭhiko*: As another definition puts it: "*Sandiṭṭhaṃ arahatīti sandiṭṭhiko* --" that the Doctrine has been expounded to clear away all defiling factors" and directed at the promotion of pure meritorious factors, it is worth to be studied closely to gain perception. Hence it is *sandiṭṭhiko*.

Since the Doctrine is the true condition for the attainment of the Supramundane *Magga*, which may be realized at all times, it is *akālika*, considered from the point of probable result.

The Doctrine itself is real and is perfectly pure. So it also is open to inspection and can invite all the world to come and see it, to learn it, and to examine it. Hence it is also *ehi-passiko*.

Being replete with those attributes, the Doctrine is worthy of being constantly borne in mind by the wise who wish to make an end of *dukkha*. Therefore it is *opaneyyiko*.

One who studies the Doctrine with a mind intent on Arahatsip, will get delightful satisfaction both on account of its excellence in language and excellence in meaning. This quality of giving delightful satisfaction to the wise individually, according to their capacity, is truly *paccattamveditabbo*.

This is the explanation given in *Visuddhimagga Mahā Tīkā* about how the five later attributes of the Dhamma can also belong to the Doctrine.



### The Nine Supreme Attributes of the Sangha.

*Suppaṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka saṃgho ujuppaṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka saṃgho, ñāyappaṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka saṃgho sāmīcippaṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka saṃgho. Yadidaṃ cattāri purisayugāni atthapurisa puggalā esa bhagavato sāvaka saṃgho āhuneyyo pāhuneyyo dakkhiṇeyyo añjalīkarāṇīyo anuttaram puññakhettaṃ lokassa.*

(The Pāli text of the nine supreme attributes of the Sangha)

Its meaning:-

The community of the disciples of the Buddha, i.e., the eight classes of the *Ariya Saṃgha*, take up the bhikkhu practice well, and hence are *suppaṭipanno*. (1)

The community of the *Ariya* disciples of the Buddha are endowed with straightforward uprightness (*ujuppaṭipanno*) because they follow the straight Middle way. (2)

The community of the *Ariya* disciples of the Buddha strive to attain *Nibbāna*, hence they are *ñāyappaṭipanno*. (3)

The community of the *ariya* disciples of the Buddha are endowed with correctness of practice, being ashamed to do evil and abhorrent to do evil, being always mindful, and controlling their conduct, even being prepared to die rather than lose morality, hence they are *sāmīcippaṭipanno*. (4)

The disciples of the Buddha, the *Ariya Sangha* consisting of eight categories of disciples in four pairs, the really great persons,-

- are worthy of receiving offerings brought even from afar; (*āhuneyyo*) (5)
- are worthy of receiving offerings specially set aside for special guests; (*pāhuneyyo*) (6)
- are worthy of receiving offerings made for the sake of *Nibbāna*; (*dakkhiṇeyyo*) (7)
- are worthy of receiving obeisance by the three worlds; (*añjalīkarāṇīyo*) (8)
- are the incomparably fertile soil for all to sow the seed of merit; (*puññakhettaṃ lokassa*) (9)

### Miscellaneous notes.

*Sāvakaṣaṃghā*: The eight classes of *Ariyas* are *Sāvakaṣaṃghā* in their true meaning. However, the virtuous bhikkhus also are called, in an extended meaning, *Sāvakaṣaṃghā* since they also follow the Teaching of the Buddha obediently. The word '*sāvakā*' is defined as: "*Sakaccam suṇantīti sāvakā*" "he who listens (the Teaching) respectfully." Here, 'to listen respectfully means to live up to the Teaching that will lead to Arahatsip. According to this definition, only *Ariyas* are *sāvakaṣaṃghā* in the true sense and worldlings are called *sāvakaṣaṃghā* as an extended meaning. (Listening respectfully is accomplished only by the *Arahats* who have accomplished the noble Practice. However, worldlings who are on the noble Path are sure to attain Arahatsip and so they are also called *sāvakaṣaṃghā* in an extended sense of the word.)

*Ṣaṃgha*: the community who are of the same moral standard. Hence '*Ṣaṃghā*' in the true sense refers only to *Ariyas*. This is because *Ariyas* have their morality based on *Magga* and are of the same purity just as a bullion cut up in two pieces in the middle are of equal value.)

### *Suppatipano, etc.*

In the nine attributes of the Sangha, the first four beginning with *Suppatipano* are the conditions that have the five latter ones as consequence.

The four conditions (attributes) are in fact not four different kinds of practice: if the right practice which is shown as the *Ariya Magga* is carried out, all the four attributes are accomplished.

This is because the Buddhas' Teaching in the last analysis is right practice as a constituent of the *Ariya* Path. It is this right practice that was presented to the multitudes over the forty-five years of the Buddhas' mission in a multitude of ways to suit the natural bent of the hearer. Thus the right practice is the Buddhas' true message, the essential feature of his entire teaching. One who follows the right practice is one who practices well, a *suppatipanna puggalo*.

The Community of the disciples of the Buddha are endowed with the proper practice because they follow the right practice. (1)

The right practice which is a constituent of *Ariya* Path has the quality of destroying the opposing factors which are defilements. Therefore the right-practice is the practice that is unailing and straight. The community of the disciples of the Buddha who follow the right practice are therefore called the noble ones who are endowed with the straightforward upright practice. (2)

The right practice which is a constituent of the *Ariya* Path is the practice that does not go against *Nibbāna*, but is in conformity with *Nibbāna*. The community of the disciples who take upon themselves the right practice that conforms to *Nibbāna*, that is not against *Nibbāna*, are endowed with the practice leading to *Nibbāna*. (3)

The right practice which is a constituent of the *Ariya* Path is the practice that is in conformity with the nine Supramundane factors, and is therefore called the righteous practice, the practice that conforms to the Dhamma. Hence the *Samgha* are endowed with correctness of practice. (4)

Of the eight categories of *Ariyas*, the four who are established in Path Knowledge are endowed with the above (four aspects of) the right practice which is a constituent of the *Ariya* Path. The four who are established in the Fruition Knowledge are endowed with the above right practice in the sense that it was through that right practice that they now enjoy the Fruit of the Path and *Nibbāna*.

#### Further explanation:

The *Ariya Samgha* take upon themselves the Doctrine and discipline as taught by the Buddha. This is taking up the true practice, the faultless practice. Hence they are endowed with the true practice. (1)

The *Samgha* take up the eight constituents of the Path and thereby steer the middle course, avoiding the two extremes (of sense-gratification and self-mortification). This practice is also straight without the slightest deviation or crookedness in any examples of the

three examples of crookedness. Hence they are endowed with the straightforward upright practice. (2)

*Nibbāna* which is penetratable only by *Magga Phalañāṇa* is called *ñāna* (knowledge). Since the *Samgha* strive for realizing *ñāna*, they are endowed with the practice leading to *Nibbāna*. (3)

Worshipping, welcoming, raising joined palms by way of obeisance, and offering of the four bhikkhu requisites are acts of veneration called *samīcikamma*. Devas and men perform these acts of veneration towards the *Samgha* having regard for the morality, concentration and wisdom of the *Samgha*. Anyone lacking in morality, concentration and wisdom does not deserve veneration. As for the community of disciples of the Buddha the taking up of the right practice which is the *Āriya* Path, endows them with morality, concentration and wisdom as the necessary threefold training. And so they deserve veneration. Since they conduct themselves to be worthy of veneration through their noble practice, they are endowed with *samīcipaṭipanno*. These four attributes are the conditions for their homage worthiness.

#### The eight categories of Ariyas in four pairs.

- (a) The *Ariya* established in the First Path or the Stream-Enterer and the *Ariya* established in the Fruition thereof;
- (b) The *Ariya* established in the Second Path or the Once-Returner and the *Ariya* established in the Fruition thereof;
- (c) The *Ariya* established in the Third Path or the Never-Returner and the *Ariya* established in the Fruition thereof;
- (d) The *Ariya* established in the Fourth Path or the *Arahatta Magga Puggalo* and the *Ariya* established in the Fruition thereof or the *Arahatta Phala Puggalo* (The Arahāt).

#### (2) *Āhuneyyo*, etc.

Those four pairs, making eight categories of *Ariyas*, being endowed with the four attributes as conditions such as *suppaṭipanno* are entitled

to the five noble privileges such as *āhuneyyo* which also are their attributes as consequences.

*Āhuneyyo*: (*a*: even brought from afar; *huna*, the four requisites as offerings, *eyya*, entitled to receive). The *Ariya Saṃgha* can, on account of their four attributes as conditions such as *suppatipanno* bestow great merit to the donors who offer them the four bhikkhu requisites. Therefore if the donor has these articles ready to offer when the *Ariya Saṃgha* come for alms-collection, he should offer them gladly. If those articles are not at hand he should try and procure them even from afar and offer them. Those articles brought from afar and offered are called *āhuna*. The *Ariya Saṃgha* who are endowed with the four conditions are entitled to receive those offerings brought from afar and more so because in accepting them the donors earn great merit. Therefore the *Ariya Saṃgha* are possessed of the attribute of *āhuneyyo*.

(Another interpretation:) (*a*; even brought from afar; *huneyya*, worthy to offer the four bhikkhu requisites) The *Ariya Saṃgha* can bestow much merit on the donor because they are endowed with the four noble conditions. Therefore the donor, wishing to gain much merit, should make offerings not only when the *Saṃgha* come to them on alms collection, but should go and make offerings to the *Saṃgha* at their monastery which may necessitate a long journey. The four requisites that are offered after making a journey for that purpose are called *āhana*. The *Ariya Saṃgha* deserve to receive such offerings on account of the four conditions that they are endowed with. In this sense also the *Ariya Saṃgha* are possessed of *āhuneyyo*.

(Still another interpretation:) The *Ariya Saṃgha* are endowed with *āhuneyyo* because they deserve to receive offerings from Sakka, king of devas, and such powerful personages. Taken in another light, in the brahmana tradition they keep a sacrificial fire called *āhavaniya* (which has the same meaning as *āhuneyyo*.) They believe that if they feed butter to this fire as offering they earn much merit. If the offering to the sacrificial fire brings merit, and is thus called *āhavaniya*, the *Ariya Saṃgha* who can bestow great merit to the donor are truly *āhuneyyo*. For the so-called *āhavaniya* of the Brahmins do not bring any real benefit: the butter that they feed the sacrificial fire just gets consumed



and becomes ash. The *Ariya Saṃgha*, being possessed of the four noble attributes as condition, unfailingly bestow much merit to the donor, and are truly *āhuneyyo*.

*Yo ca vassasatam jantu  
aggin paricare vane  
ekañca bhāvitattānam  
muhuttamapi pījaye  
sā yeva pījanā seyyo  
yance vassasatam hutam.*

"One may tend the sacrificial fire in the forest for a hundred years.

One may, on the other hand,  
Make offerings reverentially just once  
To those noble ones who dwell in insight-meditation;  
This offering is indeed of greater benefit  
Than a hundred years of tending the sacrificial fire."

*Dhammapada v. 107; Sahassa Vagga*

The above stanza brings out the significance of the *āhuneyyo* attribute of the *Ariya Saṃgha*. (5)

### *Pāhuneyyo:*

Guests who come to you from all the various quarters are called *pāhuna*. Gifts and offerings such as food, made ready for them are also called *pāhuna*. In this context the second meaning applies. (*Pāhuna*, gifts and offerings meant for guests, *eyya*, deserve to receive.) Gifts and offerings set aside for guests should be offered to the *Saṃgha* if the *Saṃgha* come to your place, i.e., Guests count only next to the *Saṃgha*. The *Saṃgha* deserve top priority because they are endowed with the four attributes discussed above. That indeed is so because (however important one's guests may be,) the *Ariya Saṃgha* appear in the world only when the Buddha appears. And the arising of a Buddha takes incalculable aeons. Further, the *Saṃgha* are so imbued with noble qualities that they are a source of pleasure, and are the incomparable

friend or relative that call at your door. For these reasons the *Samgha* are entitled to receive special offerings meant for one's valued guests, *āhuneyyo*.

*Dakkhiṇeyyo*:

'*Dakkhiṇā*' has been defined as :

*Dakkhaṇṭi etāya sattā yathādippetāhi sampattīhi vadḍhantīti dakkhiṇā.*

"The volition through which beings are blessed with whatever they wish to have or to be is called *dakkhiṇā*." This means that the gift or offering made with a view to future well-being is called *Dakkhiṇā*. If someone does not believe in the hereafter, i.e., if he holds an annihilist view, then he will not make offerings for future well-being.

According to the Buddha's doctrine, *Arahats*, i.e., the Buddha and his *Arahat* disciples, having eradicated ignorance and craving for existence, which are the root causes of the round of existences, will not be reborn in a new existence. Until the two root causes have been eradicated, rebirth is inevitable (however much one holds an annihilist view). Just as a tree whose tap roots are not cut off will remain growing and bear fruit, but when its tap roots are completely cut off it cannot thrive and cannot bear fruit, so also ignorance and craving for existence must be understood as the tap roots of rebirth. All worldlings, Stream-enterers, Once-returners, Non-returners will have rebirth because those two tap roots have not been completely destroyed. Only on attaining *Arahatship* are the two tap roots completely destroyed and rebirth is stopped.

Only one who does not hold the wrong view of annihilism believes in after-life. Only when existence after death is believed in, will there be alms-giving for one's own well-being in future existences. Only when volitional acts of giving are done, can there be the fulfilment of whatever one may aspire to as the result. Thus, any act of giving with the belief in its good result in the future existences is called *dakkhiṇā*. (Therefore *dakkhiṇā* means an object that is given away, motivated by the belief in future benefit.)

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The *Ariya Saṃgha* can make that object of offering efficacious as is desired by the donor because they are endowed with the four supreme attributes mentioned above. In that sense they deserve to receive offerings that are called *dakkhiṇā*. Hence they are possessed of the noble attribute of *Dakkhiṇeyyo*.

Another interpretation:

The *Ariya Saṃgha* purify the object that is being offered (*dakkhiṇā*) in the sense that they bestow the merit on it (through their nobility). "*Dakkhiṇāya hito Dakkhiṇeyyo*" - "the *Ariya Saṃgha* who bestow merit on the offering." This is another meaning by which the attribute of *Dakkhiṇeyyo* may be understood. (7)

*Añjalīkaraṇīyo* : Being endowed with the four noble qualities based on their right practice, the *Ariya Saṃgha* are worthy of being venerated with joined palms raised to the head. The term for this attribute is defined as: "*añjalīkaraṇīya etthāti añjalīkaraṇīyo*" : "Those wishing to earn merit pay obeisance to these eight *Ariyas*, hence the *Ariya Saṃgha* are *añjalīkaraṇīyo*." (8)

*Anuttaraṃ puñṇakhattaṃ lokassa:*

*Anuttaraṃ* : "*atthi ito uttaranti anuttaraṃ*"

(Definition) "There is no better field for sowing merit than the *Ariya Saṃgha*". Although by definition "there is no better field than the *Ariya Saṃgha*," by point of fact there is not even any field of merit equal to the *Ariya Saṃgha*. Hence this attribute has been rendered as "the incomparably fertile field for sowing merit."

*Khetta* means a field for cultivation of crops. *Puñṇa khetta* means a field where merit is cultivated, a metaphor for the *Ariya Saṃgha*. Just as a field nurtures the seeds sown in it so also the *Ariya Saṃgha* nurture the seeds of good deeds (acts of merit) sown in them (done towards them). Here the *Saṃgha* nurture the good deeds of the donors through the morality, concentration and wisdom which are like the nutrients of the soil. Thus the *Ariya Saṃgha* bestow great merit to the good deeds done towards them, and are called the field that nurtures the seeds of merit.

A field where the king sows his seeds is called the king's field. Likewise, the *Ariya Saṃgha* where all the three worlds sow their seeds of merit are called the incomparably fertile field where the whole world sow their seeds of merit, *anuttaram puññakhettaṃ lokassa*. (9)

### Contemplation of the Sangha.

The yogi who wishes to contemplate the *Saṃgha* should commit to memory the nine attributes of the *Saṃgha* in Pāli and its translation as given above. He should recite each of them, such as *suppatipanno* at a speed neither too slowly nor too fast, reflecting on its meaning. One who reflects on the attributes of the *Saṃgha*, while doing so, prevents the arising of thoughts of lust, hatred and bewilderment, besides gaining concentration which clears the mind of lethargy and distraction, and rendering it possible for a righteous thought process to arise through the medium attitude of mental exercise, i.e., equanimity.

As the concentration gets stronger through this meditation practice, the hindrances fall off and consequently the defilements are quelled. The five faculties such as conviction become very pure and effective. The repeated reflection on the *Saṃgha* sharpens the initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. When these two factors are functioning well, delightful satisfaction arises. Due to the delightful satisfaction, serenity of mental concomitants and serenity of mind arise, as the result of which physical and mental uneasiness are stilled. When there is serenity of mind and mental concomitants, happiness that causes the arising of concentration becomes pronounced. The thought-process being enriched by happiness is firmly fixed on the object of meditation (i.e., the *Saṃgha*)

Thus the factors involved in meditation beginning with initial application of the mind become more and more efficient stage by stage. The mind is neither lethargic nor distracted so that the medium attitude in mental exercise is maintained and the five faculties such as conviction are functioning in harmony. The five factors of jhana, namely, initial application of the mind, sustained application of the mind, delightful satisfaction, happiness and one-pointedness of mind, arise simultaneously at every thought moment with the great meritorious

consciousness of the contemplation of the *Samgha* which is mental cultivation pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere. Thus neighbourhood concentration or threshold concentration, *upacāra jhāna*, is achieved. When this concentration arises together with the great meritorious consciousness of the contemplation of the *Samgha* which is mental cultivation pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere, the yogi is called one who has achieved *upacāra jhāna* of the contemplation of the *Samgha*. (The possible question relating to *upacāra jhāna* and their answers should be treated along the same lines as in the case of contemplation on the Buddha.)

### The benefits of contemplating the *Samgha*.

The virtuous one who repeatedly contemplates the *Samgha* becomes exceptionally devoted to the *Samgha* comparable to the *Ariyas* devotion to the *Samgha*. He gains a stable mindfulness, a profound wisdom, and much merit. He becomes possessed of delightful satisfaction at first of the feeble kind, but later, of an ecstatic kind. He becomes indifferent to fearful things, great or small. He becomes tolerant to pain. He feels that he is always in the company of the *Samgha*. His mind is always ennobled by the awareness of the attributes of the *Samgha* so that his body is like a congregation chamber of the *Samgha* (*Sima*) where the *Samgha* are being assembled, and therefore is worthy of veneration. His mind is bent on acquiring the attributes of the *Samgha*. Being constantly aware of the attributes of the *Samgha*, he feels like one in the very presence of the *Samgha* and is incapable of committing any evil, through shame and dread to do it, whenever occasion for it arises. Making the contemplation of the *Samgha* as the bases, one may (after gaining concentration) meditate for gaining insight into conditioned phenomena with facility and succeed in it. If he does not attain *Magga Phala* in this existence for want of sufficient past merit, he is reborn in the fortunate existences. These are the benefits of contemplating the *Samgha*.

### Two kinds of meditation.

Contemplation of the Buddha, Contemplation of the Dhamma and Contemplation of the *Samgha* are all various forms of meditation. Meditation is of two kinds: meditation for refreshing the mind and meditation for Insight.

We shall explain this.

(1) A yogi who contemplates loathsomeness of the body through reflecting on the ten stages of the dead body may feel repulsed by the unpleasant object and his mind may stray like an untamed bull. In such a case he should shift his object of meditation from the original object of the dead body and contemplate the Buddha or the Dhamma or the *Samgha*. Then the mind will become refreshed and invigorated. The hindrances then fall away. Then he can go back to his original contemplation on loathsomeness of the body.

It is like the case of a strong man trying to cut down a big tree to build a pinnacle for a shrine. His sword or hatchet might get blunt after cutting off just the branches of the big tree and he might find it unusable for felling the tree. Then he would go to the blacksmith and get his blunt blade sharpened after which, equipped with a new blade, he could successfully chop down the whole tree.

The yogi, after refreshing his mind by contemplating on the Buddha or the Dhamma or the *Samgha* resumes his contemplation on the loathsomeness of the body. When he gains concentration and achieves the first *jhāna* of the fine material Sphere he meditates on the five factors of the *jhāna* as being impermanent, woeful and insubstantial. And when the mind gains the ten stages of insight into conditioned phenomena, it matures into *Magga*-Knowledge and its Fruition. (This is the first kind of meditation)

(2) A yogi contemplating on the Buddha or the Dhamma or the *Samgha* first strives to achieve the threshold concentration or *upacāra jhāna*. Then he meditates on the very nature of his mental exercise. If he has been contemplating the Buddha he applies his mind to the question: "Who is it that is meditating? Is it a man or a woman? Is he a man, or deva, or a Māra, or a Brahma?" He views the question

objectively to get at the ultimate fact. Then he will come to perceive the fact that in the ultimate sense there is no such thing as a man or a woman, or man, or deva or, Māra or a Brahma; and that in truth and reality it is just the mind that is mindful of the object under meditation that is recollecting the attribute of the Buddha such as "*Araham*". Then he comes to understand that the mind that is being mindful of the mind-object is the aggregate of consciousness (*viññāṇakkhandhā*); that the sensation that is associated with the consciousness is the aggregate of sensation (*vedanākkhandhā*); that the perceiving (of the sensation) associated with the consciousness is the aggregate of perception; (*saññākkhandhā*); that the contact (*phassa*) with the sensation that arise together with the consciousness is the aggregate of volitional activities (*saṅkhārakkhandhā*). Thus he understands the nature of mind and the four mental aggregates which are mental phenomena. Further, he examines through the insight gained so far: On what do the mental aggregates depend? He perceives first the physical base of mental phenomena (*hadaya vatthu*). Next he perceives that the physical base is dependent on the Four Primary elements (*Mahā bhūta rūpa*). Then he goes on meditating on other corporeality that are dependent on the Four Primary Elements. He exercises the mind diligently and in due course comprehends the nature of corporeality that such is the aggregate of corporeality which is just physical phenomena devoid of any real person or being, and that in truth and reality there is no I or he/she, man, woman, etc., apart from the physical phenomena. He now gains insight into the two different kinds of phenomena, that is mental and physical, in the last analysis, and understands that these two different phenomena are composed of five aggregates on a detailed analysis. Then he understands that these five aggregates are in truth and reality unsatisfactory and woeful and thus understands the Truth of *dukkha*. Then he also knows that Craving (greed) is the cause of *dukkha*; and that cessation of both *dukkha* and the cause of *dukkha* is the Truth of cessation; and that the *Ariya* Path of Eight constituents is the practice that is the condition for cessation. Thus having penetrating knowledge of the Four Truths, the yogi develops the insight stage by stage until it culminates in the Fruition of the Path Knowledge and

becomes an *Ariya*. The meditation thus culminating in Ariyahood is the kind of contemplation directed towards insight.

(These remarks are extracted from the Commentary on the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, the Ones, *ekāka*)

(End of the two kinds of meditation)

### Dependent Origination: *Paṭiccasamuppāda*.

In Volume Two of the Great Chronicle we have undertaken to deal with Dependent Origination in the Chapter on the Dhamma and this is the occasion for it. We shall explain Dependent Origination in a manner neither too brief nor too detailed.

*Saccam satto paṭisandhi paccayākārameva ca  
Duddassā caturo dhammā desetuñca sudukkarā.*

"(i) The veracity of the Four Truths, (ii) the illusion of a 'being' as regards the five aggregates, (iii) the process of rebirth that links up existences, (iv) the conditionality of all things such as ignorance - these four subjects are difficult for one to understand and, having understood, are difficult to explain them to others." So say the *Sammohavinodanī* Commentary and others.

*Paṭiccasamuppāda*, being one of the difficult subjects to understand, will now be explained to the reader in a manner neither too brief nor too elaborate, using the brief exposition in the text, based on the late *Ledi Sayadaws'* 13 expository Myanmar verses on *Paṭicca samuppāda*.

The Text: *Paṭicca Samuppāda Uddesa* -

*Avijjā paccayā saṁkhārā saṁkhāra paccayā viññāṇaṁ  
viññāṇapaccayā nāmarūpaṁ nāmarūpapaccayā salāyatanāṁ  
salāyatanapaccayā phasso phassa-paccayā vedanā  
vedanapaccayā taṇhā taṇhāpaccayā upādānaṁ upādānapaccayā  
bhavo bhavapaccayā jāti jātipaccayā jarāmaraṇaṁ soka  
parideva dukkha domanassupāyāsā sambhavanti. evametassa  
kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa samudayo hoti.*



*Avijjāpaccayā saṅkhārā:* With ignorance of the Truth as condition, i.e., due to the inability to see things as they truly are volitional activities that pertain to the present and future existences come about.

*Saṅkhāra paccayā viññāṇaṃ:* With volitional activities, pertaining to the present and future existences as condition, birth linking Consciousness comes about.

*Viññāna paccayā nāmarūpaṃ:* With birth-linking Consciousness as condition, mind and body comes about.

*Nāmarūpa paccayā salāyatanaṃ:* With mind-and-body as condition, the six kinds of sensitive corporeality called the six Sense-doors come about.

*Salāyatana paccayā phassa:* With the six Sense-doors as condition, the six kinds of contact with their respective sense-objects come about.

*Phassa paccayā vedanā:* With the six kinds of contact as condition, six kinds of sensation that cognize or experience the sense-objects come about.

*Vedanā paccayā taṅhā:* With the six kinds of sensation as condition, the six kinds of craving or attachment for the six sense-objects (i.e, sensual objects) come about.

*Taṅhā paccayā upādānaṃ:* With the six kinds of craving as condition, clinging, i.e deep-rooted attachment come about.

*Upādāna paccayā bhavo:* With clinging as condition, the causal process of ones' own actions with their results in the present and in future existences comes about.

*Bhava paccayā jāti:* With the causal process of one's own actions as condition, recurrence of fresh existences or rebirth comes about.

*Jāti paccayā jarāmarana soka parideva dukkhadomanassūpayasa sambhavanti:* With rebirth as condition ageing-and-death, grief, lamentation, bodily pain, distress of mind, and agony come about. (Ledi Sayadaw's rendering.)

## Ledi Sayadaw's verses on Dependent Origination

(Gist of the Myanmar Verses)

### Verse One:

Homage to the Peerless Lord of all Devas, who has the penetrative Knowledge of the Four Truths! I shall now explain the causal law that governs the ceaseless rounds of existences in the three Spheres (i.e, the Sensuous Sphere, the Fine Material Sphere and the Non-material Sphere.) Not knowing the Four Truths on account of the great darkness of ignorance, the worldling does not understand the fires of defilements in him and so, being deeply attached to the five aggregates that are merely fuel to the burning defilements, commits demeritorious deeds with heart and soul every day; thinking the glorious existences in the human world and the deva world as real happiness; he also performs meritorious deeds of ten kinds which tend to rebirth in the Sensuous Sphere and the Fine Material Sphere on the one hand, or to the Non-material Sphere on the other hand. Thus he does volitional actions that result in endless rebirth in the three Spheres.

### Elucidations.

*Avijjāpaccayā Saṃkhārā*: Dependent on Ignorance, volitional activities arise. i.e., thoughts, deeds and acts are caused by a certain motive or volition that are conditioned by Ignorance. There are an infinite number of beings that live in the infinite world-systems but all of them in the ultimate sense are representations of just the twelve factors of Dependent Origination, namely, Ignorance, Volitional activities, Birth-linking consciousness, Mind and matter, the six Sense-bases, Contact, Sensation, Craving, Clinging, Kammic process, Rebirth, Ageing-and-death. (*Paṭicca*, dependent on or conditioned by (cause); *Samuppāda* arising of *Saṃkhāra* etc. (results).

Of those twelve factors, Ignorance is the root condition of the earlier part of *saṃsāra*. Hence it is mentioned first, as between *avijjā* and *saṃkhāra*, the former is the cause and the latter the result. *Saṃkhāra* means volitional thoughts, words and deeds.

*Avijjā* is one of the 52 mental concomitants (*cetasika*) It is essentially bewilderment, *moha*, a demeritorious state of mind. *Moha* is variously rendered as 'not knowing', 'unskilled, 'unknowing', 'Ignorance', 'darkness of delusion'.

Ignorance means: (1) not knowing the Truth of *Dukkha* i.e., not perceiving the truth that the five mundane aggregates pertaining to the three Spheres are *dukkha*; (2) not knowing the Origin of *Dukkha*, i.e., not perceiving the truth that Craving (*taṇhā*) is the cause of *dukkha*; (3) not knowing the Truth of cessation, i.e., not perceiving the truth that *Nibbāna* is the cessation of *dukkha*; (4) not knowing the Truth of the Path, i.e., not perceiving the Truth that Ariya Path of eight constituents is the way that leads to *Nibbāna*.

The fourfold ignorance of the Four Truths are the condition whereby all worldlings, blinded by their own Ignorance, commit evil deeds that send them down to the four miserable states of *Apāya*, or perform good deeds that send them to the seven fortunate existences and the sixteen Fine Material realms of Brahmas, or to the four Non-material realms of Brahmas. The evil deeds are motivated by evil volitions called *apuññābhi saṅkhāra*. The good deeds that tend to the seven fortunate existences and the Fine Material realms are motivated by good volitions called *puññābhisāṅkhāra*. The volitions in the four types of good deeds leading to the four Brahma realms of the Non-material Sphere are called *āmeñjābhisāṅkhāra*. Therefore the Buddha declares that with Ignorance as condition, three types of volitional activities of the mundane meritoriousness and mundane demeritoriousness come to be.

(Now with reference to verse one.)

In the eulogistic reference to the Buddha at the beginning of this stanza:

- the Penetrative Knowledge is compared to the Jotirasa ruby, one of the seven boons of a Universal Monarch;
- the Four Truths is symbolised by the Four Island Continents over which a Universal monarch reigns;

- the Analytical exposition of the Four Truths is symbolised by the roaming of the four Island continents by the Universal Monarch.

And the act of reverence is performed by the poet, Ledi Sayadaw, mentally, verbally and physically.

In Buddhist literature there are three kinds of worshipful persons or devas, namely, the devas who are born instantly as mature individuals are *upapatti devas*, the rulers who have sovereignty over a country are *sammuti devas*, and Arahats the Pure Ones, are *visuddhi devas*. Amongst the Arahats the Buddha is peerless.

The poet calls his subject matter "the train of *Samsāra* that speeds along the three Spheres" because: *Paṭiccasamuppāda* is the ceaseless round of causal factors that give rise to the aggregates, Sense-bases and Elements pertaining to the three Spheres of existence.

*Avijjā* is called the great darkness of delusion, *mahātama*. The darkness of Ignorance is usually described as having four contributory factors, namely, darkness that prevails on a first-moon night where no moon shines; at midnight; in the heart of a deep forest; shrouded with rain clouds. The fourfold Ignorance of the worldling is comparable to the four factored darkness.

The worldling shrouded by Ignorance commits evil deeds for his immediate welfare through twelve demeritorious thoughts; these volitional activities are the *apuññābhisamkhāra* that tend to the miserable existences.

Ignorance does not only drive the blinded worldling to commit evil actions, it also drives him to perform good actions that send him to high existences of the deva and Brahma worlds. This is because whereas the first two truths of the Four Truths, i.e., the Truth of Dukkha and the Truth of the Cause of Dukkha are mundane truths which are of a burning nature, the latter two truths, i.e., the truth of cessation and the Truth of the Path are Supramundane Truths which have a cool and tranquil nature. The worldling (especially a worldling who cherishes rebirth) whose mental makeup is shrouded by Ignorance, does not understand that the two mundane truths are of a burning

nature and so he resorts to them and becomes a slave to his own Craving.

When Craving overpowers the worldling, particularly, those with a natural inclination to annihilist view, rejecting an afterlife, he sets his sights on the present life only. He is prepared to perpetrate any vicious act for his immediate welfare. He would kill or steal or commit any deed as his demeritorious volition *apuññābhi saṁkhāra*, urges him. The worldlings who believe in continued existence or the eternity view, on the other hand, would aspire to higher existences in the future. They would perform meritorious deeds to go to fortunate existences or to be reborn in the Non-material Sphere according to their hearts' desire, all of which are not conducive to gaining *Magga Phala* and *Nibbāna*. These deeds are, as the case may be either meritorious volitions *puññābhi saṁkhāra* that lead to the Sensuous Sphere and the Fine Material Sphere or unshakable volitions *aneñjābhi saṁkhāra*; that lead to the Non-material Sphere.

As the result of such volitional activities, fresh existences occur and there is an endless recurrence of *dukkha*.

(This is Ledi Sayadaw's verse explained on its salient points. Ledi Sayadaw has explained them in detail in his *Paṭiccasamuppāda Dīpaṇī*.)

**Verse Two:**

**(2) *Saṁkhārapaccayāviññāṇaṃ.***

As the result of volitional actions of three types, rebirth in appropriate realms of existence, i.e, in the miserable states of *apāya*, or in the human realm, or in the deva realms or in the Brahma realms takes place. In the new existence, consciousness which is the key mental factor arises. Consciousness is of six kinds according to the six sense doors, i.e., eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. The six kinds of consciousness each of which arises together with mental concomitants take cognisance of their respective sense-objects and enjoy the sense-pleasures. In so enjoying, a mistaken view of personal identity such as "I see it". "I hear it". " I smell it", etc. arises, and so also the wrong

concept of man or deva, he or she, etc. arises. All these misconceptions are due to the six kinds of consciousness. And so rebirth in all forms of existence, mostly in the miserable states of *apāya* is perpetuated.

### Elucidations

Demeritorious volitions lead to the miserable states of *apāya* with the appropriate birth linking consciousness in the Sensuous Sphere and in the Fine Material Sphere, followed by appropriate resultant consciousness. Meritorious volitions lead to the seven fortunate planes of existence, i.e., the human plane and the six deva realms. These nine types of birth-linking consciousness arise at the moment of rebirth, and at the manifested stage of rebirth, sixteen types of meritorious resultant consciousness arise in the Sensuous Sphere and in the Fine Material Sphere. The meritorious pertaining to the fine material Sphere leads to fifteen realms of Fine material Sphere where birth-linking consciousness followed by resultant consciousness of the Fine material Sphere arises. The meritorious volition pertaining to the Non-material Sphere, the Unshakable type of volition, leads to the four realms of Non-material Sphere where birth-linking consciousness followed by resultant consciousness of the Non-material Sphere arises.

In the matter of good or bad volitions giving rise to resultant consciousness appropriate to them, the four stages of endowment (*samaṅgītā*) should be briefly understood thus:

(i) When an action, good or bad, is done, the appropriate volition arises to give effect to it, as good volition or bad volition. That is the endowment of volition at the moment of its arising. The act is being endowed with its appropriate volition. (*cetanā samaṅgītā*)

(ii) After a lapse of three phases of consciousness, i.e., the three thought-moments, the volition vanishes. However, it does not (like other resultant consciousness) disappear completely; it leaves behind the *kammic* potential that will arise later when circumstances permit as a resultant consciousness. This *kammic* potential is potent throughout the successive existences unless it becomes inoperative. This mental phenomenon of being endowed with *kammic* potential is called endowment of *kamma* (*kamma samaṅgītā*).

(iii) When the time is ripe for the kammic *potential* of a past deed, whether good or bad, there appear before the appropriate sense-door of the doer the very act he/she had done, or something connected with the act such as building or tools, etc, or sign of the oncoming existence. (Except for *Arahats* this form of prescience always presents itself to the dying person in sufficient vividness that makes him/her take cognisance of.) This presentation of any of these three signs at the moment of death is called endowment of the oncoming existence (*upathāna samaṅgītā*).

(iv) After that, one passes away and there arises the birth linking consciousness, followed (in the manifestation stage of the fresh existence) the resultant consciousness befitting the past deed. This resultant consciousness functions as the life continuum (*bhavaṅga*) and is always present throughout that existence when no other thought-process occurs. This arising of rebirth consciousness and resultant consciousness is called endowment of resultant (*vipāka samaṅgītā*).

*Vipāka* is nothing but the maturity of the *kammic* potential or *kamma samaṅgītā* into a specific consciousness in the ultimate sense. It will be seen that resultant consciousness begins as volitional activity or endowment of volition. Therefore the Buddha declares in brief that "dependent on volitional activities, the six kinds of consciousness arise."

#### Now with reference to Verse Two.

The three types of volitional activities are the cause of renewed existence. As the Poet puts it, they are the capital out of which renewed existence takes shape. Through the natural process of "endowments", i.e., the four *samaṅgītā*, outlined above, a volitional act is possessed of its appropriate resultant. In the renewed existence where the resultant consciousness arises, this consciousness reigns supreme throughout that particular existence. The poet calls it "His Lordship", for it is the key factor of all mental phenomena, just as the element of heat is the key factor in all physical phenomena. (For details the reader should consult the *Paṭicca samuppāda Dīpanī*).

Resultant consciousness, functionwise, is of six kinds, namely, eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness and mind-consciousness. As there are six sense-doors, i.e., eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, eye-consciousness is the supreme consciousness at the eye-door; ear consciousness is the supreme consciousness at the ear-door, nose consciousness is the supreme consciousness at the nose-door; tongue-consciousness is the supreme consciousness at the tongue-door; body-consciousness is the supreme consciousness at the body-door; and mind-consciousness is the supreme consciousness at the mind-door.

The supremacy of the six kinds of consciousness may be understood thus: Take Eye-consciousness for example. Just as when a powerful prince arises he has the retinue, the throne and the regal paraphernalia at his command, so also whenever a certain consciousness arises, seven mental concomitants arise together with it that enable it to function properly, serving it like the retinue of the prince. The Eye-base or eye door is like the throne of the prince. The eye-sensitivity is like the paraphernalia of the prince. Just as the prince reigns supreme amidst these retinue and regal paraphernalia, so also eye-consciousness enjoys visible objects fully and completely, having dominance over the eye-door and associated forms of corporeality. The same principle holds true in respect of the other (five) kinds of consciousness.

The daily activities of a person, when analyzed in the ultimate sense, consists of just the six kinds of sense-consciousness, i.e., seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and thinking or cognizing. That is why all the physical, verbal and mental activities that are carried out day in and day out fall within the six kinds of consciousness.

Since all human activity is dominated by the six kinds of consciousness for all the days, months and years of a person's life, there comes to be the misconception of a personal identity such as, I, he, she, man, deva; and personalised ideas of "I see it," "I hear it," "I smell it," "I eat it," "I touch it," "I take cognizance of it," or "He sees it," "He hears it," etc. When this misconception arises, then that person is heading for further existences such as the four miserable states of *apāya*. All this is due to the six kinds of consciousness.



**(3) *Viññāṇapaccayanāmarūpaṃ:***

Due to the workings of the six kinds of consciousness, a wonderfully intricate body of mental phenomena such as contact, volition, perception, initial application of the mind, etc., appear, as fume that accompanies fire; and also arising together with the body of mental phenomena there is the body of physical phenomena with the Four Primary elements as the basis, on which twenty-four types of corporeality depend, thus making twenty-eight types of corporeality. A combination of mental phenomena and physical phenomena, or mind and body arise, manifesting itself in an infinite variety of shapes, forms and sizes. Thus in the various places of existence, various beings such as men, devas and animals that live in water, that live on land, etc., noble beings, lowly beings, having various characteristics, all of them a compound of mind and matter, appear in the world.

**Elucidations.**

The six kinds of consciousness give rise to their respective mental concomitants like the retinue of a powerful prince and also an endless variety of corporeality like the regal paraphernalia of the prince.

**(Now with reference to Verse Three:)**

As fire always arises with fume, so also consciousness always arises with its mental concomitants like the multi-coloured strand inside the gem called cats' eye. Mental states function wonderfully well to enable the consciousness to accomplish whatever end it is directed to. For instance, there is contact that joins up sense-organ and its respective sense-object; sensation that makes the experiencing of sense-objects possible discriminately; volition that motivates all the co-arising mental concomitants to carry out their respective tasks; and so on. Together with the mental phenomena, there also arise simultaneously the four Primary Elements and the twenty-four types of corporeality that arise dependent on them.

The mind and matter arising due to the six kinds of consciousness takes an infinite variety of shapes and forms in various places of existence, ranging from noble beings to lowly beings.

No two individuals have the same appearance or the same type of mentality. This diversity is due to the diversity of wishes of individuals that are associated with craving. As one's craving fancies, so will a person wish for this or that kind of appearance and this or that type of mentality, and commit acts, good or bad, towards that end. (Thus diversity of craving determine diversity of action.) The diversity of one's past volitional acts produce a diversity of existences with a diversity of individual character even within the same place of existence. (Thus diversity of action determines diversity of destinations of beings.)

#### (4) *Nāmarūpa paccayā salāyatanaṃ.*

Of mind-body complex that arises due to consciousness, the body of physical phenomena, *rūpa kāya* gives rise to the five types of sensitive corporeality such as eye-sensitivity, ear-sensitivity, nose-sensitivity, tongue-sensitivity, and body-sensitivity. And the body of mental phenomena, *nāma kāya* gives rise to mind which is mind-sensitivity. Each sensitivity has its separate function. Eye-sensitivity cognizes visible objects; Ear-sensitivity cognizes sounds; Nose-sensitivity cognizes smells; Tongue-sensitivity cognizes tastes; Body-sensitivity cognizes tangible objects; Mind-sensitivity cognizes thoughts and ideas besides doing its own thinking. As the seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching or bodily impression and thinking occur ceaselessly, the worldling considers all these events as, "I see it," "I hear it," "I smell it," "I taste it," "I touch it," "I know," "I think," "I am stupid," "I am wise," etc. all in an egocentric view. Thus the six kinds of sensitivity give rise to the fire of false view regarding the five aggregates.

#### **Elucidation.**

From this verse onwards the elucidations will be mostly based on the verses.

There are four types of beings :

- (i) Beings that take birth as an egg,
- (ii) Beings that are conceived in the mother's womb,
- (iii) Beings that spring from moisture such as moss or lotus flower, etc.,
- (iv) Beings that appear as adults at birth.

Just as a fruit acquires its seed at the appropriate stage of its development, so also the egg-born beings and the womb-born beings acquire their Eye-sensitivity, Ear-sensitivity, Nose-sensitivity and Tongue-sensitivity at the appropriate stage of development at the respective sense-organs such as eye, ear, nose and tongue. Body-sensitivity arises simultaneously with birth-linking consciousness. With the instant-adult type of birth and moisture-sprung type of birth, all the five kinds of sensitive corporeality arise simultaneously with birth-linking consciousness.

In the case of Brahmas, there are no nose-sensitivity, tongue-sensitivity and body-sensitivity.

Beings are endowed with past merit to acquire a pair of eyes. Due to that merit kamma-born corporeality arise in the present existence. The Four Primary Elements that are produced by *kamma* of kamma-born corporeality is the base on which eye-sensitivity, a kind of dependent corporeality, arises. Likewise, ear-sensitivity, nose-sensitivity, tongue sensitivity and body-sensitivity are kinds of dependent corporeality that arise dependent on the Four Primary Elements. All of them are kamma-born corporeality. (This is how the body of physical phenomena *rūpa kāya* gives rise to the five kinds of sensitive corporeality.)

The body of mental phenomena *nāma kāya* comprising contact, sensation, volition, gives rise to mind or mind-sensitivity that causes the arising of mind-consciousness. Mind-sensitivity is mind-consciousness itself. Here it has been stated previously that "dependent on consciousness, mind and body arises." Now this mind-sensitivity becomes mind-consciousness. Does it amount to saying "that from the offspring the mother comes to be?" Here consider the analogy of a tree. A tree grows from the seed. The tree again produces the seed. The first

seed is quite distinct from the seed produced by the tree. Similarly, out of fifty-two mental concomitants, consciousness may at times be dominated by initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind; it may at times be dominated by energy *vīriya*; it may at times be dominated by delightful satisfaction; it may at times be dominated by desire, or dominated by greed, or dominated by anger, etc. When initial application of the mind is dominant, consciousness obeys the dictates of initial application of the mind. Similarly, consciousness arises under the dominant influence of sustained application of the mind, or greed, or anger, as the case may be. Thus mental concomitants give rise to mind-sensitivity. Or take another analogy: fire gives rise to wind, and wind helps fire to grow. Consciousness is like fire; mental concomitants are like wind. Mental concomitants arise due to consciousness, and consciousness is also conditioned by the mental concomitants.

Or take another analogy. The Four Primary Elements are interdependent. Wherever one of them arises the three others also arise. Similarly, whenever consciousness arises, the appropriate mental concomitants arise together. Whenever mental concomitants arise, there is also consciousness that arises together with them. (This is how the body of mental phenomena gives rise to mind or mind-sensitivity.)

A living being is able to function only due to the presence of the six sense-bases; otherwise he/she would be inert as a log. The sense-bases are also called six sense-doors. They are not doors in the sense that they are opening but they are only sensitive to sense-stimuli, like glass-pane windows through which light can enter. Eye sensitivity arises at the eye; ear-sensitivity arises at the ear; nose sensitivity arises at the nose; tongue sensitivity arises at the tongue; body sensitivity arises at the whole body both internally and externally. Mind-consciousness, or mind-sensitivity arises at the heart-base. Thus the whole body is provided with the six kinds of sensitivity.

Just as when a bird alights on a branch, the shaking of the branch and the casting of the birds shadow on the ground below happen simultaneously, so also when a visible object is taken cognizance of by the eye-sensitivity, it is simultaneously taken cognizance of by mind-sensitivity also. Thus with eye-consciousness taking the leading role, an

appropriate thought-process arises, making complete the knowing about the event, and one knows, "Ah, this is the sun," "This is the moon," or "Ah, this is a man, (or a cow, or a buffalo)", as it may be.

When a sound is taken cognizance of by ear-sensitivity, it is simultaneously taken cognizance of by mind-sensitivity also; and after due thought process, a complete knowledge of the sound is made aware such as, "This is the sound of thunder, or of wind or of drum, or of a lute, or a human voice, or bellowing of cow," etc., as the case may be. ... p ... When an odour is taken cognizance of by nose-sensitivity, ... or when a taste is taken cognizance of by tongue-sensitivity, ... or when a tangible object is taken cognizance of by body-sensitivity, it is simultaneously taken cognizance of by mind-sensitivity also. Mind-sensitivity takes cognizance of the five kinds of sense-data cognized by their respective sense-doors besides other mind-objects covering all sorts of physical phenomena and mental phenomena. Then an appropriate thought process arises at the mind-door; and one is fully aware of whatever mind-objects taken cognizance of. This is the natural process of how sense data are received by the respective sense-doors and a full consciousness about them arises.

As these sense experiences occur ceaselessly to a worldling, and full consciousness about them arises in him, he considers these events as: "I see it", "I hear it," "I smell it", "I eat it," "I feel it," "I know it," "I think it," "I am stupid," or "I am wise," etc. This misconception about the five aggregates, which is a veritable cauldron of the realm of continuous intense suffering (*niraya*), burns furiously with the flames of greed, hatred, bewilderment, conceit, jealousy, stinginess, etc. Thus all the six sense-doors are glowing with these fires of demeritoriousness. All this is due to the presence of the six sense-bases.

##### (5) *Salāyatana paccayā phasso.*

Due to the six sense-bases in their respective places in the body, sense-objects corresponding to each of them are clearly reflected as if on a mirror. Visible objects are reflected on the eye-sensitivity; sounds are reflected on the ear-sensitivity; smells are reflected on the nose-sensitivity; tangible objects are reflected on the body-sensitivity; six

kinds of mind-objects are reflected on mind-sensitivity of mind-consciousness, according to the occurrence of events at the five other sense-doors.

When these sense-objects are reflected on the respective sense-door each with its special sensitivity of its own, there arise contact at each sense-door as if flint is struck against the steel striker in a flint match.

Due to the coming together of sense-door, sense-object and sense-consciousness, (i.e., at eye-door), due to the conjunction of eye-sensitivity, visual object and eye consciousness, eye contact arises very vividly. Likewise, at ear door, due to the conjunction of ear sensitivity, sound and ear consciousness, ear-contact arises very vividly. At nose-door, due to the conjunction of nose-sensitivity, smell and nose-consciousness, nose-contact arises very vividly. At tongue-door, due to the conjunction of tongue sensitivity, taste and tongue consciousness, tongue-contact arises very vividly. At body-door, due to the conjunction of body-sensitivity, tangible object and body-consciousness, body-contact arises very vividly. At mind-door, due to the conjunction of mind sensitivity, the respective sense-object reflected through the six sense-doors, and mind-consciousness, mind-contact arises very vividly.

The six kinds of contact are very powerful, like Sakka's Vajira weapon, in translating the sense-experiences agreeable or disagreeable. A visible object reflected on eye-door that has become eye-contact is distinguished as agreeable or disagreeable, thanks to contact. The same principle holds in respect of the five other sense-doors where the respective contact sorts out the respective sense-objects as agreeable or disagreeable. In describing the function of contact, the poet uses the metaphor of pressing a juicy fruit to yield its flavour. Sweet fruit would yield sweet juice, sour fruit would yield sour juice. Similarly, an agreeable visible object will, through the working of contact, present itself as an agreeable thing to the individual, and a disagreeable object as a disagreeable thing. So also with the remaining sense-contacts. Agreeable things are looked upon as good things, attractive or pleasant things. Disagreeable things are looked upon as bad things, unpleasant things.

This differentiation between agreeable or pleasant things and disagreeable or unpleasant things is brought out by contact.

**(6) *Phassa paccayā vedanā*:**

The six sense-objects are considered (by a worldling) as agreeable or disagreeable through the functioning of contact. (If we review the process of sense cognition:) we find that the six kinds of consciousness merely know a sense-object through the respective sense-door. It merely sees something, hears something, smells something, tastes something, touches or feels something, and thinks a thought or forms an idea. Contact translates these sense experiences into agreeable things or disagreeable things. When agreeable things are experienced through their respective sense-doors, one feels pleased, or experiences a pleasant sensation. When disagreeable things are experienced one feels displeased, or experiences an unpleasant sensation. Thus the six kinds of contact bring about six kinds of Sensation.

**(Pleasant sensation, *Sukha vedanā*.)**

*Sukha vedanā* is of two aspects, physical and mental, the former is physical ease and comfort, the latter, happiness.

**Unpleasant sensation, *dukkha vedanā*:**

*Dukkha vedanā* is (also) of two aspects, physical and mental. The former is physical pain, the latter distress of mind.

Sometimes *sukkha vedanā* is used in a combined sense of physical and mental wellbeing; and *dukkha vedanā* is used in a combined sense of physical and mental suffering.

*Vedanā* is actually of three kinds: pleasant sensation, unpleasant sensation, and neither pleasant nor unpleasant sensation. However, in this verse, the neither pleasant nor unpleasant sensation pertaining to demeritoriousness is included in the unpleasant sensation, while the neither pleasant nor unpleasant sensation pertaining to meritoriousness is included in the pleasant sensation. This point should be noted.

The reader is strongly advised to consult *Paṭiccasamuppāda Dīpanī* to have a fuller understanding of these verses. In the present work a bare paraphrase of the verses is given.

### The Six Kinds or Elements of Sensation:

(i) Sensation born of Eye contact *cakkhu samphassajā vedanā*, (ii) sensation born of Ear-contact, (iii) Sensation born of Nose-contact, (iv) sensation born of Tongue-contact, (v) Sensation born of Body-contact, (vi) Sensation born of Mind-contact *mano samphassajā vedanā*.

They are called elements because sensation primarily arise only through them. When sensation is being discriminated through each of the six kinds of Contact, concepts pleasant or unpleasant, agreeable or disagreeable, good or bad about them are formed in the mind of the person experiencing these various sensations. When an agreeable sensation is experienced one feels happy and is physically at ease. When a disagreeable sensation is experienced one feels unhappy, distressed, and physically agitated.

Everyone in the world has a single objective of enjoying the Element of pleasant sensation. All human activity is earnestly directed towards achieving that objective. This (so-called) Element of pleasant sensation only brings suffering to worldlings; *Ariyas* alone are immune from its evil consequences. Worldlings strive hard in search of pleasant sensation. In extreme cases this search after pleasant sensation takes the form of even committing suicide, for a person committing suicide decides that death alone is the way he can get peace.

### (7) *Vedanā paccayā taṇhā*.

When one sees (an agreeable) visible object, through the workings of eye-contact, that object gives a pleasant sensation to the viewer. One is very pleased with it. "It's nice! It's lovely!" The pleasant sensation causes elation and happiness. Just as when dry rice is sprinkled with butter, the viewer's mental process is permeated with joy. Just as withered *padumā* lotus is sprinkled with cool water, he feels refreshed. His face brightens. This reaction which arises due to pleasant sensation is the enjoyment of that sensation. (The reaction due to the remaining



five sense-pleasures such as on hearing an agreeable sound, on smelling an agreeable odour, etc., should be understood likewise.)

The enjoyment of pleasurable sensations through the six sense-door, whets the appetite to enjoy more and more. Craving arises for pleasant sensation. So six kinds of pleasant sensation give rise to six kinds of craving, i.e., craving for visible objects, craving for sounds, craving for odours, craving for tastes, craving for tangible objects, and craving for thoughts and ideas.

All beings are attached to their own bodies in the sense that they want to remain alive. So they are naturally attached to food so as to remain alive. Thence their attachment stretches to paddy as the staple food, and thence to the means of production of paddy such as land, draught animals, and good rains, etc., all connected with paddy. This is a practical example of how craving multiplies itself starting with a certain object of one's fancy. If one has a fancy for a certain visible object, then things possessing it, connected with it, whether animate or inanimate, are craved for. (Similarly with pleasant sounds, pleasant odours, pleasant tangible objects, and pleasant thoughts.)

All the endless objects that are craved for have numerous names, but from the viewpoint of ultimate reality they come under six sense-objects only, i.e., craving for visual objects, craving for sounds, etc. (Here the poet compares the six sense-objects to the Treasurer of a Universal monarch who is capable of providing whatever is asked of him.)

As all beings are always hankering after the six sense-objects, trying to satisfy their sense-desires, they become obsessed with craving which is essentially greed. Therefore they cannot even dream of the profound truth (about craving as the real source of all suffering). They are prisoners of their own greed and they live and die there.

#### (8) *Tañhā paccayā upādāna:*

It is well and good if craving for the six sense-objects can be given up before they become obsession: If the indulgence in craving is prolonged over a long period, craving outgrows itself into clinging which is rooted

either in craving itself or in wrong view; one clings tenaciously to oneself internally and to external sense-objects. Clinging is of four kinds: (i) Clinging to sense-pleasures (ii) clinging to wrong views (iii) clinging to wrong practices as a means to purity (iv) clinging to an illusory self or *atta*.

(i) Cling to sense pleasures *Kāmapādāna*: - It is the obsession with sense-objects of six kinds which begins as craving and outgrows itself, like the Myanmar saying: "When an iguana grows too big it becomes an allegator; when a snake grows too big it becomes a serpent. "Clinging therefore is intensified craving.

(ii) Cling to wrong view *Diṭṭhupādāna*: Wrong view are of sixty-two kinds as described by the Buddha in *Brahmajāla sutta (Dīgha nikāya sīlakkhandha Vagga)*. Tenacious belief in any wrong view is a form of clinging. (Three worst wrong views that send one down to the *Niraya* realms are included in the sixty two kinds of wrong view mentioned in these verse)

(iii) Clinging to wrong practices as a mean to purity *Sīlabbatupādāna*: some ascetics during the Buddhas' day resorted to the habit of cows or dogs in the mistaken belief that such practices would purify their hearts and bring salvation. Punna and Senja are two ascetics who followed such practices. (See *Majjhima paṇṇāsa Kukkuravatika Sutta*)

Govatika ascetics were those who believed that all past evil could be obliterated if one took up a practice like the cow, that is, living a stringent ascetic life. Their reasoning is this: living a stringent life for the whole of the present life is making retribution for all past evil deeds; the present life of asceticism also does not involve fresh evil deed. Therefore all past evil deeds and future evil deeds are eliminated, and this brings eternal happiness. A follower of this creed moves about on all fours like a cow, sleeps like a cow, eats like a cow without using the hands, and imitates all bovine behavior. (Interestingly enough:) One who takes up bovine practice in a slack manner will be reborn as a cow; one who takes up the practice too stringently will go to hell after death.

*Kukkuravatika* ascetics were believers in the dog-practice. They believed that if one could adopt the life and habits of a dog one would be liberated. A follower of this creed moves about, eats and sleeps like a dog, imitating all the habits of a dog. If one takes up this practice in a slack manner, one will be reborn as a dog. If one takes up the practice too stringently, one will go to hell.

(iv) Clinging to an illusory self (*atta*) *Attavādupādāna*: The mistaken belief in Self or *atta* is another tenacious form of clinging. It is based on the five aggregates which are considered erroneously, each in four ways, namely:

1. With regard to corporeality: (a) that corporeality is self - not being able to perceive corporeality apart from oneself; (b) that mental phenomena are self - erroneously holding that self has corporeality just like a tree has its shade; (c) that mental phenomena are self - erroneously holding that corporeality exists in self just like the scent existing in flower; (d) that mental phenomena is self - erroneously holding that self exists in corporeality just like a ruby kept in casket.

2. With regard to Sensation,
3. With regard to Perception,
4. With regard to volitional activities,
5. With regard to Consciousness --

the same erroneous views are held in the above four ways.

Therefore twenty wrong views about the five aggregates give rise to twenty different kinds of wrong view. This view which persists throughout *saṃsāra* is called clinging to an illusory self or *attavādupādāna*.

So long as the above four kinds of clinging arise in one, there is no escape from the woeful round of existences.

**(9) *Upādāna paccayā bhavo*:**

(Gist of the verse:)

Holding fast to the four kinds of clinging, a worldling believes that the body of five aggregates is his own self, his own person: Due to the

wrong view of the existence of a self or a person, one seeks immediate gain or satisfaction through wrongful conduct such as killing or stealing, etc., and thereby resorts to the ten courses of demeritoriousness. This means an accumulation of demeritorious actions that leads to rebirth.

Being desirous of future wellbeing that is in no way inferior to the present wellbeing, one performs meritorious acts after the manner of virtuous ones, such as giving, observing moral precept, and cultivating the mind. All of these acts are mundane merit tending to renewed existence. They take the form of meritoriousness pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere, or meritoriousness pertaining to the Fine material sphere, or meritoriousness pertaining to the Non-material sphere. In these ways one resorts to the ten courses of meritoriousness.

The ten courses of demeritoriousness and the ten courses of meritoriousness tending to renewed existence - these two categories of committed actions - are called *Kamma bhava* or the kammic causal process. This process or potential leads to the arising of resultant mental aggregates and Kamma born corporeality in the appropriate (i.e., appropriate to the acts committed) sphere of existence, either in the Sensuous sphere, or in the Fine material sphere, or in Non-material sphere. These resultant mental aggregates and kamma-born corporeality are called *Upapatti bhava*. (Mundane meritorious and demeritorious courses of conduct lead to *upapatti bhava* and therefore are called *bhava*. Resultant mental aggregates and kamma-born corporeality are results of *kamma bhava*)

This is the gist of this verse.

In this matter, the arising of *Kamma bhava* and *Upapatti bhava* dependent on the four kinds of clinging as discussed in detail in *Sammohavinodhanī*, the Commentary on the *Vibhaṅgha*, will be briefly stated.

"What type of *bhava* is conditioned by what particular kind of clinging?"

The answer to this question is, "all the four kinds of clinging may be the condition for both types of *bhava*. The explanation is this: -

*TINI*

A worldling is like a lunatic. That being so, he cannot discriminate what is proper and fitting, and what is not. Therefore, under the influence of all the (four) kinds of clinging, he commits all sorts of actions, that are of mundane merit and demerit, that tend to renewed existence. How these various actions come to be committed will be considered here.

A worldling may know or hear that sense pleasures abound with the ruling class or high class of the human world and in the six deva worlds. He may get ill advice from others that to gain what one wants, one should do anything: if needs be, one should kill or steal. So under the evil influence of clinging to sense pleasures, he commits evil deeds such as killing to gratify his strong desire for sense pleasures. These evil deeds lead to rebirth in the miserable states of *apaya*.

Or a worldling may have irresistible temptation to get some sense-object that he sees before him; or he may wish to preserve and protect his property, and to this end he would do anything whether it is morally right or wrong. This is a (more common) case of committing evil being driven by clinging to sense pleasures. Evil deeds cause rebirth in the miserable states. In these cases the evil deeds that send him to the miserable states is called *kamma bhava* and the result and mental aggregates and kamma born corporeality pertaining to the miserable states are called *upapatti bhava*. (These are how clinging to sense pleasures leads to demeritorious kammic causal process and the result thereof.)

Another worldling, being fortunate, has wiser counsel. His friends are virtuous by example as well as by precept. He gains some knowledge of the Truth. He knows truly that by doing meritorious deeds he can have fortunate destinations. He performs meritorious acts as a result of which he is reborn in the human world or in the world of devas. In this case the meritorious deeds that send him to the fortunate destinations is called *kamma bhava* and the resultant mental aggregates and kamma born corporeality pertaining to the fortunate existences are called *upapatti bhava*. (This is how clinging to sense pleasures leads to meritorious kammic causal process and the result thereof.)

Another worldling may have heard or have the idea that the Brahma world of Fine material sphere or Non-material sphere holds higher sense pleasures than those of the sensuous sphere. and being obsessed by the allurements of superior sense pleasures of the Brahma world, he practises jhana of the Fine material sphere or the Non material sphere, achieves it, and, as the result, is reborn in the Fine material sphere or the Non material sphere. In this case the meritorious deeds of that worldling pertaining to the Fine material sphere or Non material sphere that send him to the Fine material sphere and the Non material sphere are called *kamma bhava* and the resultant mental aggregates and the kamma born corporeality of the Fine material sphere and the resultant mental aggregates of the Non material sphere are called *upapatti bhava*.

(This is how clinging to sense pleasures gives rise to kammic causal process and the result thereof.)

Another worldling, clinging to the wrong view of annihilation or extinction believes firmly that self becomes fully extinct only in a fortunate existence of the Sensuous sphere, or in the Fine material sphere, or in the Non material sphere, and accordingly acquires merit pertaining to the Sensuous sphere that leads to a fortunate existence in the Sensuous sphere, or the exalted type of merit, *Mahāggata* which is sublimated due to absence of the hindrances. The merit of that worldling pertaining to the Sensuous sphere and the Brahma realms of the Fine material sphere and the Non material sphere are called *kamma bhava*, and the resultant mental aggregate and the kamma born corporeality are called *upapatti bhava*. This is how clinging to wrong view gives rise to kammic causal process and the resultant thereof.

Another worldling, under the influence of clinging to an illusory self (*atta*), firmly believes that self attains real happiness in a fortunate existence of the Sensuous Sphere, or in the Fine material Sphere, or in the Non material Sphere, and accordingly acquires merit pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere, that leads to fortunate existence in the Sensuous Sphere, or the exalted type of merit which is sublimated due to absence of the hindrances.

The merit of that worldling pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere and the Brahma realms of the Fine Material Sphere and the Non-material Sphere are called *kamma bhava* and the resultant mental aggregates and the kamma-born corporeality are called *upapatti bhava*. This is how clinging to an illusory Self (*atta*) gives rise to kammic causal process and the result thereof.

Another worldling, under the influence of clinging to wrong practices as a means to purity, firmly believes that - this (good) practice can be fulfilled with facility only in one who takes it up either in some fortunate existence of the Sensuous Sphere, or in the Fine Material Sphere or in the Non-material Sphere, and accordingly acquires merit pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere, or to the Fine material Sphere, or to the Non-material Sphere, and accordingly acquires merit pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere, or to the Fine material Sphere, or in the Non-material Sphere. The merit of that worldling pertaining to a fortunate existence in the Sensuous Sphere and the exalted type of merit pertaining to the Brahma realms are called *kamma bhava*, and the resultant mental aggregates and the kamma-born corporeality are called *upapatti bhava*. This is how clinging to wrong practices as a means to purity gives rise to kammic causal process and the result thereof.

**(10) *Bhava paccayā jāti:***

With *kamma bhava*, kammic causal process, as condition, rebirth occurs. Meritorious kammic causal process and demeritorious kammic causal process are the causes of rebirth.

Rebirth means the arising of resultant mental aggregates and kamma born corporeality caused by meritorious deeds; and resultant mental aggregate and kamma born corporeality caused by demeritorious deeds.

In "*saṁkhāra paccayā viññāṇam,*" it has been shown that due to volitional activities, good and bad, consciousness arises. That refers to past volitional activities giving rise to resultant consciousness at the moment of rebirth in the present existence, as well as consciousness that follows rebirth consciousness (*pavatti viññāṇa*). In the present verse "*bhava paccayā jāti*" refers to the kammic causal process i.e.,

acts committed in the present existence give rise to rebirth in a future existence, i.e., resultant mental aggregate and kamma born corporeality arise in the future. (this will become clearer later.)

When we discussed "Dependent on volitional activities, consciousness arises," we have seen how volitional activities become endowed with the requisite potentialities at the four stages (*samaṅgītā*) giving rise to consciousness (p 700 of the original text). That is the detailed explanation of how volitional activities, i.e., meritorious action and demeritorious action of the past, cause consciousness at the moment of the conception and the developed consciousness that immediately follow it. The same kammic process is at work again in the present existence. The acts committed in the present existence, both good and bad, acquire the 'endowment' at the four stages, giving rise to the resultant mental aggregates and kamma born corporeality in the future existence. This process of present actions that condition future rebirth is proclaimed by the Buddha as "*bhava paccayājāti*" (This is stating the cause-effect relationship in strictly *Abhidhamma* terms)

In the present verse, the poet describes this relationship in a mixture of *Abhidhamma* terms or ultimate usage with conventional usage for easier reading. The gist of the verse :

Dependent on the actions committed in the present existence, both good and bad, all beings at their death are reborn according to those actions. Hence some are reborn in the *Asaññasatta* realm where the existence is characterized by the presence of only the aggregate of corporeality with no mental aggregates; some are reborn in the realms of existence with five aggregates such as the human world and the Fine material world other than the *asamasatta* realm. Their rebirth is characterized by the moral order or the law of kamma (*kamma niyāma*) the arising, at conception and at the latter stage, of resultant mental aggregates and kamma born corporeality that are appropriate to the kammic causal process of each individual. This fresh arising of mind and matter is termed as *jāti*.

(From this point onwards, the term *upapatti bhava* will be used for brevity's sake, in describing " the resultant mental aggregates and kamma born corporeality")



When the arising of resultant mental aggregate, and kamma born corporeality takes place, i.e., when there occurs *upapatti bhava*, there are, as a rule, three phases: the moment of their arising (*upāda khaṇa*), the moment of their staying (*thī khaṇa*), and the moment of their dissolution (*bhaṅga khaṇa*). Of these phases, the first, *upāda khaṇa*, is called *jāti* (rebirth); the second, *thī khaṇa*, is called *jārā* (ageing); and the third, *bhaṅga khaṇa*, is called *maraṇa* (death).

So it will be seen that dependent on *kamma bhava* or kammic causal process, there is *jāti* which is the initial phase of *upapatti bhava*. In other words, *kamma bhava* conditions *jāti*. This is described in this verse as "the usual birth linking process of *jāti*."

This *jāti*, the initial arising of mind and matter, occurs not only once at the moment of rebirth but occurs repeatedly so that the compounded phenomena of mind and matter (usually regarded as this body) develops into various shapes, forms and sizes according to one's own kamma or kammic causal order. Thus there appear in the world castes such as the ruling caste, the brahmin caste, etc., and people who have power and influence, who are lowly, who are noble, who are wicked, who are virtuous, an infinite variety of personalities, an infinite variety of beings in the three spheres of existence.

All these varieties of beings are possible because there are four main categories of rebirth, namely :

- (i) rebirth beginning as an egg or "egg-born birth,"
- (ii) rebirth beginning as an embryo in the mother's womb or "womb-born birth,"
- (iii) rebirth from moisturous matter such as moss or lotus flower etc., (moisture-born birth),
- (iv) rebirth as an instant grown up, i.e, about an age of sixteen years for a female and twenty or twenty five for a male (instant grown-up birth).

(Note that no two individuals are exactly alike in personality, not even offspring of the same mother, some are superior, some inferior. This is due to the workings of the kammic causal process. The Buddha

proclaims this in *Uparipaññāsa, Cūḷa kamma Vibhaṅga sutta* wherein it is stated: "*kamman satte vibhajati yadidaṃ hīnapaññatāya*: It is only *Kamma* that conditions beings either to be inferior or superior.")

(11) *Jātipaccayā jarāmarañam*:

*Kamma bhava* conditions *upapatti bhava*. The initial phase of the arising of *upapatti bhava* is called *jati*. After the initial phase of *upāda khaṇa* there follows the developing stage, (*thī khaṇa*) which is ageing, *jarā*, and then it goes into dissolution at the third stage, *bhaṅga khaṇa*, which is *marañā*, death. (This is the inexorable process of all mind and matter conditioned by *kamma*).

(*Kamma bhava* conditions just the initial phase *upāda khaṇa* of *upapatti bhava*, but not the latter two phases of *thi* and *bhaṅga khaṇas*. When *jāti* (*upāda*) arises, *jarā* (*thī*) and *marañā* (*bhaṅga*) follow suit just as a rising tide brings water along with it.)

Since *jāti* is the condition that gives rise to *jara marañā*, (without *jāti* there can be no *jarā marañā*) the Buddha declares, "*Jāti paccayā jarā marañam*."

(Considering what has been said above, it should be carefully noted that *jati* refers to the moments of the arising of the stream of the five aggregates; *jarā* refers to the moments of the ageing of those aggregates; and *marañā* refers to the moments of dissolution of those aggregates that take place in all the existences. This is stating about the conditioned phenomena as they truly happen.)

**The gist of this verse:**

As rebirth takes place in a fresh existence, there arises the initial mind-matter complex which occurs in repeated succession, bringing about development of the five aggregates. Appearance of shapes and forms as man or deva or other types of various beings lets the worldling consider them as real beings or persons or individual entities.

Assuming a hundred years of life-span for the present era, a person's lifetime may be viewed as having three phases: the first phase of youth lasting for about thirty - three years and four months; the second phase

of middle age lasting for thirty-three years and four months; and the third phase of old age lasting for thirty-three years and four months. Just as these three phases are the natural process of a man's lifetime, the ceaseless occurrence of the aggregates in all the forms of existence are marked by the natural process of moments of arising, moments of ageing and moments of dissolution that rigorously follow each other. Ageing is of a self-consuming nature so that it is called "the fire of ageing".

The fire of ageing is of two kinds: (i) *Khāṇa jarā*: the moments of ageing of mind and matter; and (ii) *Santati jarā*: the changing process such as the corporeality that has a cool character changing into the corporeality that has a hot character, and so on. Both these two kinds burn on relentlessly in all sentient beings.

(It is an interesting question to ask: whereas all living beings are subject to the two kinds of fire of ageing, why is this fact not evident in young person whose hair does not turn gray, whose teeth do not fall off, or whose skin does not have wrinkles as is the case with elderly persons?)

The answer is that elderly persons show these signs of ageing - graying of hair, falling off of teeth, wrinkling skin - because they have sustained the relentless onslaught of ageing for so long.

This statement will be further substantiated thus :

Beginning from the moment of conception as an invisible embryo, corporeality that has arisen ages and dissolves. By the moment, the corporeality that has arisen reaches the stage of ageing, fresh corporeality arises and in turn ages to go into dissolution. Thus the corporeality that ages later than its preceding one that has gone into ageing naturally is of a more mature ageing. It is succeeded by corporeality that rises and goes into ageing itself, whose ageing is yet of a more mature ageing than its predecessor. In this way successive arisings of corporeality go into ageing with greater and greater maturity. When days come to pass and months and years of the ceaseless process of ageing takes place at every moment, after the life periods lapse, the signs of the matured ageing inevitably become

visible: graying of hair, falling off of teeth, wrinkling of skin, etc., are more and more pronounced.

Whereas the physical signs of ageing such as graying of hair, falling off of teeth and wrinkling of skin are visible, i.e., cognizable by the eye, they are not ageing in its ultimate sense but merely scars of ageing. For ageing in its ultimate sense (is not a physical phenomenon but is a mental phenomenon which) is cognizable by the mind only.

Let us take an analogy here : after a devastating flood the roads, bridges, trees, grass, etc., are left in a visibly ravaged state. They are the signs of the flood that has taken place. One who has not seen the flood can know the intensity of the flood from the damage done by it. So also, the burnt up area of an accident of fire stands testimony to the scale of the fire that has caused it . Similarly, the fire of ageing has left its scars on the elderly person in a more pronounced manner. The workings of *jarā* should be perceived from the state of physical deterioration on a person.

(This is a profound matter. Only after some deep pondering could the phenomenon of ageing be understood. The reader is advised to read this repeatedly to gain insight into it.)

The two kinds of ageing, i.e, the moment of ageing and the changing process, are taking place relentlessly and due to their working life periods such as youth, middle age, old age; or a person as a ten year old, a twenty year old, or a thirty year old, etc., come to be called. All these changes in the life periods are taking place under the driving force of ageing.

The moment of ageing is immediately followed by the moment of dissolution so that each individual has myriad's of moments of dissolution which is death taking place from moment to moment (*khaṇika maraṇa*). However, conventional death only is understood by the average person, and the moment to moment deaths pass by unnoticed.

Death or dissolution, *marana*, is of three kinds: *khaṇika maraṇa*, *samuccheda maraṇa* and *sammuti maraṇa*.

(i) *Khaṇika maraṇa* means the dissolution of conditioned mental and physical phenomena when they reach the moment of dissolution (i.e., third phase in the coming into being of mind and matter). A unit of mind and mental concomitants has an ephemeral existence which is characterized by three phases: the moment of arising, the moment of growth or ageing, and the moment of dissolution. The life of each unit of mind and mental concomitants, called "thought" (*citta*) lasts just these three fleeting moments, and each such unit is called one thought-moment, *cittakkhaṇa*.

Over one million million thought moments arise and vanish in the winking of the eye or in a flash of lighting. Of the twenty eight types of corporeality, twenty two of them (i.e., leaving aside the 4 corporeal types of salient features (*lakkhana*) and 2 corporeal types of intimation (*viññata*)) have each a life of seventeen thought-moments. The two corporeal types of intimation arise together with a thought and cease together with mind. they are followers of mind. Of the four corporeal types of salient features, corporeality that arises at conception comprising corporeality which arises at the moment of conception (*upacaya rūpa*) and corporeality which is the continued development of the corporeality which arose at conception (*santati rūpa*) occurs only at the moment of arising and lasts only one thought-instant (i.e., a subdivision of one thought moment); the corporeality which arises at the stage of ageing and decay (*jaratā rūpa*) lasts 49 thought-instants; the corporeality which arises at the stage of dissolution (*aniccatā*) lasts for just one thought-instant. Thus a living being is subject to a million million times of dissolutions which are called *khaṇika maraṇa*.

(ii) *Samuccaheda maraṇa* means complete cutting off of the process of rise and fall which is the end of all *dukkha* that is the intrinsic nature of conditioned phenomena. It is attained only by an *Arahat*. It is called "cutting off" because after the death of an *Arahat* which is the ultimate realizing of *Nibbāna* without leaving behind any substrata of existence, no fresh aggregates of mind and matter arise. Just like a flame that is exhausted, the woeful round of rebirth is totally destroyed. Hence the death of an *Arahat* is called *samuccheda maraṇa*.

(iii) *Sammuti maraṇa* means the conventional death of all living beings except the Buddha and *Arahats*. It is the ceasing of one series of the life process that belongs to one existence, called the end of the life faculty. (the term 'dies' or 'death' in the conventional sense is also applied to non-living things such as quick silver or iron or trees, etc. However, that does not concern our present discussion.)

*Sammuti maraṇa* is of four kinds.

- |                                  |                                |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| (i) <i>āyukkhaya maraṇa</i> .    | (ii) <i>kammakkhaya maraṇa</i> |
| (iii) <i>ubhayakkhaya maraṇa</i> | (iv) <i>upacchedaka maraṇa</i> |

(i) Death due to the end of life-span whereas the kammic potential is still present, *āyukkhaya maraṇa*.

(ii) Death due to the exhaustion or end of the kammic potential even though the life-span is not ended yet, *kammakkhaya maraṇa*.

(iii) Death due to the end of both (i) and (ii) above, *ubhayakkhaya maraṇa*.

(iv) Death due to an abrupt intervention of some evil kamma, although the life-span and the kammic potential above are still present, *upacchedaka maraṇa*.

The probability of death is ever present with all living beings regardless of realm or station in life. Any one of the four kinds of death may happen to a living being at any moment because there are all sorts of hazards that lurk around all of us. And of course when death claims anyone there is no way of refusal or escape.

(Note carefully: Rebirth, ageing and death are like assassins that roam about the world watching for an opportunity to strike any living being. To expand the example: let us say some one is under the vigilance of three enemies who are out to kill him. Between the three of them, the first murderer says to his accomplices; "Friends, I shall lure him away into some jungle, after telling him about the attraction of the jungle. There is no problem for me to do that." The second murderer says to the first accomplice, "Friend, after you have lured him away into the jungle, I shall molest him and make him weak. There is no problem for me to do that." And the third murderer says to the second accomplice,

"Friend, after you have molested him and made him weak, let it be my duty to cut off his head with my sword." Then the three accomplices carried out their plan successfully.

In the above simile, the moment when the first accomplice lures away someone from amidst the circle of dear ones into any new of the five destinations is the work of *jāti*. The molestation and weakening of the victim, rendering him quite helpless of the victim by the second accomplice is the work of *jarā*. The cutting off head with the sword by the third accomplice is the work of *maraṇa*.

Or in another simile: *Jāti* is like some one taking a hazardous journey. *Jarā* is like the weakening of that traveller from starvation on the journey. *Maraṇa* is like the enfeebled traveller, alone and helpless, falling victim to the beasts of prey that infest the forest.)

(12) *Soka parideva, dukkha domanasupāyāsā sambhavanti.*

Just as ageing and death must follow rebirth, so also when rebirth occurs in any of the four kinds of rebirth, the five kinds of loss occur as consequence, namely, (i) loss of relatives, (ii) loss of wealth, (iii) loss of health, (iv) loss of morality, (v) loss of right view. When any kind of these losses happen, there is much grief, lamentation, pain, distress of mind and anguish - which are the suffering in brief consequent to rebirth. There is of course untold misery that arises due to rebirth.

(13) *Evametassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandassa samudayo hoti.*

In the long long course of *Samsāra*, the truth that needs to be perceived is that apart from mind and matter there is in reality no person or being, no individual entity. It is a mere causal chain rooted in Ignorance, dependent on which twelve causal factors arise, ending up in death; and yet the occurrence of these twelve factors is considered by the worldling as man or deva (or brahmin), thus binding him to the chain of rebirth endlessly. The whole thing is just an unalloyed mass of recurrent *dukkha*. This is the stark truth about existence that is generally cherished as one's 'life'. (This verse being straight forward, is left unparaphrased by the author.)

This is the Doctrine of Dependent Origination.

••••• ☆ •••••

TINI

**The Four Kinds of Analytical Knowledge,  
*Paṭisambhidā ñāṇa.***

It has been said above that as soon as the Buddha won Perfect Enlightenment he became possessed of the four kinds of Analytical Knowledge. These four Knowledges are: (i) *Attha paṭisambhidā ñāṇa*, (ii) *Dhamma paṭisambhidā ñāṇa.*, (iii) *Nirutti paṭisambhidā ñāṇa.*, (iv) *Paṭibhāna paṭisambhidā ñāṇa.* *Paṭisambhidā* means multifarious, diverse, various. *Paṭisambhidā Ñāṇa* means Knowledge which is discriminating and comprehensive.

(i) *Atthapaṭisambhidā ñāṇa*: Herein *attha* means: (a) things that are dependent on conditions, i.e., understanding results of causes, (b) Nibbāna (c) meaning of words (*Pali*), (d) resultant thoughts *Vipākā* (i.e., mind and mental concomitants), (e) non-causative thoughts *Kiriyā*. (i.e., mind and mental concomitants).

The Buddha became endowed with the above five kinds of *attha* (meanings, results) as soon as he attained Buddhahood. Being endowed with analytical Knowledge of *attha*, the Buddha knows discriminately and comprehensively about everything, and is able to expound these to others. The great non-causative consciousness (*Mahā Kiriyā Ñāṇa*) associated with four kinds of knowledge that arises in the Buddha when his mind attends to the above five *atthas*, as well as *Magga Phala* that he knows when his mind attends to *Nibbāna*, are called *attha paṭisambhidā ñāṇa* of the Buddha.

(This *attha paṭisambhidā ñāṇa* of *Ariyas* who are still training themselves to attain *Arahattaphala* such as that of the Venerable *Ānandā* consists of the great meritorious consciousness *Mahākusala citta* associated with four kinds of knowledge that arises in them when their mind attends to those five *atthas*, as well as the (three) lower *Maggas* and *Phalas* when their mind attends to *Nibbāna*.)

(ii) *Dhammapaṭisambhidā ñāṇa*: Discriminating and comprehensive knowledge about phenomena.

Herein 'dhamma' means: (a) causes that produce results, (b) the four Ariya Paths, (c) the spoken word of the Tathāgata (*Pāli*) (d)



meritorious thoughts (i.e., mind and mental concomitants)  
(e)demeritorious thoughts (i.e., mind and mental concomitants).

The Buddha became endowed with the above four kinds of *dhamma* (causes) as soon as he attained Buddhahood. Being endowed with Analytical Knowledge of dhamma, the Buddha knows discriminately and comprehensively about every dhamma and is able to expound them to others. The great non-causative consciousness associated with knowledge that arises in the Buddha when his mind attends to the above five dhammas is the *Dhamma paṭisambhidā ñāṇa* of the Buddha. In the case of *Ariyas* who are still training themselves to attain *Arahatta Phala* such as the Venerable Ānandā, Analytical Knowledge of dhamma means the great meritorious consciousness associated with knowledge. (The same applies with regard to the next two Analytical Knowledge).

(iii) *Niruttipaṭisambhidā ñāṇa*: Analytical Knowledge of the natural language of the *Ariyas* (i.e., *māgadhi*) concerning the five kinds of *attha* and the five kinds of *dhamma* (causes). The Buddha became endowed with the analytical knowledge of the natural language of *Ariyas* (i.e., *māgadhi*). Being endowed with analytical knowledge of (words and grammar) the natural language of the *Ariyas*, (i.e., *magadhi*) the Buddha is able to teach it to others.

Indeed that is so - The five kinds of *attha* and the five kinds of *dhamma* need a wealth of words. For each of *dhamma* item, a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical forms and nuances of the natural language of the *Ariyas* (i.e., *māgadhi*) is at the facile command of the Buddha. For example, a single *dhamma* factor '*Phassa*' (contact) is expressed in its various forms such as *phasso* (contact), *phusanā* (being in contact), *samphusanā* (full contact), *samphasitattha* (contacting well) to bring out its various intrinsic meanings. Likewise *Lobha* (greed) is explained in more than a hundred terms. (Refer to *Dhammasaṅgani*, para 456)

(iv) *Paṭibhānapaṭisambhidā Ñāṇa*: This is the analytical knowledge that "*attha paṭisambhidā ñāṇa* has discriminative and comprehensive knowledge about results; that *dhammapaṭisambhā ñāṇa* has discriminative and comprehensive knowledge about five dhammas; that

*nirutte paṭisambhidā ñāṇa* has analytical knowledge about words and grammar." Briefly put, it is knowledge about the three kinds of Analytical knowledge, that knowledge which has all knowledge as object and considers them discriminately. The Buddha became endowed with this knowledge about the kinds of knowledge as soon as he attained Buddhahood. (*Nirutti paṭisambhidā ñāṇa* and *Paṭibhānapaṭisambhidā ñāṇa*, like the previous *Paṭisambhidhāñāṇas*, are the great non-causative consciousness associated with knowledge *Mahā Kiriya mahā Kusala Ñāṇa*).

(Note: The fourth of the four *Paṭisambhidā ñāṇas* discriminately knows the functions of the three other knowledges but is not able to discharge those functions itself. It is just like a preacher without a good voice who is well versed in scriptural knowledge and who is unable to preach as well as another good preacher who is gifted with a good voice but has scanty knowledge of the scriptures.

Two bhikkus learnt the art of preaching- One was poor in voice but intelligent; the other had a good voice but not intelligent. The latter made a great name everywhere he preached, the audience had a very good impression of him and said, "From the way this bhikkhu preaches, he must be one who has committed to memory the Three Piṭakas." When the learned bhikkhu with a poor voice heard these remarks he became jealous and said, "Well, you will find whether he is master of the Three Piṭakas when you hear him preach next time." (He implies that-"You are going to hear much the same stuff.") Yet whatever he might say about that popular preacher, he is just unable to preach as well as the one with a good voice who could captivate the audience.

Similarly, *Paṭibhānasambhidā Ñāṇa* discriminately knows the functions of the three other analytical knowledges, but it cannot discharge those functions itself. This has been explained in the Commentary on the Vibhaṅga.



### ASĀDHĀRAṆA ÑĀṆA.

**The Six kinds of knowledge which are solely within the Province of the Buddha.**

There are six kinds of knowledge which are possessed by the Buddha only and not shared by Paccekabuddhas or disciples, namely:

- (i) *Indriyaparopariyatta ñāṇa* (ii) *Āsayānusayan ñāṇa*  
 (iii) *Yamakapātihāriya ñāṇa* (iv) *Mahākaruṇāsamāpatti ñāṇa*  
 (v) *Sabbaññuta ñāṇa* (vi) *Anāvaraṇa ñāṇa*.

(i) *Indriyaparopariyatta ñāṇa*: Knowledge that discuss the readiness or otherwise of an individual to understand the Truth. By this special knowledge the Buddha decides such and such a being has his faculties ripe enough to gain enlightenment and is due for liberation. (Here, *Indriya*, 'Faculties' means, faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom, five factors in all.)

(ii) *Āsayānusayan ñāṇa*: Knowledge that discuss the natural bent and latent proclivities of individuals. (See original text at pp 597 on the Lokavidu attribute of the Buddha.) The term *āsayānusaya*, a compound may be rendered as "the seed-germ of an individuals' mental makeup." By this special Knowledge the Buddha knows discriminately that such and such a being has such natural bent of mind, such latent potential for defilements that are dominant in his mental makeup.

It is due to the possession of the above two special knowledges that the Buddha can deliver the right message to the right-hearer. Even the Venerable Sāriputta, being not endowed with those special knowledges, could not know the state of readiness of his hearers to receive the message, i.e., about the ripeness or otherwise of the mental makeup of those hearers, with the result that his discourses, in a few occasions, fell flat on the hearers.

(iii) *Yamakapātihāriya ñāṇa*: Knowledge that can bring out the Twin Miracle. On four occasions the Buddha employed this special knowledge, namely

- (a) At the Tree of Enlightenment, to clear away the doubt and conceit in the minds of devas and brahmas; (b) On his first visit to

Kapilavatthu to behumble his kinsmen, the Sakyas; (c) At Sāvatti, near the miraculous mango tree that grew and bore fruit on the same day it was planted by Kanda, the gardener, to behumble the followers of other faiths; (d) On the occasion of the congregation concerning Pāthikaputta. (See also Volume Three of the Great Chronicle).

(iv) *Mahākaruṇāsamāpatti ñāṇa*: Knowledge consisting of the Buddha-compassion on seeing the multitude, struggling in the stormy ocean of *samsāra*. He has great compassion on all beings that are living in the world which is like a burning prison. The acknowledge that enables the Buddha to attend his compassionate mind on those beings is associated with dwelling in the jhanic state *Mahākaruṇāsamāpatti*. At every night and every dawn, the Buddha enters into this jhānic absorption that consists of 2.4 million crores of thoughts.

(v) *Sabbāññuta ñāṇa*: Knowledge that comprehends all knowable things. The Buddha is called the All-knowing Buddha on account of this special knowledge, which is also called *Samanta cakkhu*. For details about this Buddha-knowledge refer to *Paṭisambhidā magga*.

(vi) *Anāvaraṇa ñāṇa*: This knowledge is defined as, "*Natthi āvaram etassāti anāvaram*": "There is nothing that can stand in the way of the arising of this Buddha knowledge." This unhampered special Knowledge of the Buddha is an essential feature of *Sabbāññuta ñāṇa*. It is called *anāvaraṇa ñāṇa* in the same sense as *Saddhā*, (conviction) *Vīriya* (effort) *Sati* (mindfulness), *Samādhi* (concentration) and *Paññā* (wisdom) are called *Indriya* (faculties) because they are the controlling factors each in its own way, and also called *bala* (powers) because they overpower their respective opponents— lack of conviction, sloth, negligence, distraction and bewilderment.

(These are the Six *Asādhāraṇa ñāṇa*.)

**The Ten Powers: *Dasabala ñāṇa*.**

- (i) *Thānāthāna Kosalla ñāṇa*: Knowledge that understand what is appropriate as appropriate, and what is impossible as impossible.
- (ii) *Vipāka ñāṇa*: Knowledge of the operation of kamma in the three periods (past, present future), as to the immediate results and contributory or subsidiary result.
- (iii) *Sabbatthagāminīpaṭipadā ñāṇa*: Knowledge that understands the ways or the modes of practice that leads to various forms of existence, and the way or the right practice that leads to *Nibbāna*.
- (iv) *Anekadhātunāṇā*: Knowledge that understands the various elements pertaining to living beings, the aggregates, and sense-bases, etc as well as those pertaining to non-living things as to their species, genes, etc.

(Pacceka-buddhā and the two Chief Disciples have some limited knowledge about the elements constituting living beings. They do not have knowledge of the various nature of non-living things. As for the Buddha he understands what elements are responsible for the species of tree with a white stem, or for the species of tree with a dark stem; or for the species of tree with a dark smooth stem, or for the species of tree with thick bark; or for the species of tree with thin bark. He knows what particular elements make a certain species of tree to have such and such leaves with such shape and colour, etc.; what particular elements make a certain species of tree to have flowers of a particular colour or of a particular smell such as good smell, bad smell, etc. He knows what particular elements make a certain species of tree to have fruit of such and such shape, size, smell, and taste such as sweet, sour, hot or astringent: He knows what particular elements make a certain species of tree to have fruit of such and such shape, smell, and taste such as sweet, sour, hot or astringent. He knows what particular elements make a certain species of tree to have thorns of such and such nature such as sharp, blunt, straight, curved, red, black, white, brown, etc. Knowledge of non-living things and their intrinsic nature such as these are the

province of the Buddha only, and are beyond the pale of Paccekabuddhas and disciples.) (See Commentary on the Abhidhamma.)

(v) *Nānādhimuttika ñāṇa*: Knowledge of the different inclinations of beings

(vi) *Indriyaparopariyattha ñāṇa*: Knowledge of the maturity and immaturity of the faculties in beings.

(vii) *Jhānavimokkha samādhisamāpatti ñāṇa*: Knowledge concerning the defiling factors, the purifying factors with regard to the Jhānas, deliverances, concentration and attainments and knowledge of rising from Jhānas.

(viii) *Pubbenivāsānussati ñāṇa*: Knowledge in remembering former existences.

(ix) *Cutūpapāta ñāṇa* or *Dibbacakkhu ñāṇa*: Knowledge in perceiving with the Divine Eye how beings pass away and are reborn according to their actions.

(x) *Āsavakkhaya ñāṇa*: Knowledge of *Arahatta Magga* through extinction of moral taints.

### How the Buddha Engages the Ten Powers.

First, the Buddha surveys the world with the first of the Ten Knowledges to see the possible beings to gain enlightenment by examining, whether there are the gross types of wrong view in them that render them impossible to gain *Arahatta Magga*.

Next, he examines by means of the Second Knowledge the type of rebirth to see if they were born only with two good root causes (*dvihetu*) or with no root causes (*ahetu*) in which cases the subject cannot gain enlightenment in the present existence, being born with deficient merit. Then he examines by the means of the Third Knowledge, the presence or otherwise of the five kinds of grave evil actions in the subject: (1) Killing one's own mother, (2) Killing one's own father, (3) Killing an Arahant, (4) Rupturing the Buddha's blood vessels, (5) Causing schism amongst the Sangha.

After examining of beings by means of the first three Knowledges, to see the state of their past action, their defilements and their resultants, whether they are handicapped for enlightenment or not in these three areas, the Buddha attends his mind on those not so handicapped. He engages the Fourth Knowledge to ascertain the right type of discourse to be given to the right person, considering the latter's mental make up (i.e., the elements that constitute his mentality). Then by means of the Fifth Knowledge, the Buddha examines the inherent inclination of the subject, regardless of sufficiency of effort on his part. Having known the inclination of the subject, the Buddha examines, through the Sixth Knowledge, the quality of the Faculties such as conviction of the subject. If the Faculties are mature enough to gain *Jhāna* or *Magga Phala*, the Buddha would lose no time to go and deliver a discourse to the subject. He is able to do this because he is endowed with the Seventh Knowledge. Having gone over to the subject, the Buddha reviews, through the Eighth Knowledge, the past existences of the subject, and also, through the Ninth Knowledge, reads the mind of the subject (reading other's minds being part of *Dibba cakkhu Ñāṇa*). Ascertaining the present state of mind of the subject, the Buddha preaches the Doctrine to suit the subject, with a view to his attaining *Arahatta Magga*. This is the final step the Buddha takes with the Tenth Knowledge, *āsavakkhaya ñāṇa*.

The Buddha discoursed on the Ten Powers in the same order as he actually puts them to use for the benefit of the world at large. (*Aṅguttara Nikāya(Tīkā)*).

(This is about the Ten Powers)

### The Fourteen Buddha Knowledges:

The fourteen Buddha Knowledges are, Knowledge of the Four Truths, the four *Paṭisambhidā ñāṇas*, and the six *Asādharaṇa ñāṇas*. Out of those fourteen, Knowledge of the Four Truths and the four *Paṭisambhidā ñāṇas* are attained by the disciples also, but the six *Asādharaṇa ñāṇas* are purely within the province of the Buddha. In as much as the six *Asādharaṇa ñāṇas* belong only to the Buddha, there

are also Eighteen Buddha- Attributes *Āveṇika*, that belong only to the Buddha.

The late Ledi Sayadaw had composed a fine piece of devotional interpretation of *the Eighteen Buddha- Attributes*, the gist of which is given here:

( The *Pāli* text of the *Āveṇika ṅāṇas* is not reproduced here.)

*The Translation of the Pāli text.*

May I be free from all dangers and depredations both internally and externally! There is no one such as Mara, Devadatta, Ālavaka, who can endanger the life of the Buddha within the usual life period, (adopted by all Buddhas,) of the four fifths of the life-span period of the epoch (pertaining to each Buddha.)

There is no one such as Mahesara, Brahma Baka, or Asurā, who can sully or dampen the All-Knowing Wisdom of the Buddha.

The Perfectly Self-Enlightened One endowed with the six exalted qualities, also counted in eight ways, has the All-Knowing Wisdom that can visualize all knowable things of the past extending over myriads of aeons, and not the slightest obstruction can mar this vision.  
(1)

The Perfectly Self-Enlightened One endowed with the six exalted qualities, also counted in eight ways, has the all Knowing Wisdom that can visualize all knowable things of the future extending over myriads of aeons, and not the slightest obstruction can mar this vision.  
(2)

The Perfectly Self-Enlightened one, endowed with the six exalted qualities, also counted in eight ways, has the All-Knowing Wisdom that can visualize all knowable things that are taking place at present in the thirty-one planes of existence in all the infinite world- systems, and not the slightest destruction can mar this vision. (3)

The Perfectly Self-Enlightened One endowed with the six exalted qualities also counted in eight ways, well-possessed of these three special attributes, has all bodily actions in all postures and movements,



preceded by four kinds of full comprehension, and all the bodily actions closely follow the guidance of the fourfold comprehension. (4)

All his verbal actions, all his utterances, are preceded by four kinds of full comprehension, and all the verbal actions closely follow the guidance of the fourfold comprehension. (5)

All his mental actions, all his thoughts, are preceded by four kinds of full comprehension, and all the mental actions follow the guidance of the fourfold comprehension. (6)

The Perfectly Self-Enlightened One endowed with the six exalted qualities also counted in eight ways, well possessed of these six exclusive attributes, is never lacking, not having the slightest decline, in the earnest desire that had arisen in him since as Bodhisatta Sumedha, to ferry cross the floundering multitudes to the safe shore of *Nibbāna*, and in the will to achieve noble things beneficial to himself and to others, which is the exalted quality of *kāma* itself. (7)

His Teaching which has the sole object of liberating all deserving beings from the woeful round of existences never falls short of the avowed objective. (8)

His effort which is rightly directed in three ways, namely, dauntless determination as Bodhisatta in being prepared to transverse an ocean of live coals or of sharp stakes, laid over the entire surface of the universe which is three million six hundred and ten thousand, three hundred and fifty *yojanās* wide, for the sake of attaining Buddhahood, which is the exalted quality of *payatta* itself; the exclusive Buddha-Knowledge consisting in the fourfold right efforts and the will to accomplish the five routine tasks set for himself every day never shows the slightest decline. (9)

His concentration in two aspects, namely: the inherent firmness of mind that withstands the eight kinds of worldly conditions or vicissitudes that may befall him from any quarter like Mount Meru that withstands stormy winds that blow from the eight directions, the jhanic power (*appanā samādhi*) which is the very basis of all psychic powers (*abhiññās*) such as *Iddividha*, *Dibba cakkhu*, *Cetopariya*,

*Pubbenivāsānussati, Yathākammūpaga, Anāgataṃsa*, never shows the slightest decline. (10)

His Wisdom that encompasses all happenings, i.e. rise and fall of conditional phenomena, taking place in the three worlds extending over ten thousand world systems, on which he surveys through the *Mahāvajīra ṅāṇa* consisting of 2.4 million crores of times each day, never shows the slightest decline. (11)

His release (from the trammels of the world) consisting of five kinds, namely: the four noble Abiding in universal goodwill, Compassion, Sympathetic joy and Equanimity with regard to ten thousand world-systems extending over the worlds of Brahmas, deva, human beings and the four miserable states; and the dwelling in the Arahatta Phala fourth jhāna which the Buddha is wont to resort to even in odd moments such as during recesses in delivering discourses, which consists of 2.4 million crores times each day\_ never shows the slightest decline. (12)

The Perfectly Self-Enlightened One, endowed with the six exalted qualities, also counted in eight ways, well possessed of these twelve exclusive attributes, never indulges in light hearted deed, speech or thought. (13)

He never indulges in any hasty action that is liable to be censured by the wise as thoughtless or ill- considered conduct. (14)

He never commits any action that is liable to be called inadequate or uncomprehensive. (15)

He never commits any action that is liable to be called impulsive by the wise. (16)

He never indulges in the slightest remiss concerning his self- assigned task of bringing benefit to himself and to the world at large. (17)

He never lets any moment pass without being mindful of the six sense-objects that come within cognisance of the six sense- doors. (18)

The Perfect Self-Enlightened One, endowed with the six exalted qualities also counted in eight ways, well possessed of these eighteen

exclusive attributes, is not liable to be assailed by any one either against his life or against the All-Knowing Wisdom .

The above remarks about the eighteen Buddha-attributes, are true indeed. I pay homage to the Bhagavā who is possessed of these attributes. May this meritorious verbal action bring me fulfilment of all my aspirations both for the present and for the hereafter.

(Here ends the explanation on the Eighteen Buddha- attributes *Avenikas*.)

(The Four kinds of Self- Confidence (*vesārajja ñāṇa*) have been discussed above.)

In conclusion, the *Paṭisambhidā ñāṇa*, the *Asādhāraṇa ñāṇa* and the *Dassabala ñāṇa*, etc., are merely samples of the greatness of the Buddha's Knowledge. Just as a drop of the sea water stands testimony to the salty taste of the sea, so also the above special attributes are merely indicative of the profundity of the Buddha's Knowledge and noble attributes about which we have not yet mentioned in this work.)



### The *Dhammacakka pavattana Sutta*

Some important Remarks:

As we had indicated in Volume Two, (Myanmar original, page 430), we shall now consider some important points regarding the *Dhammacakka pavattana sutta* and the *Anatta lakkhana sutta* one by one.

Before the advent of the Buddha, there appeared in India some leaders of religious sects who called themselves *samaṇas*. Some of them practised and preached sensuous way of life as the conduct of *samaṇas* while others practised and preached a self-tormenting mode of life as the conduct of *samaṇas*. During the time when the world was thus shrouded with the darkness of the two extreme doctrines of self-indulgence and self-torment, each claiming as the true good practice,

on the full moon of Vesakha at dusk, in the year 103 of the Great Era, the Buddha delivered the Dhammacakka pavattana Sutta.

The Buddha began the discourse with the words: "Bhikkhus these two extremes should not be followed by one who has renounced the world." And as soon as these words were uttered by the Buddha, due to the Buddha's powers, they echoed through out the ten thousand world systems which constitute the birth Sphere of the Buddha, and filled the entire world with *avīci niraya* realm at the bottom and the highest (Brahma) realm at the top. By that time Brahmas numbering eighteen crores who had matured root of merit as sufficing condition to perceive the Four Truths had already assembled at the place in the Deer Park, Isipatana where the sermon was to be delivered. When this first sermon was delivered by the Bhagavā, the sun was setting in the west and the moon was appearing on the eastern horizon.

The theme of the *Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta* is this :

The Bhagavā exhorted the Group of Five ascetics to avoid the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification and pointed to them the middle way consisting of eight factors as the proper course of practice. Then he briefly expounded the Four Truths. Next he declares the essential features of Buddhahood which requires three stages of knowledge regarding each of the Four Truths and admits that he is the Buddha because he has fulfilled those requirements.

Then the discourse continues with the first enlightenment of Koṇḍañña who 'entered the stream of knowledge' and was the first *Sotapanna*, a disciple established in the First Path. Thus the wheel of the Dhamma was set rolling and the Ariya Truth became established in the world. The great event was cheered by the terrestrial devas whose loud applause spread among celestial devas and Brahmas. The great earth quaked in joyous approval. A wondrous light emanating from the Buddha, caused by his mind and arising from temperature, infinitely superior to the personal effulgence of the greatest of the devas or Brahmas, arose, thanks to the all-knowing wisdom.

At the end of the discourse the delightful satisfaction that had begun to arise at the start of the discourse could not be contained by the

Bhagavā who made the joyous utterance, "Koṇḍañña has seen the Truth. Indeed Koṇḍañña has seen the Truth". (This joyous utterance also spread to the ten thousand world-systems.) Then Koṇḍañña requested the Bhagavā to make him a bhikkhu. The Bhagavā called him, "Come bhikkhu", and at that very instant, the Venerable Koṇḍañña became a bhikkhu who had the distinction of being called up by the Bhagavā himself.

This is the gist of the *Dhammacakkapavuttana sutta*.

*Some salient points in the Dhammacakka*

What is it that is termed "*Dhammacakka*"?

Dhammacakka is a term referred to two kinds of the Knowledge of the Buddha: the penetrative knowledge *Paṭiveda Ñāṇa* (i.e., the four *Magga Ñāṇas*) and the power of exposition *Desanā Ñāṇa*. I shall expand this:

The Four Path Knowledges consisting of the twelve aspects of the four Truths that arose in the Bodhisatta who was about to attain Perfect Enlightenment is the *Dhammacakka*; and the power of exposition on the self- same twelve aspects of the four truths, which was making clear to the group of five is also the *Dhammacakka*. They are called *Dhammacakka*, the wheel of the Dhamma or Righteousness, because these two kinds of Buddha- Knowledge destroy all the defilements just as a powerful missile destroys all enemies.

Both the two Knowledges arose in the heart of the Bhagavā. By means of them the Bhagavā caused the Wheel of the Dhamma to turn, caused it to happen.

That Wheel is said to be turning up to the moment when the Venerable Koṇḍañña and the eighteen crores of Brahmas attained *Sotapatti Phala*. That is because the function of the Wheel did not end till that precise moment. From that moment when the first (full-fledged Ariyas) Sotapatti Phala puggalas in Koṇḍañña and the eighteen crores of Brahmas appeared in the world, the Wheel of the Dhamma is said to have been turned, i.e., the Kingdom of Righteousness became established. This is because since the time when the Teaching of Kassapa Buddha became extinct, up to this point under Gotama

Buddha, nobody had been able to turn this Wheel through the above-mentioned two Buddha-Knowledges. (*Sārattha Tīkā*)

In the matter of penetration of the Four Truths, the Truth of Cessation is penetrated or perceived through having *Nibbāna* as object of the mind. The remaining three Truths are perceived in their respective functions. It means that the Four Truths are simultaneously revealed at the instant Magga Ñāṇa dispels bewilderment or ignorance that had concealed the Four Truths:

(These are some salient points on the *Dhammacakka pavattana sutta*)



### The *Anattalakkhaṇa sutta*:

#### Some Important Remarks

After the Bhagavā had got Koṇḍañña established in *Sotapatti Phala*, he tended to the Group of five ascetics for their spiritual development like children. From the first waning day of Vesakha he did not go on the alms-round but stayed at the monastery discoursing to them on the doctrine. On the first waning day, and on the second waning day Venerable Vappa and Bhaddiya attained Sotapattiphala respectively, both of them being called up by the Buddha himself, "Come bhikkhu!"

Then the Bhagavā let the Venerables Koṇḍañña, Vappa and Bhaddiya go on the alms-round, and gave instructions on the doctrine to the Venerables Mahānāma and Assaji. The Bhagavā and his five disciples sustained themselves on the alms-food collected by the three bhikkhus. Then on the third and fourth waning day of Vesakha the Venerables Mahānāma and Assaji were established in *Sotapattiphala*, both being called up by the Buddha himself, "Come, bhikkhu!"

After all the five ascetics became established in *Sotapatti phala* the bhagavā, on the fifth waning day decided to expound the doctrine further so as to lead them to Arahatsip. And accordingly on that day he delivered to them the *Anatta lakkhaṇa Sutta*.

The theme of the *Anattalakkhaṇa sutta* is that :

(a) First the Bhagavā opened the discourse with the statement "corporeality, bhikkhus, is not self", and explained this fact with the woeful character (*dukkha*) of corporeality.

(b) Then he put questions to the five bhikkhus, "Is corporeality permanent or impermanent?" The bhikkhus, pondering on the question, gave the reply, "Impermanent, Venerable Sir". By a similar question the Bhagavā drew out the fact from his hearers the impermanent character of the five aggregates, one by one. Likewise, he drew out the fact of woefulness (*dukkha*) and insubstantiality and not-self (*Anatta*) from the hearer. This method of dialogue in which the hearer comes to his own conclusion of the three characteristics of the five aggregates is technically termed by the Commentators as *Teparivaṭṭa dhamma desanā* (Triple-round Discourse). In this matter, what the Bhagavā wishes to establish is the character of not-self, after first establishing the impermanent character and the woeful character (*dukkha*) of the five aggregates:

We shall explain this further:

In some of the discourses the Bhagavā expounded on the impermanent nature of the five aggregates with regard to their impermanent character. (See *Uparipaṇṇāsa, Chachakka sutta*). In some discourses he makes the not-self character clear through the fact of *dukkha* character (The earlier part of the present discourse is a case in point.) In some discourses he makes the not-self character evident after having established the fact of the impermanent and *dukkha* character. (In this present discourse the latter part is after this device. See also *Khandha Saṃyuttu; Arahanta Sutta*.) The Buddha takes this approach because the impermanent and woeful nature of things is evident to all whereas the not-self nature is not so evident.

To explain this further: when somebody by accident breaks some utensil, he or she would remark, "Ah, it's impermanence !" but not, "Ah, it is unsubstantial, or not-self" When a sore afflicts one, or is pricked by a thorn, one would remark, "Ah, it's *dukkha*" - but not "Ah, it is not-self." *Anatta* is not uttered in these cases because the nature of *anatta* is some-what remote to ones thinking. Therefore the Bhagava teaches not-self through impermanence or through *dukkha* or through a

combination of impermanence and *dukkha*. This latter method is employed in the latter part, the Triple-round discourse, of the present *sutta*.

(c) Next, the Bḥagavā explains: "Therefore, bhikkhus, whatever Corporeality there is-whether in the past, future or present, whether internal or external, whether gross or subtle, lowly or lofty, far or near-all Corporeality should be regarded as they really are, by right insight and wisdom (of Path-knowledge), 'This is not mine', 'This is not I', 'This is not myself'. Thus the Bḥagavā points out the falsity of the ego when one gains insight into the five aggregates and when one decides for oneself on gaining Path-knowledge.

(Note: well: that in meditating for insight, if one concentrates on the impermanence of phenomena, one can dispel the illusion of conceit. If one concentrates on *dukkha*, one can give up Craving. If one concentrates on unsubstantiality, one can dispel the illusion of wrong view.

In the present case, considering the five aggregates as 'This is not mine' leads to destruction of Craving, and is the same as concentrating on *dukkha* in Insight meditation. Considering the five aggregates as, 'This is not I' leads to the destruction of conceit and is the same as concentrating on impermanence. Considering the five aggregates as 'This is not myself' leads to the destruction of wrong view, and is the same as concentrating on *anatta*, unsubstantiality.)

(d) At the conclusion of the discourse the Bḥagava sums up the result that is achieved by a person of right view, culmination in *Arahattaphala*. "On gaining this right view, the well informed *Ariya* disciple," in a logical sequence of events following the correct perception as detailed under (c) above, attains sufficient insight into the five aggregates to gain Path-knowledge and attain Path-knowledge and its fruition, and the reviewing Knowledge, *paccavekkhaṇāñāṇa*.

(e) The *sutta* ends with a short description about the attainment of Arahathship by the five bhikkhus in the course of the exposition.

From this discourse it is clear that the Group of Five ascetics gained arahathship through meditating on the impermanence, woefulness and



unsubstantiality of the five aggregates. Therefore, all followers of the Buddha should do well to reflect on the following verses (rendered in English prose) on the five aggregates:

(i) The aggregates of corporeality does not last long:

It arises and perishes in no time.  
 woeful, dreary, painful it is  
 to be subjected to risings and fallings,  
 continuously on and on.  
 unsubstantial is Corporeality,  
 with nothing of real essence.  
 To the discerning eye,  
 It is impermanence by nature,  
 And hence is just woeful and Not-self.

(ii) The aggregates of sensation, too, does not last long;

It arises and perishes in no time.  
 Woeful, dreary, painful it is  
 to be subjected to risings and fallings,  
 Continuously on and on.  
 Unsubstantial is Sensation,  
 With nothing of real essence.  
 To the discerning eye,  
 It is impermanence by nature,  
 And hence is just woeful and not-self

(iii) The aggregate of perception, too, does not last long;

...p... just woeful and not-self.

(iv) The aggregate of volitional activities, too, does not last long;

(...p... just woeful and not-self.)

(v) The aggregate of consciousness, too, does not last long;

(...p... just woeful and not-self.)

..... ☆ .....

### Ratana Sutta.

We have said in Volume Three of the Great Chronicle that a five rendering into Myanmar of the Ratana Sutta is given under the Chapter on the Triple Gem.

Now, we reproduce the late Koezaung Sayadaw's rendering below:

(The Pāli text of *Ratana Sutta* is not reproduced in this English translation. The very elaborate and ornate Myanmar style of the translation is also reduced to simple English prose care being taken to include its essential features.)

Reflecting on the many noble qualities of the Buddha such as: the ten kinds of Perfection, *Pāramic* of three grades, i.e., ten Perfections in the ordinary degree, ten Perfection in the higher degree, and ten Perfections in the superlative degree; the five kinds of self-sacrificing liberality *Mahā pariccāga*; the three types of conduct *Cariya*, i.e., conduct aimed at the welfare of the world, conduct aimed at the welfare of kinsmen, and conduct aimed at the buddhahood-all of which the Buddha-to-be had taken upon himself since the day he wished for Buddhahood and received the assurance of future Buddhahood from the mouth of Buddha Dīpaṅkarā who was the fourth Buddha that arose in this aeon in which four Buddhas appeared;

And reflecting on the memorable events of: the Bodhisatta's conception at his last existence, his birth in Lumbinī Park, his great renunciation, his great endeavour involving six harrowing years of self-mortification, his noble victory over the five kinds of killers (*Māra*) and his Perfect Self-Enlightenment as the Buddha, having attained the all-knowing wisdom seated on his Throne of Victory at the foot of the Bodhi Tree, his delivering of the *Dhammacakkapavattana sutta* at the Migadāvana Park, and the nine Supramundane Dhammas;

Having established a compassionate mind towards all beings in trouble like the mind of the Venerable Ānandā in reciting the Ratana Sutta around the three walls that guarded the city of Vesali through the three watches of the night -

Let us recite the *Ratana Sutta*,

Whose benign authority all the devas living in the million world-systems gladly acknowledge; and the recital of which alone had the immediate effect of stamping out the three scourges of plague, demons and famine in the city of Vesālī.

(This is the prelude to the *Ratana Sutta*. The first part in *Pāli* prose beginning with "*Yānīdha ...*" be found in the Commentary on the Dhamma Pada, Volume Two, *Pakiṇṇaka vagga, Attanopubbakamma vatthu*. The second part-concerning the *Ratana Sutta* is in two stanzas composed by ancient teachers. The *sutta* begins as uttered by the Buddha, from the stanza beginning with "*Yānīdha bhūtāni ...*" The last three stanzas were uttered by Sakka, king of devas)

(The *sutta* begins thus:)

1. May all the devas belonging to the earth and to the celestial realms who are assembled here be happy. Moreover, let them listen to this discourse respectfully.
2. O ye devas! All of you who have assembled here to hear the Discourse, pay attention to what I am going to say. Bestow your loving-kindness on human beings. By day or by night, they bring offerings to you. Therefore, protect them without remiss.
3. Whatever treasure there be, either in this human world or in the worlds of *nagas* or *garudas*, or the celestial worlds, there is no treasure that can equal the Tathagata. There is the incomparable quality in the Buddha that excels all worldly treasures, By this truth, may all beings be well and happy both here and in the hereafter.
4. The great Sakyan sage with the tranquillity which is the outcome of the Ariya Path, has comprehended *Nibbāna*, the element of extinction of defilements, the end of attachment, the deathless. There is the incomparable quality in *Nibbāna* that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy both here and in the hereafter!
5. The Perfectly Self-Enlightened one, the Supreme Buddha, extolled concentration that is the outcome of the *Ariya* Path. This

concentration has been declared by the Buddhas as instantly beneficial. There is the incomparable quality in the concentration associated with the *Ariya* Path since it is by far superior to the concentration pertaining to Fine material *jhāna* or Non material *jhāna*. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy both here and in the hereafter!

6. There are these eight individuals whom the *Ariyas* praise. They are the four pairs of *Ariyas* at the four stages of Path knowledge, each with *Magga* and *Phala* knowledges. These noble disciples of the Buddha deserve choicest offerings by those aspiring to enlightenment. Such offerings made to them yield abundant fruit. There is the incomparable quality in the Sangha consisting of those eight pairs of *Ariyas* that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy both here and in the hereafter!

(The rendering by the Koezaung Sayadaw includes 108 classes of *Ariyas* (not mentioned in this English Translation.) The way the number 108 is obtained is explained here. Leaving aside the four *Ariyas* who have attained the four *Maggas*, there are the four *Ariyas* who have attained the four *Phalas*. Of these four, there are three kinds of *Sotapatti-phala* attainers: (a) the one who has just one rebirth to undergo, (b) the one who has to undergo from two, three to six rebirths, (c) the one who has no possibility of rebirth beyond the seventh existence. Now, the four *Sotapatti-phala* attainers are of four categories according to the way of practice by which they have attained it. The three kinds (a, b, c above) into the four modes of practice makes twelve classes of *Sotapatti puggala*, Stream - Enterers at the fruition stage.

There are two distinct phases in meditation for Insight: up to the dispelling of the hindrances (*nīvaraṇas*) is the *Paṭipadā khetta* 'the period of practice; from that stage upwards till the attainment of Path-knowledge is the *abhiññā khetta*, 'the period of special apperception,' (having gained Insight). In the period of practice, a yogi who can dispel the hindrances without trouble is called 'one who has facile practice'; a yogi who can dispel the hindrances with

difficulty is called 'one who has difficult practice.' In the period of special apperception, a yogi with Insight who attains *Magga* (Path-knowledge) quickly is called 'a quick attainer'; a yogi with Insight who attains *Magga* tardily is called 'a slow attainer'. Thus there are these four modes of practice for each of the three kinds of *Sotapatti Phala* attainers, making 12 classes of *Sotapatti Ariyas*. With the Once-returners or *Sakadāgāmi puggala*, there are three kinds such as *kāma sakadāgāmi*, *Rūpasakadāgāmi* and *Arūpasakadāgāmi*. These three kinds multiplied by the four modes of practice makes twelve classes of Once-returners or *Sakadāgāmi puggala*.

With the Non-returners or *Anāgāmi puggala*, there are five kinds such as: (i) *antarā parinibbāyī anāgāmi* (ii) *upahaccaparinibbāyī anāgāmi*, (iii) *Sasaṅkhāra parinibbāyī anāgāmi* (iv) *asaṅkhāra parinibbāyī anāgāmi* (v) *uddhaṃsota akaniṭṭhagāmīanāgāmi*. The anagami Ariyas dwell in five Pure Abodes or *Suddhā vāsa* Brahma realm out of which five classes of *Anāgāmi* dwell in *Avihā* realm five in *atappā* realm; five in *Sudassā* realm, five in *Sudassī* realm, and four (i.e., those other than *uddhaṃsota-akaniṭṭhagāmī anāgāmi*) in *Akaniṭṭha* realm, thus making twenty-four classes of *anāgāmi puggala*.

The Arahats are of two kinds: *sukkhavipassaka arahat* and *samathāyānika arahat*. The former refers to those *ariyas* who attain *Arahattaphala* without achieving *jhana* but through Insight development alone; the latter to those *ariyas* who use *jhāna* and consequent psychic powers as the vehicle of attaining *Arahatta phala*.

Adding up the four ariyas, we have

Sotapannas	12	kinds of <i>Phala</i> attainers
Sakadāgāmi	12	"
Anāgāmi	24	"
Arahat	2	"
<i>Magga</i> attainers	<u>4</u>	
	54	

In gaining *Magga ñāna* an *Ariya* may, at the moment of the arising of *Magga ñāna*, either have his consciousness led by faith (*saddhā*) or wisdom (*paññā*). Thus there are two basic categories of *ariyas*, either of whom make up the above 54 classes. That is why it is said that there are altogether 108 classes of *Ariyas*.)

7. Those arahats *Ariyas* who strive with steadfast minds under Gotama Buddha's teaching are released from the defilements. They have their mind well settled on *Nibhāna*, the deathless Element, having attained *Arahatta phala*, they enjoy the bliss of *Nibbāna* without having to incur any expense. There is the incomparable quality in the *Arahat* that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy both here and in the hereafter!
8. Just as a pillar at the city gate, firmly fixed in the ground, is unshaken by the fierce winds from the four quarters, even so do I declare that the *Ariya* who perceives the Four *Ariya* Truths through his first Path-knowledge is unshakable under all worldly conditions. There is the incomparable quality in the Stream-Enterer that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy both here and in the hereafter!
9. Those Stream-Enterers have perceived the *Ariya* Truths clearly, being well-taught by the Buddha possessor of most - profound knowledge. However exceedingly forgetful they might be, they do not take birth for an eighth time. There is the incomparable quality in the stream-Enterer that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy both here and in the hereafter!
- 10 and 11. At the instant of the arising of Stream entry knowledge, the three defilements of wrong view concerning this body of five aggregates (which arises in twenty ways) eight kinds of doubts and sixteen kinds of uncertainty, and the wrong belief in misguided practices outside the *Ariya* Path, should there be any, are discarded once and for all. Although certain defilements still remain in him, he is absolutely freed from the four miserable states of *apāya*. He is also incapable of committing the six gross evil deeds, i.e., the five evil deeds and following other teachers (than the Buddha.) There is the incomparable quality in Stream-enterer that excels all worldly

treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy both here and in the hereafter!

12. In case, through being heedless, the Stream-Enterer commits an evil action by deed, word or thought, he is incapable of concealing it. That quality of being incapable of concealing any misdeed that the Stream-Enterer who has seen *Nibbāna* becomes endowed with, has been pointed out by the Buddha. There is the incomparable quality in the Stream-Enterer that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy both here and in the hereafter!
13. Just like the forest in spring time, the first month of the hot season, has its tree tops ablaze with blossoms, is a scene of delight, so also the Doctrine, delightful, in word and in meaning, leading to *Nibbāna*, has been delivered by the Buddha for the highest benefit (of *Nibbāna*). There is the incomparable quality in the Doctrine that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy both here and in the hereafter!
14. The Excellent One, the Knower of the Excellent Element of *Nibbāna*, the bestower of the Supramundane to the three spheres, the One who has embraced the Old Path of eight constituents, the peerless Buddha, has explained the excellent Doctrine comprising ten stages (events). There is the incomparable quality in the Buddha that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy both here and in the hereafter!
15. To *Arahats* there the old *kamma* is extinct (beyond the present existence), no new *kamma* is created. Their mind is not attached to any future existences. They have completely destroyed the seeds of existence. They do not hanker after continued existence. Just as the lamp is extinguished, those wise ones have their aggregates extinguished. There is the incomparable quality in the *Arahat* that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy both here and in the hereafter!
16. Devas belonging to the earth and to the celestial realms are assembled here. We all pay our homage to the Buddha whose

coming to the world is most auspicious. May this good deed bring peace and happiness to all beings.

17. Devas belonging to the earth and to the celestial realms are assembled here. We all pay our homage to the Dhamma whose proclamation in the world is most auspicious. May this good deed bring peace and happiness to all beings.

18. Devas belonging to the earth and to the celestial realms are assembled here. We all pay our homage to the Sangha whose presence in the world is most auspicious. May this good deed bring peace and happiness to all beings.

Concluding Stanza: an earnest wish

Let the devotees recite Ratana Sutta beginning from *yānīdha* to this Stanza on Earnest wish, and the three scourges will be kept at bay as in ancient Vesālī. Do not go after new-fangled ways of reciting other Pali compositions. This discourse uttered by the Buddha himself will prove efficacious to those who recite it with due faith. Accordingly, may those wishing to be free from all troubles recite Ratana Sutta which is most excellent.

(Here ends Chapter Forty two)

End of Volume Five of the Great Chronicle of Buddhas.

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Uppajjitvā nirujjhanti - tesaṁ vupasamo sukho.*



“Impermanent are all component things,  
They arise and cease, that is their nature;  
They come into being and pass away,  
Release from them is bliss supreme.”

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May she rejoice in the merits of this Dhamma-  
dāna and attain the bliss of Nibbāna.

May all beings share in the merits gained;  
enjoy good health, prosperity and happiness.  
Cultivate loving-kindness and wisdom,  
culminating in the attainment of Nibbāna,  
the cessation of all suffering.

*Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!*



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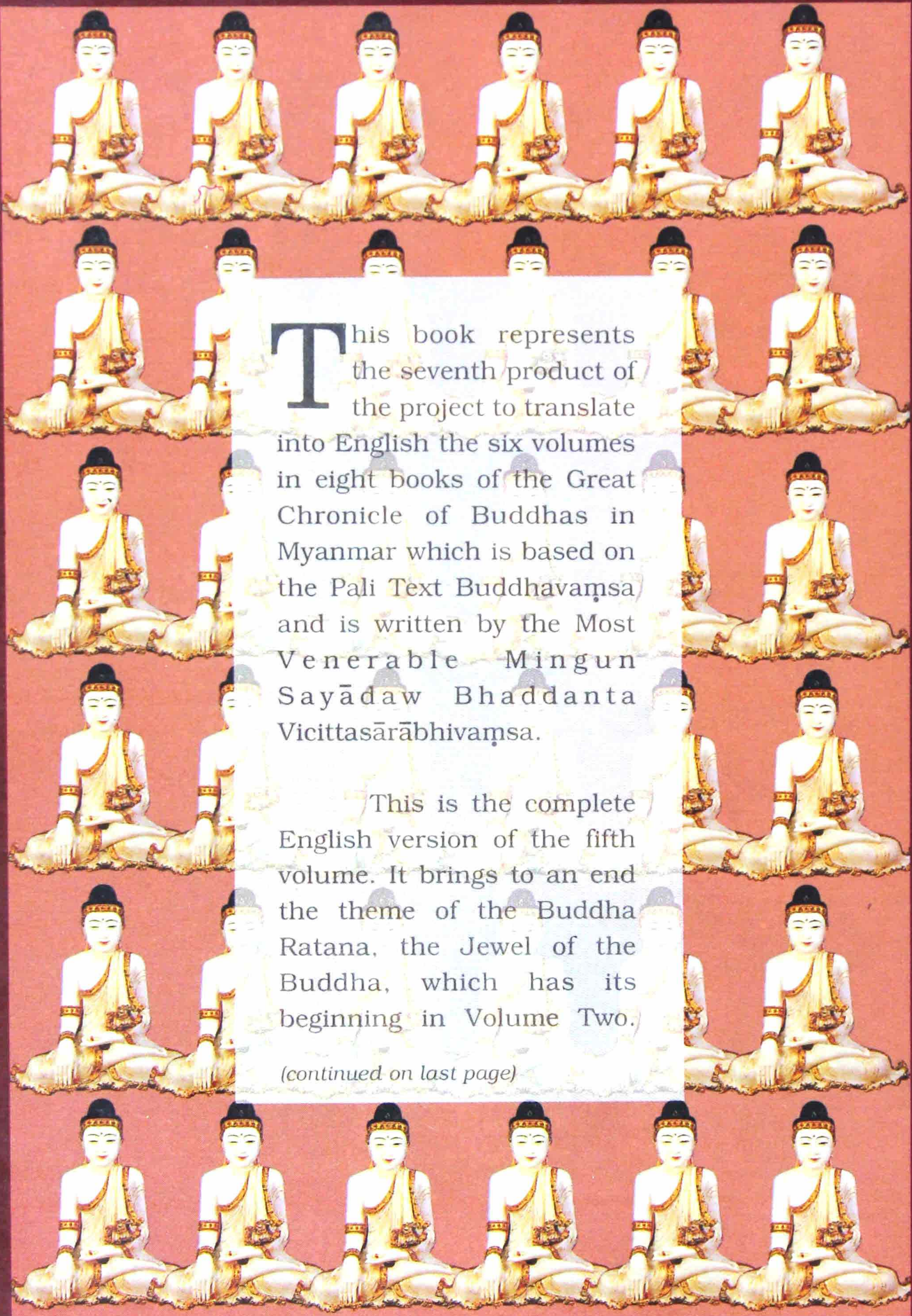
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