

THE *Great*
Chronicles
OF
BUDDHAS

VOL II
SINGAPORE EDITION

The Most Venerable MINGUN SAYADAW
BHADDANTA VICITTĀSARĀBHIVAMSA
TIPIṬAKADHARA DHAMMABHAṄḌĀGĀRIKA
AGGA MAHĀPAṆḌITA
ABHIDHAJA MAHĀRATṬHAGURU
ABHIDHAJA AGGAMAHA SADDHAMMAJOTIKA

Chapter 35

STORY OF MĀRA

(Out of the Buddha's many events that took place during the Pacchima Bodhi, the last twenty-five years, only a few notable one will be written from this chapter onwards.)

Once, the Buddha was staying near Pañcasāla village which He made His resort for aims, for He had discerned the past meritorious deeds of the five hundred young women of the village — the deeds that were potential for their attainment of *sotāpatti-magga*. On a festive day, the women went to the riverside, bathed, dressed up well and were on their way back to the village.

As Buddha was entering the village for alms-food, Māra, the Evil One, then possessed all the villagers there so as to cause the Buddha being deprived of food, not even a spoonful of rice. Compelled to leave the village with His bowl washed as before, He stood at the village gate. There Māra asked the Buddha: “O Monk, have you received any alms-food?” When the Buddha replied: “Hey Māra, you have done something so that I receive nothing, have not you?” Māra said: “In that case, Venerable Sir, enter the village again for food.” (It was not with honesty that Māra said so. In fact, he did so with an ulterior motive, he would like to possess the villagers again to make more jest at the Monk by clapping hands in front of Him. The Buddha knew Māra's intention and did not enter the village again out of compassion for him. The Buddha was aware that “should Māra do hurt Me in this manner according to his plan, his head would split into seven pieces.”)

The moment the Evil One spoke to the Buddha, the five hundred young women arrived at the village gate, showing their respect to the Buddha and they stood at an appropriate place. Māra then asked the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, if you have no food will you not suffer hunger greatly?” “Hey Māra!” addressed the Buddha, “Even if we have no food collected, I will spend the time in zest (*pīti*) and bliss (*sukha*) accompanied by *jhāna* as Mahā Brahmas, residents of Abhassara Abode and He uttered the following Dhamma-verse thereafter:

*Susukham vata jīvāma, yesam no natthi kiñcanam
Pītibhakkhā bhavissāma, devā ābhassarā yathā.*

Hey wicked Māra! There is not the slightest degree of worrying things, such as passion, hatred, etc., in us. We shall live long free from suffering and in great happiness. Like Brahmās of Ābhassara Abode, we shall certainly have (for this day) bliss as our food by engaging in the *jhāna* of zest.

At the end of the teaching, the five hundred young women were established in the *sotāpatti-phala*.

— Sukkha vagga, **Dhammapada** —

King Kosala's Matchless Alms-giving

Once as the Buddha travelled and entered the great Jetavana Monastery in the company of five hundred monks, King Pasenadi Kosala went to the monastery and invited the Buddha to the next day's *āgantuka-dāna* (gift for visitors). He prepared the *dāna* elaborately and made an announcement: “Let the citizens see my *dāna*!”

Having come and seen the King's *dāna*, the citizens became desirous of competing against the King and invited the Buddha for the following day's alms-giving and made every gift perfect and invited the King, saying: “Let the Great King, our recognized Lord (Sammuti Deva), come and observe our charity.”

Having observed the alms-giving of the citizens, the King thought to himself: “The people have done their *dāna* that is greater than mine. I will again do another alms-giving

that will excel theirs.” The next day he prepared his *dāna* more elaborately and invited the people to witness it. The people saw the King's gifts, and in order not to be outdone by him, they organized for the following day a greater alms-giving and sent an invitation to the King. In this way the King could not defeat the citizens nor the citizens the King.

At the sixth grand offering of alms, the people increased their gifts a hundred time, nay, a thousand times, and decided that their offering should be so perfect that nobody could not say that “Such and such a thing is not included in the *dāna* of the citizens.”

Seeing the people's offerings, the King became desperate, thinking: “What is the use of my living if I cannot perform better than the people in giving alms?” So he lay down on his couch, finding ways and means to outdo his subjects. Queen Mallikā then went to the King and asked: “Why are you lying down, Great King? Why do your sense faculties such as eyes, look as though they were fading?” “Don't you know, my dear Queen?” asked the king in return. “No, I do not, Great King,” replied the queen. The King then related the matter to Mallikā.

Matchless Offering organized by Mallikā.

Queen Mallikā then said to the King: “Do not have discursive thoughts, Great King. Where have you learnt that a monarch ruling over land and water is defeated by his subjects. I shall try to organize your charity.”

Having encouraged the King thus, the Queen gave her advice as she was desirous of taking the management of the Matchless Alms-giving (*asadisa-dāna*) in the following manner:

“Have a pavilion, Great King, built with fragrant planks of *sāla-kalyāṇī* trees for the five hundred monks in the precincts of the golden palace. The people will stay outside the precincts.

“Have five hundred white umbrellas made; each of five hundred elephants will take hold of one umbrella with its trunk, and stand, sheltering each monk with it.

“Have eight boats made of *nīphalam* gold. These boats are to be filled with perfumes in the middle of pavilion.

“Between each couple of monks will sit a princess grinding scented wood for perfumes. Another princess will hold a round fan and flap it for each couple of monks. Other princesses will convey ground perfumes and put them in the boats.

“Among these princesses, some will carry branches of blue lotus flowers and stir the perfumes in the boats so that they will be pervaded with the fragrance from the perfumes.

“Certainly, the people have no princesses, no white umbrellas, no elephants. For these reasons the citizens will be defeated.

“Do, Great King, as I now have told you.”

Replying: “Very well, my dear, you have given me good advice,” the King had everything done according to the Queen's instructions.

While everything was being done accordingly, a tame elephant was yet required for a monk. Then the king asked: “A tamed elephant is wanted, dear Queen. What shall we do?” “Have you no 500 elephants?” “Yes, I have dear. But the rest are all untamed. Like the *verambha* wind they might turn very wild on seeing monks.” “I have got an idea, Great King, as to where should a young wild elephant be placed to make him hold an umbrella with his trunk.” “Where is the place?” “It is close to the Venerable Āṅgulimāla,” answered the Queen.

The King had all this done as advised by the Queen. The young wild elephant stood there quietly with his tail tucked between its thighs, its ears put down, and eyes closed. The people were amazed to watch the elephant, saying to themselves: “Even such a wild elephant has now become such a docile and quiet animal!”

Having treated the Sangha headed by the Buddha to alms-food, the King showed his

respect to Him and said:

“In this pavilion of alms-giving, Exalted Buddha, I offer to you things suitable for monks (*kappiya-bhaṇḍā*) as well as things unsuitable for them (*akappiya-bhaṇḍā*).”

Things offered in this Matchless *Dāna* in a single day cost fourteen crores. Priceless were the four things offered to the Buddha, namely, (1) the white umbrella, (2) the throne for seat, (3) the stand to place the bowl on and (4) the wooden board to stand on after washing His feet. It was impossible to repeat such a grand offering to the Buddha. Therefore the alms-giving performed by King Kosala became famous in the religion as *asadisa-dāna*, the “Matchless Gift.”

Indeed, such an *Asadisa Dāna* should take place but once to every Buddha. And that *asadisa-dāna* which happened just once to each Buddha was organized by a wise woman.

Ministers Juṇha and Kāla

King Pasenadī Kosala had two ministers: Juṇha and Kāla. Between them, Kāla considered:

“Oh, a loss has indeed occurred to the King's palace? The treasures amounting to many crores have come to nothing in a single day. Having taken the King's gifts, these monks will return to their place and abandon themselves to slumber. Oh, the palace has come to ruin in unprecedented proportions!”

On the contrary, Juṇha thought like this:

“Oh, the King has properly and successfully given alms? True, one who is not established in kingship (he who is not a monarch) cannot give such alms. There is no alms-giver who does not share his merit with all other beings. I rejoice at the King's excellent *asadisa-dāna* and say: *Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!*”

Reflecting thus the minister Juṇha appreciated and took delight. When the Buddha had finished His partaking of food, King Pasenadī Kosala made himself ready to hear the sermon by holding a cup to pour the water of dedication, the sermon to be given by the Buddha in approval of the King's *dāna*. The Buddha reflected as follows:

“The King has indeed done at great sacrifice as though he let a great flood roll down waves after waves. Could he succeed in gladdening the hearts of the people or could he not?”

Then He came to know the reactions in the minds of the two ministers and came to know further thus: “If I were to give a detailed sermon that goes well with the King's *dāna*, the ministers Kāla's head will be split into seven pieces but the other minister, Juṇha, will be established in *satāpatti-magga*. Taking pity on Kāla, the Buddha delivered only a four-footed verse (*catuppadika*) despite such a great alms-giving performed by the King; then He rose from His seat and left for the monastery.

Venerable Aṅgulimāla's Courage

On their arrival back at the monastery, the monks asked the Venerable Aṅgulamāla: “When you saw the wild elephant holding the umbrella over you, friend, were you not afraid?” Getting the answer in the negative, the monks drew near to the Buddha and complained with contempt, “The Venerable Aṅgulimāla, Exalted Buddha, professes to be an *arahat*.”

“Monks,” addressed the Buddha, “Aṅgulamāla was not afraid indeed. Ascetics like my dear sons who are highly noble amidst *arahats* have no fear.” And the Buddha added the following verse as contained in the Brāhmaṇa-vagga (of the **Dhammapada**):

*Usabhaṃ pararaṃ vīraṃ, mahesiṃ vijitavināṃ.
Anejaṃ nhātakaṃ buddhaṃ, tam ahaṃ brūmi brahmaṇaṃ*

(Monks!) The *arahat* with his *āsavas* destroyed, who is courageous as he knows no trembling like a bull-king, who possesses noble energy, who has

sought and acquired the aggregate of virtues, who has triumphed over the three evils, namely, Māra as deity, Māra as moral defilement, and Māra as conditioning factors, who has quenched all craving for existences, who has washed away his mental dirt with the clear water of the Path and who has realized the Four Truths, him I declare an ultimate Brāhmana as he really is.

Destinies of The Two Ministers

King Pasenadī Kosala was unhappy and thought to himself as follows: “The Exalted One has risen from His seat and left without giving me a sermon that would befit the occasion though I have performed a great *dāna* to the assembly of such greatness. Instead, He has merely uttered a verse. Perhaps, I have not done what is agreeable to Him, I must have done what is not agreeable. Perhaps, I have not given suitable things, I must have given unsuitable things. Perhaps the Buddha is averse to me. The alms-giving performed by me is known as *Asadisa Dāna*. The Buddha should have therefore delivered some discourse appropriate to this kind of gift.” Thinking thus he went to the monastery, paid obeisance to the Buddha and said:

“Exalted Buddha, have I not done right *dāna*, or have I not given things good for the *dāna* or have I given things that are not good?”

When the Buddha replied: “Why do you ask me like this, Great King?” The King said: “You delivered no sermon in accord with my *asadisa-dāna*.” The Buddha stated:

“You have given right things, Great King. Yes, the gift you have given is known as ‘*Asadisa Dāna*’. This kind of gift happened to each Buddha but once. It is not easy to repeat it.”

Then the King asked: “Why then, Exalted Buddha, did you not preach to us in accord with the greatness of the gift?” “Because the audience was not pure.” “What was the defect of the audience, Exalted Buddha?”

The Buddha then told the King of the reactions of the two ministers and explained that He did not preached elaborately out of compassion for Kāḷa. The King then asked Kāḷa whether it was true. When Kāḷa answered in the affirmative, the King banished him from the Kingdom, saying:

“As I gave, with my family, our properties without taking a coin from you, what trouble did you suffer? You, Kāḷa, get out! But the wealth I have given you remains yours. (I will not take it back.) But you must leave the country on this day!”

Then the King summoned the other minister, Junha, and asked him whether it was true that he had favourably reacted, and on receiving the positive answer, the King said to Junha:

“Well done, uncle, well done! I adore you, uncle. Take over my retinue and give *dāna* for seven days the way I have done.”

So saying, the King handed over his kingship to Junha for seven days, after which, he addressed the Buddha: “Look at what the fool has done, Exalted Buddha. He is the one who stood against my *dāna* given in such a manner!” “Yes, Great King,” said the Buddha, “the fools are those who do not approve of another's act of charity but condemn it and finally landed in a woeful abode. The wise, however, rejoice in other's *dāna* and finally attained happy states.” And the Buddha uttered the following verse:

*Na ve kadariyā devalokaṃ vajanti
bālā have nappasaṃsanti dānaṃ
Dhīro ca dānaṃ amumodamāno
ten'eva so hoti sukhī parattha.*

(Great King!) Indeed those who are hard and stingy do not attain celestial abodes. The fools, who are ignorant of the present world and the future, indeed do not admire *dāna* and are not happy about it. Only the far-sighted

man of wisdom is able to rejoice in *dāna*. For, that very reason of his rejoicing, upon his death, he enjoys divine bliss.

At the end of the Teaching, the minister Junha became a noble *sotāpanna*. Enjoying the King's favour, he performed charitable acts for seven days in the manner of the King

End of King Kosala's Asadisa Dāna.

Sivi & Āditta Jātakas related with Reference to King Kosala's Matchless Dāna

When the Buddha spoke the verse beginning with “*Na ve kadariya devalokaṃ vajanti*”, King Pasenadi Kosala was so pleased that he offered the Buddha an outer robe made in Sivi country and worth one hundred thousand coins. Thereafter, he entered the city.

The next day, at the assembly, the monks talked about the King's generosity; “Friends, King Kosala was not satisfied even with his matchless *Dāna* that had just been given; so, after the Exalted One had preached the Dhamma, he offered him again the Sivi-made outer robe worth one hundred thousand. The King is so much insatiable in his thirst for alms-giving.” Then the Buddha came and asked what they were talking about and on hearing what was being discussed, He said:

“It is easy, monks, to give away one's external belongings. The good wise Bodhisattas of old gave away daily their wealth to the value of six hundred thousand, making it unnecessary for the whole populace of the Jambudīpa to work with their ploughs. Yet they were not satisfied with giving such external things (*bāhira-dāna*). They believed unwaveringly that ‘he who gives what he is very fond of can enjoy the special benefit which he is so fond of.’ With this belief, they gave away even their pairs of eyes to those who came into their presence and asked for.”

At the request of the monks, the Buddha related the Sivi Jātaka, an event of the past (as contained in the **Visati Nipāta**).

One day, after King Kosala's Matchless Alms-giving, the monks at the assembly discussed among themselves: “Friends, only with discrimination did King Kosala give the Matchless Dāna to the Order of noble monks headed by the Exalted One, as he knows by himself that they form the fertile soil for sowing the seeds of meritorious deeds.”

The Buddha joined them and knowing what they were talking about, He said:

“Monks, it is no wonder that after careful selection, King Kosala has sown the seeds of unique alms-giving in the supreme field of my dispensation. Learned and virtuous Bodhisattas of past also performed great *dānas* only after discriminating the recipients very carefully.”

Then at the request of the monks, the Buddha narrated the Āditta Jātaka (of the **Atthaka Nipāta**.)

(The Sivi Jātaka and the Āditta Jātaka in detail may be taken from the five hundred and fifty Birth Stories of the Buddha in prose.)

Story of Garahadinna and Sirigutta.

In Sāvatti, there were two friends: the Householder Sirigutta and Garahadinna. The former being a follower of the Buddha whereas the latter, a follower of heretical teachers. The heretical teachers said constantly to Garahadinna:

“Should you not ask your friend Sirigutta thus: ‘Friend, why do you follow the Monk Gotama? What will you gain from the Monk Gotama?’ Should not you persuade him in such a way as to make him come over to us and offer us something?”

On hearing the words of his teachers again and again, Garahadinna went to his friend and wherever they were standing, sitting, or doing something else, he said to Sirigutta:

“Friend, what is the use of the Monk Gotama to you? What benefit will accrue to you from your devotion to the Monk Gotama? Do you not think you should serve

my teachers and give them alms?”

The Householder Sirigutta said nothing and kept silent for many days. But being sick of hearing his friend's repeated speech, he said to Garahadinna one day:

“Friend, you come to me constantly and wherever we are standing, sitting or doing something else, you ask me what benefit will accrue to me from my devotion to my Master and you also urge me to go over to your teachers and give them alms. But tell me first what things do your teachers know?”

Then Garahadinna replied to his friend Sirigutta:

“Oh! What a surprise, Sir!, Do not speak like this. As for my teachers, there is nothing is unknown. They know all about the past, the present and the future; all that is done, said and thought, i.e. physical, verbal and mental actions. They know, ‘This will happen and this will not.’ They know, ‘This should be and this should not’. They know all fully.”

Thereupon, Sirigutta asked Garahadinna in order to get his affirmation: “Friend, do you say so?” The latter boldly affirmed: “Yes, I do.” Then the former said:

“In that case, friend, you have made a grave mistake by not telling me about this for such a long time. Only today I will know the intellectual power of your teachers. Go, friend, invite your teachers in my name (for the meal) tomorrow.”

Delighted, the Householder Garahadinna went to his teachers, paid respect and said: “Masters, my friend Sirigutta has invited you to tomorrow's meal.” The heretical teachers asked: “Did Sirigutta himself do so?” “Yes, Sirs, Sirigutta himself did,” replied Garahadinna in confirmation. Jubilant, the heretical teachers said: “Very well, Garahadinna. With the Householder Sirigutta as our devoted follower, what luxury is there that will not be ours?”

Preparations at Sirigutta's Home

Sirigutta's home was very large. In the compound he had a long huge ditch dug between his two houses and had the ditch filled with excrement.

On the two outward edges, tree stumps were set up and fastened with ropes. The fore-legs of couches were placed on the fore-edge of the ditch and the hind-legs on the ropes. This was made with this idea: ‘When they come, they will take their seats; when they take their seats, they will fall headlong into the ditch.’

Then the couches were covered with coverings (the edges of which touching the ground) so that the ditch was hidden.

Several large pots were placed behind the house. The brims of the pots were bound with banana leaves and white pieces of cloth and the empty pots smeared on the outside with gruel, rice, butter, oil, honey, molasses and crumbs of cakes.

The next day the Householder Garahadinna went quietly to Sirigutta's residence early in the morning and asked: “Have you prepared your offerings for the Venerable Ones?” “Yes, I have,” replied Sirigutta. “Where are the offerings?” asked Garahadinna again. Sirigutta answered, pointing to the pots: “These pots are full of gruel. These full of rice. These full of butter, molasses, cakes. The seats have also been arranged.” Saying: “Very good, friend,” Garahadinna left. On his return, came the five hundred heretical teachers to Sirigutta's place.

Sirigutta Lesson given to The Heretical Teachers

Coming out of his house, Sirigutta paid respect with fivefold veneration to the heretical teachers. Raising his folded palms, he stood before them and communicated with them but mentally.

“It is said that you Masters know everything such as the past, etc. It has been said so by your attendant and supporter Garahadinna.

“If you really know all, please do not get into my residence There is no gruel for

you who have come to my place. Nor is there rice, nor any other food.

"If you unknowingly enter my dwelling, I will have to get you dumped into the ditch of excrement and also have to get you beaten."

Having mentally told them thus, Sirigutta signalled his workers by his facial expression that they, knowing that the teachers were about to take their seats, should remove the coverings from behind (just before the teachers sat down) so that the coverings might not be soiled with the excrement.

Then Sirigutta invited the teachers, saying; "Please come this way, Sirs." The heretics went between the two houses and were about to take their seats when Sirigutta's men said: "Wait a moment, Sirs. Do not sit yet." "Why?" asked the teachers. "You should sit only knowing your manners." "What should we do?" "Sirs, you should first stand near your seats, and you all sit down at the same time."

(These instructions were designed to make the first teacher, who would fall into the ditch, unable to warn others not to take their seats.)

The teachers said: "Very well," and considering that the instructions should be followed. They all (five hundred) stood near their seats in order. Then the men told them: "Please sit down all together, be quick!" When the teachers were about to sit, the men removed the coverings from the couches. As soon as the teachers sat down, the legs of the couches on the rope slipped, and they fell head-on into the ditch.

Sirigutta closed the house-doors and to every teacher who had clambered out of the ditch, he gave a good thrashing with his stick, saying: "Why do not you know the events of the past, the future and the present as claimed by your supporter Garahadinna?" After beating them to his satisfaction, he had the doors opened, saying: "This much is enough for them."

The heretical teachers tried to run away from the house but the plastered ground along the way having been made slippery beforehand, they could not control themselves and fell to the ground. Every one of them who fell down was beaten again and sent away with the word: "This much suffices you."

The heretical teachers went to the house of their supporter Garahadinna, crying: "Sirigutta, you have ruined and humiliated us! You have ruined and humiliated us!"

Prosecution of Sirigutta by Garahadinna

When the Householder Garahadinna saw his teachers ruined and humiliated and reduced to a disaster, he became furious and said:

"My friend Sirigutta has let me down! He had the heart to have my teachers beaten and made my teachers miserable who form the good field for sowing the seeds of good works and who can bestow all the desired benefits in the deva-world even on anyone who just stretches his hands to pay respect to them (not to speak of anyone who gives them offerings)."

Muttering thus, he went to the court of King Pasenadi Kosala and filed a suit for a fine of one hundred coins against Sirigutta.

Then King Kosala summoned Sirigutta to the court. Sirigutta came and paid respect to the King and said: "Great King, impose the fine on me only after investigating the matter. Do not do so without an inquiry." When the King agreed, saying: "Householder I shall fine you only after investigation." Sirigutta said: "Very well, Great King." "Then you, Sirigutta, state your case," asked the King. Sirigutta reported to the King all that had happened, beginning with the following words:

"Great King, my friend Garahadinna, a follower of the heretical teachers, repeatedly asked me everywhere what was the use of following the Monk Gotama and what benefit would accrue to me from my devotion to the Monk Gotama."

The King, looking at Garahadinna, asked: "Did you really say so?" When the latter admitted, saying: "Yes, Great King," the King passed the following judgment:

"Regarding your teachers, who as 'Great Buddhas' are so ignorant (of the creation

of the dirty ditch), why did you tell Sirigutta, a follower of the Exalted One, that they knew all the events that took place in the three divisions of time — past, present and future? The fine of one hundred thousand coins for which you have sued Sirigutta must be paid by you.”

So saying, the King imposed the payment of the fine on Garahadinna. His heretical teachers who had come to the court as complainants were beaten and sent away.

Garahadinna's Revenge

The Householder Garahadinna was angry with Sirigutta and did not speak to him for a month thence. Then he thought to himself: "For me, it is not nice not to be on speaking terms with him. Indeed, I should ruin his teachers (in revenge)." So he went to Sirigutta and broke the ice: "Friend Sirigutta!" "What is the matter, friend?" replied Sirigutta. Then the former blamed him, saying:

"Friend, it is natural for friends and relatives to quarrel or dispute. Why did not you speak to me of anything, friend? Why are you behaving like this (in estrangement)?"

Sirigutta replied calmly: "Friend I did not speak to you because you did not speak to me. (There is no other reason.)" Garahadinna said to make peace: "Friend, let bygones be bygones. Let us not destroy our mutual friendship." From that time, they became reconciled and moved about together.

One day, Sirigutta said to his friend: (the way the latter had done before): "Friend, what is the use of your teachers for you? What benefit will accrue to you from your devotion to your teacher? Do not you think you should serve my teacher, the Exalted One, and give alms to the Venerable Ones?" Garahadinna had been longing always for that kind of speech, and it was like scratching an itchy part of his body with a finger nail.

So he asked his friend: "Friend Sirigutta, what does your teacher, the Monk Gotama know?" Then Sirigutta said:

"Friend, do not speak like that. There is nothing that is not known to our teacher, the Exalted One. He knows all the things of the past, etc., He comprehends clearly the analysis of the sixteen aspects of a living being's mental process."

Then Garahadinna said: "Friend, I did not know it earlier. Why have you kept silent about it for such a long time? In that case, friend, you go and invite your teacher, the Exalted One, for the meal at my place tomorrow. I would like to feed. Please tell him to accept with five hundred monks the food I am going to offer." So Sirigutta approached the Buddha and said:

"Glorious Buddha! My friend Garahadinna has asked me to invite you. He said you should accept, together with five hundred monks, his food-offering tomorrow. There is, however, one thing: one day in the past I did something unpleasant to his heretical teachers; I do not know whether he wants to take vengeance for what I have done to him or he wants to offer you food with a pure heart. Please reflect upon his invitation and accept it if he is sincere. If not please do not."

When the Buddha reflected on what ulterior motive Garahadinna had, He foresaw that the householder had a large ditch dug between his two houses, had it filled with eighty cartloads of firewood of cutch, burnt them in order to let the Buddha and his monks fall into the ditch of embers.

Again when the Buddha contemplated: "Will my visit to his place be beneficial or not," he clearly had vision as follows:

He would stretch his leg into the ditch of fire. At that moment the rough mat covering the ditch would vanish. A large lotus flower, having the size of a chariot wheel or a cart wheel, would appear out of the ditch. He would step onto the centre of the flower and sit there. Likewise His five hundred monks would step on to the lotus flowers and take their seats respectively. People would assemble. With two

verses, the Buddha would give a talk of blessing. By the end of the talk, eighty-four thousand beings would realize the Four Truths and gain liberation. The two friends, Sirigutta and Garahadinna, would become *sotāpanna ariyas*. Inspired with faith, both of them would give away their properties in honour of the Buddha's dispensation of eight wonders.

So the Buddha decided to go for the sake of Garahadinna. Having had the vision clearly, the Buddha accepted the invitation by keeping silent. Sirigutta went to Garahadinna's place and told him of the Buddha's acceptance. Saying: "Dear friend, with gladness do honour to the Buddha, the Chief of the three worlds," Sirigutta went home.

Preparations at Garahadinna's Residence

Thinking: "Now is the time to do what should be done to Sirigutta," Garahadinna had a large ditch dug between his two houses, had eighty cart loads of cutch firewood brought there, filled the ditch with the firewood, burnt them to create embers of cutch wood and had them kept glowing the whole night. Over the ditch he had placed wooden planks covered with rough mats that were smeared with cow dung.

He also had the path made by placing fragile sticks on one side so that when monks tread and broke them, they would fall into the ditch of fire.

At the back of his residence, he placed large pots the way Sirigutta did. The seats were also arranged in the same way.

Early in the morning Sirigutta went to Garahadinna's residence and asked: "Friend, have you made your offerings ready?" "Yes, I have," answered Garahadinna. "Where are those offerings?" "Come, let us go and see," said Garahadinna and showed Sirigutta the way the latter had done before. "Excellent, friend!" said Sirigutta delightedly.

People had assembled. There usually was a large gathering of people whenever the Buddha was invited by a man of heretical views. Other heretics also came together, thinking and saying: "We are going to witness with our own eyes the downfall of the Monk Gotama." Those who possessed right beliefs also attended the assembly, hoping that "the Exalted One would deliver a great sermon today. We will have a chance to see the might and glory of the Exalted One."

Emergence of Big Lotus Flowers out of The Fire

The next day the Buddha went with five hundred monks to the gate of Garahadinna's residence. The householder came out and did obeisance with the fivefold prostration; standing and raising his joined hands, he said mentally (not by word of mouth):

"Venerable Sirs, it is said that You know the past and all, that You comprehend the analysis of the sixteen aspects of a living being's mental process. That is what your devotee Sirigutta told me. If that were true, do not enter my house. There is really no gruel, no food, nothing for you. In fact, I am going to harm you by making you all fall into the ditch of fire."

Expressing his intention mentally thus he took the alms bowl from the Buddha's hand. After saying: "Please come this way," he added: "Venerable Sir, you visitors to my place should have come here knowing etiquette." When the Buddha asked: "What should we do?" Garahadinna said: "You should, Sirs, enter the house one by one and it is only after the preceding one has sat down that the next one should follow." [This suggestion was made because if all went together other monks would see the one, who went ahead of them falling into the ditch. Seeing his fall nobody else would proceed. (Therefore) his idea was to destroy them by letting one after another fall into the fire.] Saying: "Very well, donor," the Buddha walked off alone. When Garahadinna came to the fire ditch, he stepped back and told the Buddha to go ahead. As soon as the Buddha stretched His leg over the ditch, the rough mats disappeared. Out of the fire emerged large lotus flowers each having the size of a chariot wheel or a cart wheel. The Buddha walked, stepping on to the centre of each lotus flower, and sat on the Buddha's seat placed there. The five hundred monks, too, walked on the centre of one flower to that of another and took their respective seats.

Garahadinna's Great Distress

On seeing the extraordinary, unprecedented phenomenon, Garahadinna's body emitted heat and vapour, like those from a hot pan of oil. He hurried to his friend Sirigutta and appealed, saying: "Friend Sirigutta, please be my refuge." "Why did you say so, friend?" asked Sirigutta. Garahadinna replied: "There was no gruel, no food, nothing, in my home for five hundred monks. What shall I do?" Sirigutta asked him bluntly: "What have you done, friend?" Garahadinna disclosed:

"Friend, (to speak frankly) I had a large fire ditch made between the two houses, my intention being to subdue the Buddha and his five hundred monks by sending them into the ditch. Yet, there emerged large lotus flowers out of the ditch. The Buddha and all the monks walked on the flowers and are sitting on the seats. What am I to do now?"

When he made his confession and asked for help, Sirigutta argued, saying: "But have you not personally shown me, saying: 'These many are large pots. This much is gruel, This much is rice, etc.?' " "Friend Sirigutta, what I have told you is utter false. The pots are empty, containing no gruel, no rice, nothing," Garahadinna confessed further. Then Sirigutta said (as he had unwavering faith in the Buddha's power and glory): "Be that as it may, friend. You only go home and see the gruel and other foods in your pots."

Unimaginability of The Buddha's Capacity

No sooner had Sirigutta said so, than the pots which were falsely claimed by Garahadinna to be full of gruel became full of gruel, the pots which were falsely claimed by him to be full of rice became full of rice and the same happened to the other pots. When he went home and was confronted with all the miraculous happenings, his whole body was filled with joy. His mind also became serene.

After serving respectfully the Buddha and His monks with food, Garahadinna wanted the Buddha to give a sermon in appreciation of the offerings so he took the alms-bowl from the Buddha who had finished His meal. Desirous of giving such a sermon, the Buddha said: "Because these beings have no eye of wisdom, they are ignorant of the attributes of My disciples and the attributes of My dispensation. Those who possess no eye of wisdom are known to be blind and those who possess it are known to have eye-sight." Then He spoke the following two verses:

(1) *Yatthā saṅkāra-dhānasmiṇ, ujjhitasmiṃ Mahāpathe
Padumamī, tattha jāyetha, sucigandham manoramam.*

(2) *Evaṃ saṅkārabhūtesu, andhabhūte puthujjane
Atirocati Paññāya sammāsbuddha-sāvako.*

- (1) Just as a lotus flower of a hundred petals, pure, fragrant and delightful to every beholder, originates and arises wonderfully in the garbage dump on the public road.
- (2) Even so among those who should be discarded like garbage, the Buddha's Disciple, a good and glorious person who has destroyed all his defilements, glows with splendour, surpassing by his wisdom all the worldlings who are like the blind as they lack wisdom.

By the end of the sermon, eighty-four thousand people realized the Four Truths and won liberation. The two friends, Garahadinna and Sirigutta attained *sotāpatti-phala*. Inspired by faith, both of them dedicated all their wealth to the cause of the Buddha's dispensation that was of eight wonders.

Relation of Khadirangara Jātaka

After giving an appreciative talk, the Buddha rose and returned to the monastery. At the assembly in the evening, the monks extolled the Master, saying:

“Wonderful indeed, friends, is the power of the Exalted One. A series of lotus flowers, each having the size of a chariot wheel or a cart wheel, arose out of the horrible cutch embers.”

The Buddha came to the assembly and asked: “Monks what are you talking about?” “We are talking about this sort of subject (with reference to your power),” answered the monks. Then the Buddha said:

“Monks, it is no wonder that out of the heap of embers arose lotus-flowers for me to walk on, for I have become Perfectly Self-Enlightened, Chief of the three worlds, Omniscient. The lotus flowers emerged on one occasion in the past, when as a Bodhisatta, I was intellectually immature.” Then at the request of the monks, the Buddha related in detail the Khadirāṅga Jātaka (of the Kulavaka Vagga of the **Ekaka Nipāta**).

(The Jātaka is to be found in the Buddha's Birth Stories. There the story is told in connection with the alms-giving of Anāthapiṇḍika. It is repeated with reference to Garahadinna.)

(The Garahadinna story here is reproduced from the same story contained in the Puppha Vagga of the **Dhammapada Commentary**.)

End of the story of Garahadinna.

Taming of Nandopananda, The Nāga King, by The Venerable Moggallāna

Once, after hearing the Buddha's Dhamma-talk, the merchant, Anāthapiṇḍika, invited the Buddha: “Exalted Buddha, please accept, together with five hundred monks, my alms food at my house tomorrow.” Having the Buddha's acceptance, the merchant returned home.

The Buddha accepted Anāthapiṇḍika's invitation and passed the rest of the remaining daytime and night-time. At dawn, when He surveyed the ten thousand universes, the divine Nāga King, Nandopananda, appeared within the view of His intellectual vision.

The Buddha reflected: “The Nāga King has appeared in my vision. Has he done any good works in the past?” and came to know that “the Nāga King, having no faith in the Triple Gem, holds wrong views.” Again, when He continued to reflect as to who should free the Nāga from the wrong views, He discerned the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna

At daybreak, the Buddha cleaned himself and addressed the Venerable Ānanda: “My dear Ānanda, tell the five hundred monks that I shall make a celestial journey to Tāvātimsa Deva Abode.”

Particularly, on that day, the divine *nāgas* were preparing for the Nāga King's feast and drunken orgy. Nandopananda was seated on a jewelled divine throne, and had the white divine umbrella held over his head. Surrounded by female dancers of three different categories of age, grown-up, young and those in between, and also by a host of *nāgas*, he was viewing divine food and drinks, etc., put in gold and silver vessels.

With the five hundred monks the Buddha travelled to Tāvātimsa, passing above the mansion of Nandopananda and thus making Himself visible to the latter.

Then an evil thought arose in the Nāga King: “These wicked shaven-headed monks go to Tāvātimsa and come out passing over our abode from one higher mansion to another. This time, however, we will not allow these monks to move on, who, while doing so scatter, dust over us.” With this evil intention, he rose from his jewelled seat, went to the foot of Mount Meru and after changing his original body, he coiled himself round the mountain in seven folds and concealed the celestial world of Tāvātimsa from sight by enveloping it with his hood that lay prone from above.

Then the Venerable Raṭṭhapāla asked the Buddha: “Glorious Buddha, formerly standing from here, we could see Mount Meru; we could see its surrounding seven mountains; we could see Tāvātimsa; we could see the Vejayanta palace; we could see Sakka's flag hoisted on the Vejayanta Palace. Glorious Buddha, now we could not see Mount Meru, the seven surrounding mountains, Tāvātimsa, the Vejayanta palace, Sakka's Flag, why?”

The Buddha replied: “My dear Raṭṭhapāla, this Nāga King Nandopananda is angry with

you all, and so after coiling his body round Mount Meru in seven folds, he has covered it with his hood and created darkness.” Thera Raṭṭhapāla then said to the Buddha: “Glorious Buddha, let me tame the Nāga King” but the Buddha rejected his request. Thereafter, the Theras Bhaddiya, Rāhula and all others, rose one after another in the wake of Thera Raṭṭhapāla and made their offer to tame the Nāga King. But the Buddha did not give them His permission. (The reason for the Buddha's rejection will soon be known.)

At last, the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna asked for the permission to tame the Nāga King and the Buddha granted it to him, saying; “Tame him, my dear Moggallāna.” Having obtained the Buddha's permission, Venerable Moggallāna changed his body into that of a great *nāga* and coiled his body fourteen folds round Nandopananda and covering Nandopananda's hood with his from above, he also pressed the latter against Mount Meru.

The Nāga King emitted powerful vapour. The Venerable emitted more powerful vapour, saying: “It is not that you alone have the vapour; I too have it.” The Nāga King's vapour could not hurt the Venerable but the Venerable's could hurt him.

Then the Nāga emitted blazing flames. Saying: “It is not that you alone have the flames, I too have them,” the Venerable emitted mightier flames. The flames emitted by the Nāga could not harm the Venerable but the Venerable's could harm the Naga.

The Nāga King, Nandopananda, perceived: “This man is crushing and pressing me against Mount Meru. He is also emitting vapour and blazing flames.” Then he asked the Venerable: “Who are you, Sir?” The Venerable replied: “Nanda, I am the Venerable Moggallāna.” “In that case please wear your ascetic garb. Then the Venerable discarded his Nāga form (and assumed his original ascetic form) and entered the Nāga's body by the right ear and came out by the left. Again he entered by the left ear and came out of the right.

Similarly, he entered the Nāga by the right nostril and came out by the left and entered by the left nostril and came out by the right.

Then Nandopananda opened his mouth for the Venerable who went inside him and walked from east to west and vice versa. The Buddha warned the Venerable, saying:

“My dear son Moggallāna, be very careful. The Nāga King is of great power.”

The Venerable replied:

“I have successfully developed the four bases of psychic powers (*iddhipāda*) through the five kinds of mastery (*vasībhāva*). I can subjugate hundreds of thousands of divine *nāgas* of Nandopananda's type, let alone his single self, Glorious Buddha.”

The Nāga King thought: “I have let the Venerable enter my body through my mouth. Be that as it may. When he comes out now I will keep him between my fangs, and eat him, biting him to pieces.” So he said: “Come out Sir, do not torment me by pacing in my belly.” The Venerable came out and stood outside. As soon as he saw the Venerable, the Nāga King, perceiving: “So this is Moggallāna,” snored fiercely. The Venerable entered upon the fourth *jhāna* and defended himself against the Nāga's nasal wind, so the wind could not stir even his body-hair.

(Note. Other monks might have the power to perform miracles from the beginning but when the snoring took place, they would not be able to engage in *jhāna* as rapidly as those who were of instant consciousness concerning supernatural powers (*khippa-nisanti*) like the Venerable Moggallāna. That was why no permission was given by the Buddha to the other monks to tame the Nāga King.)

Then the Nāga King, Nandopananda, noted: “I was not able to stir even the body-hair in a pore of the monk's skin by snorting. This monk is very powerful indeed.” and tried to escape. The Venerable, having changed his natural shape into that of a garuḷa, pursued the Nāga with the speed of that bird. Being unable to escape, the Nāga turned himself into a young man and fell in salutation at the feet of the Venerable, saying: “Venerable Sir, in you I take refuge.”

The Venerable Mahā Moggallāna said: “Nanda, the Exalted One is coming. Come, let us go [to him].” Having tamed the Nāga and freed him from the poison of conceit, the Venerable took him to the Master. The Nāga paid his respect to the Buddha and solemnly declared himself a follower. “Venerable Sir, I take refuge in you.” The Buddha gave His blessings, saying: “May you be happy both physically and mentally,” and then accompanied by the monks, the Buddha went to the house of the merchant Anāthapiṇḍika.

The merchant asked the Buddha: “Why did you come when the day was in far advanced?” The Buddha said: “There had been a terrible battle of life and death fought between Moggallāna and the Nāga King Nandopananda. (That was why I came late).” The wealthy merchant asked: “Who won the battle and who lost it, Exalted Buddha?” “The victory belonged to Moggallāna and the defeat to Nanda.”

Anāthapiṇḍika was so joyous and elated that he said: “Venerable Sir, may the Exalted Buddha and the monks receive my offering of meal every day for seven days. I will honour the Venerable for seven days.” Then the merchant celebrated the victory of the Venerable by honouring the five hundred monks, headed by the Buddha, for a week.

This account of Venerable Mahā Moggallāna's taming of Nandopananda, the Nāga King, was taken from the Iddhi Niddesa of the **Visuddhi Magga** Vol. II and also from the exposition of the Mahā Moggallāna Thera Gāthā, **Thera Gāthā Commentary**, Vol II.

Taming of Baka Brahmā

(The account of the taming of Baka Brahmā by the Buddha occurs in the Baka Jātaka of the **Sattaka Nipāta** and the Kesava Jātaka of the **Catukka Nipāta** Text and its Commentary, and also in the Commentary of the Baka Brahmā Sutta of the **Saṃyutta Nikāya** as the Commentary of the Brahma-nimantanika Sutta of the **Mūla-paññāsa** covers the Jātaka accounts and the expositions of the **Saṃyutta Commentary**, the following is based on the Brahmā-nimantanika Sutta Text and its Commentary of the **Mūla Paññāsa**.)

Once, while dwelling at Jetavana in the noble city of Sāvatti, the Buddha called the monks and said:

“Monks, on one occasion, I was living at the foot of a large sal tree in the Subhaga grove near the town of Ukkatṭha. Then arose, monks, the following thought in Baka Brahmā:

‘The world of Brahmās together with this body is permanent, firm, stable, unique and subject to no change. In this Brahmā-world, there is no one who is conceived, who grows old, who dies, who falls, who is reborn (by way of conception). There is no liberation higher than the Brahmā-world together with this body.’

“Such is the very strong but wrong view of eternalism (*sassata micchā-diṭṭhi*) that arose in Baka Brahmā.”

(**Note.** Baka Brahmā, who held this view, rejected the existence of the higher transcendent states of the second and third *jhāna* Brahmā planes, the fourth *jhāna* Brahmā plane (with the four (*arūpa*) states) and the Path, Fruition and Nibbāna, for he belonged to the first *jhāna* plane).

“Monks, knowing his thought with (My) mind, I disappeared then from the foot of the sal tree in the Subhaga grove, near Ukkatṭha and appeared in the (first *jhāna*) Brahmā abode, just as a strong man stretches his bent arm and bends his stretched out arm. When Baka Brahmā saw, from afar, My approaching to him, monks, he said:

‘Sir, please come. Sir, you are welcome. Sir, you visit this Brahmā abode after a long time. Sir, the Brahmā-world, together with this body, is permanent, firm, stable, unique and subject to no change. In this Brahmā-world, there is no one who is conceived, who grows old, who dies, who falls, who is reborn (by way of conception). There is no liberation higher than the Brahmā-world together with this body.’

“Monks, when Baka Brahmā spoke thus, I said:

‘Friends, Baka Brahmā is foolish indeed! Friends, Baka Brahmā is foolish indeed! He speaks of what is not permanent as permanent, what is not firm, not stable, not unique and subject to change as firm, stable, unique and subject to no change. He says that in this Brahmā-world there is no one who is conceived, who grows old, who dies, who falls, who is reborn (by way of conception) though in this Brahmā-world there are those who are conceived, who are born, who die, who fall, who are reborn (by way of conception). He says that there is no liberation higher than the Brahmā-world together with his body though there clearly are higher forms of liberation in terms of other *jhānas* and Brahmā-worlds such as the second, third, fourth *jhāna* Brahmā-worlds and the Path, Fruition and Nibbāna.

Possession of An Attendant Brahmā by Māra

“Monks, Māra the Evil One then possessed a young Brahmā attendant (*Brahmā-pārisajja*) and rebuked Me thus:

‘Monk, do not criticize this Baka Brahmā. Monk, do not criticize this Baka Brahmā. He is great. He is dominant. He is indomitable. Surely, he sees all. He holds sway over all living beings. He rules the world. He creates the world. He is the Lord of the world. He determines a living being’s destiny (declaring: ‘You shall be a king, you shall be a brahmin, you shall be a merchant, you shall be a farmer, you shall be a labourer, you shall be a human, you shall be a monk, (at least) you shall be a camel or you shall be an ox’). He is accomplished in *jhāna*. He is the father of beings that have arisen and beings that are arising.’ ”

(**Note.** Of the expressions “beings that have arisen” and “beings that are arising”, the latter means “beings originating in the eggs or in the wombs”. From the time they come out from the eggs or the wombs they are known as “beings that have arisen”.

(In the case of beings originating in moisture (*samsedaja*), they are called “beings that are arising” at the moment of their rebirth-consciousness, and after that moment they are “beings that have arisen”.

(As for the spontaneous (*upapatti*) beings they are called “beings that are arising” at the moment of their first bodily posture and after that they are “beings that have arisen”).

“Monk!, in this world, those *samaṇa* and *brāhmanas* before you, who (like you) condemned and abhorred the earth-element, the water-element, the fire-element, the wind-element (as *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*) and who (like you) condemned and abhorred the living beings, devas, *māras* and Brahmās, (as *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*) they all landed in the lower worlds (of woes) after the dissolution of their bodies at death.

“Monk, in this world, those *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* before you, who admired and cherished the earth-element, the water-element, the fire-element, the wind-element (as permanent, firm, stable, imperishable, unbreakable and inexhaustible) and who admired and cherished the living beings, devas, *māras* and Brahmās (as firm, stable, imperishable, unbreakable and inexhaustible) they all landed in the sublime (Brahmā) world after the dissolution of their bodies at death.

“Therefore I say unto you, Monk, I want to urge you to follow the Brahmā’s teaching. Do not go against his teaching. Monk, if you go against his teaching, you will be like a man who beats and drives away with a six-foot long stick, the glory that has come right to you or like a man who falls over a cliff and does not land on the supporting ground by not coming into contact with it by his hands and legs. This example will do for you. I therefore want to urge you to follow the Brahmā’s teaching. Do not contradict it. Monk, you see the Brahmās who have assembled, do you not?”

“Thus, Monks, Māra the Evil One aimed his speech at Me and tried to make Me a member of Baka Brahmā’s assembly.”

(Herein it may be asked: “How did Māra see the Buddha?” While staying in his

mansion, Māra enquired frequently: "In which village or market town is the Buddha staying now?" When he enquired on this particular occasion, he came to know that the Buddha was staying in the Subhaga grove near Ukkatṭha. When he tried to see where the Buddha had gone, he saw that the Buddha had gone to the Brahmā-world. So he thought: "I will go and make Him give up His desire to preach there before He cause the Brahmās to get out of my dominion." So he followed the Buddha vigilantly and stood anonymously among the Brahmās. Knowing that the Buddha had rebuked Baka Brahmā, he emerged as a supporter of the Brahmā.

(Māra could not possess Mahā Brahmā and Brahmā-purohita Brahmās. He therefore possessed the young Brahmā attendant.)

"Monk, when the evil Māra spoke thus (through the Brahmā attendant), I refuted him as follows:

'You evil Māra! I know you. Do not think that 'the Monk Gotama does not know me.' You evil One, you are Māra. You evil Māra, the Mahā Brahmā, the assembly of Brahmās, the Brahmā-attendants they all fall into your hand; they are all under your sway. You evil Māra, you are wrong in believing thus: 'This monk too may fall into my hand. This monk too may come under my sway.' In reality, I do not fall into your hand. I do not go under your sway.'

"Monks, when I have thus spoken to Māra, Baka Brahmā said to me:

'Venerable Sir, I speak of what is permanent as permanent. I speak of what is firm, stable, unique and imperishable as firm, stable; unique and imperishable. I say that in the Brahmā-world there is no one who is conceived, who grows old, who dies, who falls off, who is reborn, because in the Brahmā-world there is no one who is conceived, who is old, who dies, who falls off, who is reborn. I say that there is no liberation better than the Brahmā-world with this body because there is no liberation higher than the Brahmā-world together with this body.'

'Monk, in this world, the practice of those *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* before you was as old as your age. They might have known what my is liberation higher (than the Brahmā-world with this body) as the liberation higher (than the Brahmā-world with this body). They might have known the liberation no higher (than the Brahmā-world with this body) as the liberation that is no higher (than the Brahmā-world with this body).

'Monk, therefore I say to you this (I assert as follows): You will not find any other liberation higher (than the Brahmā-world with this body). If you search for it, this will mean only trouble and suffering for you.

'Monk, if you cling to the earth element, you will live near me, you will live in my place, you will be my subordinate. If you cling to the water element, the fire element, the wind element, the living beings, devas, *māras* and Brahmās, you will live near me, you will live in my place, you will be my subordinate.'

(The Buddha replied:)

'Brahmā, I too know this: If I cling to the earth element, I will live near you, I will live in your place, I will be your subordinate. So will I and so will I be if I cling to the water element, the fire element, the wind element, the living beings, devas, *māras* and Brahmās. I know all this!

'Brahmā, in fact, I know that you are of such great power, of such might, of such great fame and retinue. I know your ability, too.'

Then Baka Brahmā asked the Buddha:

'Venerable Sir, how do you know that I am of such great power, of such great might, of such great fame and retinue? How do you know my ability too?'

Then the Buddha answered:

'Your authority lies in a thousand universes, in each universe, the sun and the

moon move about and shine in all directions. (Meaning: a vast circular area in which the sun and the moon wander, illuminating all over the directions, is called a *Lokadhātu*, “World Element”, or *Cakka-vāla*, “Spherical Universe”.) All over these universes, numbering one thousand, spread your (Brahmā’s) authority.)

‘You, Baka Brahmā, know high and low beings, covetous and uncovetous beings, this and the remaining (999) universes, the rebirth and death of beings in these universes.

‘Baka Brahmā, I know that you are of such great power, of such great might, of such great renown and fame. I know your ability too.’ (The Buddha’s words have not come to an end yet. A note may, however, be inserted here.)

(By saying so, the Buddha tried to subdue the Brahmā. What he meant to say was this: “Baka Brahmā, your authority spreads only within one thousand universes. Yet you think highly of yourself, ‘I am a great Brahmā.’ You are only a *Sahasī-brahmā*, i.e. a Brahmā who can see just a thousand universes. There are other Brahmās who are superior to you such as *Dvisahasī-brahmās*, those who can see two thousand universes, who can see three thousand, four thousand, five thousand, ten thousand universes and *Satasahasī-brahmās*, those who can see a hundred thousand universes and they are countless. And yet, like a man who tries to compare his piece of cloth, which is only four cubit long, with another piece of cloth that is far greater in length. (Commentarial simile), like a man who desires to immerse himself in the water which is only ankle-deep. (Sub-commentarial simile) or like a small frog which thinks that the water in a bullock’s foot-print is a deep pool (simile used by the wise), you have a high opinion of yourself, thinking, ‘I am a great Brahmā’ ”)

‘Baka Brahmā, there is still another world indeed apart from this world of the first *jhāna*. You neither know nor see it. But I know and see it. Baka Brahmā, there is still another world known as the *Ābhassara*-world. Falling from that *Ābhassara*-world, you have landed in this world of the first *jhāna*. Because you have lived (in this world of the first *jhāna*) you have lost your memory. Therefore you neither know nor see that (*Ābhassara*-world). But I know and see it. Baka Brahmā, because I know (the *Ābhassara*-world which is unknown to you) you are not equal to Me in intellect. Why should I be inferior to you? In fact, I am superior to you intellectually.’ (1) (the Buddha speech has not come to an end yet. Another note may, however, be inserted here.)

(Baka Brahmā had fallen from the higher worlds and landed in the lower world. **Elaboration:** In a past *kappa*, devoid of appearance of a Buddha, Baka Brahmā became an ascetic and practised *kaṣiṇa* meditation as a prelude to attainment of *jhānas*. When he passed away, without any slip of the *jhāna*, he was reborn in the Vehapphala Brahmā-world of the fourth *jhāna*, which is of a long life span, five hundred *kappas*. Having lived the full life-span there, he desired for rebirth in a lower world and developed the *rūpa-vacara*, third *jhāna* of a high standard. (When he passed away from that Vehapphala-world, he landed in the Subhakiṇha Brahmā-world of the third *jhāna* which is of the life span of 64 *mahā-kappas*.)

(N.B. If a man commits a number of *anantariya* (immediately resultant) deeds, such as matricide, etc., only the severest and heaviest one of them bring about rebirth in the Mahā-Avīci state of long suffering; others do not bring about it but contribute to its occurrence. Similarly of the four *rūpa-jhānas* developed, only the specially developed one with the four dominant (*adhipati*) factors brings about rebirth in the *rūpa-vacara* plane and the remaining *rūpa-jhānas* do not result in that rebirth as they themselves have no chance to do so; they merely facilitate the sustenance of that rebirth for its full life span. (From the **Tika**.)

(Having existed in that Subhakinha Brahmā Abode for the full life span of 64 *mahā-kappas*, Baka Brahmā developed in the previous manner the *rūpa-vacara* second *jhāna* of the higher standard and (when he fell from Subhakinha) he landed in the Abhassara Brahmā Abode which is the second *jhāna* plane lasting for eight *mahā-kappas*. Having

existed there for the full life span of eight *mahā-kappas*, he developed, in the previous manner, the *rūpa-vacara* first *jhāna* of the higher standard and (when he fell from Ābhassara) he landed in the Mahā-Brahmā Abode, which is the first *jhāna* plane, lasting for 64 *mahā-kappas* in terms of *antara* kind or just one *kappa* in terms of *asaṅkhyeyya*.

(In his present Mahā Brahmā Abode, however Baka-Brahmā remembered in the earlier part of his life, his performance of wholesome *jhāna* and the former abode where he had existed. When he had been there for too long, he forgot even those two things and wrongly took to himself the false Eternalism. That was why the Buddha said to Baka Brahmā: “You have lost your memory. Therefore you neither know nor see that (Ābhassara) World”, and so on.)

The Past Story of Baka Brahmā

When the Buddha spoke thus, Baka Brahmā thought: “The Monk Gotama knows the life span of my previous lives, the worlds of my previous rebirths and the good deeds of *jhāna* that I had practised before, I will ask him now about my good deeds in the past.” In response to his question, the Buddha told him about his good deeds.

Elaboration: This Baka Brahmā, in one of his former births, was a son of a good family. Seeing the ills of sense desires he decided: “I will put an end to birth, old age, sickness and death.” Thereafter, he renounced the world and became an ascetic, developing mundane *jhānas*. Having accomplished the *jhānas*, the foundation of psychic powers, he built a small leaf-hut near the Gaṅgā and spent his time in enjoying the bliss of *jhāna*.

While he was staying thus, a caravan of five hundred carts carrying merchants, crossed a desert frequently. When they crossed the desert by night the bullocks that were harnessed at the foremost cart lost their way and turned back, thus coming back to the former track that they had taken. The other carts too similarly came back to the former track and this was known to the merchants only at dawn. For the merchants, it was the day they must have passed through the desert. All their fire wood and water had run out. Therefore, thinking that “we are now to lose our lives” the people unyoked their bullocks from the carts, tied them to the wheels and went to sleep in the shade of the rear part the carts.

The *jhāna*-accomplished ascetic, the future Baka Brahmā, got out of the leaf-hut early in the morning. While sitting at the hut-door, he had a look at the Gaṅgā and saw a great flood overwhelming the whole Gaṅgā as though a huge green stone was rolling down. When he thought: “Are there in this world any beings that are wearied for lack of such sweet water?” he saw the caravan of those merchants suffering in the sandy desert. Wishing them survival, he resolved through psychic powers, “May a great volume of water from the Gaṅgā flow towards the merchants in the caravan.”

As soon as his consciousness of psychic powers occurred, a great volume of water flowed into the desert as though into a drain. The merchants got up because of the sound of the water. On seeing the water they were overjoyed. They bathed, they drank, and they let the cattle drink and they finally arrived at their destination.

In order to point out this past good deed of Baka Brahmā, the Buddha spoke this verse:

(1) *Yam tvaṃ apāyesi bahū manusse
pipāsīte ghammani sambarete.
Taṃ te purāṇaṃ vatasīlavattaṃ
suttapabbuddho’va anussarāmi*

(O Brahmā by the name of Baka! In the past, when you were a *jhāna*-accomplished ascetic) you caused, by your psychic powers, those thirsty people, who were tortured by the sun in the desert, of a caravan to have water to drink and to bath. Like a man waking up, I recollect again and again, by My power of remembering former lives (*pubbenivāsānussati-ñāṇa*), your morality practised in the past.

At a later time, the ascetic, built a leaf-hut on the bank of the Gaṅgā and lived there depending upon a small village for food. Then robbers beat the villagers and robbed them

of gold and silver and took with them cattle and people as hostages. The cries of the people and the animals created loud noises. On hearing the noises, the ascetic thought what it was all about. Knowing that some danger has befallen the villagers, he made a wish: “May these beings not perish while I am seeing them.” Then he engaged himself in *jhāna*, the foundation of his psychic powers. Arising from that *jhāna*, he created a large army of four divisions (elephants, horses, chariots, and foot-soldiers) that marched (arrow-) shooting, (trumpet-) blowing, (drum-) beating and (threat-) shouting.

Seeing the great army, the robbers thought that it was the marching of the king, they discarded all their looted properties and fled. The ascetic resolved: “May the properties go back to their respective owners,” and this happened in accord with the ascetic's resolve. The people are thus overjoyed.

In order to point out also this past good deed of Baka Brahmā, the Buddha spoke this verse:

(2) *Yam enikulasmim janam gahitam
amocayī gayhaka niyamanam.
Tam te purāṇam vatasīlavattam
suttappabuddho'va anussarāmi.*

(O Brahmā by the name of Baka! In the past when you were a *jhāna* accomplished ascetic) on the bank of the Gaṅgā which was also named Enikula because there were many herds of *eṇī* deer, you caused the villagers, who were taken as hostages and whose properties robbed by the robbers, to escape from the robbers' hands by your creation of an army of four divisions. Like a man waking up, I recollect again and again, by My power of remembering former lives, your morality practised in the past.

Again at a later time, a family living in the upper part of the Gaṅgā and another family living in the lower part held a wedding ceremony, one party giving the bride to the other and making friends together. They joined their boats, forming them like a raft which carried many kinds of food, unguent, flowers, etc, and which floated by the currents of the Gaṅgā waters. The people on the boats had a great feast, dancing and singing. They revelled as though they were moving in a celestial flying mansion.

Then the Nāga King, ruler and resident of the Gaṅgā, saw the people and became angry, thinking: “These people have no regard for me as they are not aware that their riotous merry making would annoy me the Nāga King of the Gaṅgā. Now I shall make them float into the ocean.” So thinking he assumed an enormous body and split the water into two halves between which he emerged all of a sudden. With his vast hood raised, he made a great hissing sound and stayed there as though he were to bite the people and put them to death.

On seeing the Nāga King, the people became frightened and cried loudly and feverishly. While sitting in the leaf-hut the ascetic heard the cries, he thought: “Earlier these people were very happy, dancing and singing. Now they are making sounds of fear and grief. What is the matter?” Then he saw the Nāga King and desired for the people's safety: “May they not perish while I am seeing them.” So he engaged himself in a *jhāna*, the foundation of his psychic powers, and after assuming the guise of a *garuda* bird, he was poised to snatch away the Nāga King.

Fearing, the Nāga King withdrew his hood and immersed himself in the water. All the people were thus saved.

In order to point out as this part of good deed of Baka Brahmā, the Buddha spoke this verse:

(3) *Gaṅgāya sotasmim gahita nāvaṃ
luddena nāgena manussakappā
Amocayittha balasā pasayha*

*Taṃ te purāṇaṃ vatasīlavattaṃ
suttappabuddho'va anussarāmi.*

(O Brahmā by the name of Baka! In the past when you were a ascetic) you saved the people of the two villages, who were to be destroyed by the fierce Nāga King in the water currents of the Gaṅgā, by your psychic powers known as *vikubbaniddhi* and you thus set them free from the threat of the Nāga King. Like a man waking up, I recollect again and again by my power of remembering former lives, your morality practised in the past.

Still at a later time, Baka Brahmā was a noble ascetic known in Kesava. At that time our Bodhisatta was a youthful ascetic by the name of Kappa. Constantly staying near the ascetic Kesava and serving him as a residential pupil (*antevasika*); who was always obedient, thinking to do only what was pleasing to his master, who was intelligent and who practised what was beneficial. The ascetic Kesava was unable to move about, to remain still, to eat or drink without the help of his close pupil, the young ascetic Kappa. At one time, he was looked after by the King of Varanasi but he left the King and lived by depending on his own pupil, Kappa the ascetic. (*The story in detail may be read in the Kesava Jātaka of the Catukka Nipata.*)

In order to point out also this past good deed of Baka Brahmā, the Buddha spoke this verse:

(4) *Kappo ca te baddhacaro ahosi
sambuddhimantaṃ vatiṇaṃ amaññīti.
Taṃ te purāṇaṃ vatasīlavattaṃ
suttappabuddho'va annusarāmi.*

(O Brahmā by the name of Baka! In one of the past existences) I, the Buddha, was a virtuous ascetic, Kappa by name, who, as your residential pupil, served you, a virtuous ascetic, Kesava by name. (At that time) you fondly spoke in praise of me, that I was good, intelligent and that I had practised morality adequately. Like a man waking up, I recollect again and again by My power remembering former lives, your morality practised in the past.

In this way the Buddha talked to Baka Brahmā, pointing out the latter's good deeds done in his various past existences. While the Buddha was thus talking, Baka Brahmā recollected his past lives. All his past deeds gradually manifested to him as though different objects become clear when a thousand oil lamps are lighted. He was so pleased, having a faithful heart, he spoke the following verse:

*Addhā pajānāsi mam'etam āyuraṃ
aññaṃ pi jānāsi tathā hi Buddho.
Tathā hi tyāyaṃ jalitānubhāvo
obhāsayaṃ tiṭṭhati Brahmaloḷaṃ.*

(Exalted One, who has done away with all suffering!) Certainly, you know my past lives. You also know all *neyya-dhamma*, things worth-knowing (apart from my lives). You are therefore an Omniscient Buddha. This bright body-light of yours exist, illuminating the whole Brahmā Abode, outshining the light of hundreds and thousands of suns and moons.

Having related as a parenthesis to the past events of Baka Brahmā at his request, the Buddha came back to his original topic, speaking thus:

“Baka Brahmā, there are still the Subhakinha Abode, Vehappala Abode, and Abhibhū Abode. You neither know nor see them. I know and see them. I know (what you do not) you are not equal to me intellectually. How can I be inferior to you? In fact, I am superior to you intellectually.”

Then in order to prove a step further that Baka Brahmā was not His intellectual equal and

that He Himself was superior to Baka Brahmā intellectually, the Buddha continued his speech as follows:

“Baka Brahmā, with extraordinary intellect I know the earth element that it is by nature *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*. I know Nibbāna, that is inaccessible to the earth elements by its nature; and I do not cling to the earth element (with craving (*taṇhā*), conceit (*māna*) and wrong view (*diṭṭhi*)). I do not cling to it, as something in which *attā*, etc., lie, or something from which *attā*, etc., emerge, I do not cling to it as I, mine, or my *attā*. Baka Brahmā, as I know (Nibbāna that is unknown to you), you are not equal to Me intellectually. How can I be inferior to you? In fact, I am superior to you intellectually.

“Baka Brahmā, with extraordinary intellect, I know the water element, ... the fire element, ... the wind element, ... the sentient beings, ... the devas *māras*, ... Brahmās, ... Ābhassara Brahmās.... Subhakiṇhā Brahmās, ... Vechapphala Brahmās, ... Abhibhu Brahmās, with extraordinary intellect. I know all (individuality pertaining to the three planes of existence (*tebhūmaka*) that is by nature *anicca*, *dukkha*, and *anatta*. I know Nibbāna, that is inaccessible to all individuality by all its nature and I do not cling to all individuality with craving, conceit and wrong view. I do not cling to it, as something in which *attā*, etc., lie or, as something from which *attā* etc, emerge. I do not cling to all (individuality pertaining to the three planes of existences) as I, mine, or my *attā*. Baka Brahmā, as I know Nibbāna that is unknown to you, you are not equal to me intellectually. How can I be inferior to you? In fact, I am superior to you intellectually.”

(Then Baka Brahmā, wishing to charge the Buddha with falsehood, said:)

“Venerable Sir, if what is inaccessible to all by all its nature, Your claim that You know what is inaccessible would come to nothing. Do not let it come to nothing. Your statement would become empty. Do not let it become empty.

(Herein some clarification will be made so that the virtuous readers of the Chronicle may not be confused.

(The English word ‘all’ and the Pāli ‘*Sabba*’ are of the same meaning. The word ‘*sabba*’ or ‘all’ is used in the sense of ‘all mundane things’ (‘all that is of individuality’, *sakkāya*. The complete terminology is ‘*sakkaya-sabba*’ or ‘all individuality’. It is this ‘*sakkāya-sabba*’, ‘all individuality’, that is referred to in the Ādittapariyāya Sutta where ‘*Sabbam bhikkhave ādittam*’ occurs.

(The Pāli sentence means ‘All things, monks, are burnt by fire such as *rāga*, etc. It cannot be said that supramundane things are burnt by fire, for unwholesome things, such as *rāga*, *dosa*, *moha*, etc., are absolutely incapable of taking the supramundane things as their target. They are capable of doing so only in the case of mundane things, individuality (*sakkaya*) or the factors of clinging to existence (*upādānakkhandhā*). Hence the burning of mundane things by the fire of *raga*, etc. Therefore what is supramundane is to be excluded from ‘*sabbam*’, ‘all’, whereas what is mundane is to be included therein. Therefore by the word ‘*sabba*’ of the Ādittapariyāya Sutta is meant ‘*sakkāya-sabba*’ or ‘all individuality’.

(With reference to the term ‘*Sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*’ or ‘All embracing Knowledge’ (or Omniscience), its component ‘*sabba*’ means all both mundane and supramundane, for the Buddha knows the whole range of things, mundane as well as supramundane. Therefore, the word ‘*sabba*’ of *Sabbaññutā-ñāṇa* means *sabba-sabba*, ‘all this all that’.

(By this much the virtuous readers of this Chronicle might have understood that in the field of Dhamma literature the use of the *sabba*, ‘all’ is of two kinds: (1) the use of it in the sense of *sakkāya-sabba*, ‘all individuality’, or ‘all mundane things’, and (2) the use of it in the sense of *sabba-sabba*, ‘all this and all that’ with mundane or supramundane designations. Let us examine now the use of *sabba* by the Buddha and Baka Brahmā.

(When the Buddha asserted that he was intellectually superior to Baka Brahmā, He presented 13 points as follows:

(1) I know the earth element (and you know it too), I know Nibbāna which is inaccessible to the earth element (but you do not). (2) I know the water element (and you know it too), I know Nibbāna which is inaccessible to the water element (but you do not); (In this way the Buddha went on with regard to:) (3) the fire element; (4) the wind element; (5) the sentient beings; (6) devas; (7) *māras*; (8) Brahmas; (9) Abhassara Brahmas; (10) Subhakinha Brahmas; (11) Vehapphala Brahmas; (12) Abhibhū Brahmas (Assaṇṇasatta Brahmas); (13) I know all (*sakkāya-sabba*) (and you know it too); I know Nibbāna which is inaccessible to all (but you do not).

(With regard to the first 12 points, Baka saw no reason to blame the Buddha. As regards the last point, however, he saw something to accuse the Buddha of.

When the Buddha said: “I know all (*sakkāya-sabba*) and I know Nibbāna which is inaccessible to all (*sakkāya-sabba*),” He said so as a puzzle. What He meant to say by this was: “Baka Brahmā, I know all (*sakkāya* = mundane things) by My extra-ordinary intellect that they are, by nature, *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*. Having known this, I also know Nibbāna by My extra-ordinary Vipassanā Insight, which cannot be attained by all. (*sakkāya* = mundane things).” (In that speech the statement reading “I know all by all their nature” means “I know by Vipassanā Insight all individuality pertaining to the three planes of existence, and five aggregates of mundane things in their nature of *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*.” Here the Buddha said: “(I know) all by all their nature” with reference to *sakkāya-sabba*. “(I know Nibbāna) which is inaccessible to all by all nature” means “I know Nibbāna with the Path Knowledge, realizing that it is inaccessible to all individuality and the five aggregates of mundane things in their nature of being conditioned (*saṅkhata*). (Such conditioned material things as the earth element, the wind element, etc. have the nature of hardness, cohesiveness, etc. which are also conditioned, such conditioned mental things as contact, sensation, etc., have the nature of the tangibility, feeling, etc., which are also conditioned — all these conditioned things are absent in Nibbāna which is unconditioned. Only the nature of *santi* or Peace, as opposed to conditioned things is present in unconditioned Nibbāna. This was in view when it was said that Nibbāna which is inaccessible to the earth element. Nibbāna which is inaccessible to the water element, ... Nibbāna which is inaccessible to all individuality.”)

By this much, virtuous readers of the Chronicle must have understood that what the Buddha meant was as follows:

“I know thoroughly all *sakkāya* or the five aggregates of mundane things (and you know them too). I also know Nibbāna which cannot be reached by all individuality (but you do not), and that the word ‘all’ in that speech implies the five aggregates of mundane things and that Nibbāna is something which cannot be attained by all.

But as a fault-finding ideologue, Baka Brahmā took, but wrongly, that by ‘all’ was meant *sabba-sabba*, ‘each and every thing mundane or supramundane and designated,’ (for he was totally ignorant of the fact that here *sakkāya-sabba* was referred to in the Buddha’s speech). This led him to his criticism of the Buddha:

“Venerable Sir, if the Dhamma is inaccessible to all other thing by all nature, your saying that you know that is inaccessible would come to nothing. Do not let it come to nothing. Your statement would become empty. Do not let it become empty.”

The gist of Baka Brahmā’s criticism was as follows:

- (1) In your speech, Venerable Sir, you claim your knowledge of all, and
 - (2) your knowledge of the Dhamma that is inaccessible to all.
- (1) The word ‘all’ of the first statement covers all things. So there can be nothing which is inaccessible to all things. And yet the Buddha insists on His knowledge of what is mentioned in the second statement. His insistence, therefore, will be reduced to nonsense like ‘the flower of the sky’, ‘the horn of a rabbit’, ‘the hair of a turtle’, and ‘the blood of a crab’.
 - (2) If what is inaccessible is semantically exclusive of the word ‘all’ of the first

statement, His assertion there cannot be true, for the things known to Him are not complete. It will be a lie then.

In this way did Baka Brahmā want to accuse the Buddha of false speech. (In short, the Buddha spoke of *sakkāya-sabba*, all that is mundane. Baka Brahmā mistook it for *sabba-sabba*, all that is either mundane or supramundane. Hence his accusation against the Buddha was unjust.)

Being a supreme ideologue, a hundred times, a thousand times, nay, a hundred thousand times greater than Baka Brahmā, the Buddha would still proclaim His knowledge of all and of Nibbāna that is inaccessible to all for the Brahmā to listen to, and in order to refute the Brahmā's charge of falsehood, He went on to say thus:

“Baka Brahmā, there is Nibbāna-Dhamma which is particularly higher than all conditioned things, which is to be known through the Path-knowledge, Fruition-knowledge, reflective knowledge which is invisible to the naked eye or which has no resemblance that can be shown as its representative, which is completely devoid of arising-and-passing nature, which is brighter than all other dhammas or which never knows darkness but ever remains brilliant.”(By these words the Buddha boldly affirmed the real existence of Nibbāna that is beyond all individuality on the three planes of existence.).

“That Nibbāna-Dhamma (1) cannot be reached by the earth element through the nature of earth; (2) cannot be reached by the water element through the nature of earth; (3) ... by the fire element (4) ... by the wind element ...; (5) ... by the sentient beings through their nature; (6)... by devas ...; (7) ... by *māras* ...; (8)... by Brahmās...;(9)... by *Abhassara* Brahmās, (10) by *Subhakiṇha* Brahmās; (11) ... by *Vehapphala* Brahmās; (12) cannot be reached by *Abhibhu* Brahmās through their nature; cannot be reached by all (*sakkāya-dhamma*) through the nature of them all (*sakkāya*). (By these words the Buddha made clear that He spoke of ‘all’, too).

“In this way there is the aggregate of all *sakkāya-dhammas* of the three planes of existence which is within the range of knowledge that belongs to persons like you. By that aggregate of *sakkāya-dhammas* of the three planes of existence through the nature of them all, Nibbāna-Dhamma (with the aforesaid four attributes) cannot be reached.

Thus the Buddha firmly asserted his doctrine.

Miracle Contest between the Buddha and Baka Brahmā.

Every aspect of his belief in the eternity of the Brahmā-world together with the body having been criticized and repudiated, Baka Brahmā was at a lost for words. In order to cover his defeat, he gave up arguing for his belief and decided to show his superiority by performing miracles. So he said:

“Venerable Sir, if that is the case, I will now vanish in your presence. I am going to perform the sort of miracle so that I become invisible to you. You just watch me.”

The Buddha said:

“Baka Brahmā, (you are not able to do so). If you indeed have such a power, then vanish now before me.”

Brahmās have two kinds of body: natural body and artificial or created body. The natural body which originates at the time of birth is so subtle that it cannot be seen by other Brahmās. So to make it visible, they take the form of created gross body.

Therefore when Baka Brahmā received the consent, he bent his mind on changing his created gross body into the natural, subtle body. The Buddha knew his intention and resolved that his body should remain unchanged in its gross form. So Baka Brahmā could not change his body into its natural, subtle form and there was no vanishing of his body.

Unable to change his body, the Baka Brahmā again tried to create darkness that might envelope his present body. But by means of His supernormal power, the Buddha dispelled

the darkness created by the Brahmā. So Baka was unable to hide himself.

Being unable to hide by changing his body or by creating darkness, Baka Brahmā desperately entered his mansion and hid there. He hid under the wish-fulfilling tree. He squatted furtively. Then hosts of Brahmās burst into laughter and jeered, saying: “This Baka Brahmā is now hiding in the mansion. Now he is hiding under the wish-fulfilling tree squatting furtively. O, Baka Brahmā what a pity that you think you have hidden yourself.” Being thus jeered at by other Brahmās, Baka Brahmā wore a displeased face. Hence it is said in brief in the Text.

“Monks, though Baka Brahmā said: ‘I will hide myself in the presence of the Monk Gotama, I will hide myself in the presence of the Monk Gotama’, he was unable to do so.”

To the Brahmā who was unable to hide himself, the Buddha said:

“Baka Brahmā, if you cannot hide yourself, I will hide myself in your presence now. I am going to perform a miracle so that you cannot see me.”

Then Baka Brahmā replied to the Buddha:

“Venerable Sir, hide yourself in my presence now if you can.”

Then the Buddha (1) first entered upon the fourth *jhāna* (*rūpāvacara-kiriya*), the foundation of His resolve; (2) then rising from that *jhāna*, He resolved that the Mahā Brahmā, the assembly of Brahmās and the young attendant-Brahmās could only hear His voice but not see his body; (3) then He entered upon the fourth *jhāna* (*rūpāvacara-kiriya*), the foundation of His Psychic Power; (4) when He rose from that *jhāna*, a process of Psychic Powers occurred in His mind; as soon as He felt that mental process but once, the Buddha's body vanished and not a single Brahmā could see Him. To make them know that He was still with them though He had vanished, the Buddha uttered this verse:

*Bhavevāhaṃ bhayaṃ disvā, bhavañ ca bhavesinaṃ
Bhavaṃ nābhivadim kiñci, nandiñ ca na upādiyim.*

O, Brahmās who have assembled here! Because I have seen clearly with My eye of wisdom, the dangers of birth, old age, and sickness on the three planes of existence such as *kāma*, *rūpa* and *arūpa*, and the endless arising of beings (like Baka Brahmā), who have gone astray in their search of Nibbāna that is non-existence, I no longer cling to any existence as permanent, constant, eternal, etc., under the power of craving and wrong view. I am entirely free from craving for existence as I have rooted it out and cutting it off four times with the axe-like wisdom of the fourfold Path-Knowledge.

Attainment of Noble Stages by Ten Thousand Brahmās

In this verse, by the word ‘existence’ (*bhava*) is indicated ‘the Truth of Suffering’, by ‘craving for existence’ (*bhava-taṇhā*) is indicated ‘the Truth of the Cause of Suffering’, by ‘non-existence’ (*vibhava*) is indicated ‘the Truth of the Cessation of Suffering’, by ‘I have no craving for existence’ (*nandiñ ca na upādiyim*) is indicated ‘the Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering’.

Thus the Buddha taught the Four Truths in detail to the Brahmās according to their dispositions and led them to Vipassanā Insight and concluded His Teaching with the Fruition of Arahantship as its apex. At the end of the Discourse, the Brahmās, reflectively following the discourse, were steeped in the essence of Vipassanā Insight at various stages, some attaining *sotāpatti-phala*, some *sakadāgāmi-phala*, some *anāgāmi-phala* and the rest arahatship. Then the Brahmās rejoiced, marvelled and extolled the Buddha. Hence it is said in the Text:

“Monks, then the Brahmā, his followers and attendants were filled with great wonder, saying: ‘Friends, wonderful indeed is the great power and the great might of the Monk Gotama! Never have we seen or heard any *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* who is so powerful and so mighty as the Monk Gotama, a Sakyan Prince and an ascetic

of the Sakyan royal family. Indeed, the Monk Gotama can remove the root of existence (i.e. ignorance and craving) from all beings who take delight in existence, who take pleasure in existence and who arise in existence.’ ”

Molestation by Mara

Then Māra reflected and came to know in anger thus: “While I am moving about, the Monk Gotama has taught ten thousand Brahmās and set them free from my dominion.” So furious was he that he once again possessed a young attendant Brahmā.

(Herein, how did Māra know that the ten thousand Brahmās had become *ariyas*? He knew this by inference (*nayaggāha* or *anumāna*). He knew that when the Buddha preached to worthy beings, He pointed out the ills of *saṃsāra* and the bliss of Nibbāna so that the listening beings would discern Nibbāna; that all His sermons were beneficial and effective like the *vajira* weapon hurled by Sakka; and that devas and humans who established in His Teaching became invisible in *saṃsāra*.)

Having possessed the young Brahmā, Māra spoke to the Buddha, disturbing. This is mentioned in the Text in the following manner:

“Monks, at that time the wicked Māra possessed a young attendant Brahmā and said to me thus:

‘Venerable Sir, if you know (the Four Truths) analytically thus, if You know them by Your Omniscience, do not convey this doctrine to Your disciples. Do not convey them to hermits and wandering ascetics. Do not preach to Your disciples. Do not preach to hermits and wandering ascetics. Have no greed for Your disciples. Have no greed for hermits and wandering ascetics.

‘Monk, there were *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* who lived before You and who claimed to be *arahats* or who claimed to have destroyed the enemy in the form of moral defilements, or who claimed to be Sammāsambuddhas, those who claimed to know all the doctrines by themselves. They conveyed their doctrines to their disciples and hermits and wandering ascetics. They preached to their disciples and hermits and wandering ascetics. They had greed for them and on the dissolution of their bodies at death, they landed in the low woeful states. (a)

‘Monk, there were in this world *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* who lived before You and who claimed to be *arahats* or who claimed to have destroyed the enemy in the form of moral defilements, or who claimed to be Sammāsambuddhas, those who claimed to know all the doctrines by themselves. They did not convey their doctrines to their disciples. They did not preach to their disciples and hermits and wandering ascetics. They had no greed for them and on the dissolution on their bodies at death, they landed in the high Brahmā-worlds. (b)

‘Therefore, Monk, I would like to tell you thus: ‘Venerable Sir, I urge you. Live in comfort, live without any bother. Sir, non-preaching is good. Do not exhort others.’ I would like to tell you thus.’

“Monks, when Māra the evil One said thus, I spoke to him as follows:

‘Evil Māra, I know you. Do not think that I do not know you. You are Māra. Hey, evil Māra, you have spoken thus not because you desire for My welfare but because you desire for My loss. You fear that those who follow My preaching will overcome the three kinds of existence that lie within your domain.

‘Hey, evil Māra, *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* whom you speak of claimed to be Sammāsambuddhas without actually being Samāsambuddhas. But I truly claim to be Sammāsambuddha, who know all the doctrine by Myself.

‘Hey, you evil Māra, whether the Buddha preaches to His disciples or not, He has neither love nor hate; He is endowed with the attributes of *tādi* (indifference). Why?

‘Hey, evil Māra, the Buddha has abandoned the moral intoxicants (*āsava*) that lead

to anxiety, rebirth, anguish and suffering, later on causing rebirth, old age and death. He has cut off their latent (*anusaya*) roots. He has made them like the uprooted palm-tree. He has made it impossible for them to arise again. (So, for the Buddha, there is absolutely no revival of those *āsavas*).

‘Hey, evil Māra, as a palm tree cut off at its neck, cannot thrive, so the Buddha has abandoned the *āsavas* that lead to anxiety, rebirth, anguish and suffering, later on causing rebirth, old age, and death. He has rooted them. He has made them like the uprooted palm-tree. He has made it impossible for them to arise again. So, for the Buddha, there is absolutely no possibility of the resurges of those *āsvavas*.’ ”

Thus the Buddha preached this sermon to silence Māra and impart special knowledge to the Brahṃā. Hence this sutta is named Brahmanimantika Sutta.

Here ends the taming of Baka Brahṃā.

Cūlasubhaddā and Her Father-in-law, Ugga

Story of Cūlasubhaddā

While the Buddha was residing at Jetavana in the good city of Sāvātthi, he gave a sermon beginning with “*Dūresanto pakāśenti*” in connection with the merchant Anāthapiṇḍika's daughter, Cūlasubhaddā. The details were as follows:

Ugga, who was another merchant, a citizen of Ugga City, was the childhood friend of the merchant, Anāthapiṇḍika. While they were educated by the same teacher, they promised to each other that when they grew up and had children, one who had a daughter should give her in marriage to a son of the other who wanted her to be his daughter-in-law.

The two friends grew up and became great merchants in their respective cities. One day, the merchant, Ugga, went to the house of Anāthapiṇḍika in Sāvātthi with five hundred carts to do business. Anāthapiṇḍika called his daughter, Cūlasubhaddā, and assigned a duty to her, saying: “Dear daughter, your (would be) father, Ugga, the merchant has come. Do all that is necessary for him.”

“Very well,” said Cūlasubhaddā and from the day of Ugga's arrival, she prepared and cooked the food personally. She put on flowers, perfumes and unguents, etc. While the merchant was being fed, she kept the bath-water ready and after he had taken his bath, she personally supervised all the needful for him with respect.

Observing her possession of the character of a good housewife, the merchant Ugga was pleased with Cūlasubhaddā. Then one day, while conversing cordially with Anāthapiṇḍika, he reminded his friend saying: “Friend, when we were young we have made such and such a pledge to each other,” and then asked Cūlasubhaddā for his son. But Ugga was a heretic. So Anāthapiṇḍika did not make any decision (on his own) and reported the matter to the Buddha, who seeing Ugga's former good deeds that would contribute to his attainment of *sotāpatti-magga* and *phala*, approved. He then discussed with his wife, Puññalakkhaṇa Devī, and they agreed to his friends proposal. He fixed the date and elaborately arranged for the wedding ceremony, and when he sent Cūlasubhaddā away in marriage, he called his daughter and gave ten pieces of advice which were the same as those given to Visākhā by her father, Dhanañcaya.

“My dear daughter, a woman who lives in the house of her parents-in-law:

- (1) should not take outside the fire that is inside her house, (that is, she should not tell people in other houses about the faults of her parents-in-law and husband);
- (2) should not bring into her house the fire from outside (that is, when the neighbours speak ill of her parents-in-law and husband, she should not report it to them);
- (3) should give only those who give back, (that is, she should lend only to those who punctually return what they have borrowed from her house);
- (4) should not give those who do not give back, (that is, she should not give another loan to those who do not punctually return what they have borrowed from her house);

- (5) should give others whether they give her or not, (that is, when poor relatives come to her house, she should give them whether they can afford to give or not);
- (6) should sit well, (that is, she should stand up first at the sight of her parents-in-law and husband. It is not proper for her to remain sitting when she should stand up);
- (7) should eat well, (that is, she should not eat before her parents-in-law and husband but she should serve them and eat only after making sure everybody has his or her food);
- (8) should sleep well, (that is, she should not sleep in her bed before her parents-in-law and husband do. She should sleep only after doing her duties towards them);
- (9) should serve the fire respectfully, (that is, she should regard her parents-in-laws and husband as a great mass of fire or a poisonous serpent *nāga* king and look at them respectfully. She should not look at them disrespectfully by casting a side glance or frowning upon them);
- (10) should worship the devas in the house, (that is, she should show respect to her parents-in-law and husband, regarding them as the devas occupying the foremost or most sacred place of the house).

These were the ten pieces of advice which Anāthapiṇḍika gave to his daughter as did the merchant Dhanañcaya to his daughter Visākhā. He also sent eight wise men as guarantors along with his daughter with these instructions:

“Whenever a problem crops up to my daughter Cūlasubbhaddā you must solve it lawfully.”

The day of her departure saw him giving alms lavishly to the Sangha headed by the Buddha. Then he sent his daughter to the merchant Ugga's house with great pomp and ceremony as though he exhibited the magnificent fruition of the good deeds which Cūlasubbhaddā had done in her previous lives.

Arriving at Ugga City, she was welcomed by the merchant's family and hosts of the citizens. Like Visākhā, she entered the city standing in her chariot, and making the people much impressed by her glory and splendour. She accepted the presents sent by the citizens and sent in return gifts appropriate to their distinguished status and thus by virtue of her wisdom she endeared herself to the whole city.

When her heretical father-in-law honoured the naked ascetics (*acelakas*) on auspicious occasions at his house, he sent for her as he wanted her to come and pay respect to his teachers. But she refused to go to the place where they were being honoured because she was so shy to see the unclothed teachers.

The merchant Ugga sent for her repeatedly but Cūlasubbhaddā remained adamant in her refusal. So the merchant became furious and ordered her to be turned out of the house. She refused to take such unreasonable treatment. Instead she called in the eight wise men her guarantors, and stated her case openly. They decided that she had no fault and informed the merchant accordingly.

The merchant told his wife that Cūlasubbhaddā did not pay respect to his teachers, saying that they had no sense of shame. The merchant's wife wondered what kind of monks were the teachers of her daughter-in-law whom she extolled so excessively. So she summoned Cūlasubbhaddā and asked her:

*Kīdisā samaṇā tuyhaṃ
bālhaṃ kho ne pasamsasi.
Kim sīlā kim samācārā
taṃ me akkhāhi pucchitā.*

Our daughter-in-law Subhadda! How are your teachers and monks possessed of noble qualities? Extremely do you praise them. (Those teachers of yours, the Monk Gotama and his disciples), what virtues of distinction do they have? What kind of good conduct do they show? As you are asked, tell me

truthfully about that.

Then Cūlasubbhaddā, desiring to talk to the wife of the wealthy merchant about the qualities of the Buddha and His disciples, uttered the following verse:

- (1) *Santindriyā santamānasā
santam tesaṃ gataṃ ʔhitam.
Okkhittacakkhū mitabhānī
tādisā samaṇā mama.*

(Madam) Those monks of mine (comprising the Exalted One and His disciples) in contrast to the fickle and self-indulging behaviour of your teachers, are mentally serene, being free from the heat of all defilements. Therefore, their walking with their steps like lotus flowers or their standing with their twin golden feet, is so calm that the faith of the beholders increases. They have their down-cast eyes that never look beyond the length of a yoke. They speak moderately of what is in accord with time and place. My Teacher, the Exalted One, and His disciples possess such impressive attributes.

- (2) *Kāyakammaṃ sucī nesaṃ
vācākammaṃ anāvilam
Mano-kammaṃ suvisuddham
tādisā samaṇā mama.*

(Madam) All the physical behaviour of my Teacher, the Exalted One, and His disciples, is clear of unwholesomeness and pure; their verbal behaviour is serene by nature without the dust and mud of unwholesomeness, all their mental behaviour is free from the stain of evil character. They possess such impressive attributes.

- (3) *Vimalā saṅkhamuttābhā
suddhā antarabāhirā.
Puṇṇā, suddhehi dhammehi
tādisā samaṇā mama.*

(Madam) They (my Teacher, the Exalted One, and His disciples) are free from moral defilements like the conch-shell or a pearl necklace. They are pure both inside and out, having no dust of fault at all. They are fully endowed with the three kinds of pure training. They possess such impressive attributes.

- (4) *Lābhena unnato loko
alābhena ca onato
Labhālabhena ekaʔthā
tādisā samaṇā mama.*

(Madam) In the world, people become puffed up with pride when they acquire many things owing to their possession of effort now (*payoga-sampatti*) and their good deeds in the past. They become depressed when they do not acquire anything owing to their lack of effort now and their evil deeds in the past. But my Teacher, the Exalted One, and His disciples, are not affected by acquisition nor non-acquisition of things, but remain calm and tranquil. They possess such impressive attributes.

- (5) *Yasena unnato loko
ayasena ca onato.
Yasāyasena ekaʔthā*

tādisā samaṇā mama.

(Madam) In this world people they became puffed up with pride when they become famous and have many followers owing to their possession of effort now and good deeds in the past. They become depressed when they cease to become famous and have fewer followers owing to their lack of effort now and their evil deeds in the past. But, my Teacher, the Exalted One, and His monk-disciples are not affected by having fame or having no fame and by having only a few followers, but remain calm and tranquil. They possess such impressive attributes.

(6) *Pasaṃsāy unnato loko
nindāyā'pi ca onato.
Samā nindāpasaṃsāsu
tādisā samaṇā mama.*

(Madam) In this world people become puffed up with pride when they are praised owing to their effort now and good deeds in the past. They are depressed when they are dispraised owing to their lack of effort now and their evil deeds in the past. But my Teacher, the Exalted One, and His monk-disciples are not affected by praise or by dispraise, but remain calm and tranquil. They possess such impressive attributes.

(7) *Sukhena unnato loko
dukkhenā'pi ca onato.
Akampā sukhadukkhesu
tādisā samaṇā mama.*

(Madam) In this world, people become puffed up with pride when they are affluent owing to their effort now and good deeds in the past. They become depressed when they are poor owing to their lack of effort now and their evil deeds in the past. But my Teacher, the Exalted One, and His monk-disciples, are not affected by affluence, but remain calm and tranquil. They possess such impressive attributes.

Thus, Cūlasubbhaddā, the wise daughter-in-law, pleased her mother-in-law, by extolling the Exalted One and His disciples. The merchant's wife asked her whether she would be able to show them her teacher, the Exalted One and His disciples, and Cūlasubbhaddā said she could do so. Then her mother-in-law told her to make an arrangement so that they could see her teacher and all.

Having promised thus, Cūlasubbhaddā prepared great offering for the Buddha and the Sangha on the top of the mansion and facing towards the Jetavana monastery, she paid respect to the Buddha and contemplated His attributes. Then honouring the Buddha with sweet smelling flowers, and perfumes, she resolved thus:

“Glorious Buddha, I invite the Sangha headed by the Exalted One to my good deeds at my house. May the Exalted One, the Teacher of devas and humans, know my invitation quite well through these Jasmine flowers which I am now sending.”

After extending her invitation, she threw up eight handfuls of Jasmine flowers into the air. Like small butterflies, the flowers travelled by air and became a flower-canopy above the Buddha, while He was preaching amidst four classes of people in the Jetavana monastery.

At that moment the merchant Anāthapiṇḍika who had heard the Dhamma invited the Buddha to his house the next day to his good deeds. The Buddha replied that He had already accepted the invitation to the meal offering by another donor. The merchant said: “There is no one who has come and invited the Exalted Buddha before me. Whose meal-offering have you accepted?” The Buddha replied that He had been already invited by

Cūlasubhaddā. The merchant said: “But, Glorious Buddha, is not my daughter Culasubhaddā living in Ugga which is one hundred and twenty *yojanas* away from this city of Sāvattthi?”

The Buddha replied: “You are right, merchant but good people can manifest as if they were standing before Me even though they may be living in a place that is many *yojanas* away.”

Then the Buddha uttered the following verse:

*Dūre santo pakāśenti
himavaṇṭo'va pabbato.
Asantettha na dissanti
rattim khittā yathā sarā.*

Merchant Anāthapiṇḍika, donor of Jetavana! Though people, pure at heart and doers of good deeds, may stay many *yojanas* away, they manifest themselves to My knowledge as does the Himavanta forest. Though foolish monks and lay persons, exist near Me, they never manifest themselves in the neighbourhood of My vision like the arrows shot in the darkness of four characteristics, namely, midnight, moonless, in the heart of the forest and under all cloudy sky.

By the end of the discourse, many people attained the Fruition of Sotāpatti.

The Buddha's Journey to Ugga

Knowing that the Buddha had accepted Cūlasubhaddā's invitation, Sakka told Visukamma Deva to create five hundred turreted flying vehicles in which the Buddha and His monks were to be taken to Ugga the next day. The next day, Visukamma stood at the gate of the Jetavana monastery, after creating five hundred flying vehicles.

The Buddha took the the batch of the five hundred choice *arahats* as His entourage, and they, one seated in each vehicle, travelled by air to Ugga City.

Looking forward with his followers to the Buddha's arrival, as instructed by his wise daughter-in-law Cūlasubhaddā, Ugga saw the Buddha coming with great glory. Overwhelmed by devotion, he welcomed and honoured the Buddha with flowers, scents, etc. After performing alms-giving, he invited the Buddha now and then and repeated his great offering for seven days.

The Liberation of Ugga and 84000 Beings

The Buddha preached the Dhamma that suited Ugga. As a result, he and his wife, together with eighty-four thousand beings, realized the Four Truths and became liberated.

In order to show His grace to Cūlasubhaddā, the Buddha told Thera Anuruddha to stay behind in Ugga and, Himself and the rest of the *arahats* returned to Savatthi. From that day onwards the city of Ugga became a great centre of the faith and a city devoted to the Triple Gem.

— Pakiṇṇaka Vagga, **Dhammapada Commentary**, Vol. II. —

The Buddha's Preaching to a Brahmin of Wrong Views

Story of A Certain Brahmin

Once, while residing at Jetavana in Sāvattthi, the Buddha preached a sermon beginning with ‘*Taṇhāya jāyatī soko*’, etc. in connection with a certain brahmin. The story in detail is as follows:

One day, a brahmin, a citizen of Sāvattthi, who held wrong views, was clearing a farm land near the river Aciravati. The Buddha came to know that he had performed, in the past, an act that would contribute to his attainment of the Path and Fruition. The brahmin saw the Buddha but as he was of wrong views, he did not show his respect to the Buddha, not even talked to Him but kept silent. The Buddha Himself first addressed the brahmin,

saying: “O Brahmin what are you doing?” The brahmin replied: “O Gotama, I am clearing the farmland.” With only a few such words on the first day, the Buddha went away.

The next day, too, the Buddha went to the brahmin and asked him what he was doing. The brahmin replied that he was ploughing the field. After hearing this reply the Buddha went away.

Again, the next day and the following days, the Buddha asked the brahmin what he was doing and he replied that he was sowing seeds, planting seedlings, weeding or looking after the field. The Buddha heard the brahmin’s answers which were appropriate to his work and went away,

In this way, owing to the frequency of the Buddha’s visit, the brahmin began to like and adore the Buddha. Wanting to make the Buddha his friend he said: “O Gotama, you have been visiting me since the day I cleared my farmland. If the farm yields good and abundant crops, I will share them with you. I will not consume them without giving you. From today you have become my friend.”

Then one day the crop on the brahmin’s field became ripe and mature and he decided to have them reaped the next day. But, while he was making preparations for the harvesting, rain fell heavily at night and swept away all the crops. So the whole farmland was stark barren like a field with all its crops removed.

Since the very day of his first visit, the Buddha had foreseen that the crops would come to nothing. But, if he started visiting the brahmin only after the destruction of the crops, His sermon would fall on deaf ears. He had, therefore, been visiting the brahmin from the day when the latter cleared the field, in this way the Buddha hoped to gain the brahmin’s confidence and intimacy that would make him receptive to the sermon to be given on the day when the crops were ruined.

The brahmin went early to his field and seeing his farmland stark empty, he was overwhelmed with grief.

“The monk Gotama has been visiting me since I cleared my field. I have told him that I will give Him a share of the crops after harvesting, that I will not consume them all by myself without giving Him and that He has become my friend. Now my desire will remain unfulfilled.”

So thinking, he returned home, ate nothing and lay down on his bed.

Then the Buddha went to the brahmin’s house. When the brahmin heard of the Buddha’s coming, he told the people in his house to bring his friend inside and to give Him a seat. They did according to his instructions. The Buddha sat down and asked where the brahmin was. They answered that he was lying on his bed in the room. Thereupon, He told them to bring the brahmin. The brahmin came and sat at a suitable place. Then He asked the brahmin what was wrong with him.

The brahmin said: “O Gotama! you have been visiting me ever since I cleared my farmland, I have promised to share the crops with You when they come out well. But now my desire cannot be fulfilled and I am overwhelmed with anguish. I did not want even to eat my meal.”

Then the Exalted One asked: “O Brahmin! Do you know why there arises grief in you?” The brahmin said: “I do not know, Gotama. But do you know?” The Exalted One replied: “Yes, I do. Grief and fear arises from craving.” Then the Buddha preached the following verse.

*Taṇhāya jāyati soko
taṇhāya jāyati bhayaṃ.
Taṇhāya vippamuttassa
natthi soko kuto bhayaṃ.*

O Brahmin, grief arises from craving. From craving arises fear. There is not the least grief in a person who has become free from craving through

arahatship. How can fear arise in him since he has repudiated it at the moment of attaining the *anāgāmi-magga*?

At the end of the sermon, the brahmin attained the Fruition of Sotāpatti-magga.

— Dhammapada Commentary —

Story of Candābha Thera

While dwelling in Jetavana, in Sāvattī City, the Buddha preached the verse beginning with ‘*Candāmba vimalāṃ suddham*’, etc., in connection with Candābha.

The story in detail is:

Former Good Deeds of Candābha.

Long ago, a trader in Vārāṇasī planned to go to a border country to collect fragrant sandalwood. So he took a lot of garments and ornaments to the border country. There, he camped near the gate of a village and asked the cowherds in the wood: “Boys, is there somebody who works at the foot of the hill?” The cowherds said: “Yes.” He asked again: “What is his name?” When they gave the man's name, he also asked the names of the man's wife and children. When they gave their names, he asked further the locality of man's home. The cowherds gave their answers with honesty.

Acting on the information given by the cowherds, the trader went in a small cart to the house of the forest worker. He stepped down, went into the house and called the housewife by her name. Thinking that the visitor was one of their relatives, the woman quickly came out and gave him a seat. The trader sat down, and mentioning the name of her husband, he asked: “Where is my friend?” She replied: “Sir, your friend has gone to the forest.” Then he asked her about the children, mentioning their names and referring to them as “son” and “daughter”. He gave her garments and ornaments as presents for her husband and children. The housewife served the trader with very good food hospitably. When her husband returned from the forest, she told him about the guest, how he had inquired about their children by name and how he had given her presents for the whole family. The worker became intimate with the trader and dutifully did all that was necessary for the guest.

In The Evening

Then in the evening the trader sat on the bed and asked the forest worker: “What objects do you find abundantly at the foot of the hill while you are wandering there.” The forester said: “I do not find anything extraordinary other than the trees with red branches that are plentiful.” The trader asked him whether he found such trees abundantly and the forester assured him that the trees abounded. “In that case, please show me those trees.” Then, led by the forester, the trader went into the forest, cut down the red sandalwood trees and came back with five hundred cart-loads of sandalwood. He gave the forester his address in Vārāṇasī and said: “I would like you to come to my place. You are always welcome. When you come, I want you to bring only those trees. I want no present other than the trees with red branches.” After speaking warmly out of friendship, the trader returned to Vārāṇasī.

In accordance with the trader's instruction, the forest worker brought only red sandalwood whenever he went to see the trader. The trader was grateful for his kindness and gave much gold and silver.

The Relic Stupa honoured with Sandalwood

On another occasion, after the Parinibbāna (passing away) of the Buddha Kassapa and the construction of a great relic stupa, the forester came to his friend, the Vārāṇasī trader, with a lot of sandalwood. The trader had the sandalwood pounded, filled the bowl with it and said to his friend: “Come, friend, let us go to the great stupa before the meal is ready. We will honour the stupa and come back.” So saying he took his friend to the stupa and honoured it with an offering of sandalwood powder. His friend, the forest worker, too honoured the stupa by making the shape of a moon with red sandalwood powder on the bell shape part of the shrine.

(This forest worker was the future Thera Candābha. This above act of honouring

was his only good deed in the past that contributed to his attainment of the Path and Fruition.)

Brahmin Candābha.

On his death, the forest worker was reborn in the deva-world and after passing his time during the whole interval between the two Buddhas, he was reborn in an affluent brahmin family in Rājagaha in the time of Buddha Gotama. From the navel of the young brahmin there came out white, brilliant light like that of the full moon. So his parents and relatives named him Candābha, master moonlight.

(This emission of the whole bright light like the full-moon was the result of his honour done to Buddha Kassapa stupa with a moon shape made of sandalwood powder.)

The brahmins decided to take the child round and make money by deceiving the people. They made the child sit in a vehicle and wandered about the whole Jambudipa, boasting that those who stroked the youth's body with their hands would acquire much wealth. Only those who could pay one hundred or one thousand coins were allowed to stroke the child.

In the course of their wanderings, the brahmins came to Savatthi and stayed in a place between the city and the Jetavana monastery. In the morning, five crores of noble, virtuous men gave alms and in the afternoon, they went to Jetavana with scents, flowers, robes, medicines, etc. to hear the Dhamma.

Seeing these people, the brahmin asked them where they were off to. "We are going to hear the Exalted One's sermon," answered the noble, virtuous men. Then the brahmin said: "Come friend, what's the use of going to that Exalted One. There is no power like that of our Brahmin Candabha. Certainly, those who stroke his body will have such and such benefits. Come and see Candābha."

Candābha taken to The Monastery

The good people said: "What kind of power does the Brahmin Candābha possess? Our teacher the Exalted One is the most powerful being in the world." Being unable to give a final decision on the issue by themselves, they at last agreed to go to the monastery and see the powers of the Exalted One and of the Brahmin. So they went to the monastery taking the Brahmin Candābha.

Ordination of Candābha

As soon as the Brahmin came near Him, the Buddha resolved to make moonlight from the Brahmin's navel disappear. The Brahmin became something like a small crow in a basket of charcoal. When the Brahmin was taken away from the Buddha, the light from his navel reappeared and when he was taken back to the Buddha, the light vanished as before. This occurred thrice and Candābha wondered whether the Buddha knew any mantra (spell) that could dispel the light and he asked the Buddha accordingly.

The Buddha said: "Yes, I know it." The Brahmin requested: "In that case please teach me the mantra." The Buddha replied that He could not teach it to anyone who was not a monk. Then the Brahmin told his companions: "I will become the greatest man in the whole Jambudipa after learning this mantra. You wait for me in your lodgings in this city. I will learn the mantra within two or three days after ordination." Having thus cheered up his friends he went back to the Buddha, asked for ordination and become a monk.

Candābha's Attainment of Arahatsip

Then the Buddha taught Thera Candābha contemplation of the thirty-two parts of the body (*Dvattimsakara kammattana*). The Thera asked the Buddha what *kesa* (head-hair), *loma* (body-hair), etc. meant. The Buddha said: "That contemplation is preliminary (*pari-kamma*) to learning the mantra you should recite it."

The other brahmins came occasionally and asked him if he had learnt the mantra. The Thera answered that he had not and that he was still reciting the preliminary. In this way

through the contemplation of the thirty-two parts of the body, Thera Candābha developed concentration, then practised insight-meditation (Vipassanā) and within two or three days he attained arahatship. When the brahmins came and inquired him, he told them clearly and decisively: “Go away! It is now not possible for me to return to worldly life.”

On hearing his words, other monks reported to the Buddha: “Glorious Buddha! This Thera Candābha has falsely claimed to be an arahatship.” The Buddha said: “Monks! Now, my son, the monk Candābha, is an *arahat* with all his *āsavas* extinct. He speaks only the truth.” Then the Buddha uttered the following verse:

*Candaṃ va vimalaṃ suddha; vippassannam anāvilṃ
Nandībhava-parikkhīṇaṃ, lam ahaṃ brūmi Brāhmaṇaṃ.*

Monks! The *arahat* is free from the impurity of five kinds of sensual pleasure; pure, spotless and clear like flying mansion of the moon, free from all defilements and craving for the three kinds of existence. Such an *arahat*, I call a true *Brāhmaṇa* as he really and naturally is.

By the end of the Discourse many people attained the Fruition of *Sotāpatti* etc.

— **Brāhmaṇa Dhammapada Commentary** —

Māra's Temptation of The Buddha

Story of Māra

The Buddha preached the sermon beginning with “*Atthamhi sukhāsahāyā*” in connection with Māra who came to tempt Him to be a king. The detail account is as follows:

Once, the Buddha was dwelling in a small forest hermitage on the slopes of the Himalayas, in Kosala country. At that time, the kings still enforced their rule by oppressing the people. The Buddha saw the people in the countries of tyrants being ill-treated through various kinds of unlawful taxation and punishment. Being moved with pity, the Buddha wondered whether it was possible for one to be a good ruler without killing by oneself or through another person, without bringing about damage or loss of citizen's property by oneself or through another person, and without making one grieve by oneself or through another person.

Māra knew what was passing through the Buddha's mind and he thought: “Now, the Monk Gotama is considering the possibility of being a ruler. Perhaps, now He wants to be a king. Kingship is a cause of negligence. If the Monk Gotama becomes a king, I will have the opportunity to molest him. I will now go and make the Monk Gotama tries for kingship.” So thinking, he approached the Exalted One and said: “Glorious Buddha, let the Glorious One be a king! Let the Exalted One who utters good words becomes a righteous king who does not kill by Himself nor through another person, who does not bring about damage or loss of other's property by Himself or through another person and who does not make other grieve by Himself or through another person.”

Thus Māra lured the Buddha. The Exalted One said: “Hey, you, evil Māra! What do you see in Me that makes you tell Me like this?” Māra replied: “Glorious Buddha, You have thoroughly and effectively developed the four foundations of supernormal power. If Your mind is inclined to turn the great Himalayas into gold, it will certainly become solid gold. If You act lawfully as a king, I will support You in all matters that require gold or silver.”

Then the Exalted One uttered the following verse:

*Pabbatassa suvaṇṇassa
jātarūpassa kevalo.
Dvittāva nālam ekassa
iti vidvā samaṃ care.*

There may be a big mountain that is made up of pure gold unmixed with copper, iron, lead, or other minerals. Let alone such a mountain of gold.

Even a gold mountain that is twice as high as the Himalayas cannot satisfy the craving of a person. The wise man who understands this nature of craving should steadfastly and diligently practise the ten good Dhamma in thought, speech and deed.

*Yo dukkham adakkhi yato nidānaṃ
kāmesu so jantu kathaṃ nameyya.
upadhiṃ viditvā saṅgoti loka
tass'eva jantu vinayāya sikkhe.*

If a man knows clearly that all kinds of suffering have their source in the five kinds of sensual objects, why should he be inclined to see anything good in them? In this world, a man (being) who clearly sees sensuality as a substratum (*upadhi*) of existence that is bound with greed, hatred, ignorance, conceit and false beliefs, should devote himself to threefold training (in morality, concentration and wisdom) in order to overcome sensual desire.

After startling Māra with these verses, the Buddha said: “Hey, you, evil Māra, your teaching is one thing while My teaching is another (you teach to strive to occupy sense objects and sense pleasures while I stress the need for eradicating them.) Certainly, by no means is it possible to enter into a doctrinal discussion with you. I teach as follows.” Then the Buddha preached the following verses:

*(1) Atthami jātamhi sukhā sahāyā
tutthi sukhā yā itarītarena.
Puñña sukhāṃ jīvitasaṅkhayamhi
sabbassa dukkhassa sukhāṃ pahānaṃ.*

(In this world), when there is any kind of understanding, (a) friends are a source of happiness, (b) contentment with whatever is available is the source of happiness, (c) when one is dying, the good deeds are a source of happiness. (d) Arahantship, which means the total abandonment of the whole round of suffering inherent in the life cycle, is the source of happiness (Here the cause of happiness is described as happiness in *phalupaca* method. The same may be said of the following verses. (This verse mentions four causes of happiness.)

*(2) Sukhā matteyyatā loka
atho pettayyatā sukhā.
Sukhā samaññatā loka
atho Brahmaññata sukhā.*

In this world, (a) supporting of one's mother is the source of happiness. (b) So is supporting one's father. (c) Giving alms respectively to hermits monks and wandering ascetics is also a source of happiness. Moreover, (d) giving gladly and respectively to the Buddhas, Paccekabuddha and *ariya* disciples is a source of happiness. (This verse also shows four sources of happiness.)

*(3) Sukhaṃ yāva jarā sīlaṃ
sukhaṃ saddhā paṭiṭṭhitā.
Sukho paññāya paṭilābho
pāpānaṃ akaraṇaṃ sukhaṃ.*

The good moral life involving the observance of the Five, Eight or Ten Precepts is good and productive of happiness until old age when one's hair turn grey, teeth fall off and the skin become wrinkled.

(Ruby carrying, red garments etc. are congenial to people only at a certain age. Young

people's garments are not congenial to adults and vice versa. An adult wearing the garment of a young man or vice versa will cause criticism and gives one the impression of being crazy. But morality comprising the observance of the Five, or Ten Precepts is congenial to young or old, people alike in the three phases of life. A morally good person earns the approbation of other people that is pleasant and delightful to him.

Unwaveringly established faith, mundane and supramundane, is a source of happiness. So is the ability to acquire mundane and supramundane wisdom by diligence. Complete abstinence from doing evil deeds is another source of happiness. This verse also show another set of the four sources of happiness.)

By the end of the discourse, millions of devas realized the Four Truths and became liberated.

— Commentary of Dhammapada —

Story of Pokkharasāti Brahmin

(From Ambattha Sutta, **Dīgha Nikāya**, Vol II)

(For the full story of the Brahmin Pokkharasāti, the reader is referred to the *Silakhanda Vagga* of the **Dīgha Nikāya**. It is condensed here as much as possible.)

One day, at dawn, the Buddha surveyed the world of living beings and there appeared the Brahmin Pokkharasāti within the range of His Omniscience. After further reflection the Buddha saw the former good deeds of the Brahmin that would contribute to his attainment of the *sotāpatti-magga*. The Buddha also foresaw, that:

“When I go to Icchanangala region, the Brahmin teacher Pokkharasāti will send his the young Brahmin Ambattha to inquire about My major and minor marks. Ambattha will hold a debate with Me, uttering all kinds foolish words. I must admonish him and dispel the poison of his pride. He will report the matter to his teacher. When his teacher hears his word, he will come to Me and examine My marks. I will then teach the Brahmin Pokkharasāti, who will attain the Fruition of Sotāpatti at the end of My Teaching.”

With His fore-knowledge, the Buddha journeyed to Kosala Kingdom with five hundred monks and on arriving at Icchanangala brahmin village in Kosala, the Buddha dwelt in a nearby huge grove at Icchānaṅgala.

At that time as city administrator appointed by King Pasenadi Kosala, the Brahmin Pokkharasāti administered the populous city of Ukkattha which was abounded in grass, firewood, water, rice and paddy.

(When the city was about to be founded its site was marked under the light of torches and firebrands, hence the name of the city, Ukkattha.)

(About the Brahmin Pokkharasāti: In the time of Buddha Kassapa he was a brahmin well-versed in the three Vedas. After giving alms and hearing the Dhamma, he was reborn in the deva-world.

(When he died in the deva-world and was reborn in the human abode in the moisture in a Paduma lotus, in a big lake near the Himavanta. A hermit, having built a hermitage near the lake, was living there. While standing near the lake, he saw the big lotus bud and thought to himself: “This big lotus bud is extraordinarily bigger than others. When it blossoms, I will take it.”

(The bud did not blossom even after a week. The hermit became impatient and stepping into the lake, he plucked the bud. As soon as it was broken from the stalk, the bud opened. Then to his surprise, the hermit found in the flower a baby boy, silvery white and covered with the pollen all over his body, like a silver statue with gold dust scattered over.

(The hermit thought: “This child will become a great man. I will start raising him from now.” He took the child to the hermitage, raised him and began to teach him the three Vedas when he was seven years old. The boy became a very famous brahmin teacher who was an authority the three Vedas. Later on, the brahmin

teacher demonstrated his knowledge to King Kosala. As the King, having a high opinion of his knowledge, offered him the post of administrator of Ukkattha City. He was known as Pokkharasāti because he was conceived in the lotus-flower.

(The brahmin's body had the colour of white lotus flower and was splendid like a silver post set up at the gate of a celestial city. His head had the dark blue colour of sapphire. His beard appeared like a dark line drawn on the surface of the moon. The eyes were like a blue lotus flower and the nose was quite clean and round like a silver tube. His palms, soles and lips seemed well tainted with lacquer. The brahmin's body was very beautiful. He was fit to be made a king in a place where there was no ruler. Such was the splendour of the brahmin. Because of his resemblance to a white lotus, he was called Pokkharasāti.)

— (From the **Commentary**) —

Like the Brahmin Verañjā mentioned earlier, Pokkharasāti heard the news about the attributes of the Buddha. He has a residential pupil, named Ambaṭṭha, a young brahmin who was also well-versed in the three Vedas and various other sacred books, and worthy of brahmin teacher himself who held him in high esteem and ranked him as his peer.

Pokkharasāti told his pupil, Ambaṭṭha, about the reported virtues of the Buddha and said: “Dear son Ambaṭṭha, go to the Monk Gotama and enquired whether the report is true or not and whether He is true to His fame or not. The thirty-two marks of a great man are explicitly mentioned in our Vedas. For a great man who possesses these marks, there are only two possibilities: if he leads a worldly life, he will become a Universal Monarch, the ruler of the four continents; or if he leads an ascetic life, he will become a Buddha. My dear son Ambaṭṭha, I have taught you the Vedas and you have learnt them from me.”

(As an intelligent brahmin, Pokkharasāti thought: “In this world, there are many people like Purāṇa Kassapa and others who go about claiming to be Buddhas, so it is not advisable for me to associate with a teacher merely from hearsay. Certainly, it is hard to dissociate oneself from some person if one has become associated with them. Besides, such an attempt may be harmful to one's welfare, so it is good to send my disciple and find out whether the Monk Gotama is a Buddha before I myself go and see Him.” So Pokkharasāti sent his disciple Ambaṭṭha.)

Then having risen and paid respect to his teacher, Ambaṭṭha said: “Very well, Master,” and went to Icchanangala grove with many other young men in his teacher's chariot that was drawn by a mule. He went as far as the chariot could travel in the grove, then got off the chariot near the gate and entered the monastery on foot. (It was then noon.)

At that time, several monks who engaged in meditation were walking to and fro on the ground in the open air. Ambaṭṭha went to the monks and said: “Friends where is the Monk Gotama now? We have come to this place to see the Monk Gotama.”

Then the Monk thought to themselves:

“This youth Ambaṭṭha is of a well known family. He is also a pupil of the famous Pokkharasāti. For the Exalted One, it should not be burdensome to converse with such a son of a good family.”

So they said to Ambaṭṭha:

“Approach quietly that lodging with the doors closed. Enter the frontage slowly and after humming, knock at the door. The Exalted One will open the door for you.”

Then Ambaṭṭha went and knocked at the door as instructed by the monks. The Buddha opened the door. Ambaṭṭha entered the building followed by the other young men. They exchanged pleasant words with the Buddha and sat at suitable places.

(Note: The Buddha did not get up and open the door by Himself. In fact, He stretched His hand, resolving that the door should be opened. Then the door opened by itself, as if it were saying: “Venerable Sir! You, who have given alms for crores of *kappas*, have not done the kind of *kamma* that would make you open the door

with your hands.” This opening of the door by itself, as resolved by the Buddha, is expressed by “*vivari bhagavā dvāram*” in Pāli, which is simply translated as “the Buddha opened the door.”)

Ambaṭṭha's Behaviour

The young Ambaṭṭha was not even impressed by the splendour of the Buddha's body. Bent on threatening, he unfastened the strip of cloth tied on his chest and hang it loose down his neck. Holding the edge of his waist-cloth with one hand, he got onto the promenade and sometimes walked there, sometimes stood, sometimes showed his arm, sometimes showed his chest, sometimes showed his back, sometimes made a rude gesture with his hands, and sometimes made ugly facial expressions (such as grimaces), saying:

“O Gotama! Are you quite well? Do you get your food without any hardship? It is apparently not hard for you to get food. Certainly, all your physical features are robust and very impressive. Wherever you go, people adore you very much as a monk belonging to a royal family or as a Buddha and give choicest nourishing food. Friends, look at the abode of Gotama! It is like an extraordinary hall. It looks like a celestial mansion. Look at His bed and His pillow! For a man who lives in such a good place, how can it be possible to experience hardship in leading a monastic life!”

Thus Ambaṭṭha spoke only derisive words and ungentlemanly words that would be bitter and painful forever to ordinary people.

Then the Buddha thought: “This young Ambaṭṭha spends his energy irrelevantly like a man who stretches his hand to grasp the highest Brahmā abode (Bhavagga) or like a man who stretches his legs to wander in the Avīci hell or like a man who wants to swim across the great ocean or like a man who wants to climb Mount Meru. I will now talk with him.” So thinking the Buddha said to Ambaṭṭha: “You speak to Me disrespectfully and bitterly in a way that is unacceptable to good people. Do you speak to the aged brahmin teachers and their teachers in the same way.”

“No, Gotama, I do not speak to them in this way. When a brahmin wants to speak to a walking teacher, he speaks while walking. If he wants to speak to a standing teacher, he speaks while standing. If he wants to speak to a sitting teacher, he speaks while sitting. If he wants to speak to a teacher who is lying down, he has to speak while lying down.”

Monks denounced as Low Caste for The First Time

(Herein a brahmin usually spoke to his teacher only while walking, standing and sitting. But Ambaṭṭha was so arrogant that he mentioned the lying posture.) So the Buddha said: “Ambaṭṭha, a walking brahmin pupil may speak to a walking brahmin teacher, a standing brahmin pupil may speak to a standing brahmin teacher, a sitting brahmin teacher may speak to a sitting brahmin teacher. Such a behaviour, all brahmin teachers approve. But you speak while lying down to your teacher who is also lying down (In that case, you are indeed like an ox.) Is your teacher then an oxen and you an ox.”

Then Ambaṭṭha became very angry and said: “O Gotama! with the dark, low-caste, vile and bare-headed monks who sprang from the instep of Brahmā, I speak in the same way as I now speak to you.” Thus he disparaged the Buddha using the word low-caste for the first time.

(Herein, according to Ambaṭṭha, brahmin sprang from the mouth of the Brahmā, princes from the chest, merchants from the navel, labourers from the knee and monks from the instep. Believing thus, Ambaṭṭha ranked the monks as men of the lowest caste and though he made no reference in his speech it was intended for the Buddha.)

Then the Buddha thought: “Since this young Ambaṭṭha came here, he has spoken to Me only with conceit motivating his remarks. Like a man who grasp a very poisonous snake by the neck or who embraces a big fire or who holds the trunk of a bull-elephant in a rut, he

does not know his capacity. I will now let him know it.” So the Buddha said:

“Ambaṭṭha, you came here for some purpose. (1) You should be well mindful of the purpose for which you came here (2) Oh! without having intelligence as yet, you consider yourself already intelligent. There is nothing but lack of cleverness to account for the way you behave and speak to me.” (Here the first statement means: “Your teacher has sent you here not for insulting us but for some other purpose. So now mind the business you are sent for.” After reminding Ambaṭṭha of the etiquette to be observed by visitors, the Buddha made the second statement to snub him.)

Resentful and displeased with the Buddha's reference to his lack of cleverness. Ambaṭṭha decided to censure the Buddha in the presence of his companion and said:

“Gotama! The Sakyan princes are arrogant rough, small-hearted, talkative and if they do not revere, adore, honour or bow to the brahmin is downright improper.” Thus Ambaṭṭha spoke in contempt of the Sakyan princes, using the word “low caste” for the first time.

Monks denounced as Low Caste for The Second Time

Then the Buddha asked Ambaṭṭha how the Sakyan princes had wronged him. Ambaṭṭha replied: “Gotama, I once went to Kapilavatthu City to do some business for my teacher Pokkharasāti. I visited the assembly hall of the Sakyan princes. At that time, many Sakyan kings, who have been anointed the princes, who have not been anointed yet, were tickling one another, laughing uproariously and playing boisterously while seated on a raised platform in the hall. In fact, they seemed to be laughing only at me. Nobody offered me a seat, Gotama! Not to thus revere, adore, honour or bow to the brahmin on the part of low-caste Sakyan princes is downright improper.” Thus Ambaṭṭha denounced the Buddha for the second time using the word, “low-caste”.

(The Sakyan princes sneered at Ambaṭṭha because they know his ancestry. He arrived like one intoxicated with pride, his shoulder-bone bent and one hand holding the edge of his waistcloth that hang loosely down to his feet. They tickled one another, laughed and played boisterously saying: “Look folks! There comes Ambaṭṭha, a descendant of our slave, Kaṇhāyana.” Ambaṭṭha also knew his ancestry and so he consider rightly that the princes were laughing only at him.)

Monk denounced as Low Caste for The Third time

Then the Buddha said: “Ambaṭṭha, even a skylark can chirp as much as it like in her nest. Kapilavatthu is the city of Sakyan princes. You should not have a grudge with such a trivial matter.”

When the Buddha thus cited the simile of the skylark, Ambaṭṭha thought that the Buddha was free from conceit since he linked his relatives to the skylark and the brahmins to *haṃsa*, crane and peacock. So Ambaṭṭha went on to mention the four classes of people, saying: “Friend Gotama, there are four classes of people, namely, kings, brahmins, merchants and labourers. Of these four classes, the kings, merchants and labours are in fact servants of the brahmins. So, O friend Gotama, not revering, adoring, honouring or bowing to the brahmins on the part of the low-caste Sakyan princes is downright improper.”

Thus Ambaṭṭha belittled the Sakyan princes for the third time with the word, “low-caste.”

Proof of Ambaṭṭha's Low Birth

As Ambaṭṭha persisted in denouncing the Sakyan princes as low caste people, the Buddha decided to asked him about his clan. So the Buddha said: “Ambaṭṭha, of what clan are you.” Ambaṭṭha, shouted three times: “Gotama, I am of Kaṇha clan.”

(Herein, Ambaṭṭha knew the impurity of the Kaṇha clan superficially. But he did not know the previous life of Kaṇha. Owing to his ignorance he thought that the Buddha could not say anything and he made the above remark because of his

arrogance.)

Then the Buddha explained to Ambaṭṭha the lineage of Sakyan princes and the origin of the Kanha clan.

“Ambaṭṭha, if you trace back your genealogy, you will find that the Sakyan princes are the sons of lords and that you are the son of their slave-woman.

“Ambaṭṭha, the Sakyan princes regard King Okkāka as their grandfather. What happened long ago was that King Okkāka had a young Queen whom he loved very much. Wishing to give his kingdom to her son, he sent into exile his elder sons called Okkāmkha, Karakanda, Hatthinika and Sinisura. (Their elder and younger sisters, namely, Piya, Sappiya, Ānanda, Vijitā and Vijitasenā, these five princesses also accompanied the princes with the permission of the King.) The exiled princes founded a city in the teak forest, near a lake on the fringe of the Himavanta. They married their sisters in order to preserve the purity of their family.

“Ambaṭṭha, King Okkāka asked his ministers where his sons lived. They reported to him that the princes had founded a city in the teak forest, near a lake on the Himavanta and that they had married their sisters to preserve the purity of their family.

“Ambaṭṭha! King Okkāka exclaimed then: ‘My sons are so able. They are so able!’ in allusion to that exclamation the princes were known as Sakyan (*Sakya*, ‘able ones’). King Okkāka was the prototype of the Sakyan princes.

Origin of Kanha Clan

“Ambaṭṭha, King Okkāka had a slave woman named Disā. She gave birth to a son called Kanha. Immediately after his birth, Kanha said: ‘O Mother, cleanse me! Bathe me! Free me from this impurity! I will be one who can do good to you.

“Ambaṭṭha, just as nowadays, people call a *ogre* a *pisaca*, so also in those days people gave the name Kanha to ogres. They talked about the slave-woman's son: ‘This child spoke soon after his birth. So he is a Kanha (ogre).’ The Kanha clansmen were known as Kaphayana after that saying: ‘That Kanha was the progenitor of the Kanha clan.’

“Ambaṭṭha, so if you trace back your ancestry, you will find that the Sakyan princes are the sons of the lord while you are the son of their slave-woman.”

When the Buddha spoke thus, the young men, who had come along with Ambaṭṭha, said together: “O Gotama! Do not disparage Ambaṭṭha so severely with the word, ‘son of a slave-woman.’ O Gotama! Do not disparage Ambaṭṭha so severely with the word, ‘son of a slave-woman.’ Ambaṭṭha is well-born, a young man of good family, well-informed, skilful in speaking and wise. He is competent to challenge and refute you in connection with your use of the word ‘son of a slave-woman.’

(Herein the outcry of these young men was designed merely to absolve themselves of blame before their teacher. In their view, Ambaṭṭha was the top disciple of their teacher. If they did not put in a word for him in his dispute with the Buddha, he would make such a report as would make his teacher displeased with them. So thinking, they supported Ambaṭṭha so as to be free from censure. They secretly wanted him to be snubbed. Indeed because of his arrogance they hated him naturally.)

Then the Buddha thought: “If these young men, seated there keep talking loudly, I will not come to the end of my speech. I will silence them and talk only with Ambaṭṭha.” So the Buddha said to them:

“Young men! If you believe that because Ambaṭṭha is low born, not of good family, ill-informed, not skilful in speaking and devoid of wisdom, he is not competent to refute the Monk Gotama, then leave him alone. It rests only with you to argue with me about the matter. But if you think that Ambaṭṭha is well-born, of good family, well-informed, skilful in speaking and wise and competent to argue

with Me about this matter, then you keep quiet. Let Ambaṭṭha alone argue with Me.”

Then the young men thought: “Ambaṭṭha (dare not raise his head again) when it is said that he is the son of a slave-woman. This matter of birth is inscrutable. If the Monk Gotama tell someone that he (that someone) is a slave, who will be able to challenge and contend with the Monk Gotama? Let Ambaṭṭha rid himself of the burden that is of his own making.” So wishing to wash their hand and put the responsibility on Ambaṭṭha, they said to the Buddha evasively:

“Friend Gotama! Ambaṭṭha is well-born, of good family, well-informed, skilful in speaking and wise. He is competent to rebut (your) use of the word ‘the son of a slave-woman.’ We will keep quiet. Let Ambaṭṭha refute you.”

The Buddha now asked Ambaṭṭha:

“Ambaṭṭha here is a reasonable question for you. You will have to answer it although you do not wish to do so. If you do not answer it thoroughly or speak evasively or keep silent or go away, then your head will break up into seven pieces on the spot.

“Ambaṭṭha, what do you think of the question I will now ask? What have you heard from old brahmin teachers and their predecessors (about it)? How did the Kaṇha clan originate? Who was the ancestor of the Kaṇha clans?”

When the Buddha asked him thus, Ambaṭṭha remained silent: (His silence was the outcome of this thought: “The Monk Gotama wants me to admit verbally by myself that I am the son of a slave-woman. If I do so, then I will certainly be a slave. If the Monk Gotama asks me twice or thrice and I refuse to answer him, he will say nothing and then I will go away.”)

For the second time the Buddha asked him: “Ambaṭṭha! what do you think of the question I will now ask? What have you heard from old brahmin teachers and their predecessors? How did the Kaṇha clansmen originate? Who was their ancestor?” But Ambaṭṭha was still silent.

Then the Buddha said:

“Ambaṭṭha, now it is not the time for you to remain silent. If a man refuses to answer a reasonable question which the Buddha asks him twice, then his head will break into seven pieces on the spot.”

At that moment, Sakka (the King of Devas) came and stood in the air above Ambaṭṭha in the form of an ogre with a glowing and blazing iron hammer in his hand and threatening to break Ambaṭṭha's head into seven pieces on the spot, if he refused to answer the reasonable question which the Buddha asked him thrice. Sakka in the form of an ogre was visible only to the Buddha and Ambaṭṭha.

Herein it may be asked as to why did Sakka come. (The answer is) he came in order to make Ambaṭṭha discard his false belief (or) in the above section when Sahampati Brahmā requested the Buddha to proclaim the Dhamma, Sakka, who was with the Brahmā, said: “Venerable Sir, you do the preaching, we will make disobedient and defiant people obey you. Let your authority be the Dhamma, ours will be the command.” In accordance with his pledge, Sakka came to scare Ambaṭṭha and force him to answer the Buddha's question.

(With regard to the statement “Sakka, in the form of an ogre, was visible only to the Buddha and Ambaṭṭha”, It should be explained that if he were seen by other people as well, those who saw Sakka would have poor impression of the Buddha. They would say contemptuously that the Buddha showed the ogre to Ambaṭṭha because the latter would not accept His doctrine and that the young brahmin had to speak reluctantly under duress.)

As soon as he saw the ogre, Ambaṭṭha's body sweated profusely. He felt his whole stomach was moving up and down making a terrible sound. He scrutinized his companions

but he did not see any sign of creepy feat in them. He thought: "I am the only person threatened by this ogre. If I tell them about the ogre, they will say: 'Do you alone have the eyes to see the ogre? You did not see the ogre before. You see him only when you find yourself at your wit's end in your dispute with the Monk Gotama.' Now there is no one other than the Monk Gotama for my refuge." Thus frightened with his hair standing on end, Ambattha approached the Buddha, sat at a lower place and said:

"What did Friend Gotama say, let Friend Gotama say it again."

The Buddha then asked him for the last time:

"Ambattha, what do you think of my question? What have you heard from your old teachers and their predecessors? How did the Kaṇha clansmen originate? Who were their ancestors?"

Then Ambattha made the confession:

"Friend Gotama! I have heard what you said from my old brahmin teachers and their predecessor, Kaṇha clansmen have their origin in Kaṇha, the son of the slave-woman. That Kaṇha was their ancestor."

Ambattha's Ancestry

Ambattha's confession caused an uproar among the other young brahmins. They shouted: "Friend, it is said that Ambattha is low born, not of a good family, and the son of the Sakyan princes' slave-woman. The Sakyan princes are said to be the sons of the masters of Ambattha. We have misunderstood the Monk Gotama and blamed him, whereas in fact, he is a speaker of the truth (*Dhammavādi*)."

Then the Buddha thought: "These young men are humiliating Ambattha severely with the word 'son of a slave-woman'. I had better make Ambattha free from such a humiliation."

So he said:

"Young men! Do not humiliate Ambattha severely with the word 'son of a slave-woman!' That Kaṇha was a powerful hermit. He went to the region south of the river Ganga and after having learnt the holy mantras he approached King Okkāka and asked for his daughter, Maddaūpi's hand in marriage.

"King Okkāka said: 'Hey! This hermit, Kaṇha, is the son of my slave-woman and yet he is asking for my daughter. What kind of a man is he?' Furious and displeased, he bent his bow but he could not shoot the arrow nor could he withdraw it.

"Then the ministers approached the hermit and begged him to save the King. Kaṇha said that the King would be safe but he threatened that if the King dropped the arrow, the earth in the whole kingdom would be destroyed."

(Herein, the hermit Kaṇha went to the region south of the Ganga as a lay man and while serving a brahmin hermit, he obtained from that hermit a mantra for obstructing arrows. Then he donned the robe of a hermit, came to King Okkāka, asked for the latter's daughter and when the irate King bent his bow to kill him, he obstructed the arrow with his spell. The spell had the power only to obstruct the arrow. Kaṇha's reference to the destruction of earth was an empty threat, merely a lie. The same may be said of his other threats.)

"The ministers again begged him to save the King and the country. He said that the King and the country would be safe but again he lied that if the King dropped the arrow, there would be no rain in the whole kingdom for seven days.

"Again the ministers begged him to spare the King and the country and make the rain fall. He said that both the King and the country would be safe and it would rain but he said that if the arrow were directed at the elder son, he would be safe without a hair standing on end. Kaṇha said this only after making the King promise to give his daughter.)

"Young men, the ministers then reported to King Okkāka. The King directed the

arrow at his eldest son and the prince was safe without a hair standing on end. Then threatened with the weapon of mantra, King Okkāka became frightened, his hair stood up; and (after having made Kanha washed his head, he released him from slavery) he gave his daughter Maddarūpī.

“Young men, do not humiliate Ambaṭṭha severely with the word, ‘son of a slave-woman’. That Kanha is a powerful hermit.”

The Buddha gave his account of Kanha, saying that Ambaṭṭha was somewhat akin to the Sakyan princes (on his side) and thereby consoling the young Ambaṭṭha. So like a man on whom water is poured, Ambaṭṭha felt much relieved as his worry [about his social status] had been washed away. He became conceited, thinking that the Buddha had affirmed his kinship to the royal family, Khattiya on his mother's side.

The Nobility of The Khattiyas

Ambaṭṭha considered himself a member of the ruling class, not knowing that he was not a real prince. So the Buddha decided to disillusion him and in order to explain the meaning of *khattiya* he further engaged in the following dialogue with the young man.

“Ambaṭṭha, now what do you think of the question that I will ask you? Suppose in this world a man of the aristocratic family marries a woman of brahmin family. As a result of their marriage a son is born. Will the son born of that couple receive priority among the brahmin as regard seat and water?”

When Ambaṭṭha answered: “Yes, Gotama, he may receive it.” the Buddha said again:

“May the brahmins serve that man at the feast in memory of the dead, the wedding feast, the feast at a sacrificial ceremony and at the feast given to guests?”

When Ambaṭṭha answered: “Yes, Gotama, they may serve him,” the Buddha asked again:

“May the brahmins teach or may not teach him the Vedas?”

When Ambaṭṭha answered: “Yes, Gotama, they may teach him,” the Buddha asked again:

“May the brahmin forbid or may not forbid his marriage with a brahmin woman?”

When Ambaṭṭha answered: “No Gotama, they may not forbid,” the Buddha, clinching the argument, asked:

“May royal family consecrate him a king?”

“No Gotama,” replied Ambaṭṭha reasonably, “They may not consecrate him because his mother is not a member of Khattiya family.”

(Here in this section Ambaṭṭha answered that a son of a Khattiya father and a brahmin mother is not crowned king because of the low birth of the mother, so also is the son born of a brahmin father and a Khattiya mother because of the low birth of the father. The Buddha made this clear in His further dialogue with Ambaṭṭha.)

Buddha: “Ambaṭṭha! What do you think of the question which I will now ask you? Suppose, in this world, a brahmin marries a Khattiya woman and a son is born of this marriage. May their son receive priority among the brahmin in respect of seat and water?”

Ambaṭṭha: “Yes, Gotama, he may.”

Buddha: “May the brahmins serve him at the feast in memory of the dead?”

Ambaṭṭha: “Yes, Gotama, they may.”

Buddha: “May they teach him the Vedas or may they not?”

Ambaṭṭha: “Yes, Gotama, they may.”

Buddha: “May they forbid his marriage with a brahmin woman?”

Ambaṭṭha: “No, Gotama, they may not.”

Buddha: “May the Khattiyas consecrate him king?”

Ambaṭṭha: “No, Gotama, they may not, because the father is not a Khattiya.”

Buddha: “So, Ambaṭṭha, if you compare a man with man or woman with a woman, you will find that only the Khattiyas are superior and that the brahmins are inferior.”

The following is a different dialogue between the Buddha and Ambaṭṭha to show the superiority of the Khattiyas and the inferiority of the brahmins.

Buddha: “Ambaṭṭha! What do think of the question which I will now ask you? Suppose in this world, a brahmin is exiled, with his head shaved and ashes sprinkled over it from the country or the city by other brahmins for a certain offence. May that exiled brahmin receive priority among the brahmins in respect of seat and water?”

Ambaṭṭha: “No, Gotama, he may not.”

Buddha: “May the brahmins serve that (exiled) brahmin at the feast in memory of the dead, at the wedding feast, at the sacrificial feast and at the rest given to guests?”

Ambaṭṭha: “No Gotama, they may not.”

Buddha: “May the brahmins teach or may not teach the Vedas to that (exiled) brahmin?”

Ambaṭṭha: “No, Friend Gotama, they may not.”

Buddha: “May the brahmins forbid the marriage of that (exiled) brahmin with a brahmin woman?”

Ambaṭṭha: “Yes, Friend Gotama, they may.”

Buddha: “Ambaṭṭha, what do you think of the question that I will now ask you? In this world, the Khattiyas exile a Khattiya from the city or the county, with his head shaved and ashes sprinkled over it for some offence. May that man receive priority among the brahmin in respect of seat and water?”

Ambaṭṭha: “Yes, Gotama, he may.”

Gotama: “May the brahmins serve him at the feast in memory of the dead, at the wedding feast, at the sacrificial feast and at the feast given to guests?”

Ambaṭṭha: “Yes, Gotama, they may.”

Buddha: “May the brahmins teach or may not teach him the Vedas?”

Ambaṭṭha: “Yes, Gotama, they may.”

Buddha: “May they forbid or not forbid the marriage of that man with a brahmin woman?”

Ambaṭṭha: “No, Gotama, they may not.”

Buddha: “Ambaṭṭha, Khattiyas may have exiled a Khattiya with his head shaved and ashes sprinkled over and exiled from the country or the city for a certain offence and by such treatment he is very much disgraced. But even when he is very disgraced, the Khattiya is superior and the brahmin is inferior.”

“Ambaṭṭha, Sannakumara Brahmā too, utters this verse.”

*Khattiyo settho janetasmim
ye gottapatisārino
vijjā-caraṇa sampanno
so settho deva-mānusse.*

Among people who count much on ancestry, the Khattiyas are praiseworthy and superior. Among devas and humans, one who has wisdom and practised that wisdom is praiseworthy and superior.

“Ambattha, this verse is well-spoken by Sanankumara Brahmā. It is not ill-spoken: it is relevant to welfare; it is not irrelevant to welfare. I approved of it. Ambattha, I

too like Sanankumara Brahmā, uttered this verse:"

*Khattiyo seṭṭho janetasmim
so seṭṭha devamānusse.*

Vijjā and Carana elaborated

There is the phrase "*Vijjā-carana-samapanno*" in the verse it means "possessed of *vijjā* (Knowledge) and *carana* (Practice)". In the view of Ambaṭṭha, *vijjā* refers to the three Vedas while *carana* to the five moral precepts. Ambaṭṭha thought that if a man who possesses *vijjā* and *carana* is praiseworthy and superior, only then the brahmins were the praiseworthy and superior people. Wishing to know these two qualities, he asked: "O Friend Gotama, what is *carana* and what is *vijjā*?"

Then the Buddha, desiring to point out the supreme, transcendent knowledge and practice, leaving aside the three Vedas and the Five Precepts that are bound up with the well known caste system, etc. of Brahmanism, said:

"Ambaṭṭha, in the matter of possessing supreme transcendent knowledge and practice, you should never utter word such as 'you are fit for me' or 'you are not fit for me', words that stem from attachment to birth, attachment to clan and attachment to pride.

"Ambaṭṭha, only in a human society with its marriage customs involving the taking or giving of a daughter, should you ever utter words that stem from attachment to birth, clan and pride, words such as 'you are fit for me' or 'you at, not fit for me'.

"Ambaṭṭha, those, who cling to words stemming from attachment to birth (*jāti-vāda*), words stemming from attachment to clan (*gotta-vāda*), words stemming from attachment to pride (*māna-vāda*) and words stemming from attachment to marriages that involve the taking or giving of a daughter, are far from possession of the supreme, transcendent knowledge and practice.

"Ambaṭṭha, one can realize the supreme, transcendent practice only if one overcomes clinging to birth, clinging to clan, attachment to pride, attachment to marriages that involve taking or giving of a daughter."

Then Ambaṭṭha thought: "It has been our belief that we are still in possession of Knowledge and Practice. But just as a violent storm roughly gets rid of husks of grain, the Monk Gotama illumined us about those Knowledge and Practice. The Monk Gotama insists and extols only this supreme Knowledge and Practice which we cannot grasp. We should know the knowledge and practice which this Monk Gotama talk about" and again asked the Buddha: "O Friend Gotama, what is *carana* and what is *vijjā*?"

Then as in the Samañña-phala Sutta, the Buddha gave a talk on the supreme, transcendent Knowledge and Practice, section by section, beginning with the appearance of the Buddha and ending in the attainment of arahatship. (Readers may look up the teaching in the translation of the Sutta.)

The Four Causes of Destruction

(To state briefly:) Then the Buddha pointed out to Ambaṭṭha the four causes of destruction of Knowledge and Practice (or of the Dhamma.) The four causes of are:

(1) The life of an ascetic, who, being unable to live up to the doctrine for the attainment of Knowledge and Practice, enters the forest and takes to eating fallen fruits, (2) the life of an ascetic, who, being unable to practise even that much, enters the forest and takes to eating roots and fruits, (3) the life of an ascetic, who, being unable to practise even that much, builds a fire-shed near a town or village and worship fire, (4) the life of an ascetic, who, practise even that much builds a pavilion with entrance from four directions at the junctions of the cross roads, for making-money by providing drinking-water to all the people who come from four quarters, etc. The Buddha described these four types of ascetics making the so-called self-styled Samaṇas and Brāhmanas as merely attendants of

the monk who possessed the Knowledge and Practice of the Buddha-dhamma. Ambaṭṭha and his teacher were lacking in such Knowledge and Practice. So they did belong to the four types of degenerate monks and hermits, not to speak of the types of true monks who possessed the two qualifications. The Buddha elicited these facts from Ambaṭṭha through his questions and then criticized him for the first time.

“Ambaṭṭha you and your teacher lack supreme Knowledge and Practice. Nay, you even do not have the lesser qualities of those whose mode of life is the cause of the destruction of such Knowledge and Practice.

“Ambaṭṭha, your teacher, the Brahmin Pokkharasāti, does not have the lesser qualities (leading to such destruction) and yet he says impertinently: ‘What kind of people are these low-born, bare-headed and useless monks who sprang from the instep of the Brahmā? How can it be possible for the brahmins well-versed in the three Vedas to discuss with them? Ambaṭṭha, you note this defect of your brahmin teacher Pokkharasāti.”

Then the Buddha added:

“Ambaṭṭha, your brahmin teacher, Pokkharasāti, enjoys the privileges granted by King Pasenadi Kosala. Yet the King does not give the brahmin teacher any opportunity to face him. Also, when he consults the Brahmin Pokkharasāti, he does so from behind a curtain. Ambaṭṭha, why does not the King allow the brahmin to face him, the brahmin who is recipient of provisions lawfully given by him? (You think over the reason for this matter.) Ambaṭṭha, you note this defect of your brahmin teacher Pokkharasāti.”

This was the second criticism made by the Buddha.

(Herein the Brahmin knew the mantra for deception in one's presence (*summukhā avatṭam*). If, while the King was adorned with a very costly ornament, he stood near the King and recited the mantra, uttering the name of the ornament, the King had to give the ornament without being able to say: “I will not give it”. Then on a festival day, he would say: “Bring the *mahāraha* ornament” then the attendants informed him of his having given it to the Brahmin Pokkharasāti. The King asked why he had given it and the ministers said that the Brahmin knew the mantra for immediate deception, that he had tricked the King and taken away the *Mahāraha* ornament.

(Other ministers too, who envied the Brahmin for his close relationship with the King said: “Great King, the Brahmin Pokkharasāti has a kind of leprosy called leucoderma. This kind of leprosy is infectious through physical contact. So do not embrace and fondle the Brahmin as you do now when you see the Brahmin.” From that time, the King did not allow the Brahmin to face him.

Still in spite of this loss of privilege, the Brahmin Pokkharasāti was a scholar learned in law and statecraft. There was nothing which went wrong if it was done after consultation with him. Therefore, the King sat behind a curtain and consulted the Brahmin who remained outside behind the curtain.

(This was known to no one except the King and the Brahmin. The Buddha revealed the secret (not to humiliate the Brahmin but) because He knew that such revelation would certainly convince others of His Omniscience.)

Then the Buddha questioned Ambaṭṭha and made him admit that it was impossible for a commoner or his slave to become a king or a minister just by sitting at a place where the King of Kosala conferred with the ministers and princess and by repeating what they said at such meetings. The Buddha pointed out that likewise it was impossible for Ambaṭṭha or his teacher to become a hermit or a probationary hermit just by reciting and teaching the Vedas that were recited and taught by ancient hermits like Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka and others.

The Buddha again questioned Ambaṭṭha and made him admit that unlike Ambaṭṭha and his teacher, Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka and others of ancient times did not don good garments, eat good food, move in the company of women, ride good chariots, keep their good mansions

well-guarded and indulge in sensual pleasures. Then in conclusion, the Buddha said:

“Ambaṭṭha, thus you and your teacher are not hermits or probationary hermits. One who has doubt about my Buddhahood should remove that doubt by asking Me, I shall dispel his doubt by answering the questions.”

(The Buddha said so because there was no likelihood of Ambattha's attainment of the Path and Fruition in his present life. The day would only pass away. The young Brahmin has come to examine the major marks possessed by the Buddha. He had now forgotten the object of his visit and so the Buddha decided to remind him of it indirectly.)

No one was capable of examining the major marks of a Buddha who was sitting or lying. Examination was possible when He was standing or walking. Also. It was customary of the Buddha to rise and walk when someone came to investigate the marks. For these reasons, the Buddha came out of the monastery and went for a walk. Ambaṭṭha followed the Buddha closely.

Two Major Marks Shown

Walking behind the walking Buddha, Ambaṭṭha looked for the thirty-two major marks of an extraordinary man in the body of the Buddha. He saw clearly thirty of them. He did not, however, see the remaining two great marks namely, (1) the male genital covered with a sheath and (2) the thin, long and flat tongue. Therefore, he had doubts and was sceptical and indecisive.

Knowing this very well, the Buddha created, by His supernormal power, the man's genital covered with sheath, in such way as to make it visible to the young man Ambaṭṭha. Then He stuck out His tongue and passed it in both ears, right and left (thereby revealing its length), passed it into both nostrils, right and left (thereby revealing its tenderness), and covered the whole forehead with the tongue (thereby revealing its flatness.)

Then Ambaṭṭha concluded that the Buddha really possessed those marks and took leave of Him, saying: “Well, Gotama, we will go now. We have many things to attend to.” When the Buddha said: “Ambaṭṭha you may go if you wish.” Ambaṭṭha got onto his mule drawn chariot and left.

Stuck out His Tongue and passes It in Both Ears, Right and Left

At that time the brahmin teacher, Pokkharasāṭṭi, had come out of Ukkattha City and together with many brahmins, he was waiting for Ambattha in his garden. Ambaṭṭha went to the garden in his chariot as far as he could go and then stopping, he walked on foot. Then after paying respect to his teacher, he sat down at a certain place. Then there followed a dialogue between the teacher and Ambaṭṭha:

Pokkharasāṭṭi: “Ambaṭṭha have you seen the Monk Gotama?”

Ambaṭṭha: “Yes Sir, we have seen the Monk Gotama’.”

Pokkharasāṭṭi: “Ambattha, is the report about the reputation of the Monk Gotama true or false? Does the reputation of Gotama has any basis or does it have no basis?”

Ambaṭṭha: “Sir, the report about the Gotama's reputation is true. The reputation of Gotama has some basis, in fact. Gotama really possesses the thirty-two major marks of an extraordinary man and the marks are thoroughly genuine.”

Pokkharasāṭṭi: “Ambaṭṭha, did you ever talk with the Monk Gotama about something?”

Ambaṭṭha: “Yes, Sir, I talked with the Monk Gotama about something.”

Pokkharasāṭṭi: “Ambaṭṭha, how did you talk with the Monk Gotama about something?”

Thus questioned, Ambaṭṭha reported to his teacher all the conversation that he had with the Buddha. Then the teacher Pokkharasāṭṭi said:

“Oh! Our young sages and intellectuals are so amazing! Oh! your experts in the

Vedas are so wonderful! With such an assistant (like Ambaṭṭha), a man is bound to land in one of the four lower worlds after physical dissolution and death.”

Thus he rebuked Ambaṭṭha, and being furious and displeased, he kicked the young man, making him collapse. He was angry with Ambaṭṭha but in a moment there also arose in him the desire to go and see the Buddha (As for Ambaṭṭha, the privilege that he formerly had of going together with his teacher in a chariot as a charioteer was forfeited and from that time, he had to go on foot before the chariot.)

Pokkharasāti's Visit to The Buddha

The Brahmin Pokkharasāti was very much anxious to meet the Buddha but the other brahmins told him to put off the visit till the next day as it was already too late to make the visit on that day.

Then having prepared very delicious food, he put the food in the vehicle, had the fire torches hoisted on it and coming out of Ukkatṭha City, he went to Icchanāṅgala grove. He went in the vehicle as far as possible, then stepped off and approached the Buddha on foot. He greeted the Buddha, exchanged memorable words and took his seat at a certain place.

(Explanation: “Put the food in the vehicle” is the translation for the Pāli phrase: *‘yane āropetvā’* that is found in both Myanmar and Sinhalese Pīṭakas. Translators have made the special observation that the house in the context could not be in the Ukkatṭha City, and that it might be Pokkharasati’s house in Icchanangala village or elsewhere.

If the Pāli phrase were ‘*Yānam abhiruhitvā*’ it would mean ‘riding the vehicle’, a translation that would be more appropriate to the context. It would also accord with the Pāli passage: ‘*Lārohaniyaṇ naḡam abhiruhitvā Okkāsu, dhāriya-mānāsu niyyāsi*’. In the Sāmānaphala Sutta, Icchānaḡala was certainly in Ukkatṭha township. The Pāli word ‘*nivesana*’ refers only to a dwelling-place and the word ‘*parivsaṇa*’ is used for a rest house in the Sunivessakāre Vat.)

After taking his seat, the Brahmin Pakkharasāti had the following conversation with the Buddha:

Pokkharasāti: “Gotama did our pupil Ambaṭṭha come to this place?”

Buddha: “Yes, Brahmin, your pupil Ambaṭṭha did.”

Pokkharasāti: “Friend Gotama, did you talk with Ambaṭṭha about anything?”

Buddha: “Yes Brahmin, I talked with Ambatṭha about something.”

Pokkharasāti: “Friend Gotama, how did you talk with Ambaṭṭha?”

Then the Buddha told the Brahmin Pokkharasāti all about the conversation with Ambaṭṭha. Pokkharasāti apologised to the Buddha, saying: “Friend Gotama, young Ambaṭṭha is a fool. Kindly excuse him.” The Buddha said: “Brahmin, I wish Ambaṭṭha happiness,” thus forgiving the young man.

Investigation of Pokkharasāti

Then the Brahmin Pokkharasāti looked for the thirty-two marks of an extraordinary being in the body of the Buddha. He saw thirty major marks as did Ambaṭṭha, but not the other two major marks, namely, (1) the male genital covered with a sheath and (2) the thin and long tongue, he was doubtful, sceptical and indecisive.

Knowing this well, the Buddha created, by His supernormal power, the male genital covered with a sheath so as to make it visible to the Brahmin. Then the Buddha stuck out His tongue and passed it in both ears, right and left (thereby revealing its length), passed it into both nostrils, right and left (thereby revealing its tenderness) and covered the whole forehead with the tongue (thereby revealing its flatness.)

Then Brahmin Pokkharasāti became really convinced that the Buddha certainly possessed all the thirty-two major marks of an extraordinary being and said:

“Let the Venerable and the monk-disciples accept the meals at my house today for

my benefit.”

The Buddha accepted the invitation by saying nothing.

Knowing of the Buddha's acceptance, when the meal was ready, the Brahmin Pokkharasāti informed Him that the meal was ready, that it was time for the Buddha to partake of it. So at his invitation, the Buddha went to the Brahmin's house with His monks in the morning and sat in the seats prepared for them.

Then the Brahmin Pokkharasāti and his young pupils undertook the responsibility and personally served the Buddha and the monks respectively with good, delicious food. When the Brahmin knew that the Buddha had finished His meal and put aside the bowl, he took a seat and sat down at a proper place.

The Buddha gave the Brahmin Pokkharasāti a series of Dhamma talks leading to the Path and Fruition, talks on (1) generosity, (2) morality, (3) the attainment of the deva-world and (4) the noble way leading to the Path, Fruition and Nibbāna. While following these talks, the mind of the Brahmin became stable, tender, free from hindrances, joyous and clear, then the Buddha preached the Four Truths that He Himself had discovered (*sāmuikkāmsika*) and the Brahmin attained the Fruition of *Sotāpatti*.

Pokkharasāti's Special Request

Then the Brahmin Pokkharasāti, who had become a *sotāpanna-ariya*, said to the Master:

“O Venerable Gotama, Your Teaching is so delightful just as an object that has been upside down is turned upside up, just as a covered object is uncovered, just as a man who has lost his way is shown the right way, just as fire-torches are lighted in the darkness in order that those who have eye-sight may see various objects, so also You, Venerable Gotama, have clearly preached to me the Dhamma in many ways.

“O Venerable Gotama, with my son, daughter, wife, followers and councillors, I seek refuge in the Venerable Gotama, in the Dhamma and in the Sangha. From today, let the Venerable Gotama regard me as a lay man devoted to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha for the rest of his life.

“Just as the Venerable Gotama visit the house of other lay devotees in Ukkatṭha, so also kindly visit my house. Young men and young women in my house will pay respect to You. They will welcome You. They will offer seats or water to You. At the very least they will be much inspired with faith. The response of these young men and women to Your visit will be conducive to their welfare and prosperity for a long time.”

Thus having committed himself to the Buddha, etc. on the supramundane level, the Brahmin invited the Buddha to his house. The Brahmin Pokkharasāti's commitment to the Buddha, etc. differed from that of other lay devotees in that (1) it embraced his sons, daughters, wife, followers, and councillors and (2) by the last paragraph, he stated the reasons for his commitment.

Therefore, in conclusion the Buddha extolled him, saying: “Brahmin, you have spoken well” and accepted the invitation.

Chapter 36

THE BUDDHA'S HEIGHT MEASURED BY A BRAHMIN

On one occasion, a certain brahmin citizen of Rājagaha heard that it was impossible to measure the height of Buddha Gotama. So when the Buddha went into Rājagaha City and made His rounds for alms, he took a sixty-cubit long bamboo pole and stood outside the city-gate. When the Buddha drew near the city-gate, he went up to Him with the pole. The pole reached just the Buddha's knee.

The next day, the brahmin joined two sixty-cubit long poles and came again near the Buddha. The joined poles did not stand higher than the waist of the Buddha who asked him what he was doing. The brahmin replied that he was measuring His height. Then the Buddha said:

“Brahmin, even though you may join all the bamboos in the universe, you will not be able to measure My height. Certainly, I have not developed the perfections for four *asaṅkhyeyyas* and a hundred thousand aeons to enable somebody to measure My height. (I have developed them to the extent that nobody can measure My height.) Brahmin, the Buddha is a personage who is peerless and immeasurable.”

So saying, the Buddha spoke the following verse as contained in the **Dhammapada**:

*Te tādise pūjayato
nibbute akutobhaye
na sakkā punnaṃ saṅkhātum
imettāṃ api kenaci.*

The merit acquired by one who pays homage with *saddhā* to those Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and other Noble Ones, who have calmed the heat of defilements, who have no source whatever from which grief and fear derive, who are endowed with virtues excellent and visible, are incalculable to any one in the three worlds of devas, humans and Brahmās saying: “This merit is beneficial this much, this merit is profitable this much.”

At the end of the verse, eighty-four thousand beings became *soṭāpanna-ariyas*, having the opportunity of blissfully enjoying the elixir of Nibbāna.

Story of King Pukkusāti

(From the Dhatu-vibbanga Sutta, **Majjhima Nikāya**)

When King Bimbisāra was ruling the city of Rājagaha in the country of Magadha of the Middle Land (*Majjhima-desā*), the ruler of the city of Takkaṣāla, on the border of the Middle Land, was King Pukkusāti.

Once, the merchants of Takkaṣāla went to Rājagaha with goods for sale. They took presents and went to see King Bimbisāra. They offered the presents and stood paying respect to the King, who asked them where they lived and they replied they lived in Takkaṣāla.

After making further enquiries about the political situation, material welfare and about the city itself, he asked the name of the King. When the merchants replied that their King was Pukkusāti, he asked if their King fulfilled the ten kingly duties. They answered: “Great King, our monarch fulfilled the ten duties. He promotes the welfare of the people through four supporting things (*saṃgaha-dhamma*) such as *sassa-medha*, *purisa-medha*, *sammapasa* and *vacapeyya*. He acts like the parent of the people and makes them happy as the parent would do to the child sleeping in his lap.”

(1) *Sassa-medha*: prudence with regard to crops. In collecting land revenue, only to a tenth of the crops harvested is collected.

- (2) *Purisa-medha*: prudence with regard to men and warriors in service. Prizes are awarded and provisions are distributed half-yearly.
- (3) *Sammapasa*: winning the hearts of the poor. Loans in cash, a thousand or two, are offered to them without interest for three years.
- (4) *Vācāpeyya*: Affectionate talks. Endearing terms, such as ‘young man’, ‘uncle’, etc., are used in addressing people according to their age.

King Bimbisāra still asked another question: “How old is your king?” The merchants answered the age of their king and it so happened that the two monarchs were of the same age.

Then the King said to the merchants: “Friends, your King is righteous. He is equal to me in age. Would you be able to make your King, my friend?” When the answer was in the affirmative, King Bimbisāra exempted the merchants from customs duties, provided them with lodgings and ended the conversation by asking them to see him before their departure from the city.

In accordance with the King’s instructions, the merchants went to see King Bimbisāra on the eve of their departure, the King said: “Friends, have a pleasant journey on your way home. Ask your King, in my name, about his health and tell him, on my behalf, that I desire friendship with him.”

“Very well,” replied the merchants and they returned to Takkasilā. On arrival there, they stowed away their goods properly, and went to see their King after their breakfast. The King asked: “Where have you been, men? I have not seen you for all these days.” The merchants reported the whole matter to their King. Then the King rejoiced, saying: “Excellent, men! Because of you, I have a friend and ally in the Middle Country.”

Later on, the merchants of Rājagaha went to Takkasilā on business. They called on King Pukkusāti with presents. When the King learned that they had come from Rājagaha, the city of his royal friend, he said: “You are the visitors from Rājagaha, the city of my friend and ally, King Bimbisāra.” The merchants replied in the affirmative.

Afterwards the King asked after his friend’s health and made an announcement through the beat of drum: “From today onwards, all the merchants, who have come to my kingdom from the country of my friend King Bimbisāra, on foot or in carts, shall be provided with houses for lodgings and provisions from the royal granary. They shall be exempted from taxes. There shall be no molestation whatever to them.” King Bimbisāra did similarly in his Kingdom.

Exchange of Messages between The Two Kings

Then King Bimbisāra sent a message to King Pukkusāti saying:

“Friend, precious stones, such as rubies, pearls, etc. are usually produced in border countries. If you ever find various precious stones that make attractive objects and sensational news, please inform me of them.”

King Pukkusāti, on his part, sent a return message reading:

“Friend, the Middle Land is a great region. If attractive and sensational precious stones of different kinds appear there, kindly let me be informed.”

As the days, months and years passed, the two Kings remained staunch friends without seeing each other.

King Pukkusāti's Gift

While the two Kings were thus committed to sharing the news of their potential treasure, a very special thing worthy to be given as a gift occurred to King Pukkusāti first. The King obtained eight pieces of invaluable, five-coloured muslin. “These are of fine quality,” thought the King, “I shall send them as my gifts to my friend King Bimbisāra.” So he had eight cases made of sandalwood pith, each being the size of a gum lac ball, turned on a lathe: in each case he put a muslin piece and by applying gum-lac, he had the cases made

into balls. Each ball was then wrapped with a white cloth and put in a box which was wrapped again with another cloth and sealed. "Give it to my friend King Bimbisāra," the King asked his ministers and sent the boxes to his royal friend. He also sent a message: "I would like my friend to open the box and see the gifts in the company of his ministers and other officials at the centre of the city."

The ministers went to Rājagaha and presented the gift. On hearing the message, King Bimbisāra ordered his ministers and officials, through his drummers, to assemble. At the city-centre, the King sat on the jewelled throne under a white royal umbrella. Then he removed the seal and the cloth-covers and opened the box. When he untied the package in the box and saw the gum balls, it occurred to him thus: "Oh, my friend King Pukkusāti sent these gum dices as his gifts, for he must have mistaken me for a gambler, a dice-addict." Thinking thus, he took a ball, roll it in his hand, guessed its weight and knew definitely that it contained a bundle of muslin.

When the King struck the ball against the foot of the throne, the gum fell off (in layers). He opened the fragrant case gently with his fingernails and on seeing the treasure of muslin, he ordered the other seven cases to be opened. They clearly saw with their eyes that all contained priceless pieces of muslin. When these were spread and measured, they were found to be of beautiful colours and fine touch, each measuring sixteen cubits in length and eight cubits in breadth. On seeing the precious treasure of muslin pieces, people clapped their hands and threw up their turbans. They rejoiced, saying: "Our King and his friend, King Pukkusāti, have never seen each other, yet that King has sent such priceless gifts. It is proper to make such a King a friend."

King Bimbisāra had each muslin piece appraised and found all of them to be of inestimably high value. He had four of them offered to the Buddha and kept the other four in his palace.

King Bimbisāra's Gift

Then king Bimbisāra wondered thus: "A return gift should excel the gift received. My friend, King Pukkusāti, has sent me the priceless gift. What kind of gift should I send in return to him?"

Herein it may be asked: "Is there no treasure that is better than the eight pieces of muslin in Rājagaha?" (The answer is:) It was not that there was none indeed. King Bimbisāra was a great king. Therefore, it could not be that there was nothing better than the eight pieces of muslin. Nevertheless, from the time of his attainment of *sotāpanna* any worldly treasure had been no more delightful to the King's heart. Only the Three Jewels, in the form of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, were delightful. Therefore, in selecting the most valuable thing as a return gift, the King considered in the following manner:

"In this world, the treasure (*ratana*) is of two kinds: the living (*saviññāṇaka*) and the non-living (*aviññāṇaka*). Of these two, the non-living, such as gold, silver or any other precious thing, is only to adorn the living. Therefore, the living treasure is more praiseworthy.

"Again, the living treasure is of two kinds the human and the animal, The animal, such as elephant, horse or any other creature, is only to work for the human. Therefore the human treasure is more praiseworthy.

"Again, the human treasure is of two kinds: the male and the female. The female, even if she be the wife of a Universal Monarch, is to serve the male. Therefore the male treasure is more praiseworthy.

"Again, the male treasure is of two kinds: the householder (*agārika*) who strives for his family and the ascetic (*anāgārika*) who does not strive for his family. The householder, even if he be a Universal Monarch, the top of the former kind, is to pay homage with the fivefold veneration to the newly ordained novice of today. Therefore the ascetic treasure is more praiseworthy.

"Again, the ascetic treasure is of two kinds: the learner (*sekkha*), a worldling or a

man of lower attainments, and the non-learner (*asekkha*), an *arahat*. Even if there be a hundred thousand learners, they are not equal to one non-learner, the *arahat*, in sanctity. Therefore, the non-learner treasure is more praiseworthy.

“Again, the non-learner treasure is of two kinds: the Buddha and the Disciple. Even if there be a hundred thousand Disciples, they are not equal to one Buddha in sanctity. Therefore, the Buddha treasure is more praiseworthy.

“Again, the Buddha treasure is of two kinds: the minor or solitary Buddha (*Pacceka*buddha) and the Omniscient One (*Sabbaññū* Buddha) or the Perfectly Self-Enlightened One (*Sammā* sambuddha). Even if there be a hundred thousand of the former type, they are not equal to one Buddha of the latter kind. Therefore, the Omniscient Buddha is more praiseworthy.

“Indeed, in this world of sentient beings, together the world of devas and Brahmās, there is no treasure like the Omniscient Buddha. Therefore, I will send that unique treasure to my friend King Pukkusāti.”

So thinking, King Bimbisāra asked the ministers from Takkaṣilā whether they had ever seen the Three Jewels viz., the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha in their country. The ministers replied that they had not even heard of them, much less seen them. The King was much pleased because he now had the opportunity to send a present that was not found in Takkaṣilā. Then the King thought:

“I can request the Exalted One to go to Takkaṣilā, the city of my friend King Pukkusāti, for the spiritual uplift of the people. But it is not customary for the Exalted One to pass the night in border countries. So it is impossible for the Exalted One to go there.

“Suppose I can request and send the Venerables Sāriputta, Mahā Moggallāna and other great disciples and *arahats*. But the fact is, even as soon as I hear of the sojourn of these great *theras* in border regions, I should send my people, have them brought here by any means possible and serve their physical needs. So it is not possible for the great *theras* to go there.

“Therefore I will send a message that will serve the same purpose as the visit of the Exalted One and the great *theras* to Takkaṣilā would.”

The King then had a gold sheet made, four cubits in length and half a cubit in breadth, neither too thick nor too thin. On the day he was going to write on the sheet, he washed his head early in the morning, bathed, committed himself to the Eight Precepts and after his breakfast, he did not adorn himself with flowers nor use any perfume. Then taking the vermilion in a golden cup, he closed all the doors of the lower storey and went upstairs and in order to get more light, he opened the lion (figure)-supported window in the east, and sat in the airy chamber, the King wrote on the golden sheet:

“There has arisen in this world the Master, who is the Worthy One (*Arahaṃ*), the Perfectly Self-Enlightened One (*Sammāsambudha*) the Possessor of Knowledge and Conduct (*Vijjā-carāṇa-sampanṇā*), the Noble Wayfarer (*Sugata*), the Knower of the World (*Lokavidū*), the Peerless of Charioteer and Trainer of men (*Anuttaro-purisa-damma-sārathi*), the Teacher of men and devas (*Satthā-devamanussānaṃ*), the Enlightened One (*Buddha*), the Exalted One (*Bhagavā*).”

Thus the King first wrote some high attributes of the Buddha. Then he described how the Bodhisatta practised the Ten Perfections (*pāramīs*); how, after his demise in the Tusitā deva-world, he took conception in the womb of his mother; how, at that time, there appeared thirty-two great signs that seemed to open the whole world freely; how the miracles attended his conception; how he practised asceticism and strived for Enlightenment; how, sitting on the Aparājita Throne, he attained Omniscience, and how he acquired extra-ordinary supernormal powers that made the whole world open to him. Finally, King Bimbisāra wrote that in the living world of devas and Brahmās there was no *ratana* other than the *Buddha-ratana* which possessed such great attributes. The King again described some other attributes of the Buddha in the following verse:

*Yam kiñci vittam idha vā huram vā
saggesu vā yam ratanam paṇitam
na no samam atthi Tathāgatena;
idam'pi Buddhē ratanam paṇitam
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.*

Then willing to extol the *Dhamma-ratana*, the King wrote its six attributes, namely, “The doctrine of the Buddha is well proclaimed (*svākkhāta*), leading to results discernible in this very life (*sandittihika*), beneficial instantly (*akālika*), invites beings to ‘come and see’ (*ehipassika*), worthy to be embraced (*opaneyyika*), and worthy to be experienced by the wise individually (*paccattam-vedittabbo vinnuhi*). The King also mentioned special attributes such as the thirty-seven constituents of Enlightenment (*Bodhipakkhiya Dhamma*), such as the four foundations of mindfulness (*satipatthana*), the four right efforts (*sammappadhana*), the four paths to supernormal power (*iddhi-pada*), the five faculties (*indriya*), the five strengths (*bala*), the seven factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*) and the eightfold Path (*magganga*).

Then the King described the attributes of the Dhamma partly as follows:

*Yam buddhasett̐ho parivannayī sucim
samādhim anantarikaññam āhu;
Samādhinā tena samo na vijjati;
idam'pi dhamme ratanam paṇitam
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.*

Then the King willing to extol the *Sangha-ratana* wrote its nine attributes, of which the first four being that “The Disciples of the Buddha possess good conduct (*suppaṭipaññātā*), upright conduct (*ujupaṭipaññātā*), conduct leading to Nibbāna (*ñāya-paṭipaññātā*), conduct leading to their being worthy of veneration (*sāmicī-paṭippaññātā*); by possessing which (as the cause): they are worthy of offering brought from afar (*āhuneyya*), worthy of offering meant for guests (*pahuneyya*), worthy of proper offering (*dakkhineyya*), worthy of veneration (*añjali-karaṇīya*), and being the best field for beings to sow the seeds of good deeds (*anuttara-puññakkhetta lokassa*). The King continued his writing:

“Clansmen, who are of good birth and good conduct, hear the words of the Exalted One and renounce the world to become monks. Some do so, giving up the pleasures of a king, some the pleasures of a crown-prince, some the post of a supreme commander, and so on. Having become monks, they lead the noble way of life.” After this foreword, with regard to the noble way of life, the King wrote something about lower morality (*cūla-sīla*), medium morality (*majjhima-sīla*), higher morality (*mahā-sīla*), etc., as contained in the Brahmajāla Sutta. He also wrote, in part, on the restraint of the six senses, cultivation of mindfulness with intelligence (*satisampajañña*), contentment with the four requisites of life, the nine kinds of dwellings suitable for meditation, the overcoming of five hindrances (*nivarana*), making preparations with certain devices (*kaṣiṇa*) for mind-training, development of *jhāna* and supernormal powers, thirty-eight kinds of meditation, etc., all leading up to the attainment of arahatship.

After describing in detail the sixteen kinds of mindfulness on breathing (*anapanassatī*) for meditation, the King glorified the Buddha's Disciples in the Sangha:

*Ye puggalā aṭṭhasatam pasat̐hā
cattari etāni yugāni honti;
te dakkhiṇeyya sugatassa sāvaka
etesu dinnāni mahāpphalāni;
idampi Sanghe ratanam paṇitam
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.*

The King then added: “The Teaching of the Exalted One with its threefold training

(*sikkhā*) is beautiful in the beginning, beautiful in the middle and beautiful in the end. It is the teaching that will also certainly lead to liberation from *saṃsāra*; Friend Pukkasati, I would like to urge you to renounce the world and become a monk if you can.”

King Bimbisāra then rolled the gold sheet, wrapped it in a piece of very fine cloth and put it in a sandalwood case; the sandalwood case was then placed in a gold case, the gold case in a silver case, the silver case in a ruby case, the ruby case in a coral case, the coral case in a carbuncle case, the carbuncle case in a spotted ruby (*masāragalla*) case, the spotted-ruby case in a crystal case, the crystal case in an ivory case, the ivory case in a ten-jewelled case, the ten-jewelled case in a bamboo-strip case and the bamboo-strip case again in a sandalwood box, then again the sandalwood box was placed in a gold box, silver box, ruby box, coral box, carbuncle box, spotted-ruby box, crystal box, ivory box, the ten jewelled box and a bamboo-strip box successively, one box in the other as before.

Then the bamboo-strip box was put in a sandalwood casket, the sandalwood casket in a gold casket, then as before in a silver casket, ruby casket, coral casket, carbuncle casket, spotted ruby casket, crystal casket, ivory casket, ten-jewelled casket and lacquer casket successively. Then after having the lacquer casket wrapped up in a piece of fine cloth, and the royal seal stamped, the King ordered his ministers: “Decorate the streets in my domain, each street being eight *usabhas* in width, the two portions being two *usabhas* in width on either side to be just patched up but the middle portion measuring four *usabhas*¹ in width is to be decorated with royal accessories.”

Then the King had a seat placed on a fully ornamented royal elephant, had a white umbrella over it, had the roads of the capital sprinkled with water and thoroughly swept. Flags, banners, and streamers were to be hoisted. On either side of each road was to be decorated with plantain trees, water-filled pots, various performers and fragrant flowers. Messengers were sent to provincial and city governors with instructions saying:

“You should honour the royal present when it passed through places under your rule.”

Splendidly adorned with full regalia, and accompanied by his ministers, the King himself set off, carrying the sacred present to the border with great pomp and ceremony amid the boisterous playing of all kinds of music. He privately told his envoy who was in charge of the scared present:

“Men, I want my royal friend to receive it not in the presence of his queens but on the upper terrace of the mansion.”

The King worshipped the sacred present most respectfully, regarding its journey as the visit of the Buddha Himself to the border country. Then he returned to Rājagaha City.

The provincial and city governors also improved the road in the same way and passed on the scared present from one place to another.

Reception by King Pukkasāti

King Pukkasāti, too, had the road from the border refurbished, had the capital beautifully decorated and received the sacred present magnificently.

The sacred present reached Takkasilā surprisingly on an *uposatha* day. The minister, who brought the present, transmitted to the King about the message that King Bimbisāra had verbally given him.

Having heard the message, King Pukkasāti made the necessary arrangements for the comfort of the visitors and took the present by himself and went up to the upper terrace of the mansion. He posted guards at the door to prevent anyone from entering the mansion, opened the window, placed the holy present on a high place and took a lower seat for himself. Then he removed the royal seal and the outer covering of cloth and on opening the

1. 1 *usabha* = 20 *yaṭṭhis*, 1 *yaṭṭhi* = 7 *ratanam*,
1 *ratanam* = 2 *vadatthi*, 1 *vadatthi* = 12 *aṅgulaṃ*
1 *aṅgulaṃ* = 1 inch. Hence 1 *usabha* = 280 ft (Childers)

containers one by one beginning with the lacquer casket he saw the innermost sandalwood casket and rightly concluded: "The way in which the present is packed is different from the way in which earthly treasures are packed. Surely it must be a *ratana* that has appeared in the Middle Land and that deserves our attention."

Then the King opened the fragrant casket, removed the royal seal and holding the very fine cloth by both edges, he unwrapped it gently and saw the golden scroll. He was struck with wonder at the fine script of the writer — the beautiful, well-shaped letters and lines that made up his hand-writing. The King read every letter of the message.

As he read the attributes of the Buddha, beginning with "There has arisen the Exalted One in this world," he became very much ecstatic with the hair from ninety-nine thousand pores standing straight on end. He was unconscious even of his standing or sitting posture. He was deeply gratified when he thought of the opportunity that he had, thanks to his friend King Bimbisāra for the opportunity to hear the message about the *Buddha-ratana* that was so hard to hear despite the passage of millions of *kappas*.

Being unable to read further, King Pukkusāti sat in a contemplative mood till his ecstasy faded away. Then he read the attributes of the Dhamma beginning with *svākkhāta*. Again he became ecstatic as before. Having remained in a contemplative mood till his ecstasy faded away, he then read the attributes of the Sangha beginning with *suppaṭipañṇā* and there arose a great ecstasy in him as before.

King Pukkusāti's Attainment of Jhāna and Monkhood

Then the King read the last section in the gold scroll which described the mindfulness of breathing in meditation. He engaged in meditation according to the instructions in the scroll and gained the *rūpāvacāra jhāna* fully. He spent his time enjoying the bliss of *jhāna* without anyone other than a young attendant who was allowed to see him. In this way, half a month (fifteen days) had elapsed.

The people of the city assembled in the courtyard of the palace and clamoured for the appearance of the King, saying:

"The King has completely stopped reviewing the troops or seeing the dancers since the day he received the royal present. He has also ceased to give royal decisions. We want the King to show anyone he likes the royal present sent by his friend, King Bimbisāra. It is a tendency of some kings to try to annex a country by alluring the ruler with royal presents. What is our King doing now?"

When the King heard their outcry, he wondered whether he should work for the welfare of the country or follow the Teaching of the Buddha. Then he thought: "No mathematician can count the number of lifetimes that I have spent as a ruler of a country. Therefore, I will only practise the Teaching of the Exalted One." So thinking, he took the sword that was near the bed, cut off his hair, opened the window and threw down the hair-knot with the ruby-headdress into the midst of the assembly, saying: "Men! Take my hair-knot and let it act as a king."

The people received the hair-knot together with its ornamental ruby headdress and cried, lamenting: "O Great King! Are the kings who receive presents from their royal friends all like you?" The beard of King Pukkusāti was two finger-breadth long like that of the Bodhisatta on the eve of his renunciation.

Then the King sent his young attendant to the market to buy and bring two dyed robes and an earthen bowl. Then saying: "I dedicate my monkhood to the Exalted Ones who are worthy of honour in this world," he donned one robe as the lower garment, put on the other as the upper garment and, with the alms-bowl hanging over his left shoulder and a staff in one hand, he paced twice or thrice outside the mansion to see whether he looked well and proper as a monk. He was pleased to find that he did. He then opened the main door and stepped down from the mansion.

The dancers and others who were waiting at the three successive doors saw the monk Pukkasāti coming down but they did not recognize the King. They thought that a Paccekabuddha had come to preach to their King. It was only when they got on to the top

of the mansion and thoroughly examined the seat of the King that they knew of the King's departure and they cried all at once, like people in a sinking boat in the middle of the sea.

As soon as the monk Pukkusāti stepped on the ground, all the citizens and soldiers surrounded him and wept bitterly. The ministers said to Pukkasāti:

“Great King! The kings in the Middle Land are very crafty. You should go only after sending emissaries and making inquiries to know definitely whether or not the *Buddha-ratana* has really appeared in the world. For the time being, you should return to the palace.”

But monk Pukkusāti went off, saying: “Friends, I have implicit faith in my friend, King Bimbisāra. My friend, King Bimbisāra, has never spoken to me ambiguously. You stay behind.” The ministers and the people, however followed the King persistently.

Pukkusāti the clansman then made a mark on the ground with his staff and asked the people: “Whose country is this?” They replied: “Great King, it is your country.” Then the monk said: “He who destroys this mark should be punished by the authority of the king.” In the **Mahājanaka Jātaka**, the Queen Sīvalidevī dared not erase the line drawn on the ground by the Bodhisatta, King Mahā Janaka. So rolling on the ground, she artfully made the line disappear and followed the King. The people too followed through the outlet made by the Queen. But in the case of the line drawn by King Pukkusāti, the people dared not destroy it and they were left rolling and weeping with their head turned towards the line.

Pukkusāti The Clansman

Pukkusāti the clansman went off alone without taking even a servant or a slave to offer him a tooth-stick or water for washing face on the journey. He travelled by himself, mindful of the fact that “My Teacher, the Exalted Ones, renounced the world (as a Bodhisatta) and went off alone to become a monk.” Bent on following the example of the Buddha as far as possible and remembering that the Buddha never used a vehicle, he did not wear even a single-layered slipper or use even an umbrella made of leaves. The people climbed the trees, city-walls, small turrets or scaffolds on the walls or inside of fortifications, etc and watched their King setting out alone.

Pukkusāti the clansman thought: “I will have to go a long journey. I cannot fare to the end of my journey all by myself.” So he followed a caravan. As he had to travel by foot on a very rough terrain under the burning sun, the soles of his very tender feet cracked with sores and eruptions, causing great pain and suffering. When the caravan set up a tent made up of branches and leaves and took rest, Pukkusāti stepped off the main road and sat at the foot of a tree. There was no one to massage him or attend to his physical needs. He entered upon the fourth *jhāna* by engaging in breathing meditation, dispelled his weariness and passed the time in *jhānic* bliss.

The next morning, he cleaned his body and again followed the caravan. When it was time for his morning meal, the merchants took his alms-bowl and offered him food. Sometimes the food was not well-cooked: sometimes too soft, sometimes too rough with sand and pebbles, sometimes too salty, and sometimes it had too little salt. The monk did not bother whether the food was soft or hard, rough or tender, salty or having little salt, but only thought of the place it entered, and ate it as if it were celestial food.

In this way, he came to Sāvatti, having covered a distance of one hundred and ninety-two *yojanas*. Although the caravan passed the Jetavana monastery in the city, it never occurred to him to ask where the Buddha resided. This was due to (1) his reverence for the Buddha and (2) the message of King Bimbisāra.

- (1) Throughout his journey, Pukkusāti concentrated his mind on the Buddha without thinking of anything else. Having arrived near Jetavana with deep reverence for the Buddha, he did not even wonder whether the Buddha lived there and so. The question to ask about Master never occurred to him.
- (2) The message of King Bimbisāra said that “The Exalted. One appears in this world” and so it led Pukkusāti to believe that the Buddha lived in Rājagaha. So, although he passed

by the Jetavana monastery, he did not ask about the residence of the Master and continuing his journey, he came to Rājagaha, forty-five *yojanas* from Savatthi.

On reaching Rājagaha, just after sunset, Pukkusāti found many monasteries and as he concluded from King Bimbisāra's message that the Buddha was in Rājagaha, he asked the people where the Buddha lived. The people asked him from where he came and on hearing that he came from the north, they said: "Venerable Sir, you have over journeyed. The Exalted One lives in Sāvattthi, forty-five *yojanas* distant from Rājagaha on the way by which you have come." The monk thought: "Now, it is too late. I cannot go to the Exalted One today. I will spend the night here and see the Exalted One tomorrow." He asked the people about the place where the ascetics who came to Rājagaha after sunset put up. The people pointed to a potter's small hut as the rest-house for visiting monks. With the permission of the potter, the monk entered the hut and sat there to spend the night.

Arrival of The Buddha

At dawn on that day the Buddha surveyed the world of living beings and on seeing Pukkusāti, the Buddha thought:

"This man of good family read the message sent by his friend King Bimbisāra and after completely renouncing his one hundred *yojana*-wide domain of Takkasīla, he became a monk out of reverence for Me. Today he will reach Rājagaha after travelling 192 *yojanas* and another forty-five *yojanas* beyond Sāvattthi.

"If I do not go to him, he will pass the night and die hopelessly without attaining the lower three Fruitions. If I go to him he will realize the three lower Fruitions of the Noble Path and become liberated. I have developed and practised Perfections for aons out of compassion for worthy beings. I will now go and see him for his spiritual uplift."

So early in the morning the Buddha cleaned his body and entered Sāvattthi with the monks on the round for alms. In the afternoon, he left the city, rested for a while in the Fragrant Chamber and thought:

"This man of good family has done out of reverence for Me which is hard for many other people to do. Having renounced the one hundred *yojana* vast domain of Takkasīlā, he set out alone without even a young servant to give him water for washing his face." The Buddha thought of this austerity of the monk and without calling the Mahātheras Sāriputta or Moggallāna or any other disciples, He left Sāvattthi, taking His alms-bowl and robe by Himself.

The Buddha did not fly in the air or shorten the journey but went on foot as He knew that, out of reverence for Him, the monk did not travel by elephant, horse chariot or a golden palanquin but went barefooted without a slipper or a leaf-umbrella.

With a Buddha's splendour of all the great marks and six body-rays, etc. shrouded like the cloud-covered moon, the Buddha travelled incognito for the whole afternoon (i.e., about six hours) and covering a distance of forty-five *yojanas*, He arrived near a potter's hut at sunset, just after the monk Pukkusāti had entered the hut. The Buddha arrived with His glory covered in order to enable the monk to have complete rest. One, who is tired and weary, cannot absorb the Dhamma.

When the Buddha arrived near the potter's hut, He did not enter it impolitely as the Omniscient Buddha but stood at the entrance and asked for the monk's permission to stay there. Pukkusāti mistook the Buddha for an ordinary monk and gave his permission willingly, saying: "My friend, this hut is quiet. It is not small. You may stay here comfortably as you please."

(How could the monk Pukkusāti, who had renounced the one hundred *yojana*-vast kingdom of Takkasīlā, be reluctant to share his accommodation in a deserted hut with a fellow-monk? He was not reluctant at all. Yet some vain and foolish monks (*mogha purisa*) are very miserly and possessive with regard to their abode (*āvāsa-macchariya*) and try to deny accommodation to fellow-monks.)

The Buddha, who was very tender and delicate, left the Fragrant Chamber which was like a celestial mansion and entered the potter's hut which was very filthy and loathsome with ashes, broken pots, grass straws and droppings of chickens and pigs. Here, amidst this collection of garbage, the Buddha made a bed of grass, spread the robe of rags and sat totally unperturbed as though He were in the Chamber that was fragrant with celestial scents.

Thus, as the two men of Khattiya families, who were credited with past good deeds, who renounced royal pleasures to become monks, who had golden complexions, who had attained transcendent states, the Buddha and Pukkusāti both sat in the potter's hut, making the hut very splendid like the crystal cave where the two lion-kings dwelt.

The Buddha never thought: "I am very delicate and yet I have travelled strenuously forty-five *yojanas* the whole afternoon (in six hours). I will now lie down on my right side to get over my weariness for a moment." Without having any such thought, the Buddha entered upon the fourth *jhāna* of Fruition (*phala-samāpatti*) while sitting.

Nor did the monk Pukkusāti think of lying down for a moment to overcome his weariness from the bare-footed journey of one hundred and ninety-two *yojanas*. He too entered upon the fourth *jhāna* induced by breathing while sitting.

(Herein the object of the Buddha's visit was to teach Pukkusāti and why did he enter upon the fourth *jhāna* instead of teaching the monk? The Buddha did not teach at once because, at that time, the monk was still tired and weary. He would not be able to appreciate the Teaching. So the Buddha waited to let his weariness pass away.

(Other teachers say that Rājagaha was a populous royal city with the air ringing with the ten kinds of sound, that the Buddha deferred preaching till midnight when the city would become quiet. This view is not acceptable, for certainly the Buddha could supernormally dispel even the sound travelling as far as the Brahmā-world. In other words, He could make that sound inaudible to the monk. In fact, the Buddha waited till the monk's recovery from his weariness.)

The Buddha left Savatthi at noon, travelled on foot to Rājagaha which was forty-five *yojanas* away, reached the potter's hut at sunset, entered the hut with the permission of the monk and became absorbed in *phala-samāpatti* for six hours. Arising from the *jhāna* at midnight, He opened both of eyes, which were endowed with five kinds of sensitivity, like opening the window of a golden mansion. Then He saw the monk Pukkusāti sitting absorbed in the fourth *jhāna* (induced by breathing) like a golden statue, without any movement of the hands, legs or head, grave and imperturbable like a firmly established door-post. The Buddha thought that the monk's posture was quite impressive and decided to start the conversation.

Of the four postures, viz., walking, standing, lying down and sitting, the first three lack dignity. The hands, the legs and the head of a walking monk shake. The standing monk's body is stiff. The one lying down is also unpleasant. In fact, only the sitting posture of the monk, who, after having swept his retreat in the afternoon, spread his leather sheet, cleaned his hands and feet, sits cross-legged is dignified. The monk Pukkusāti sat cross-legged in the fourth *jhāna* that was induced by breathing practice. This pleased the Buddha.

(The Buddha knew that Pukkusāti became a monk out of reverence for Him. Yet, He decided to ask him because if He did not do so, there would be no conversation and no conversation would mean no preaching. So, He started the conversation in order to pave the way for preaching).

The Buddha asked the monk to whom he dedicated his monastic life, who was his teacher and whose teaching he liked. The monk answered that he dedicated his life to the Buddha and so on.

Again, the Buddha asked him where the Worthy One, the Supremely Enlightened One lived. The monk Pukkusāti replied: "My friend, there is a city called Savatthi in the north

country. The Worthy One, the Supremely Enlightened One, now lives in that city.” When the Buddha asked him whether he had ever seen the Buddha, and if he were to see Him now would he recognize Him. Pukkusāti’s reply was that he had not seen Him and that he would not know Him if he were to see Him now.

(Herein everyone knew the Buddha from His glory. This is not surprising. But it is hard for people to know the Buddha who went incognito as an ordinary monk on the round for alms; with His glory hidden. So the monk Pukkusāti answered honestly that he would not know the Buddha. He did not know, although he stayed in the same hut with the Buddha.)

Knowing that the monk’s weariness had vanished, the Buddha decided to preach to him “who had dedicated his monkhood to Me,” the Buddha said: “Monk! I will teach you. Listen to My Teaching. Bear it well in mind. I will teach you the Dhamma thoroughly.” (Up to that time, the monk Pukkusāti still did not know that his companion was the Buddha.)

Pukkusāti had renounced his kingdom after reading the message of his friend King Bimbisāra and had become a monk in the hope of hearing the sweet Dhamma of the Buddha. He had made such a long journey without meeting anyone who would care to teach him. So why should he refuse to welcome respectfully the teaching of his companion? Like a thirsty man, he was very anxious to drink the water of the Dhamma. So he gladly agreed to listen to the teaching respectfully. Then the Buddha gave the summary or contents of the Dhātuvibhaṅga Sutta as follows:

“Monk! A person or a being has six elements, six sense organs, eighteen modes of thought, four kinds of support. He, who exists on these four supports, is free from the current of conceit born of ego-illusion. When such current of conceit is absent in a monk, he is said to be one whose *āsava* or defilements are gone. (1) He should be mindful of the Vipassanā (Insight) Knowledge, (2) He should speak the truth, (3) He should strive to repudiate moral defilements, (4) He should practise the Dhamma only for the extinction of defilements.” (These are the contents in brief of the Dhātuvibhaṅga Sutta.)

After thus stating these fundamentals of the Dhamma, the Buddha explained them one by one in detail. (Reference: Dhātuvibhaṅga Sutta of the **Majjhima-Nikāya**.)

Pukkusāti’s Attainment of Anāgāmi State

When the Buddha explained the first dhamma, viz., mindfulness of Vipassanā Knowledge, the Buddha led the teaching up to arahatship and Pukkusāti attained the three lower Fruitions on the basis of his good deeds in the past and became an *ariya* (Noble One) in the *anāgāmi* state.

For example, while a king is eating food of various tastes in a golden bowl, he takes such amount of cooked rice as would suit the size of his mouth. When the young prince sitting on his lap shows the desire to eat, the king may put in his mouth the lump of rice that he has taken for his own consumption. The child will eat only such quantity of rice as would be in accord with the size of his mouth. As for the remaining rice, the king may eat it himself or put it back into the golden bowl. In the same way, the Buddha, the Lord of the Dhamma, gave a discourse leading to arahatship, a discourse in accord with his own intellectual power and on the basis of his former good deeds, the monk Pukkusāti could consume three fourths of the Dhamma food, that is, the Path and became an *anāgāmi-ariya*.

Pukkusāti had no doubt about the Dhamma before he attained *anāgāmi-phala* and when he was following the Buddha’s talk on aggregates, sense-organs, elements or mental impressions, etc. But he wondered whether the highly distinguished man who looked like an ordinary man and who was teaching him might be the Buddha because he had heard that the Buddhas made it a practice to go about incognito in some places. However, when he attained the Fruition of Anāgāmi, he had absolutely no doubt that the teacher was the Buddha.

Before he recognized the Buddha, he had addressed Him as “My friend!” He did not as

yet apologize to the Buddha for his mistake because the Buddha was still delivering the discourse according to the series of the fundamentals, and the monk did not have the opportunity to offer his apology.

Pukkusāti's Request for Ordination

At the end of the discourse there followed a dialogue between the Buddha and the monk Pukkusāti:

Pukkusāti: “The Exalted One, the Teacher of devas and humans, has come here out of great compassion for me! The Buddha who preaches the good Dhamma has come here out of great compassion for me! The Exalted One who understands all the Dhamma thoroughly come here out of great compassion for me.” (Saying thus joyously, he rose and put his head against the feet of the Buddha, and he added) “Glorious Buddha! Because of my foolishness, I have made a mistake. I thought that I should call you ‘my friend’, (and I have called you so erroneously.) Glorious Buddha! Kindly forgive me for the offence against which I should guard myself in future.”

Buddha: “Monk! Verily because of your foolishness, you have made a mistake. You thought that I should be called ‘friend’ (and you have called me so erroneously.) Monk! I forgive you for the offence because you admit your offence and make amends for it accordingly. Later you guard yourself against it. Such atonement and such self-restraint contribute to the welfare of those who are committed to My Teaching.”

Pukkusāti: “Glorious Buddha, may I receive ordination in your presence.”

Buddha: “Have you got your (own) bowl and robe?”

Pukkusāti: “No, Glorious Buddha, I have not.”

Buddha: “Monk! the Buddhas do not ordain those who do not have alms-bowls and robes.”

The Venerable Pukkusāti was very much pleased with the Buddha's Teaching. He expressed his appreciation, rose from his seat, paid respect to the Buddha and went away to search for the alms-bowl and robe.

(N.B. Why did not Pukkusati receive the alms-bowl and robes that appeared supernormally for the monks whom the Buddha ordained, simply by saying “Come, *Bhikkhu!*” It is said that he did not receive them because he had never donated the eight requisites of a monk in a previous life. (This explanation was not acceptable to the commentator). Certainly, as a man who had given alms and who had great aspirations, he could not be one who had never donated the eight requisites of a monk. In reality the bowls and robes created of supernormal power are meant only for the monks who was in their last existence. Pukkusāti was still subject to rebirth. So he could not have such supernormal requisites.

(The Buddha did not seek the bowl and robe for Pukkusāti's ordination because He had no opportunity to ordain him. The death of Pukkusāti was imminent and he was like a Brahṃā to the potter's hut for temporary residence. So the Buddha did not seek the bowl and robe for him.)

Pukkusati went off in search of bowl and robe just after dawn. Dawn came all at once with the end of the Buddha's discourse and the emission of the Buddha's six body-rays.

The Buddha emitted the six hued rays as soon as His preaching was over. The whole hut was brightly illuminated. The six hued rays spread out in groups, as if enveloping all the quarters with gold garments or making all places bright with multi-coloured flowers. The Buddha resolved Himself to become visible to the people of the city and when the people saw the Buddha, they spread the news of His presence in the hut and the matter was reported to King Bimbisāra.

King Bimbisāra's Visit and Honour

When King Bimbisāra heard the report, he went to the potter's hut and after paying respect, he asked the Buddha when He had arrived. The Buddha replied that He had arrived at sunset, the previous day. The King again asked about the object of His visit. Then the Buddha said:

“Great King, your bosom friend, King Pukkusāti, read your message and after renouncing the world to become a monk, he made the journey out of regard for Me but having travelled forty-five *yojanas* unnecessarily beyond Sāvattthi, he entered the potter's hut and stayed here.

“For his spiritual welfare I have come here on foot and preached to him. Pukkusāti has now attained the Fruitions of the three lower Paths and is an *anāgāmi-ariya*.”

On hearing this, the King was surprised and asked the Buddha where his friend King Pukkusāti was. The Buddha replied that he had gone out to get alms-bowl and robe for his ordination. King Bimbisāra immediately rushed out in the direction in which his friend had gone out for alms-bowl and robe. The Buddha returned to the Fragrant Chamber in the Jetavana monastery.

Pukkusāti's Death and Rebirth in Brahmā World

In his search for alms-bowl and robe, Pukkusāti did not go to his royal friend, King Bimbisāra, or to the merchants who had come from Takkaśīla. He considered it unethical for him to search for them here and there, discriminating between the good and the bad like fowls. He decided to seek the real rags, not in big cities but in the fords, cemeteries, garbage heaps or narrow streets. So he tried to find really torn pieces of cloths in the garbage heap in the back-lanes.

While Pukkusāti was trying to do so, a mentally deranged cow (his enemy in a previous life) rushed towards him and gored him with her horns. Weak and extremely oppressed by hunger, Pukkusāti lost his life as he was hurled into the air. When he fell to the ground, he lay on the garbage heap like a golden statue. After his death he was reborn in the Aviha Brahmā Abode and before long he became a Brahmā *arahat* after attaining arahatship.

According to the Sagāthavagga Saṃyutta (the tenth sutta of the **Aditta Vagga** and the fourth Sutta of the **Nānatitthiya Vagga**) there were seven people who attained arahatship soon after their spontaneous (*upapatti*) rebirth in the Aviha Brahmā abode. They were: (1) Upaka, (2) Palaganda, (3) Pukkusāti, (4) Bhaddiya, (5) Khanda Deva, (6) Bahuraggi and (7) Singiya.

King Bimbisāra thought: “My friend King Pukkusāti renounced his kingdom merely after reading my message and had made such a long and arduous journey. He had done what is hard for ordinary people to do. I will honour my friend in the way the monks are honoured.” He sent his men to all the environs of the city to search for King Pukkusāti. The men found the King lying dead face down like a golden statue on the garbage heap. So they returned and reported to King Bimbisāra.

King Bimbisāra went there and mourned over his friend, saying: “We did not have the opportunity to honour our great friend while he was alive. Now he had died without anyone to help him.” The King had the corpse carried on a small couch, put in a proper place and not knowing how to honour a dead monk, he sent for the bathers, clothed the body in clean white garments and ornamented like a king.

Then the corpse was placed on a palanquin and honoured with all kinds of music and fragrant flowers, taken to the outskirts of the city and cremated with fragrant fire-wood. The bones were then collected and enshrined in a *cetiya*.

Later on, many monks in Sāvattthi went to see the Buddha. They paid respect to the Master and sitting in a proper place they said: “Glorious Buddha, You have briefly preached the Dhamma to Pukkusāti. That man is now dead. What is his destination? What is his future life?”

Then the Buddha replied: “Monks, Pukkusāti was a wise man. He practised Vipassanā (Insight) meditation that accords with the transcendent Dhamma. He did not give Me any

trouble on account of the Dhamma. Due to the extinction of the five fetters that lead to the lower sensual worlds, he will be reborn in the Avihā Brahmā-world and will attain in that very Suddhāvāsa Brahmā-world (Avihā being one of its five abodes). There is no possibility of his return to the lower sensual worlds from that Avihā abode.”

Story of The Asura King (Rāhu)

Rāhu, the Asura Deva King, was four thousand and eight hundred *yojanas* in height. The distance between his two arms was one thousand and two hundred *yojanas*. The thickness of his body was six hundred *yojanas*. His palms and his soles were three hundred *yojanas* in perimeter. The portion of the finger between two joints is fifty *yojanas* long. The distance between the two eye-brows was fifty *yojanas*. The mouth was two hundred *yojanas* long, three hundred *yojanas* deep and three hundred *yojanas* in circumference. The neck has (a girth of) three hundred *yojanas*. The forehead was three hundred *yojanas*. The forehead was three hundred *yojanas* in breadth and the head nine hundred *yojanas*.

Rāhu, the Asura King, thought: “I am too tall, I will not be able to look down and see the Exalted One.” So he did not go to the Buddha. But, one day, he heard words about the greatness of the Buddha and so he went, hoping to see the Master by any possible means.

Knowing the Asura Deva King's mind, the Buddha thought of the posture in which He should be viewed. Then since a person who is standing appears to be tall in spite of his short stature, the Buddha decided to show His body to the Asura-king in a lying posture. The Buddha told the Thera Ānanda to put a small couch outside the Fragrant Chamber and then He lay down on the right side on the couch like a lion-king.

Rāhu then went near the Buddha but he had to look up to see the Buddha's face, just as he had to stretch his neck and look up at the moon in the sky. The Buddha asked him why he had come to see Him only after a very long time. The Asura King replied that he had not come because he haboured under the misapprehension that he would not be able to stoop and see the Glorious Buddha.

Then the Buddha said to him: “Asura King! I have not developed the Perfections (*Pāramīs*) holding my head down (that is, relaxing my effort). I have given alms always holding up my head (that is, without relaxing my effort).”

On that very day, Rāhu, the Asura King, formally become one who took refuge in the Buddha.

Story of Devadatta

(The following story of Devadatta, from the time of his ordination to his being swallowed by earth, is condensed as far as possible, although a lengthy account should be given based on many stories about Devadatta in Pāli literature).

An account of Devadatta, up to the time of his ordination, has already been given. (Reference: “The ordination of six Sakyan princes and the barber Upāli”, Chapter 28.)

Of the six Sakyan princes and the barber Upāli after their ordination,

- (1) the Venerable Bhaddiya attained the threefold supramundane knowledge and became an *arahat* during the *vassa* in that very year.
- (2) the Venerable Anuruddha gained the Divine Eye (*dibbu-cakkhu*) and after hearing the Mahāvītakka Sutta, he attained arahatship (**Āṅguttara Nikāya** Vol 3.)
- (3) the Venerable Ānanda was established in *sotāpatti-phala* after hearing the discourse containing the simile of the mirror taught by the Venerable Puṇṇa Mantāni-putta. (**Saṃyutta Nikāya**, Vol 2.)
- (4) & (5) the Venerables Bhagu and Kimila later on developed Vipassanā meditation and attained arahatship.
- (6) Devadatta gained mundane psychic powers, remaining a worldling. He never became an *ariya*.

At another time while the Buddha was sojourning in Kosambī, He and His many disciples

received abundant offerings. People came into the monastery with robes, medicines and other requisites in their hands and asked: “Where is the Exalted One? Where is the Venerable Sāriputta? Where is the Venerable Moggallāna? Where is the Venerable Mahā Kassapa? Where are the Venerables Bhaddiya, Anuruddha, Ānanda, Bhagu and Kimila?” They were always on the move, looking for the places where the eighty Great Disciples (*Mahā Sāvaka*) stayed. But there was nobody who bothered to ask Devadatta's whereabouts.

Devadatta's Attempt to gain Power

Then Devadatta thought: “I too became a monk along with Bhaddiya and others. They are monks of ruling (Khattiya) families; I too am a monk of such a family. But those who brought offerings with them asked for Bhaddiya and others. As for me, there was not a single person who cares to ask about me even by my name. Whom should I associate with and whom should I make devoted to me so that I have abundant offerings for my own?” He continued to ponder: “King Bimbisāra was established in the *sotāpatti-phala* together with one hundred and ten thousand wealthy brahmins the first time he saw the Buddha. It is not possible to be united with him. Nor is it possible to form an alliance with King Kosala. Prince Ajātasattu, son of King Bimbisāra, however, does not know a person's virtues or vices as he is young. I will manage to be one with him.” So thinking he went to Rājagaha and transformed himself into a boy. He adorned himself with four snakes, two on his hands and two on his legs, he also placed a snake on his neck, another one on his head and still another one on his left shoulder; he had the tails of these seven snakes interlocked as a waist band (belt) and put it on to decorate himself. Finally he came down from the sky and sat on the lap of Prince Ajātasattu.

The Prince was so scared and asked him who he was. The apparent boy said that he was Devadatta and the Prince requested him to show himself as the real Devadatta. Devadatta removed the guise and stood before the Prince in his original physical form, dressed in the monk robe and with an alms-bowl in his hand. Very much impressed by this magic, Prince Ajātasattu became Devadatta's devoted follower. He regularly went with five hundred chariots every morning and evening to see his teacher. He also sent five hundred pots of food, each pot containing food enough for ten monks.

Loss of Devadatta's Jhānic Power

His ego having become inflated because of the abundant offerings that he received, Devadatta conceived the evil desire to make himself a Buddha and lead the Sangha. As soon as this desire arose in him, Devadatta lost his supernormal powers based on mundane *jhāna*.

Kakudha Brahmā's report to Mahā Moggallāna

At that time, a lay disciple of the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna, a Koliya prince named Kakudha became a Brahmā after his death. Kakudha Brahmā came to Mahā Moggallāna with his body three *gavutas* (three-fourth of a *yojana*) long and reported how, being puffed up with self-conceit, Devadatta conceived the evil desire to make himself a Buddha and lead the Sangha and how he immediately lost his supernormal powers. After making this report, the Brahmā vanished on the spot.

The Venerable Mahā Moggallāna went to the Buddha and informed him of what Kakudha Brahmā had told him. The Buddha asked him whether he had verified the Brahmā's report by means of his psychic powers of knowing another person's mind. When the Venerable replied that he had, the Buddha said:

“Moggallāna! Keep this matter to yourself! Now that man Devadatta who is empty of the Path and its Fruition will show himself in his true colours.”

Then the Buddha gave a talk on five kinds of bogus teachers: (1) the teacher who claims to have pure morality without having it, (2) the teacher who claims to have pure livelihood without having it, (3) the teacher who claims to have pure preaching without having it, (4) the teacher who claims to have pure speech without having it, and (5) the teacher who claims to have pure intellectual vision without having it. Their respective disciples know all

about these five kinds of teachers. But they do not tell their lay followers about their respective teachers because if they do so, their teachers, who have been receiving the four requisites from the laity, will be displeased. So they say nothing and connive at the deception of their teachers, believing that by their deeds they will one day reveal their true colour by themselves. The disciples have to protect only such teachers and such teachers crave for the protection of their disciples. As for the Buddha, He really has pure morality and so He claims it. He really has pure livelihood, pure preaching, pure speech and pure intellectual vision and so He claims to have all these pure assets. For this reason, there is no need for His disciples to protect Him in respect of morality livelihood, preaching, speech and intellectual vision nor does He in the least want such protection. (For details see the Cūlavagga of the **Vinaya Piṭaka**.)

The Buddha's Sermon with Regard to Devadatta's Gains

Then the Buddha left Kosambī City and arrived at Rājagaha where He resided in the Veļuvana monastery. There, many monks reported to Him that Prince Ajātasattu went to Devadatta with five hundred chariots in the morning and in the evening, and that he sent five hundred pots of cooked food every day. Then the Master said:

“Monks, do not set great store by the gains of Devadatta. As long as Prince Ajātasattu goes to Devadatta with five hundred chariots every morning and evening and send five hundred pots of food daily, it certainly means decline of his good deeds. But their increase is not to be expected. (It is not certain.)

“Monk, for example, if the bile of a bear is cut and put in the nose of a wild dog, the animal will become worse and more violent. Likewise, so long as Prince Ajātasattu goes to Devadatta with five hundred chariots every morning and send 500 pots of food everyday, it certainly means Devadatta's decline in doing good deeds. His doing of more and more good deeds is not to be expected. (It is not certain.)

*Phalaṃ ve kadalim̐ hanti
phalam̐ veļuṃ phalaṃ nālam̐
Sakkāro kāpurisaṃ hanti
gabbho assatim̐ yathā.*

“Monks, Devadatta's reputation for his gains will head to his self-destruction. For example, monks, (1) the banana plant bears fruit for its self-destruction, (2) the bamboo plant bears fruit for its self-destruction, (3) the reed-plant bears fruit for its self-destruction and (4) the Assatara mare bears the calf in her womb for her self-destruction. In the same way, Devadatta's reputation for gains will lead to his self-destruction.

“Monks, just as the *banana* fruit kills the banana plant, the bamboo fruit kills the bamboo plant, the reed fruit kills the reed plant and the calf in the womb kills its mother, the assatara mare; so also gains kill a man of corrupt and evil disposition.”

Devadatta's First Grudge against The Buddha

Then one day as the Buddha sat amidst a large assembly, preaching to the king and the people, caring Devadatta rose and covered the left shoulder with his upper robe (as a sign of respect), he raised up his joined hands in adoration towards the Buddha and said:

“Glorious Buddha, now you are old, far advanced in age and on the threshold of the last stage of life. Venerable Sir! Let the Exalted Buddha now live in peace without bothering about anything. Let him hand over the Sangha to me. I will lead and look after the Sangha.”

The Buddha said: “Devadatta! That is not proper. Do not wish to look after and lead the Sangha.” For the second time Devadatta made the same request and the Buddha rejected it.

When Devadatta made the request for the third time, the Master said: “Devadatta! I would not hand over charge of the Sangha even to Sāriputta and Moggallāna. Why should I hand it over to you, you evil one, eater of spittle?”

The words of the Buddha rankled Devadatta. “The Buddha rebuked me in the presence of the King and the people with the word ‘eater of spittle (*kheḷāsaka*)’, one who consumes the four impure, eater of spittle-like requisites! He exalts only Sāriputta and Moggallāna.”

So thinking, he was angry and displeased and after paying respect to the Buddha, he went away.

Pakāsaniya-kamma against Devadatta

Then the Buddha made the monks pass a resolution against Devadatta in Rājagaha city. It was an act called *Pakāsaniya-kamma* - called *Ñatti-dutiya* carried out by the assembly of monks after taking the proceeding *kammavācā* at which the motion is put but once and followed by the declaration of the Sangha's decision. Then the Venerable Sāriputta was nominated by vote to be the person entrusted with the task of making the resolution public in Rājagaha. In accordance with the Buddha's word of command, the Sangha nominated the Venerable Sāriputta, and he made the resolution against Devadatta well-known in the city.

On hearing this resolution, those who lacked faith and wisdom blamed the monks, saying: “These monks, these sons of the Sakyan prince, Buddha, are jealous. They are jealous of Devadatta's gains!” But those who had faith and wisdom said: “It could not be an evil act on the part of the Master to have the facts about Devadatta made public in Rājagaha.”

(Herein, a *pakāsaniya-kamma* is an ecclesiastical act to be performed by the Sangha according to Vinaya rules. It shows clearly that the acts and sayings of the monk, against whom the Sangha passed resolution, have nothing to do with the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha and that he acts and says only of his own free will.

(The resolution against Devadatta is somewhat like this: “Formerly Devadatta's behaviour was of one kind but now it is quite different. What he does corporeally or says by word of mouth is not to be identified with the Buddha or the Dhamma or the Sangha. It is to be identified only with Devadatta.” The resolution containing words to this effect was passed by the Sangha after taking votes. Then in accordance with the instructions of the Buddha, the Sangha formally nominated the Venerable Sāriputta (again by votes) to be the persona who was to declare Devadatta a *persona non grata* publicly in Rājagaha. So accompanied by many monks, the Venerable Sāriputta went into the city and made public the dissociation of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha from Devadatta by saying: “Formerly Devadatta's behaviour was of one kind, now it is quite different. What he does bodily or verbally should not be identified with the Buddha or the Dhamma or the Sangha. It should be identified only with Devadatta.” These in brief are the noteworthy points about *pakāsaniya-kamma*.)

Prince Ajātasattu

After he has been thus fully declared to be a monk whose acts and words were disavowed by the Sangha, Devadatta thought: “Now the Monk Gotama has repudiated me. I will now do what is harmful to His welfare.” So he went to Prince Ajātasattu and said:

“Prince, people in ancient times lived long but nowadays people are short-lived. There is the possibility of your death even as a prince. So kill your father and become a king. I will kill the Buddha and become a Buddha.”

Prince Ajātasattu thought: “The Venerable Devadatta is a powerful person. He says so perhaps because he has reasons for saying so.” So he tied a dagger to his thigh; shaking with fear, he hurried into the palace in broad daylight. The ministers who guarded the King seized and searched the Prince. When they found the dagger tied to his thigh, they asked him what he wanted to do. The Prince said that he wanted to kill his father. The ministers again asked him at whose instigation he tried to kill the King. The Prince admitted that Devadatta had incited him.

Then some ministers held the view that the Prince and Devadatta and all the monks should be killed. Some contended that the monks should not be killed as they did no wrong and that only the Prince and Devadatta should be killed. Still the rest of the ministers maintained that the Prince and Devadatta should not be killed nor should the monks be killed, that the matter should be reported to the King and action taken according to the King's instructions.

Then the ministers took the Prince to the King and informed him of the Prince's attempt to kill him. The King asked them about their views and the ministers stated their three different views. The King said:

"How can the Exalted One or the Dhamma or the Sangha be guilty of any offence? They are certainly not guilty. Has not the Exalted One already declared that Devadatta's present behaviour is quite different from his former behaviour and has not He publicly disavowed the acts and sayings of Devadatta?"

Then the King dismissed the ministers in the first group (that is, those who held the first view), demoted the second group of ministers and promoted those in the third group.

Then the King asked his son why he wished to kill him. The prince said that he wanted to become a king. King Bimbisāra then said: "Prince, if you want to be a king, then this kingdom is yours," and he handed over his kingdom completely to Prince Ajātasattu.

Devadatta's Cruel Advice

As his wish was now fulfilled, Prince Ajātasattu was delighted and he told Devadatta about it. But to incite enmity in the Prince Devadatta said: "Like a man who covers his drum with a fox inside it, you think that you have achieved your object. After two or three days, your father will have a second thought about your impudence and make himself King again."

The Prince asked his teacher what he should do. Devadatta cruelly advised him to exterminate his father. The Prince said that he was not desirable to kill his father with any weapon since he was of royal blood. Then Devadatta again gave devilish advice that the Prince should starve his father to death.

Ajātasattu's Act of Parricide

King Ajātasattu ordered his father King Bimbisāra to be imprisoned in a very hot and highly vaporous iron cage. He did not allow any one except his mother to see the King.

- (1) Then Queen Vedehi put the food in a golden bowl and took it into the iron cage. The King ate the food and sustained his life. King Ajātasattu asked how his father managed to keep himself alive and when he heard what his mother was doing, he ordered the ministers not to allow her to enter the cage with food.
- (2) Then the Queen hid the food in her knot of hair and entered the cage. The King ate the food and stayed alive. When King Ajātasattu heard this, he forbade the Queen to go into the cage with her hair knotted.
- (3) Then the Queen put the food in her golden footwear and entered the cage putting on them. The King subsisted on the food brought by the Queen in her footwear. When Ajātasattu learnt how his father was staying alive, he forbade his mother to visit the King in her footwear.
- (4) From that time on, Queen Vedehī bathed herself with fragrant water, coated her body with food (made of oil, honey, molasses and butter) and putting on her outer robe, she entered the iron cage. The King licked her body and in this way he kept himself alive. When the wicked Ajātasattu heard the news, he imperiously ordered the ministers. not to allow his mother to enter the cage.

Thus forbidden to get inside the cage, the Queen stood near the door of the cage and cried: "O Great King! You, yourself, did not allow this wicked son Ajātasattu to be killed when he was young. You, yourself, raised your own (potential) enemy. Now, this is the last time that I see you. From now on, I will not have the opportunity to see you. Forgive me if

I have done anything wrong.” Thus muttering and weeping, she went back to her residence.

King Bimbisāra’s Death

From that time on, the King had no food to eat. Walking to and fro, he stayed alive only by means of the bliss of *Sotāpatti*-Fruition that he had attained. His mind being thus always absorbed in that Fruition, the King’s body became very splendid.

The wicked Ajātasattu asked his men how his father managed to survive. His men said that the King kept himself alive by walking to and fro and that he had become more splendid than before in his physical appearance. Then King Ajātasattu decided to put an end to the walking exercise of his father and told the barbers to gash the soles of his father’s feet, smear them with oil and salt and broil them before red-hot cutch-embers.

When he saw the barbers, King Bimbisāra thought that someone had certainly brought his son to his senses and that the barbers therefore had come to remove his beard.

The barbers approached the king and stood paying respect to him. The king asked them about the object of their visit, and they informed him of their purpose. Then the king told them to do according to the desire of their master. The barbers requested the king to sit and after making obeisance to him, they said: “O Great King! We will have to carry out the order of King Ajātasattu. Do not be angry with us. What we have to do is most inappropriate to a good king like you.” Then holding firmly the soles of his feet with their left hands and sharp razors with their right hands, they gashed the soles, smeared and rubbed them with oil and salt and then broiled them before the red-hot cutch-embers.

(In a previous life the King walked on the stupa platform with his footwear and trod on a mat with his uncleaned feet. The suffering that he now underwent was the lingering effect of that unwholesome act in the past, according to Commentaries.)

King Bimbisāra had to endure excruciating pain. Without harbouring any ill will, he contemplated the wonderful attributes of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. Then withering away like a flower dumped on the stupa-platform, he became an attendant of Vessavana Deva King in Catumahārāja deva-world, and the supreme commander of deva ogres by the name of Janavasabha.

(Herein he was called Janavasabha because as King Bimbisāra he was a *sotāpanna-ariya* and the chief of one hundred and ten thousand brahmin merchants. “*Jana*” meaning “of 110,000 brahmin merchants”, and “*vasabha*” meaning “chief”.

(Why did he become a low-class in Catumahārāja deva-world although he was a great *sotāpanna-ariya*? The answer was given by Janavasabha Deva-yakkha himself.

(According to his answer, he passed through seven lifetimes as king on earth after his demise in Catumahārāja deva-world and seven lifetimes in Catumahārāja after his demise on earth. Now as a *sotāpanna-ariya* and by virtue of his many good deeds in respect of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, he could have attained a higher deva-world. But because he had spent seven lifetimes successively in Catumahārāja world, his attachment to life (*bhava-nikanti*) in that deva-world was powerful and because of that powerful attachment he landed in the Catumahārāja deva-world. This was the confessions of the Deva-yakkha Janavasabha in the Janavasabha Sutta in **Dīgha Nikāya**. His confessions in verse read as follows:

*Ito satta tato satta, saṃsārani catuddasa
Nivāsam abhijānāmi, yattha me vusitaṃ pure.)*

Belated Remorse of The Fool

On the very day of King Bimbisāra’s death, the wife of the foolish King Ajātasattu gave birth to a son, later called Udayabhadda. So the two messages, one reporting the birth of a son from the chief of the palace and the other reporting the death of the King’s father,

Bimbisāra, came to the palace at the same time.

The ministers considered it advisable to submit first the report of the birth of a son and they did so accordingly. As soon as he read the report there arose in him an intense love for his son that excited his whole body and made him ecstatic to the marrow. At the same time he became aware of his gratitude to his father, thinking that at the time of his birth his father might have also experienced intense love for his son.

King Ajātasattu then ordered his ministers to release his father at once. But the ministers said that was impossible and submitted the report of the death of King Bimbisāra. On hearing the news, King Ajātasattu wept bitterly, went to his mother and asked her whether there arose intense love in his father at the time of his birth.

Queen Vedehī replied: “You foolish son! What do you say? During your childhood you had a whitlow on your finger. The royal nurses were unable to coax and make you stop crying. In the end they took you to your father who was seated in the court of law. Your father kept in his mouth your finger that was afflicted with the whitlow and due to the warmth of the mouth, the tumour erupted there. Out of great love for you your father did not spit out the pus mixed with putrid blood lest you should wake up and he swallowed it instead. Your father loved you so much.”

The Queen thus told him at length how his father was attached to him. King Ajātasattu wept bitterly and performed the funeral of his father.

Assassins sent by Devadatta

Then Devadatta went to King Ajātasattu and asked him to despatch men who would kill the Buddha. The King sent the assassins to Devadatta telling them to follow the instructions of his teacher.

Devadatta told the first man: “Man, you go to the place where the Monk Gotama is now living. You kill Gotama and come back by this way.”

Then he told a couple of men to kill the first man and come back by another way.

Then the third batch of four men was instructed to kill the two men (of the second batch) and return by another way.

The fourth batch of eight men was instructed to kill the four men (of the third batch) and come back by another way.

Then still another sixteen men (as the fifth batch) were told to kill the eight men (of the fourth batch) and return by another way.

Assassins attained Sotāpatti

Armed with a sword and a shield and a bow and a quiver of arrows, the first man went to the Buddha and stood with his rigid body near Him, trembling with fear and agitation.

Seeing him, the Buddha said: “Man, come here. Have no fear.” Then the man got over his fear and put his sword and shield as well as his bow and arrows in a suitable place. Then having approached the Buddha, he bowed his head at the feet of the Buddha and confessed and apologized for his offence. The Buddha forgave him and gave the series of talks on generosity, morality and other good deeds that lead to the attainment of the Path and Fruition. As a result the assassin became a *sotāpanna-ariya* and at the same time sought supramundane refuge in the Triple Gem.

Then the Buddha dismissed the assassin telling him not to go by the way instructed by Devadatta but to go by another way.

The two assassins (of the second batch) waited for the first assassin for a long time. Then going in the opposite direction they saw the Buddha seated at the foot of a tree. They went near the Buddha, paid respect and sat at a proper place. The Buddha gave them the series of Dhamma talks and, explained the four Truths and established them in the Fruition of the *Sotāpatti*. Like the first assassin, they too became *sotāpanna-ariyas* and sought supramundane refuge in the Triple Gem.

Again, the Buddha dismissed these assassins, telling them to go by another way.

Then the four assassins (of the third batch)

Then the eight assassins (of the fourth batch)

The sixteen assassins (of the fifth batch) waited for the eight assassins for a long time and going in the opposite direction, they saw the Buddha as did those who went before them. They paid respect to the Buddha and sat at a proper place. The Buddha gave them the Dhamma talks on the Four Truths and established them in the Fruition of Sotāpatti. After they had sought supramundane refuge in the Triple Gem, the Buddha dismissed the men, telling them to go by another way.

Then the first assassin approached Devadatta and said: “Sir, I cannot kill the Exalted Buddha. He is so very powerful.” Devadatta said: “Enough men, do not kill the Monk Gotama. I will kill him by myself.”

Devadatta caused Blood to bleed in The Buddha

After having helped the assassins to gain the Fruition of *Sotāpatti*, the Buddha was one day walking to and fro in the shadow of the Gijjhakūṭa Hill. Then Devadatta climbed the hill and rolled down a large rock with the intention of killing Him. As it rolled down, two promontories appeared automatically and blocked the rock. A layer of the rock flew off and caused blood to bleed at the foot of the Buddha.

The Buddha looked up and said to Devadatta: “You foolish man, you who can make no spiritual progress! You have caused blood to bleed in Me with ill-will and murderous intention. So you have done much evil.”

Then the Buddha said to the monks: “Monks, Devadatta has done this first heinous act (*anantariya-kamma*) because he has spilled my blood with ill-will and murderous intention.”

The monks carried the Buddha to the monastery in Maddakucchi Park. There the Buddha expressed the desire to go to the monastery in Jīvaka's mango grove and told the monks to take Him there. Accordingly, the monks took Him there.

On hearing the news, the great physician Jīvaka went to the Buddha and applied a highly potent medicine to the wound. Having bandaged the wound, he told the Buddha to keep the bandage intact until his return from his visit to a patient in the city. After calling on the patient and doing the needful for him, the physician came back but did not reach the city gate before it was closed.

Then the physician Jīvaka thought: “I have applied the powerful medicine to the foot of the Exalted Buddha and bandaged the wound treating Him like an ordinary patient. So I have made a grave mistake. This is the time to untie the bandage. If the bandage is not untied, He will suffer intense pain the whole night.” So thinking, Jāvaka was much worried. At that moment, the Buddha called Ānanda and said: “Ānanda, the physician Jīvaka came back after dark and could not reach the city gate before it was closed. He is worried because now is the time to untie the bandage. So you untie the bandage immediately.” Ānanda removed the bandage and the wound was gone, like the bark detached from the tree.

As soon as the city-gate was opened, Jīvaka hurried to the Buddha even before dawn and asked Him whether He suffered any pain. The Buddha said: “Jīvaka, I have overcome all pain since I gained supreme Enlightenment under the Bodhi tree” and then He preached the following verse:

*Gataddhino visokassa, vippamuttassa sabbadhi
Sabbagantha-pahīnassa, pariḷāho na vijjati.*

Jīvaka! There is absolutely no sorrow, no suffering in the *arahat* who has been liberated from *saṃsāra*, who has gone to the other shore of *saṃsāra*, who is free from all grief, who has no attachment whatever to all things including the body, etc., who has removed all his fetters.

(*Parilāho* (suffering) is of two kinds, viz., physical (*kāyika*) and mental (*cetasika*) suffering. Physical suffering due to cold, heat, etc., occurs in the *arahat* and so he is not free from physical suffering. The physician Jīvaka had this in mind when he asked the question. But as Lord of the Dhamma, the Buddha, was supremely skilful in preaching, and He answered that the *arahat* who possessed the above-mentioned attributes had no mental suffering. Jīvaka asked whether the Buddha had any mental suffering and the Buddha said that he had none.)

By the end of the sermon, many living beings gained the Fruition of Sotāpatti and so forth.

Security provided to The Buddha by Monks

Many monks, who heard the report about Devadatta's attempt to kill the Buddha, surrounded the residence of the Buddha in one ring after another. They recited the scriptures loudly and walked up and down to guard, protect and ensure the security of the Buddha.

On hearing their recitation (and noise of their movement) the Buddha asked Ānanda (in spite of his knowledge), and when he told Him about the vigilant monks, He summoned the monks and said:

*Atthānam etaṃ bhikkhave anavakāso, yaṃ par'
ūpakkamena Tathāgatam jīvitaṃ voropeyya.
anupakkamena bhikkhave Tathāgata parinibbāyanti.*

Monks, it is wholly impossible for anyone to put effort to kill the Buddha.

Then the Buddha said to them (as He did to Venerable Mahā Moggallāna on one occasion) that those are five kinds of teachers in the world, that only these kinds of teachers need the protection of their disciples, that, as for the Buddha, He truly claimed pure morality, pure livelihood, pure teaching, pure speech and pure intellectual vision as he had all these virtues and therefore, he did not need the protection of His disciples. He added that it was impossible for any one to kill a Buddha and that Buddhas attained Nibbāna not by any one's attempt to kill them.

Finally the Buddha said to the monks.

“Monks, go back to your own abode. The Buddhas are not beings whose security of life depends only on other people's protection.”

Sending Nālāgiri The Elephant

(The sending of Nālāgiri occurs in the Sanghabhedakakkhandhaka of the **Vinaya Cūḷa-Vagga**, and the exposition of the Cūlahamisa Jātaka of the **Asīti Nipāta**. Here the latter is based.)

Due to the treatment given by the physician Jīvaka, the Buddha recovered His fitness and as before, He went about in the glory of a great Buddha, surrounded by monks. On seeing the Buddha, Devadatta thought: “It is impossible for any men to approach and kill the Monk Gotama when he sees Him in the glow of His physical body at its zenith. But King Ajātasattu's elephant, Nālāgiri, is vicious, wild and homicidal. He does not know any good thing about the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. Only that wild Nālāgiri can kill the Monk Gotama.” So he went to the King and told him about his plan.

King Ajātasattu agreed to his plan. He summoned the mahout (elephant-driver) and ordered him to intoxicate Nālāgiri the elephant and send him the next morning along the same way by which the Buddha was taking. Devadatta also asked the mahout how much liquor the elephant consumed on other days and when he learnt that the animal drank eight pots of liquor, he told the mahout to give the animal sixteen pots of liquor the next morning and to send him towards the Monk Gotama. The mahout promised that he would.

King Ajātasattu had it announced by the beat of drum in the city that all citizens should do their business early the next morning and avoid going about in the streets as Nālāgiri

would be made intoxicated and sent into the city.

Devadatta also left the palace, went to the elephant-shed and told the mahouts: “Men, we are the King’s teachers who can make the King’s servants promoted or demoted in their work. If you want to be promoted, then give the elephant sixteen pots of very potent liquor early in the morning and when the Monk Gotama comes into the city, you incite and enrage the animal with goads and spears. Let the elephant break open the shed, rush in the opposite direction of the Monk Gotama and kill Him.” The mahouts agreed to follow his instructions.

The news spread throughout the whole city. The Buddha’s lay devotees who adored the Triple Gem approached the Buddha and said: “Exalted Buddha, in collaboration with the King, Devadatta will send the wild elephant, Nālāgiri, tomorrow along the same way by which You are coming. So do not come into the city for alms tomorrow but stay here in this Veļuvana monastery. We will offer meals to You and the monks in the monastery.”

The Buddha did not say that He would not go into the city for alms. But He decided to teach the wild elephant the next day, perform the miracle (*Pāṭihāriya*)² by teaching, subdue the heretics, and without going about for alms in Rājagaha, return to Veļuvana with monks from the city. The Buddha knew that the lay followers in Rājagaha would bring many pots and bowls of food and that He would have His meal in the monastery. For this reason the Buddha accepted the invitation of the lay men.

Knowing very well the acceptance of their invitation by the Buddha, the lay men decided to bring and offer food at the monastery and went away.

The Buddha preached to the monks in the first watch of the night and answered the questions of devas and Brahmās in the second watch. The third watch was divided into three periods. In the first period, the Buddha lay down on the right side like a lion-king. In the second, He was absorbed in the Fruition of Arahatsip. In the third, He was filled with infinite compassion and after arising from that state, He surveyed the worthy beings, and saw Nālāgiri. The Buddha saw clearly that when He preached to the elephant, eight hundred and forty thousand beings would realize the Four Truths and become liberated. So, after cleaning His body at dawn, He called Ānanda and said: “Ānanda, tell all the monks who live in the eighteen monasteries around Rājagaha to come along with Me into the city.”

Venerable Ānanda acted according to the instructions of the Buddha. All the monks assembled in the Veļuvana monastery. The Buddha entered Rājagaha surrounded by many monks.

Then the mahouts carried out the instructions of King Ajātasattu and Devadatta. There was a very large gathering of people. At the meeting those who had faith in the Buddha said:

“Today, there will be a battle between the two bull elephants, the Buddha and Nālāgiri. We will witness clearly the admonition of the animal bull, Nālāgiri, by the Buddha Bull.”

So saying they climbed the turreted and unturreted mansions, house roofs, etc., to wait and see the battle.

But as for the heretics, who had no faith in the Buddha, they said: “This Nālāgiri elephant

2. *Pāṭihāriya* means removal of opposing evil deeds. There are three ways of removal: (1) removal by preaching (*anusāsāni-pāṭihāriya*), (2) removal by performance of miracle such as creation of different forms (*iddhi-pāṭihāriya*), (3) removal by knowing the listener’s mental state (*ādesanā-pāṭihāriya*).

Of these three ways, the third one is meant here. The second way belonged to Mahāthera Moggallāna and the first to Mahāthera Sāriputta. Though the Buddha adopted the third method, it was usually preceded by either of the previous two in accordance with the mental inclinations of the listener.

is vicious, violent and homicidal. He does not know anything good about the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. Today he will destroy the bright, yellow and golden body of the Monk Gotama and terminate His life. Today we will clearly see the end of our enemy.”

So saying, they climbed the turreted mansions, etc and waited there.

When Nālāgiri the elephant saw the Buddha coming, it rushed towards the Buddha like a moving mountain with its trunk raised, his ears and tails set upright, scaring the people, destroying the houses and crushing the carts to pieces.

When the monks saw the elephant rushing, they said to the Buddha: “Glorious Buddha, the wild, vicious and homicidal Nālāgiri is coming along this way. This animal does not know anything good about the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. We want the Glorious Buddha, the speaker by good words, to step aside (keep off the way along which the elephant is coming).” Then the Buddha said: “Monks! Have no fear! I can tame Nālāgiri.”

Then the Venerable Sāriputta said: “Glorious Buddha, it is the duty of the eldest son to attend to any matter that concerns his father. Let me tame the elephant.” But the Buddha turned down his request, saying: “Sāriputta, the power of the Buddha is one thing and the power of the disciples is a different matter. You need not take any trouble (for Me).” Most of the eighty great disciples made the same request but the Buddha did not give His consent.

Self-sacrificing Love of Venerable Ānanda

Then, because of his great love for the Buddha, the Venerable Ānanda could no longer restrain himself. He came forward and stood in front of the Master, bent on sacrificing his life for Him and allowing himself to be the first trampled to death by the elephant. The Buddha said: “Keep back, Ānanda. Do not come and stand in front of me.” Ānanda replied: “Glorious Buddha, this elephant is vicious, wild and homicidal. It is like the fire that destroys the world. Let it come to you after first trampling me to death.” The Buddha dissuaded Ānanda three times but the latter persisted in standing before Him. Finally, He had to remove him by His psychic power and put him among the monks.

Incident of A Child's Mother

At that moment, a child's mother saw the elephant and fearful of death, she fled, abandoning the child from her bosom onto the ground between the Buddha and the elephant.

Nālāgiri pursued the woman but being unable to overtake her, it turned back and went near the child. The Buddha focussed His separately intended loving-kindness (*odissaka-mettā*) on the elephant and in a very sweet voice of the Brahmā-king, He said:

“O Nālāgiri, they served you sixteen pots of liquor and made you drunk not to catch any other being but verily to kill Me. So do not go about harassing the pedestrians. Come straight to where I am.”

Thus the Master invited the elephant.

The Buddha's Power

On hearing the sweet words of the Buddha, the wild Nālāgiri opened his both eyes and saw the glorious body of the Buddha. He was shocked and owing to the power of the Buddha, he became sober and dropping his trunk and flapping his ears, he went to Him and crouched at the feet.

Then the Buddha said: “Nālāgiri, you are an animal and I am a Buddha. From now on, do not be vicious, violent and homicidal. Try to cultivate loving-kindness towards all living beings.” The Buddha stretched His right hand, and stroking the forehead of the elephant, He spoke the following two verses:

*Mā kuñjara nāgam āsado
Dukkham hi kuñjara nāgam āsado.*

*Na hi nāgahatassa kuñjara
sugati hoti param̐ yato.*

*Mā ca mado mā ca pamādo
na hi pamattā sugatim vajanti te.
Tvaññ'eva tathā karissasi
yena tvañ sugatim gamissasi.*

O! elephant Nālāgīri, do not approach with murderous intent, with the desire to kill the Buddha who has never done any evil. To approach the Buddha with murderous intent is an evil that will lead to suffering. There is absolutely no possibility of good rebirth in the deva or human worlds after the death of anyone who wants to hurt or kill the Buddha.

O! elephant Nālāgīri, do not be conceited. Do not be unmindful of the ten good deeds. Those, who are unmindful of the ten good deeds, do not have good rebirth in deva and human worlds. You will have to do such good deeds as will ensure good rebirth (In other words, you will attain good rebirth only on the basis of good deeds.)

Nālāgīri elephant was overwhelmed with ecstasy. If he had not been an elephant, he would have attained the Fruition of Sotāpatti on the spot.

On seeing this miracle, the people gave a resounding ovation. They clapped their hands and joyously threw various ornaments over the elephant as their rewards. The ornaments covered nearly the whole body of the elephant and from that time he came to be known as Dhanapāla. At the time when Dhanapāla elephant was tamed by the Buddha, eighty-four thousand beings had the opportunity to sample the Dhamma, the juice of Deathlessness.

The Buddha established the elephant in the Five Precepts. The elephant gently collected the dust at the Master's feet, scattered it over his head and stepped back on its knees. He stepped at the last place within sight of the Buddha and after paying respect entered the elephant-shed. From that time he became a docile, good tempered and very tame elephant and did not harm any being for the rest of his life.

Having His wish fulfilled, the Buddha resolved that the ornaments that had accumulated be returned to their owners. He thought: "Today, I have performed a great miracle and so it is not advisable for Me to go about in the city for food." Having thus subdued the heretics, He left Rājagaha City and returned to the Veḷuvana monastery, surrounded by monks like a triumphant king (back from the battlefield). The citizens went to the monastery with much food and offered alms lavishly. They sang the following song joyously:

*Daṇḍen'eke damayanti, aṅkusehi kasāhi ca.
Adaṇḍena asatthena, nāgo danto Mahesinā.*

Some animal trainers train elephants, horses and cattle by beating violently with iron spikes, sticks, spears, goads, hooks and canes. As for the Buddha, He has tamed Nālāgīri the elephant without using any destructive weapon and has removed his violent temper through loving-kindness.

Decline of Devadatta's Gains

Devadatta's attempt on the life of the Buddha caused a big outcry among the people. They loudly blamed King Ajātasattu, saying: "It was Devadatta who caused the death of our King Bimbisāra. It was Devadatta who sent the assassins. It was he who rolled down the rock; and now he sent the elephant Nālāgīri to kill the Master. Yet such an evil man is made teacher by King Ajātasattu who goes about with him."

When King Ajātasattu heard the people's reproach, he ordered the withdrawal of his regular offer of five hundred pots of food to Devadatta and he stopped going to see his former teacher. The citizens, too, ceased to offer any food to Devadatta who visited their houses for alms.

Five Things demanded by Devadatta

His gains having dwindled day by day, Devadatta decided to do some thing dramatic and spectacular for his living. He went to the Buddha and said:

“Glorious Buddha, I beg you to lay down the following rules for the monks:

- (1) All monks should live in forest hermitage for life. A monk, who lives in a monastery near a village, should be guilty of an offence.
- (2) All monks should always eat only the food that they obtain by going on the round for alms. A monk, who accepts the food which the lay men have offered after invitation, should be guilty of an offence.
- (3) All monks should always wear only the robe made of rags. A monk, who accepts the robe offered by lay men, should be guilty of an offence.
- (4) All monks should always dwell at the feet of trees. A monk, who goes to a monastery with a roof, should be guilty of an offence.
- (5) All monks should always avoid eating meat and fish. A monk who eats meat or fish, should be guilty of an offence.”

Then the Buddha said: “Devadatta, your demands are not proper (reasonable).

- (1) Let the monk live in a forest hermitage or in the monastery near a village according to his desire.
- (2) Let the monk eat the food that he gets by going round for alms or by accepting the food offered by lay men after invitation. Let him get the food in either way he likes.
- (3) Let the monk wear the robe made of rags or the robe offered by lay men according to his desire.
- (4) Devadatta, I have permitted the monks to dwell at the foot of trees for eight months.
- (5) I have permitted the monks to eat meat or fish provided they do not see or hear or have any suspicion about any creature being killed for their food.”

(Herein when Devadatta made the five demands, the Buddha knew instantly that his object was to create a schism in the Sangha. As concessions to these demands would be a hindrance to spiritual progress, the Buddha considered them unreasonable and said that a monk might live in forest hermitage if he wanted to, and so on.

In this connection, a good monk should know the wish of the Buddha as well as what is proper for Him.

(According to the Buddha, there are four kinds of monks, viz. (a) the forest-dwelling monk who will gain the Path and the Fruition by virtue of his great physical and intellectual strength, (b) the monk who cannot live in the forest because of his physical weakness and who can make spiritual progress only if he practises the Dhamma in the village monastery, (c) the monk who will make spiritual progress either in the forest hermitage or in the village monastery by virtue of his physical strength and forbearance, and (d) the (*padaparama*) monk who will make no spiritual progress in spite of his effort either in the forest or the village monastery,

- (a) The Buddha wants only the monk of the first kind to live in a forest hermitage. The hermitage is a proper abode for him and following his example, his disciples will want to live in the forests.
- (b) The Buddha wants the second type to live in a village monastery.
- (c) According to the Buddha, the monk of the third type should live only in a forest hermitage. The forest hermitage is good for him and following his example, his disciples will want to live there.
- (d) As for the (*padaparama*) monk who will not make much spiritual progress in this life, the Buddha wants him to live in a forest hermitage. Practice of austerities (*dhutaṅga*) and meditation in the forest hermitage will contribute to his attainment of the Path and Fruition in the next life and he will be a living example for his disciples.

(Thus when the Buddha says “(1) Let the monk live in a monastery near a village according to his desire”, He means “the monk (b) who cannot live in the forest because of his physical weakness and who will achieve his spiritual goal only if he practises the Dhamma in a village monastery.” This concession also enables other monks to live in the village monastery.

(If the Buddha accepted Devadatta's demands, it would rule out the possibility of spiritual progress for two kinds of monks: (1) the monk (b) who is physically weak and (2) the monk who lived in the forest when he was young but who cannot live there in his old age owing to decline in health and so has to live in the village monastery to achieve his spiritual goal. For these reasons the Buddha rejected Devadatta's demands.)

Devadatta's Attempt to create Schism

Devadatta was delighted when the Buddha refused to comply with his five demands. Together with his followers, Kokālika, Katamodaka Tissaka, the son of Queen Khanda and Samuddadatta, he rose, and after paying respect to the Buddha, went away. (The monk Kokālika, Queen Khanda's son Kadamodaka Tissaka and the monk Samuddadatta were Devadatta's close and trusted disciples.)

Then Devadatta went to Rājagaha with his followers and propagated their doctrine. They told the people that the Buddha had rejected what they regarded as their reasonable demands for five rules that would contribute to non-attachment, etc. and that they, on their part, would live in accordance with those five rules.

People, who lacked faith and intelligence, extolled Devadatta and blamed the Buddha. Those, who had faith and intelligence, criticized Devadatta for trying to create schism in the Sangha and undermine the authority of the Buddha. The monks, who heard the people's words, also criticized Devadatta and reported to the Buddha.

Then the Buddha called a meeting of the Sangha in connection with the matter reported by the monks and in the presence of all monks, He asked: “Devadatta, is it true that you are trying to create schism in the Sangha and destroy its authority?” Devadatta replied: “Yes, Venerable Sir!”

Then the Buddha said:

“Devadatta, what you are doing is not proper. Do not wish to see dissension in the Sangha. One who causes schism in the Sangha bears a very grave responsibility. One who causes schism in a united Sangha commits an evil that will lasts one whole *kappa*. He will suffer in hell for one whole *kappa*.

“Devadatta, one who restores unity to a disunited Sangha commits a good deed and enjoys life in the deva-world for one whole *kappa*. Devadatta, what you are doing is not proper. Do not wish to see dissension in the Sangha. One who causes schism in the Sangha bears a very grave responsibility.”

Although the Buddha thus admonished him seriously. Devadatta did not give up his attempt and carried out the preliminary plan for the schism. The next day, he decided to perform *uposatha* service and acts of the Sangha (*Sangha-kamma*) separately. In the morning, he approached the Thera Ananda who came into Rājagaha for alms, and he said: “Dear Ananda, from today I will perform the *uposatha* service and the acts of Sangha without the company of the Buddha and His monks.”

When Venerable Ānanda reported the matter to the Buddha, He breathed forth the following verse:

*Sukaram sādhunā sādhu
sādhu pāpena dukkaram.
Pāpam pāpena sukaram
pāpam ariyehi dukkaram.*

It is easy for a good man to do a good deed
It is hard for an evil man to do a good deed
It is easy for an evil man to do an evil deed

It is hard for a good man to do an evil deed.

Schism created by Devadatta

Then on that *uposatha* day, Devadatta rose from his seat in the assembly of monks and said that the Monk Gotama had rejected his demand for five rules that would lead to non-attachment, etc., that they would abide by the five rules and that those who liked the rules should vote for them. The votes were taken and the five hundred young monks of Vajji country who lived in Vesālī and who were ignorant of the Vinaya teaching voted for the rules as they thought that the rules represented the Dhamma, Vinaya and the sayings of the Buddha. Devadatta took the five hundred monks and went to Gayāsīsa.

Contribution of The Two Chief Disciples

Then the Venerable Sāriputta and the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna, the two Chief Disciples, went to the Buddha and the Venerable Sāriputta informed Him of Devadatta's schismatic defection and his departure for Gayāsīsa with five hundred monks. The Buddha reproached them for having no compassion for the young monks and urged them to go and save the monks from spiritual ruin. The two Venerables promised to do so and after paying respect to the Buddha they left for Gayāsīsa.

A Young Monk's Concern

Then a monk came and stood crying near the Buddha. The Buddha asked him why he was crying. The monk said that the two Chief Disciples of His, Venerables Sāriputta and Moggallāna had gone to Devadatta, probably because they preferred Devadatta's teaching. Then the Buddha said: "Monk, there is absolutely no reason why Sāriputta and Moggallāna should like Devadatta's teaching. In fact, they have gone there in order to enlighten the five hundred young monks who have become Devadatta's followers."

At that time, Devadatta was seated preaching in the midst of many of his followers. When he saw from afar the two Venerables coming, he said to the young monks: "Monks look over there! I have proclaimed my doctrine very well. Even the Monk Gotama's Chief Disciples, Sāriputta and Moggallāna prefer my teaching and they are now coming over to join me."

Then the monk Kokālika (one of the leaders of his sect) warned Devadatta: "Friend Devadatta, do not associate with Sāriputta and Moggallāna. They have evil desire and they follow their evil desires." But Devadatta said: "Friend, you should not say like this. Their coming here is good because it is motivated by their appreciation of my teaching."

When the two Venerables came near, Devadatta said, "Come, Sāriputta, sit here" and offered to share his seat with him. But the Venerable refused to accept his offer and took his seat in a suitable place. So did the Venerable Moggallāna.

Having preached to the monks the whole night, Devadatta said to the Venerable Sāriputta: "Friend Sāriputta, the monks are free from sloth and torpor. You carry on with your talk on the Dhamma. My neck is stiff and cramped. Let me stretch my back." (Here he imitated the Buddha in the way He urged the Venerable Sāriputta.) Venerable Sāriputta agreed. After spreading his big fourfold outer robe, Devadatta lay down by the right side. As he was tired, unmindful and devoid of intelligence, he instantly fell asleep.

Then the Venerable Sāriputta taught the five hundred young monks first by making them aware of their own mental states (*ādesanā-pāṭihāriya*). This was followed by his pointing out the Dhammas that they should avoid and the Dhammas that they should practise (*anusāsānī-pāṭihāriya*). The Venerable Mahā Moggallāna taught them first by performing miracles (*iddhi-pāṭihāriya*) and then telling them what to avoid and what to follow. Therefore the five hundred young monks gained the Fruition of Sotāpatti on the spot and became *sotāpanna-ariyas*.

After the five hundred young monks had become *ariyas* on the Sotāpatti Path, the Venerable Sāriputta told them that he and Venerable Moggallāna would return to the Buddha and that those who liked His teaching might go along with them. All the monks

followed them and travelling by air by their psychic power, they reached Veļuvana.

Vomiting of Blood by Devadatta

After the two Chief Disciples had gone away with the five hundred young monks, Kokālika, a teacher of the sect, woke Devadatta up by hitting the breast with his knee and saying: "Get up, Devadatta! Sāriputta and Moggallāna have taken away the young monks. Have I not told you that you should not associate with Sāriputta and Moggallāna, that they have evil desires and that they follow their evil desires?" Then Devadatta vomited hot blood on the spot.

Jātakas concerning Devadatta

When the monks living in the Veļuvana monastery saw Venerable Sāriputta returning with the five hundred monks, they said to the Buddha: "Glorious Buddha, when the Venerable Sāriputta left for Gayāsīsa, he had only the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna as his companion. Now his return from there with so many followers is indeed glorious." The Buddha said: "Monks, it is not only now that Sāriputta is glorious. When he came back to me as an animal in a previous life he was also glorious." and He recounted the Lakkhanamiga Jātaka in the Sila-Vagga of the **Ekaka Nipāta**. Again, when the monks reported that Devadatta imitated the Buddha by trying to preach like a glorious Buddha with the two chief disciples on the right and left side, the Buddha said: "Monks, it is not only now; also a long time ago Devadatta tried to imitate Me but it was in vain." Then the Buddha told them the Viraka Jātaka of the Nataṃḍaḷha Vagga, **Duka Nipāta**.

The following days, too, the Buddha narrated the Kandagalaka Jātaka (Nataṃḍaḷha Vagga, **Duka Nipāta**), etc. in connection with Devadatta.

Again the Sakuṇa Jātaka (Kaliṅga Vagga, **Catukka Nipāta**) etc were recounted in connection with Devadatta's ingratitude.

Then in connection with Devadatta's attempt to kill the Buddha, he told the Kuruṅgamiga Jātaka (Kuruṅga Vagga, **Ekaka Nipāta**) and others.

Then one day the monks were talking about Devadatta's downfall in respect of the offerings he received from the laity and in respect of his spiritual life when the Buddha said: "Monks, it is not only now that Devadatta has his downfall. He had it too long ago," and the He narrated Ubhatobhattha Jātaka (Asampadāna vagga, **Ekaka Nipāta**) etc.

Herein a short list of Jātakas which the Buddha recounted in connection with Devadatta is given below:

Ekaka Nipāta: Scriva Jātaka, Lakkhapa Jātaka, Kuruṅgamiga Jātaka, Vānarinda Jātaka, Tayodhamma Jātaka, Silava Jātaka, Saccamkira Jātaka, Siṅgala Jātaka, Dummedha Jātaka, Asampadāna Jātaka, Ubhatobhattha Jātaka, Siṅgala Jātaka, Virocana Jātaka and Sanjīva Jātaka.

Duka Nipāta: Vinīlaka Jātaka, Dubbhiyamakkaṭṭa Jātaka, Manicora Jātaka, Viraka Jātaka, Kuruṅgamiga Jātaka, Sumsumāra Jātaka, Kaṇḍalaka Jātaka, Dhamma-dhaja Jātaka, Kāsāva Jātaka, Cūlanandiya Jātaka, Kumbhila Jātaka, Upāhana Jātaka, Mahāpiṅgala Jātaka, Sabbadāṭhi Jātaka and Guttliia Jātaka.

Tika Nipāta: Romaka Jātaka and Jambukhādaka Jātaka.

Catukka Nipāta: Sakuna Jātaka, Kakkāru Jātaka, Kālābāhu Jātaka, Jambuka Jātaka, Vānara Jātaka and Khantivādī Jātaka.

Pañcaka Nipāta: Cūḷadhammapāla Jātaka and Sāliya Jātaka.

Sattaka Nipāta: Kapi Jātaka and Parantapa Jātaka.

Aṭṭhaka Nipāta: Cetīya Jātaka.

Navaka Nipāta: Tittira Jātaka.

Dasaka Nipāta: Nigrodha Jātaka and Kukkura Jātaka.

Ekadasaka Nipāta: Dhammadevaputta Jātaka.

Dvadasaka Nipāta: Sanmudavāṇija Jātaka.

Terasaka Nipāta: Amba Jātaka and Rum Jātaka.

Pakinnaka Nipāta: Candakinnarī Jātaka.

Visati Nipāta: Sattigumba Jātaka, Somanassa Jātaka.

The Last Days of Devadatta

Thus while residing in Rājagaha, the Buddha recounted many Jātaka stories concerning Devadatta and then He went to Sāvattthi where He dwelt in the Jetavana monastery.

Having been ill for nine months, Devadatta had the desire to see the Buddha at the last moment. So he told his disciples to take him to the Buddha. But his disciples said: “You went about as the enemy of the Buddha when you were healthy. So, we dare not take you to Him now.” Then Devadatta said: “My disciples, do not ruin me. As a matter of fact, it was only I who bore grudge against the Buddha. He did not have the slightest grudge against me.”

Vadhake Devadattamhi, core Aṅgulimālake.

Dhanapāle Rāhule ca, sabbattha samamānaso.

My (cousin) brother, the Buddha, has the good-will towards His brother-in-law Devadatta who was bent on killing Him, towards Aṅgulimāla the robber who adorned himself with one thousand fingers, towards Nālāgiri the wild elephant, later called Dhanapāla, towards His own son, Rāhula and towards all living beings equally.

“Take me now to my brother, the Exalted Buddha.”

Thus Devadatta again and again entreated them to let him see the Buddha. Then his disciples laid him on a couch and carried him to Sāvattthi where the Buddha was staying.

When the monks heard the news that Devadatta was coming, they reported to the Buddha. The Buddha said: “Monks, Devadatta will have no opportunity to see Me in his present life.”

(It was natural that Devadatta had no opportunity to see the Buddha from the time he made the five demands.)

In the eyes of the ordinary monks, Devadatta was on the way to Sāvattthi to see the Buddha. The Buddha said: “Devadatta would not be able to see Me in the present existence, under any circumstances, though I may remain here.” The monks were nonplussed and they did not know what to make of the Buddha's saying. Therefore, they again and again informed Him of Devadatta's arrival at such and such a place. But He still insisted that whatever Devadatta did, “by no means would he see Me.”

But, from time to time, the monks reported the progress of Devadatta's journey saying that he was now one *yojana* away from Sāvattthi. That he was now only a *gavuta* away that and that he had closed upon the pond near the Jetavana monastery. Finally the Buddha said: “Devadatta will not see Me at all even though he may get into the Jetavana monastery.”

Devadatta swallowed by Earth

The disciples bearing Devadatta laid down the couch on the bank of the pond near the Jetavana monastery and stepped into the pond to bathe. Devadatta sat up on the couch putting his two feet on the ground. Then his feet sank into the earth irresistibly. Down he went, the parts of his body sinking one after another, the ankle, the kneecap, the waist, the chest, and the neck, and the earth had gorged him up to the jaw-bones when he uttered the following verse:

Imehi aṭṭhihi tam aggapuggalam

devātidevaṃ naradammasārathim.

Samantacakkhuṃ satapunnalakkhaṇam

I, Devadatta, on my death-bed seek refuge in the Exalted One with these bones and this lingering life-force. With intelligent, noble, joyous mind motivated by the three noble root-conditions (I seek refuge in the Omniscient Buddha, the Supreme Being in the world, the All-seeing Teacher who can discipline all worthy beings and who possesses the thirty-two splendid marks of an extraordinary man by virtue of His countless good deeds.

(It was because of the Buddha's fore-knowledge of Devadatta's repentance that the Buddha ordained him. Even if he had not been a monk, he would certainly have committed the same heinous crime as a layman and later on he would not have been able to do the good deed that would contribute to his liberation from *saṃsāra*.

(The Buddha knew that after ordination Devadatta would do the two most evil deeds: causing the spilling of the Buddha's blood and creating schism in the Sangha and that later on he would do the good deed for his release from *saṃsāra*. So the Buddha ordained him. Indeed, because of this good deed, Devadatta will be a Paccekabuddha by the name of Atthissara, after one hundred thousand *kappas*.)

Devadatta's Suffering in Avīci Hell

After uttering the verse, Devadatta entered the earth and landed in the Avīci hell. It seemed as if he was to suffer unshaken in the hell because he had wronged the unshaken Buddha. In the great Avīci hell, one hundred *yojanas* in width, Devadatta's body was one hundred *yojanas* in height. His head was inside the upper iron pan up to his two ears. The two legs were inside the red-hot iron bottom up to the ankles. He was roasted standing and facing east. An iron stake with the thickness of a palm-tree protruding from the west side of the hell-pot pierced right through the middle of Devadatta's back, came out from the front breast and went into the east side of the hell-pot. Another iron stake came out of the south side of the hell-pot, passed through Devadatta's right side, came out from the left side and went into the north side of the hell-pot. Still another iron stake came from the iron pan, pierced right through the top of the head, came out of the bottom and went into the iron floor under the hell-pot. In this way Devadatta was roasted unshaken in the great Avīci hell.

(About the Avīci hell: In this realm: (1) the denizens of hell are jammed without any space, (2) the hell fires are continuous and cover the whole realm, leaving no space, and (3) the inhabitants have no respite in their suffering. They have to suffer all the time. Thus, because there is no vacant space among the inhabitants, or no cessation as regards the hell fires or suffering, the hell is called the great Avīci hell.)

Narration of Jātakas after Devadatta's Death

After Devadatta was thus swallowed up by the earth, the topic of conversation among the monks was Devadatta's inability to see the Buddha although he had travelled laboriously forty-five *yojanas* for this purpose. The Buddha said that Devadatta was swallowed by the earth also in one of his former lives and told the story of the elephant *Sīlava*. When the Bodhisatta was the elephant *Sīlava*, he put a man who had lost his way on his back and took him to a safe place. Yet the man came back thrice to cut the trunk, and when he went back with the last portion of the trunk he was swallowed up by the earth as soon as he went out of sight of the Bodhisatta. This man, a hunter, named *Mittadubbhi* became Devadatta. (*Sīlava Jātaka*, *Varuṇa Vagga*, **Ekaka Nipāta**)

Then again the Buddha recounted *Khantivādā Jātaka* (*Pucimanda vagga*, **Calukka Nipāta**) to show how King *Kalābu* (Devadatta) was gorged by the earth when he wronged the Bodhisatta, Hermit *Khantivādi*. The Buddha also told the *Cūladhammapāla Jātaka* (*Maṇikuṇḍala Vagga*, **Pañcaka Nipāta**) in which as King *Mahāpatāpa* (Devadatta) was swallowed by the earth for having wronged his own son, *Cūladhammapāla*, who was the Bodhisatta.

After the death of Devadatta people were overjoyed. They set up all kinds of flags and banana plants, etc, placed the pots full of water and celebrated their riddance of Devadatta. When this was reported to the Buddha by the monks, He said that in ancient times, too, the death of Devadatta delighted many people. To illustrate His saying, the Buddha recited Mahā Piṅgala Jātaka (Upāhana vagga, **Duka Nipāta**) in which people rejoiced at the death of the evil King Piṅgala in Vārāṇasi.

The monks asked the Buddha about the afterlife of Devadatta. The Buddha said that he had landed in the Avīci hell. The monks said: “Glorious Buddha, Devadatta had to suffer much in the present life and now at the end of this life also he has landed in the world of much suffering.”

Then the Buddha said: “Yes, monks, that is true. All beings whether monks or lay men who are unmindful in respect of good deeds have to suffer in the present life and the afterlife.” And the Buddha uttered the following verse.

*Idha tappati pecca tappati
pāpakārī ubhayattha tappati.
“Pāpaṃ me katan” ti tappati
bhiyyo tappati duggatiṃ gato.*

Monks, the man who does evil has to suffer because of the effect of his evil act. He has to suffer both in the present life and the afterlife. Stricken by his conscience, ‘I have done an evil deed’, he has to grieve in the present life. When he lands in the lower, evil world (after his death), he has to grieve extremely because of the effect of his deed.

By the end of the sermon many beings became *sotāpanna-ariyas*, etc. The sermon was beneficial to many people.

Chapter 37

STORY OF KING AJĀTASATTU

King Ajātasattu was so called because he was the enemy of his father, King Bimbisāra, even before his birth. (*Ajāta* (before birth)+*sattu* (enemy of his father).)

When the Prince was conceived in the womb of Vedelī, the Chief Queen of King Bimbisāra, the Queen strongly desired to drink the blood of the King's right arm. It was hard to fulfil and she considered it inadvisable to tell anyone about it. She dared not express it openly and as a result she became lean, pale and haggard in her physical appearance.

Seeing this change in the Queen, the King asked what was wrong with her. The Queen at first refused to answer but the King pressed for an explanation and at last she revealed the craving that had made her unhappy.

The King was overwhelmed with love and said: "You silly Queen! Why should you think it is hard to satisfy your desire?" Thus reproving her for her reticence, the King sent for a physician and after having his arm cut with a small golden knife, he had the blood taken in a golden cup, mixed it with water and made the Queen drink it.

When the soothsayers heard the news, they predicted that the child in the Queen's womb would become the enemy of the King, and that he would kill his father. On hearing their prediction, the Queen was worried. She did not wish to bear the potential murderer of the King. So she went to the garden to carry out abortion but her attempt was unsuccessful. In spite of her repeated attempts, she could not get rid of her pregnancy. (Later on the garden was named Maddakucchi — the garden where abortion was performed.)

King Bimbisāra inquired why the Queen often went to the garden and when he learnt what she was doing, he said: "We do not know as yet whether the child in your womb is a boy or a girl. Do not try to kill the child because, if you do so, our good reputation will be severely damaged all over Jambudīpa for our cruelty to our own child." He deterred the Queen from doing so and kept her under surveillance. The Queen then decided to kill the child after its birth.

When the child was born, the guards took him to a safe place. The Prince grew up and when he was shown to the Queen, she became deeply attached to him. (She lost all her desire to kill her son.) King Bimbisāra later appointed the Prince his heir-apparent.

(The subsequent association of Ajātasattu with his evil friend Devadatta and his killing of his father to become king have been described in the section on Devadatta.)

From the day he ordered his father to be killed, King Ajātasattu was unable to sleep. As soon as he shut his eyes, he felt like being pierced by hundreds of spears and had dream-like hallucinations about his destiny that kept him shaking and muttering. (This shows that those, who have done much evil, see signs of their impending descent into the lower worlds not only on their death-bed but long before the end of their lives.) The guards asked the King what ailed him but he just said: "Nothing." These nightmarish hallucinations plagued the King and made him reluctant to go to sleep. So every night he gave audience for a long time to keep himself awake. (*Dīgha Nikāya*, Vol. 1.)

King Ajātasattu adored the evil Devadatta who was a thorn in the side of the Exalted One and so he gave alms lavishly to Devadatta and built for him a monastery in Gayāsīsa, and at the instigation of his teacher he killed his father who was a *sotāpanna*. In this way, he ruled out the possibility of doing any good deed leading to the Sotāpatti Path and ruined himself most disastrously.

On hearing that Devadatta was gorged by the earth, King Ajātasattu was afraid, lest he should share the fate of his former teacher. He could not indulge in royal pleasure nor

could he sleep peacefully. He became tremulous, restless and jittery, like a young elephant pricked with a sharp iron stake. He had visions of the earth cracking, the flames from the Avīci hell coming out, the earth threatening to swallow him up and the custodians of hell making him lie on his back on the red-hot iron floor and poking him with iron stakes. So, trembling like a beaten fowl, King Ajātasattu could not find any support even for a moment nor could he stand firm and steady.

He wanted to see the Buddha, pay respect and ask about his problem but because of the enormity of his evil deed, he dared not go to the Buddha.

Then, when the festival of the planet Kattikā was held in Rājagaha on the full-moon night in the month of Kattikā (November), the whole city was decorated like a celestial city, and brightly illuminated with fire torches and flames. While seated amidst his ministers on the golden throne in the audience hall, King Ajātasattu saw the physician Jīvaka and thought: "I will take Jīvaka as my guide and go to the Buddha. But I should not admit frankly that I dare not go to the Exalted One and tell him (Jīvaka) frankly to take me there. Tactfully, I will extol the beauty of the night and then ask the ministers which real noble *sāmana* or *brāhmaṇa* can inspire us with faith and devotion. When the ministers heard my words, they will glorify their respective teachers and the physician Jīvaka will glorify his teacher, the Exalted One. Then I will go and see the Exalted One with Jīvaka as my guide."

After planning this strategy, King Ajātasattu said:

"(a) Ministers, tonight is so delightful, being free from snow, mist, cloud, Asurinda (an enormous semi-divine being that is supposed to create lunar eclipse) and smoke, the five disturbing things that disturb the beauty of the moon-lit night, or pollute the air. (b) Ministers, tonight is so beautiful, being free from the five elements. (c) Ministers, tonight is so lovely to look at, being free from the five disturbing elements. (d) Ministers, tonight our minds are calm and serene because the night is free from the five disturbing elements. (e) Ministers, tonight should be very memorable since it is free from the five disturbing elements."

Having thus extolled the full-moon night, the King added:

"Which *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* should we see tonight, who can inspire us with faith and devotion?"

By saying this, the King gave a hint to the physician Jīvaka. (a) The King had committed a heinous crime by killing his father, a great patron of the Buddha and a *sotāpanna-āriya* at that time, and (b) by supporting Devadatta who did many things harmful to the Buddha. So he dared not go to the Buddha by himself. He knew that for the fulfilment of his desire to see the Buddha he must rely on Jīvaka who had built a monastery for the Buddha and who served the Buddha's medical needs.

Jīvaka did not fail to take his cue from the King. In fact, he knew it but because the assembly included many followers of the six heretical teachers, Jīvaka thought: "As followers of ignorant teachers, they themselves are ignorant, and they do not understand the rules to be observed at a meeting. If I start describing the noble attributes of the Exalted One, they will rise one by one and extol their teachers and then I will never come to the end of my description of the Exalted One's noble attributes. As the teachings of their six heretical teachers do not have substance or anything worthy of note, the King will not be pleased with what they say and he will ask me directly. Then I will tell the King without any distraction about the noble attributes of the Exalted One and take him to the Buddha." Thus thinking deeply, Jīvaka said nothing despite the King's hint and sat silently.

The ministers, who were the disciples of the six heretical teachers, thought: "Today the King extolled the beauty of the night of the Kattikā full-moon. He really must have the desire to see one of the *samaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas*, to ask questions and hear his sermon. The King will greatly honour the teacher whom he adores and whose sermon he hears. It augurs well for the minister whose teacher becomes the King's teacher." So each of them was bent on extolling his own teacher and leading the King to him. With this intention the ministers who were disciples of Pūrāṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambala, Pakudha

Kaccāyana, Sañjaya and Nigantha Nātaputta extolled their respective teachers. (Read Sāmaññaphala Sutta of the **Dīgha Nikāya** for their extolling speeches.)

King Ajātasattu had seen the heretical teachers before. When he first saw them, their physical appearance did not, in the least, impress him. On the contrary, he was much disappointed. Now, when he heard the words of his ministers, he felt like a man who sees a very sour and acid fruit brought and put in his hand when, in fact, he wishes to eat a golden coloured, sweet, delicious, ripe mango. He longed to hear the sweet Dhamma concerning the *jhāna*, supernormal powers, three characteristics of existence, etc. and so when he (in addition to his disappointment with the heretical teachers' physical appearance) heard their followers praising them, he became much dispirited and said nothing.

Although he was displeased with their saying, King Ajātasattu thought: "If I show my anger and have these ministers seized by the neck and turned out of the palace hall, other people will not have the courage to say anything, fearing that the King treats in the same way every one who speaks." So, although he did not like their words, the King did not reproach them and remained silent.

Heroic Words of Jīvaka

King Ajātasattu thought: "Only the ministers whom I do not wish to listen to are talking. Physician Jīvaka, who I wish to hear, is silent like the Garuḷa bird that has swallowed the brain of a *nāga*. I am so unfortunate!" Then he had an afterthought: "Jīvaka is a disciple, an attendant of the quiet Exalted One. So he himself is quiet and lives in silence like a disciplined ascetic. He will not speak if I do not ask him. So I must act like a man, who when trampled by an elephant, has to clasp the animal's foot."

So thinking, the King said directly:

"Friend Jīvaka, why are you keeping silent? These ministers never tire of glorifying their teachers. Do not you have any teacher like these ministers? Do you have no teacher because you are a commoner without any official post or privileges granted by my father? Or do you have no teacher because of lack of faith?"

Thus the King asked Jīvaka directly, about the reason for his silence. Jīvaka thought: "The King wants me to speak of the attributes of my Teacher. Now, it is not the time for me to remain silent. But it is not proper for me to describe the noble attributes of the Buddha just as these ministers extol their teachers in a posture of reverence to the King." So Jīvaka rose, bowed most respectfully in the direction of the Teacher's residence in Jīvaka's mango-grove, raised his joined hands above his head and said:

"Great King! Do not think that I am the devotee of just a so called, self-styled *samaṇa* of doubtful characteristics. Certainly, at the time of my teacher's conception in His mother's womb, at the time of His birth, at the time of His renunciation, His attainment of Buddhahood, and His preaching of the Dhammacakka Sutta, the ten thousand universes shook quiveringly. In this and that way, the Exalted One performed miracles of fire and water. In this and that way, He came down to earth from the deva-world of Tāvātimsa. I will tell you about the Exalted One's noble attributes to the best of my ability. Listen to me attentively." With this preamble, Jīvaka went on to give an account of the Buddha.

"Great King, deva among the people! My Teacher, the Possessor of such attributes as *Araham*, and *Sammāsambuddha* now lives with one thousand two hundred and fifty monks in the mango-grove monastery that we have donated to him.

"Our Teacher, the Exalted One, is an *araham* because He possesses the attributes of morality (*sīla-guṇa*), mental concentration (*samādhi-guṇa*), wisdom (*paññā-guṇa*), liberation (*vimutti-guṇa*) and insight-knowledge of liberation (*vimutti-ñāṇa-dassana-guṇa*) that make Him worthy of special honour by devas, humans and Brahmās ... He is an Exalted One (*Bhagavā*) because he possesses sixfold glory. Such good reputation of our Teacher, the Exalted One has spread beyond the highest abode of Bhavagga [in the *arūpa* or formless worlds].

“I want you, Great King, to see our Teacher, the Exalted One. If you see our Teacher, your mind will certainly become calm and serene.”

Preparations for The Visit to The Buddha

Even as he heard the noble attributes of the Buddha, King Ajātasattu was overwhelmed with five kinds of ecstasy. So, he wished to see the Buddha instantly and knowing that there was no one except Jīvaka who could arrange transport for his visit to the Buddha at that time, he told Jīvaka to go and prepare the elephant transport.

(Herein, there are various kinds of transport, such as horses, chariots, etc., but the elephant transport is the best of all transports. King Ajātasattu decided that he should go to the Supreme Buddha by means of the supreme transport. Horses and chariots are noisy, making their sounds audible in the distance. But the elephant makes no noise although it may not go quickly. The King considered it advisable to go to the quiet and calm Buddha by means of quiet and calm elephants. So he told Jīvaka to harness the elephants.)

Then Physician Jīvaka had five hundred female elephants and the state elephant adorned with all trappings.

The King did not tell him explicitly to prepare the female elephants for transport. But being intelligent, he got the female elephants ready with all equipments. In doing so, he was motivated by the reflection: “The King wants to go and see the Exalted One tonight. But kings have many enemies. If anything untoward happens to the King on the way, people will blame me and say that I lead the King out of the palace at an untimely hour of the night, heedlessly taking advantage of his compliance with my wish. Moreover, they will also blame the Exalted One, saying that the Exalted One preaches, taking advantage of His influence over people without regard for proper time. Therefore, I will make my plan so that the Exalted One and I maybe above reproach and the King may be well-protected.”

Again he thought: “Men are never in fear of women. So I will make the King go happily, surrounded by women.” After having five hundred female elephants adorned with full trappings, he had the five hundred female courtiers dressed as men and instructed them to accompany the King, each armed with swords and spears.

Still another thought occurred to Jīvaka: “On account of his heinous crime of parricide, there is no special good deed for this King Ajātasattu that will contribute to the attainment of the Path and Fruition in his present life. It is customary with the Buddhas to preach only when they see someone credited with extra-ordinarily good deed, which may serve as a support of spiritual progress (*upanissaya-paccaya*). Now, I will assemble the people. Then the Buddha will preach the Dhamma in view of the former good deed of someone in the assembly, the good deed essential to his spiritual uplift. The sermon will benefit many people.” Instantly, he sent a message to every part of the city, announcing also by the beat of drum, the King's plan to visit the Buddha and hear the Dhamma, and that people are to go along with the King for his security according to their official position.

Then the people thought: “It is said that our King will go and see the Buddha. What kind of Dhamma will He preach? What can we profit by making merry in this planetary festival? We will go to the monastery where the Buddha is going to preach to the King.” So all of them waited for the King on the way with fragrant flowers in their hands.

After having done all the necessary things, Jīvaka told the King that the elephants were ready and that it rested with him to choose the time for his journey.

Ajātasattu's Visit to The Buddha

Then King Ajātasattu mounted the royal elephant and with a female courtier dressed as a man and seated on each of the five hundred female elephants, and with fire-torches lighted, he set out from Rājagaha City with great royal pomp and splendour and went to Jīvaka's mango-grove, which was then the residence of the Buddha.

Herein “great royal pomp and splendour”, may be explained as follows:

King Ajātasattu was the ruler of two countries, viz., Anga and Magadha, each three hundred *yojanas* in width. He was a great monarch and although no arrangements were made in advance for his visit to the Buddha, (as arranged by Jīvaka) five hundred female courtiers came out instantly dressed as men, with swords suspended from shoulders and with ruby-handled spears in their hands.

(Moreover sixteen thousand female dancers also accompanied the King. Behind those dancers, their attendant elderly women went along on foot.

(Behind the elderly women were the eunuchs who guarded the palace; behind the eunuchs were sixty thousand ministers exquisitely attired in various garments and walking on foot.

(Also walking on foot behind the ministers were about ninety thousand provincial princes, adorned with various ornaments and fully armed like young men possessed of magical powers (*vijjādhara*).

(Behind the princes were ten thousand brahmins, who, having bathed, smeared themselves with unguent and adorned themselves with golden flowers, etc., wore one hundred *kahāpaṇa* worth waist garment and donned five thousands *kahāpaṇa* worth outer robes covering the left shoulder. Raising their right hands and chanting: “May the Great King overcome all dangers!” they went on foot.

(Behind the brahmins were the musicians; behind them were the royal archers; behind them was the elephant-brigade; behind it was a big cavalry; behind it was the chariot-division; behind it was the infantry and behind the infantry were the members of eighteen assemblies dressed and adorned with various ornaments befitting their official position.

(Thus, as instructed by Jivaka, the troops, ministers, etc. were deployed in such a way that the arrow shot from end of the procession could not reach the King. As for him, he walked close by the King, very vigilant to save the King's life promptly in case of emergency.

(The fire-torches were so numerous that they could not be counted by hundreds or thousands. With such royal pomp and splendour the King went to the residence of the Buddha.)

King Ajātasattu's Fright

King Ajātasattu came out of the city and as he approached the mango-grove, he became scared. He trembled with great fear and his hair stood on end.

He was much frightened because the silence in the monastery raised doubt about Jivaka's sincerity. As a matter of fact, Jivaka had told him before that he would have to approach the Buddha silently. So the King had banned music and the musicians had only held their musical instruments during their journey. They had not spoken loudly and they all had travelled showing signs by their hands when necessary.

Now in the grove, not even the sneezing of a monk was to be heard, and kings usually delighted only in places where there was sound. King Ajātasattu became weary and sick of the deep silence and suspicious of Jivaka. He thought: “This Jivaka says that there are one thousand two hundred and fifty monks in his grove. But I don't hear even the sneezing of someone in this place. Jivaka may not be speaking the truth. Perhaps, he has deceived me and taken me out of the city. Perhaps, he wants to seize me and usurp my throne with the help of the army. Certainly, Jivaka is strong enough to match the strength of five elephants. He is also hanging about me and there is no armed attendant near me. Oh! It is all over with me!”

Thus scared, King Ajātasattu was unable even to mask his fear with royal demeanour and he clearly expressed his fear to Jivaka by asking:

“Jivaka! You are not deceiving me are you? You are not handing me over to my enemies, are you? Why is it that among so many monks numbering one thousand two hundred and fifty, there is no sneezing, no coughing and no talking?”

Then Physician Jivaka said:

“Great King, be not afraid. I do not deceive you. I will not hand you over to your enemies. Great King, go ahead. Within the circular hall there are oil lamps burning brightly.”

(Herein Jivaka thought: “The King does not know that I never take life. If I do not console him, he will come to ruin here.” So he consoled the King to allay his fear effectively by telling him twice not to be afraid and assuring him that he was not being deceived.

(Then to make his assuring more weighty, he told the King twice to go forward and said the oil-lamps were burning brightly in the hall. The implication of this last remark was that the illumination in the hall left no doubt about the presence of good people and the absence of insurgents and robbers who always went about in the dark. Jivaka's speech was then deeply meaningful indeed.)

Ajātasattu's Questions on The Advantages of Monastic Life

Then King Ajātasattu went by elephant as far as possible and at the gate of the monastery he dismounted. As soon as he put his feet on the ground, the power and glory of the Buddha pervaded his whole body. He sweated so profusely that he was nearly forced to change his garments. He remembered his parricide and became overwhelmed with fear. So he dared not go direct to the Buddha. Instead, he took Jivaka's hands and like a visitor looking around the monastery, he complimented Jivaka, saying: “You have built this building wonderfully! You have built this building wonderfully!” When they came to the entrance of the circular meeting-hall, the King asked Jivaka where the Buddha was: In fact, it was customary with kings to affect ignorance and ask in spite of their knowledge.

Then Jivaka thought: “The King is like a man who stands on earth and asks where the earth is; like a man who looks up to the sky and asks where the sun and the moon are; like a man who stands at the foot of Mount Meru and asks where Mount Meru is. I will now show him the Buddha.” So Jivaka raised his joined hands towards the Buddha and said: “Great King, that person seated before the monks, leaning against the middle pillar and facing east is the Exalted One.”

Then King Ajātasattu approached the Buddha and paid his respect. Standing at a place, he looked again and again at the monks who were serene and dignified like a very clear lake, dead silent without any coughing or sneezing, their eyes calmly fixed on the Buddha without casting a single glance at the gorgeous gathering of the King and his people.

The King marvelled and exclaimed:

“The monks are so serene. May my son, Prince Udayabhadda, have such serenity!”

(Herein King Ajātasattu's exclamation should not give one the impression that he wanted his son to lead a monastic life and become serene. In fact, at the sight of the monks, he became clear in his consciousness and remembered his son. Naturally, getting an object that is hard to come by or seeing something marvellous reminds one of one's beloved relatives or friends. The King uttered the above words because he remembered his son (and not because he wanted to have his son ordained).

(In another sense, his exclamation was due to his worry about his son and his desire for the Prince's serenity. For he thought: “The day will come when my son, seeing that I am still young, asks me where his grandfather is. If he comes to know somehow or other that his grandfather was killed by his father, he will take it into his head to kill me and become king.”

(In spite of his worry about his son and his desire to make the Prince serene, the King was destined to be killed by his own son. In the lineage of King Ajātasattu there were five cases of parricide: (1) Prince Ajātasattu killed his father, King Bimbisāra, (2) Prince Udaya killed his father, King Ajātasattu, (3) Prince Mahāmūṇḍika killed his father, King Udaya, (4) Prince Anuruddha killed his father

Mahāmuṇḍika, and (5) Prince Nāgādāsa killed his father, King Anuruddha. Then the people of the country unanimously resolved to have nothing to do with the king who disgraced their lineage and made away with King Nāgādāsa.)

Before the King made his exclamation, the Buddha had divined the thought of King Ajātasattu as he stood in silence before Him. The Buddha knew that the King dared not speak to Him, that he remembered his son as he looked again and again at the monks and that unless He broke the ice, he would not have the courage to say anything. So deciding to speak first, the Buddha said just after the King's exclamation.

“O King! Your mind is now with your beloved one.”

Then King Ajātasattu thought: “Oh! Marvellous indeed is the greatness of the Exalted One! There is no one equal to me in having wronged the Exalted One. I killed (my father) the greatest supporter who was an *ariya*; donor of the Buddha. Not only that, misguided by Devadatta, I sent assassins to kill the Buddha. Perhaps, Devadatta thought he had my support when he rolled the rock from the Gijjhakuta hill to kill the Buddha. I have done so much evil and yet now the Buddha has started the conversation with me. The Buddha indeed firmly possesses the *tādi* attribute in terms of five characteristics. Therefore, we will never ignore such kind of Exalted One and never seek refuge (or a teacher) elsewhere.”

(The five *tādi* characteristics are (1) equanimity without any love or hatred in the vicissitudes (*lokādhamma*) whether desirable (*iṭṭha*) or undesirable (*aniṭṭha*) of life, (2) repudiation of defilements; (3) having crossed over the current of *samsāra*; (4) freedom from lust, etc.; (5) possession of morality, faith, etc. that makes him worthy of being pointed out as a man of moral integrity, faith, etc. (The Mahāniddeśa contains its elaboration).

(Alternatively, (1) the ability to have desirable perception (*iṭṭha-saññā*) at will, in regard to undesirable (*aniṭṭha*) beings or phenomena; (2) the ability to have undesirable perception (*aniṭṭha-saññā*) at will, with regard to desirable (*iṭṭha*) beings and phenomena; (3) the ability to have desirable perception at will, in regard to both desirable and undesirable beings and phenomena; (4) the ability to have undesirable perception at will, in regard to both desirable and undesirable beings and phenomena and (5) the ability to have equanimity at will, in respect of both the pleasant and undesirable beings and phenomena. These five Noble Powers (*ariyiddha*) are the five *tādi*-characteristics.

— **Sīlakkhandha Abhinava Tīkā**, Vol. II. —

So thinking, he was much delighted and in response to the Buddha's remark, he said:

“Glorious Buddha, I love my son, Prince Udayabhadda, dearly. May my son, Prince Udayabhadda, have the same serenity that the monks now have.”

King Ajātasattu reflected: “If after paying respect to the Exalted One, I go to the monks, here and there, and pay respect to them, I will have turned my back to the Exalted One and that will mean irreverence to Him on my part. Certainly, a man, who, after paying respect to the king, goes to the crown prince and pays respect, show lack of respect for the king.” So after paying respect the Buddha, the King bowed to the monks with both hands raised from the place where he was standing and sat down at a proper place.

Then King Ajātasattu said:

“Glorious Buddha, if You permit me to ask, I would like to ask You a few questions about a certain thing.”

The Buddha said:

“Great King, You may ask Me about anything you like,” thereby extending to the King the invitation of the Omniscient Buddhas.

(Note: **Two kinds of invitation.**)

Invitation of questions is of two kinds: (1) the invitation by Omniscient Buddhas and (2) the invitation by their disciples.

When someone wants to ask an Omniscient Buddha about something, the Buddha

says confidently and without any reservation: “Ask me about anything you like. I will answer all your questions thoroughly.” This kind of invitation is made only by Buddhas and the intellectually mature Bodhisattas.

As for their disciples, they do not say “Ask me about anything,” but they say with reservation: “I will answer your question if I can, only after I have heard it.”

On being thus invited by the Buddha in the manner of Omniscient Buddhas, King Ajātasattu became much delighted and enthusiastic and he asked the following questions:

“Glorious Buddha, there are many skilled occupations and craftsmen. They belong to warriors riding elephants, warriors riding horses, warriors riding chariots, archers, flag-bearers, military strategists, commandos who slip behind the lines of the opposing army and cut off the enemies' heads, princes distinguished in fighting, daredevils who make speedy attacks on the enemy, warriors who are valiant like bull-elephants, very brave warriors, warriors clad in armour, trustworthy servants, cooks, barbers, those who bathe other people, butlers, flower stringers, laundry workers, weavers, maker of reed mat walls, potters, arithmeticians, and those who count by their fingers; besides these, there are many other similar crafts-men. These people live long, profiting by their skills. By means of their skills they make themselves, their parents, their wives and children and their friends comfortable and vigorous. Moreover, they give alms to monks and brahmins so as to reborn in the deva-world in their afterlife.”

“Exalted Buddha, can one point out the benefits of a monastic life like those of skilled occupations, benefits which one can realize by himself in the present life?”

Then the Buddha thought: “Nowhere at this place are many princes and ministers who are the followers of heretical teachers, those who are outside the pale of My Teaching. If I give my sermon in two parts, showing the impurity of their teachers' doctrines (*kaṇha-pakkha*) in the first part and the purity of My doctrine (*sukka-pakkha*) in the second part, these people will blame Me, saying that I talk only about the doctrinal conflicts and controversies of the monks from the time of the arrival of their King who has come here with great effort to hear the Dhamma. As a result, they will not hear the Dhamma respectfully. If the King himself talks about the doctrine of the heretics, the people will not blame Me. They will let Me say what I like. In fact, people naturally follow the king (*issarānuvattako hi loko*). Now I will make it the King's responsibility to describe the teaching of the heretics.” Then the Buddha asked the King if he remembered having put the question to the other monks and brahmins.

The King said that he did and the Buddha asked him how they had answered the question and urged him to state their answer if he did not mind it. The King said: “Sir! I do not mind doing so in a place where the Exalted One or a man like the Exalted One is sitting.”

(What is implicit here in the King's reply is this: It is troublesome or hard to tell a person pretentious to be wise about anything because he is apt to criticize every sentence and every word. The real wise man, however, extols the speech that he hears if it is flawless and he corrects the language, sentences and words if there are flaws in the speech. The Buddha has no peer in the world in respect of real wisdom. Hence the King's reply as mentioned above.)

Thus urged by the Buddha to recount the answers given by the heretical teachers, the King told Him how he once approached the six heretical teachers, viz., Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambala, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Nigantha Nāṭaputta and Saṅgya Belatthaputta and asked them about the advantages of monkhood in the present life. The six teachers described only their respective doctrines like a man, who being asked about a mango tree, describes a jack fruit tree, or vice versa. The answers were at variance with the question but, although the King was disappointed with the heretical teachers, he considered it inadvisable for a King like him to rebuke such religious persons as monks and brahmins in his country. So he neither accepted nor rejected their sayings. Nor did he show his displeasure by word of mouth. Instead, he got up and went back without taking note of

their words and now he asked the Buddha about the present advantages of a monastic life.

Then the Buddha gave an elaborate talk on the advantages of monkhood in the present life. For example, (1) a man-slave was honoured by the king after his ordination; (2) a farmer who paid taxes to the king was honoured by the latter after he became a monk. (3) To show the higher advantages of monkhood, the Buddha referred to the life of a man of either low or high caste who had heard His Teaching, inspired with faith, he became a monk and practiced the (a) lower morality, (b) medium morality and (c) higher morality. Then he guarded his senses, developed mindfulness, easily contented, rejected hindrances; he gained the first *jhāna*, (4) the second *jhāna*, (5) the third *jhāna* and (6) the fourth *jhāna*. (7-14) Still making further progress, he attained insight-knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*), psychic powers (*manomayidhi-ñāṇa*), supernatural powers (*iddhividha-ñāṇa*), the divine-ear (*dibbasota-ñāṇa*), penetrative knowledge of the mind of others (*cetopariya-ñāṇa*), remembrance of former existences (*pubbenivāsānussati-ñāṇa*), knowledge of the dying and reappearance of other beings (*cutupapata-ñāṇa*) and extinction of all mental intoxicants (*āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa* or *arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*). Thus, the monk gained as the present advantages of his sacred life the eight kinds of progressively higher, extraordinary knowledge up to arahatship.

(For details, read the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*.)

Refuge sought by Ajātasattu

When the Buddha thus described in detail the present advantages of monkhood with arahatship as its apex, King Ajātasattu followed the whole talk attentively, expressing his appreciation verbally from time to time. He thought: “In the past, I did not ask many monks and brahmins about these matters but like a man who pounds the husks of grain, I have never received any thing substantial. Marvellous indeed is the greatness of the Exalted Buddha! He has answered these questions, enlightening me very much as if with the brilliance of a thousand oil-lamps. For a long time, ignorance has deceived me, making me blind to the greatness and power of the Exalted One.”

Overwhelmed with ecstasy arising from the contemplation of the Buddha's attributes, the King clearly showed his faith in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha in the following words:

“Venerable Sir, very delightful indeed is the Teaching! Just as in the world what has been upside down is set right, just as what has been covered is uncovered, just as a man who has lost his way is shown the right way, just as torches are lighted in order that those who have eye-sights may see various visual forms in the darkness, so also, You have in many ways made the Dhamma very clear to me. Venerable Sir! I seek refuge in the Exalted One, the Dhamma and the Sangha. Let the Exalted One regard me, from today, as a lay devotee established in *saraṇa-gamana* for life.

“Venerable Sir! I am overwhelmed with guilt stemming from foolishness, confusion and ignorance. For the sake of kingly pleasures, I have killed my father, a great monarch who practised justice and ruled righteously. Let the Exalted One forgive me for the offence, regarding it as an offence that will make me mindful and vigilant in future.”

Thus the King sought refuge in the Buddha, etc. and apologized for his offense. Then the Buddha said:

“O King! You are indeed overwhelmed with guilt arising from your foolishness, confusion and ignorance. You have killed your father, the great monarch who practised justice and ruled righteously. But we forgive you that offence because you admit it and make amends for it. If a man admits his offense, atones for it accordingly and guards himself against it in future, then such atonement and self-restraint mean spiritual progress under the system of My Teaching.”

Then King Ajātasattu said:

“Very well, Venerable Sir! We will now go. We have many things to do.” The Buddha replied: “O King! You may go as you wish.” The King accepted the Buddha's Teaching

with much pleasure, extolled it delightedly, rose from his seat, paid respect and went away.

Note on *Saraṇa-gaṃana*

Herein note on *Saraṇa-gaṃana* will be mentioned briefly.

There are seven points regarding *Saraṇa-gaṃana*:

- (a) *Saraṇa* (Refuge),
- (b) *Saraṇa-gaṃana* (Refuge taking or Refuge consciousness),
- (c) Person established in *Saraṇa-gaṃana*,
- (d) Forms of *Saraṇa-gaṃana*,
- (e) Fruit of *Saraṇa-gaṃana*,
- (f) Contamination of *Saraṇa-gaṃana*, and
- (g) Destruction of *Saraṇa-gaṃana*.

(a) *Saraṇa* (Refuge).

The Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha are the threefold *Saraṇa* (Refuge) because those, who seek its protection, overcome their fear, alarm, physical and mental suffering and various miseries in the lower worlds after death. In other words, the Buddha helps beings overcome various perils by contributing to their welfare and averting their misfortunes. So does the Dhamma by making beings free from hardships of life and consoling them. And so does the Sangha by making them gain a great benefit even from a few good acts. Hence the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha constitute the real threefold Refuge that ensures beings freedom from all suffering.

(b) *Saraṇa-gaṃana* (Refuge taking or Refuge consciousness)

Great wholesome consciousness (*mahākusala-citta*) that makes one inclined for the Three Jewels by removing defiling unwholesome mental states through devotion and veneration to the Three Jewels, Great Consciousness of Action (*mahākiriya-citta*) regarding the *arahats*, and Path Consciousness (*maggacitta*) regarding the Noble Ones established in the Path, *maggatṭha ariyas*. All these forms of consciousness are called *saraṇa-gaṃana*. Conviction that the Three Jewels are the real factors that eliminate fear and suffering by means of such consciousness is *saraṇa-gaṃana*. This is a definition.

(c) Person established in *Saraṇa-gaṃana*

A person who has the consciousness described above is one who is established in the threefold Refuge. Thus we should first understand the three aspects (1) *Saraṇa* (2) *Saraṇa-gaṃana* and (3) Person established in *Saraṇa-gaṃana*.

(d) Forms of *Saraṇa-gaṃana*

It is of two forms: (1) supramundane and (2) mundane.

(1) Supramundane *saraṇa-gaṃana* is implicit by way of fulfilment of function in a single thought-moment when the *ariyas* realize the Four Truths and attain the Paths, thereby overcoming all defilements and focusing their minds on Nibbāna. (By this is meant as follows: supramundane *saraṇa-gaṃana* is Path-consciousness. Path-consciousness is focused on Nibbāna, and this means uprooting the defilements that make *saraṇa-gaṃana* impure. So, although the Path-consciousness arises from the focus not on the Three Jewels but on Nibbāna, the fulfilment of its function involves the recognition of the Three Jewels as the real Refuge. In other words, at the moment of Path-consciousness, one is also possessed of the supramundane *saraṇa-gaṃana*. For example, it is said that one knows the Four Truths at the moment of Path-consciousness. Having Nibbāna as its object, the Path-consciousness is concerned only with the truth about the end of suffering. But it also roots out ignorance that makes us blind to the Four Truths. Thus although the *ariya* focuses his mind only on Nibbāna, he becomes aware of the three other Truths that do not directly concern Nibbāna, viz., the Truths about Suffering, the Cause of suffering and the Way to

the Cessation of Suffering.)

(2) The mundane *saraṇa-gamana* arises in an ordinary person (worldling) when he contemplates the attributes of the Buddha, the Dhamma and Sangha in the effort to remove the depravities (*upakkilesa*) that defile *saraṇa-gamana*. Basically this *saraṇa-gamana* means faith in the Buddha, etc. or Right View (*Sammā-diṭṭhi*) based on faith or a mental factor of wisdom (*paññā-cetasika*). As one of the ten meritorious actions (*puñña-kiriya*), it is called *Diṭṭhijukamma*.

Here faith too is termed *saraṇa-gamana* and so is the faith and wisdom combined. Mundane consciousness, with regard to the Threefold Refuge, is of two kinds: intelligent consciousness (*ñāṇa-sampayutta saraṇa-gamana*) and unintelligent consciousness (*ñāṇa-vippayutta saraṇa-gamana*). The former is the consciousness of the children who recite the Refuge-formula at the advice of their parents. Here it is only a matter of faith (*saddhā-cetasika*). The intelligent *saraṇa-gamana* is based on the knowledge of the noble characteristics of the Three Jewels and here faith and wisdom are jointly mentioned as *saraṇa-gamana* because they are easily felt. The actual *saraṇa-gamana* however, is the consciousness that is led by faith and wisdom.

Again, the mundane *saraṇa-gamana* is of four kinds:

- (1) *Attasanniyyātana-saraṇa-gamana* = *saraṇa-gamana* by giving up oneself to the Three Jewels;
- (2) *Tapparāyana-saraṇa-gamana* = *saraṇa-gamana* by finding one's support in the Three Jewels;
- (3) *Sissabhāv'ūpa-gamana saraṇa-gamana* = *saraṇa-gamana* by becoming a pupil of the Three Jewels; and
- (4) *Panipāṭṭa saraṇa-gamana* = *saraṇa-gamana* by showing great reverence to the Three Jewels.

Of these four:

- (1) Giving up oneself to the Three Jewels involves declaration as follows: "From today onwards I give up myself to the Buddha; I give up myself to the Dhamma; I give up myself to the Sangha."
- (2) Finding one's support in the Three Jewels involves supplication as follows: "From today onwards kindly recognize me as one who finds support in the Buddha, in the Dhamma and in the Sangha."
- (3) Becoming a pupil of the Three Jewels involves supplication as follows: "From today onwards, kindly recognize me as a residential pupil (*antevāsika*) of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha."

(In the Mahājanaka Jātaka, the Bodhisatta pointed out lifeless mango tree bearing fruit and the other mango tree bearing no fruit as his teachers because they instructed him for his welfare. Therefore, one speak of the Dhamma as one's teacher and speak of oneself as its pupil.)

- (4) Showing great reverence to the Three Jewels involves supplication as follows: "From today onwards kindly recognize me as one who worships, welcomes, raises one's hands in adoration, venerates only the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha."

One who adopts any of these four modes of seeking refuge is one who fulfils one's *saraṇa-gamana*.

Alternatively,

- (1) declaration, uttering: "I give up myself to the Buddha, to the Dhamma, and to the Sangha," or "I offer my life to the Three Jewels," or "I have offered my body to the Three Jewels," or "I have offered my life to the Three Jewels," or "I am aware of my approach to the Buddha as my refuge till the end of my life, ... to the Dhamma ... and ... to the Sangha ...," or "the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha are my refuge", all these utterances of declaration constitute *attasanniyyā-saraṇa-gamana*.

- (2) In the story of Pippali, a youth who later became the well-known Mahā Kassapa, donned the robe by himself and set out from his brahmin village of Mahā Titttha to visit the Buddha. On his way, he saw the Buddha at the foot of the banyan tree called Bahu-puttaka between Rājagaha and Nālanda. The Buddha was waiting for him from a distance of three gavutas. As soon as Pippali saw the Buddha, he decided that “this noble ascetic must be the *satthā* (teacher) of devas and humans, the *sugata* (good wayfarer) who has really attained Nibbāna through excellent practice, and the *Sammāsambuddha* (Perfectly Self-Enlightened One) who has rightly penetrated the right doctrines by Himself. Then he took refuge in the Buddha by uttering: “If I am to see the *satthā* of devas and humans, I will see only You. If I am to see the *sugata*, I will see only You. If I am to see the *Sammāsambuddha*, I will see only You. (i.e. I will see no other person with my eye of wisdom as my *Satthā*, *Sugata*, and *Sammāsambuddha*. I will see only You as my *Satthā*, *Sugata*, and *Sammāsambuddha*.)” His utterances indeed amounted to the third mode of taking refuge which is *sissabhāv'ūpa-gamana saraṇa-gamana*.
- (3) The *Saraṇa-gamana* that is marked by the desire to scale protection and shelter in the Three Jewels, as in the case of the ogre Ālāvaka, the deva kings, Hemavata and Sātāgira, is termed *Tapparāyana-saraṇa-gamana*.
- (4) In the Brahmāyu Sutta of the **Majjhima Nikāya**, after the Buddha had answered the eight question put by the Brahmin Brahmāyu, the latter was much impressed and so after rising, he bowed his head to the feet of the Buddha. He also sucked the Buddha's feet with his mouth and massaged them vigorously, saying: “O Gotama! I am the Brahmin Brahmāyu” and thus mentioning his name.

This gesture of the Brahmin Brahmāyu showing deep reverence for the Three Jewels is *Panipata saraṇa-gamana*.

In short, there is no uniform gesture for the four kinds of *saraṇa-gamana*. There are many kinds of bodily and verbal actions by which one can show reverence for the Three Jewels. The Commentary distinguished between four kinds of *saraṇa-gamana* explains the four kinds of reverences.

Four Kinds of Reverence (Panipāta)

Reverence may be of four kinds, reverence for relatives, reverence from fear, reverence for the teacher and reverence for one who, as one of the Three Jewels or Refuges, is worthy of excellent offering.

The *saraṇa-gamana* necessarily presupposes the fourth kind of reverence. It has nothing to do with the others.

Indeed reverence with faith is essential to *saraṇa-gamana*. This consciousness erodes only when there is reverence for the bogus Buddha, bogus Dhamma and bogus Sangha in place of three genuine Jewels.

- (1) So a Sakyan or a Koliyan prince has no *saraṇa-gamana* if he reveres the Buddha, regarding the Buddha as a senior member of their family.
- (2) Neither is it *saraṇa-gamana*, if a man reveres the Buddha out of fear that as a powerful teacher honoured by kings, the Buddha might do harm to him if he showed no respect.
- (3) A man may remember having learnt (some craft) from the Buddha when He was still a Bodhisatta and now he reveres the Buddha, regarding Him as his former teacher. Another man may have heard the Buddha's sermon on, say, the apportionment of one's wealth, i.e., a wise person should spend one fourth of his income on enjoying life, two fourths (one half) to be invested in business, and the remaining one fourth to be saved for any emergency. So he looks up to the Buddha as his teacher and reveres Him for the advice with regard to his material welfare. Now neither of these two men's reverence has anything to do with *saraṇa-gamana*.
- (4) But a certain man reveres the Buddha, believing that He was the real Jewel, the real

Refuge, worthy of alms given as foundations for welfare hereafter. Only this man has *saraṇa-gamana*.

For a layman or a laywoman who seeks refuge in the Buddha, recognizing the Buddha as a being worthy of excellent offering (*aggadakkhiṇeyya-puggala*), his or her *saraṇa-gamana* is not adversely affected even though he reveres a relative of alien, heretical monastic Order, to say nothing of revering a non-heretical monk or a layman in his family. So also a layman or a laywoman who has sought refuge in the Buddha will not have his or her vow damaged by revering the king out of fear. The same is true in the case of a layman paying respect to a heretic who happens to be his former teacher.

(e) Fruit of *Saraṇa-gamana*

The chief immediate benefits of supramundane *saraṇa-gamana* are the four Fruitions of the Path gained by *ariyas*. The subsequent benefit is extinction of *saṃsāra*. In other words, it is the total extinction of the illusions of permanence, pleasantness and substantiality as regards the impermanent, unpleasant and insubstantial psychophysical phenomena, etc., are the benefits of mundane *saraṇa-gamana*.

(f) Contamination of *Saraṇa-gamana*

Mundane *saraṇa-gamana* gets debased owing to ignorance, doubt and misconceptions about the noble attributes of the Three Jewels. It is not bright, vast and great. The supramundane *saraṇa-gamana* is free from corruption. It is always clean and pure.

(g) Destruction of *Saraṇa-gamana*

Supramundane *Saraṇa-gamana* can never be destroyed. The *ariya* who is established in it does not point out as his or her teacher anyone other than the Three Refuges even in the next life. It is only the mundane *saraṇa-gamana* that tends to come to destruction.

Its destruction is of two kinds: (1) disastrous destruction and (2) non-disastrous destruction. The destruction is disastrous when one reveres and seeks refuge in other heretical teachers in one of the ways described above, thereby giving rise to craving, wrong belief, etc. When the destruction follows death, it is not disastrous because it does not involve doing any evil. (The vow taken by Buddhists nowadays as regards taking refuge in the Buddha, etc. is mundane. Like the observance of the moral precepts, its duration is not fixed and it ends only with death. This end is not disastrous because it does not involve craving, wrong belief and other unwholesome states of consciousness.)

Note on *Upāsaka* (Lay-devotee)

(*Sutta Silakkhan* the Commentary)

Some brief note on *upāsaka* may be mentioned as follows:

- (1) Definition of an *upāsaka*
- (2) Function of an *upāsaka*
- (3) Morality of an *upāsaka*
- (4) Livelihood an *upāsaka*
- (5) Failure of an *upāsaka*
- (6) Success of an *upāsaka*

These six aspects should be understood.

(a) Definition of An *Upāsaka*

An *upāsaka* is he who seeks refuge in the Three Jewels, irrespective of his birth, high or low. (Relevant examples contained the *Samyutta Nikāya*.)

(b) Function of An *Upāsaka*

His function is to follow the Three Jewels, namely, the Buddha, the Dhamma and Sangha. (*Upāsatiṭi upāsako* — He follows the Three Jewels; therefore he is *upāsaka*. *Upāsako* — a devotee of the Triple Gem).

(c) Morality of An Upāsaka

His morality is the observance of the Five Moral Precepts. (Relevant examples contained in the **Saṃyutta Nikāya**.)

(d) Livelihood of An Upāsaka

His livelihood excludes the five kinds of wrong trades: (1) trade in arms, (2) trade in human beings, (3) trade in meat and fish, (4) trade in alcohol, and (5) trade in poison. Avoiding these five wrong trades, he earns his living righteously by tending cattle, buying and selling goods and farming.

(e) Failure of An Upāsaka

His failure lies in the destruction of his observance of the Five Precepts and right livelihood. (If his observance of the precept is impaired or if he earns his living by taking up one of the five wrong trades, his life as an *upāsaka* is ruined.) Moreover, there are five things that make his life rough, nasty and disgusting: (1) lack of faith, (2) lack of morality, (3) performance of and indulgence in worldly rites and rituals with regard to what has been seen, heard or experienced as conceived by the foolish and the ignorant, (4) disbelief in the Law of Kamma and belief in rituals, and (5) performance of good deeds in the Order of the Buddha only after seeking recipients in the sects of the heretics. (These five deeds lead an *upāsaka* to his failure.) (Examples in the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**.)

(f) Success of An Upāsaka

His success consists in the fulfilment of his morality and right livelihood. (He is an *upāsaka* as long as his morality and right livelihood remain intact.) Besides, if he maintains the following five practices, he is said to be successful as an *upāsaka*. The five practices are: (1) faith that makes one an *upāsaka* comparable to a jewel, an *upāsaka* comparable to a paduma lotus, and an *upāsaka* comparable to a *puṇḍarika* lotus; (2) unimpaired morality; (3) non-indulgence in earthly rituals; (4) belief in one's own deeds good and bad; (5) performance of good deeds in the Order of the Buddha before seeking recipients in the systems of the heretics. These five lead to an *upāsaka* to his success. (Examples in the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**.)

King Ajātasattu's Loss and Gain

Not long after the King's Ajātasattu's departure the Buddha addressed the monks: “Monks, the King has destroyed his own position. Monks, if King Ajātasattu had not killed his father, King Bimbisāra, the righteous monarch, who ruled his kingdom lawfully, the Sotāpatti Path-Wisdom would have occurred to him on the spot. (He would have become a *sotāpanna-ariya*.)”

The Buddha added: “Monks, if he had not put his father to death, he would have attained the Sotāpatti Path while seated here as he heard this Sāmañña-phala Sutta. But now, on account of his association with his wicked friend, his potentiality to attain that Path has been injured. Nevertheless, since he has taken refuge in the Triple Gem and since his refuge which is my threefold Teaching is supreme, he may be compared to a man who, after having been sentenced to death for murder, escapes the death penalty by getting good support and by giving just a handful of flowers (as a small fine). Although he ought to suffer in the Avīci hell for his heinous crime of parricide, he will suffer only in the Lohakumbhī hell after his death, for he has the good support in My Teaching. He will land in that hell and remain there for thirty thousand years and come up and stay on the surface for thirty thousand years. Then (after sixty thousand years) he will be released from Lohakumbhī.

(Herein Ajātasattu's gain will be mentioned according to the Commentary. One may asked: “Had he benefited from his hearing of the Sāmañña-phala Sutta?”)

The answer is: Yes, he had, and his benefit is enormous. Since the moment of his parricide he had known no sleep, by day or by night, for there appeared to him

signs of his woeful rebirth. Only after listening to the sweet and soothing Sāmañña-phala Sutta, he could sleep well whether it was day or night. And he lavishly honoured the Three Jewels. No other worldling had faith (*pothujjanika-saddhā*) that was equal to Ajātasattu's. (Sound sleep, merit accrued from his honour done to the Triple Gem, possession of unique faith of a worldling, etc. were his gain that was realised in his present life. His afterlife benefit would be his attainment of Parinibbāna after becoming a Paccekabuddha, by the name of Vijitāvī.)

Note on Ajātasattu's Enlightenment

If it is true that King Ajātasattu could have gained the *Sotāpatti*-Path Knowledge instantly but for his parricide, how can he become a Pacceka Buddha and attain Parinibbāna? If it is true that he will become a Paccekabuddha and attain Parinibbāna, how could he have gained the state of a *sotāpanna*? Enlightenment of a Paccekabuddha consists in the fulfilment of five things: (1) *manussatta* (a human life), (2) *liṅga-sampatti* (being a male), (3) *vigatāsava-dassana* (discernment leading to freedom from *āsavas*), (4) *adhikāra* (service), and (5) *chandatā* (aspiration). Enlightenment of a disciple requires only two factors: (1) *adhikāra* and (2) *chandatā*. As regards the duration of time for their fulfilment of *pāramīs*, it takes two *asaṅkhyeyyas* and a hundred thousand aeons for the Enlightenment of a Paccekabuddha, one *asaṅkhyeyya* and a hundred thousand aeons for that of a Disciple. In realising the Four Truths, the former has no teacher while the latter has. For these reasons, are not the two kinds of Enlightenment basically different from each other?

The answer is that they cannot be different. For Ajātasattu will fulfil whatever is necessary for the attainment of Enlightenment as a Paccekabuddha, only after suffering for sixty thousand years in the Lohakumbhī hell. Indeed those who seek Enlightenment as a Disciple will gain it as Paccekabuddhas, if circumstances are not favourable for them to become Disciples. For they must have resolved to gain release as Paccekabuddhas. (This is the answer given by the first school of teachers. According to them, although the King had the potential for gaining release as a disciple, he could not do so in the present life because of his association with his evil friend, Devadatta, which made circumstances unfavourable and damaged the prospects for his attainment of *sotāpatti-magga*. But later on he will fulfil everything that will contribute to his attainment of Paccekabuddhahood and he will gain release.)

But according to other teachers, Ajātasattu had resolved to gain only the Enlightenment as a Paccekabuddha. But in the absence of any definite prediction of a Buddha, even those who have performed good deeds for Paccekabuddhahood cannot gain maturity of their Enlightenment in their capacity as Paccekabuddhas; instead they will attain Enlightenment as disciples in the presence of a Buddha. Hence the Buddha said: "Monks, if he had not put his father to death, he would have attained Sotāpatti Path while being seated here as he heard this Sāmañña-phala Sutta."

Of the three kinds of future personages, namely, the future Buddha, the future Paccekabuddha and the future Disciple, only the future Buddha is free from the *pañcānantariya-kamma*; the other two future Ones are not. That is true. Though Devadatta had been assured (though he had received the definite prediction) that he would become a Paccekabuddha, because of his grudge that he had long harboured, he committed the *ānantariya-kamma* by creating schism (*saṅghabhedaka-kamma*) and causing bloodshed to the Buddha (*lohit'uppādaka-kamma*) which were most serious crimes. Taking these into consideration, it may be understood that future Paccekabuddhas and future Disciples are not so invulnerable. It may also be understood therefore that King Ajātasattu missed his opportunity to gain Sotāpatti Knowledge in the present life because of his parricide and that he will later on become a Paccekabuddha by the name of Vijitāvī in accordance with the law of Paccekabuddha Enlightenment (*Paccekabuddha-Bodhi Niyāma*). This is the view of the other teachers. Choose between these two views what you think is more reasonable. (Exposition on the Sāmañña-phala Sutta, *Sīlakhandha Tika*, Vol. II)

End of the Story of Ajātasattu

Chapter 38

BUDDHA'S BRAHMIN PARENTS IN HIS PREVIOUS EXISTENCE

On one occasion, after residing in Sāvatti for the rains retreat, the Buddha 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 Himself wherever the situation was appropriate. Travelling in stages, the Buddha arrived at Sāketa at evening 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 visit Him at night. They waited till the next morning, then, taking flowers, perfumes and other offerings with them, they approached the Buddha, and making their obeisance, and exchanging courteous words of greeting with Him, and remained there till it was time for Him to go on the daily alms-round.

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

Even while the brahmin was drawing near Him, the Buddha 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 Buddha at close range from the front, from the back, and from the left side and from the right side, Then embracing Him, 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 Buddha: "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 Buddha indicated His consent by remaining silent. The Brahmin led the way to his place holding the Buddha'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 Buddha. As she saw the Buddha nearing her house, she went to Him, and saying: "My son, it is a long time that I have not seen You", she fondled the Buddha's feet and wept with joy. She requested the Buddha to proceed to her home where they (brahmin couple) respectfully offered the Buddha and His company of *bhikkhus* with food. After He had finished His meal, the Brahmin took the alms-bowl and washed it himself.

The Buddha then discoursed to the brahmin couple in a way fitting to them and at the end of the discourse they became Stream-Enterers, having become *ariyas*. They requested the Buddha: "May the Bhagavā and his company of *bhikkhus*, during their sojourn at Sāketa, receive offering of alms-food only at our home." The Buddha 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 Buddha: "In that case, Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā and his company of *bhikkhus* go for alms (elsewhere) but take the meals at our home 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 Ānanda asked the Buddha: "Venerable Sir, I know your

parentage (as Queen Mahā Māyā Devī and King Suddhodāna) and yet why is it that the Brahmin Sāketa and his wife are called the Buddha's parents?" And the Buddha explained: "Ānanda, 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 Buddha then uttered this stanza.

*Pubbeva sannivāsena paccuppaññāhitena vā
evam 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 Buddha 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 Sāvattthi. 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. *anupādisa 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 Buddha (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-nusaya-ñāṇa*) and knowledge of the maturity and immaturity of the faculties of beings (*indriyaparopariyatti-ñāṇa*) for that day and came to know 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 Sāvattthi for the cemetery at Sāketa, carrying His alms-bowl and big robe Himself.

On seeing the Buddha, the people said: "The Bhagava has come to attend to the funeral of His father and mother" and paid their obeisance to Him. The townsfolk brought the bier to the cemetery in reverential ceremony. They asked the Buddha: "Venerable Sir, what is the proper way to venerate the brahmin couple who had been *ariya* laydisiples?"

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*:

*Ahimsakā ye munayo niccam kāyeva saṇvutā
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 *maggā*-knowledge, they are free from sorrow. They have realized the four *maggas* and *phalas* and attained to the deathless Nibbāna. — **Dhammapada**, 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. Aṭṭhaka Vagga, Jarā Sutta, the sixth in that *vagga* or group of discourses.) By 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.)

The Story of Viṭaṭṭha (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 Takkaṣa (Taxila) to get their education under a 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 they became friends. After having completed their education under the guidance of the great teacher in due time, they bid farewell to the teacher and left Taxila together and returned to their respective homes.

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

Prince Mahāli of the Licchavis also 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 he 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 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.

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* going to the houses of Anāthapiṇḍika, the rich man, Cūla Anāthapiṇḍika, 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; and five hundred each at the house of Cūla Anāthapiṇḍika, 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 and invited the Buddha 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 Buddha: “Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā and five hundred *bhikkhus* come to the palace to receive our food offerings every day.” The Buddha 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 visits to their home 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 Buddha assigned the Venerable Ānanda to head five hundred *bhikkhus* to go to the palace for the daily alms-food.

The King attended to the offering of food to the *bhikkhus* personally for seven days without assigning these duties to anyone. 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” and left. On the next day also, the King forgot to feed the Sangha and many of the *bhikkhus* left the palace. On the third day also, the same thing happened and all the *bhikkhus* left but only the Venerable Ānanda 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 Venerable Sāriputta and Venerable Mahā Moggallāna who were two Chief Disciples; Therī Khemā and Therī Uppalavanna who were two Chief Female Disciples; Citta, the rich man, and Prince Hathakaḷavaka who were two foremost lay disciples; and Nandamātā, wife of the rich man of Velukaṇḍaka and Lady Khujjuttarā who were two foremost female lay disciples, they were acclaimed 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 Ānanda also had fulfilled the Ten Perfections over a hundred thousand aeon (*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 Ānanda. King Pasenadi of Kosala came to the palace 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 Ānanda 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 Buddha and complained: “Venerable Sir, I had prepared food offerings for five hundred *bhikkhus* but only the Venerable Ānanda 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 Buddha 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 go to your palace.” On that occasion, the Buddha 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. (**Anguttara Nikāya**, Navaka Nipāta, Pathama Paṇṇāsaka, 2 - Sihanāda 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 conditions should not be visited by *bhikkhus*, if they have never been there, or if they happen to be there already, they should not stay there. Now, these are the nine (improper) conditions:

- (1) If the lay supporters do not respectfully welcome you;
- (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 at such a home already, 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 there already, they should stay there. Now, these are the nine (proper) conditions:

- (1) If the lay supporters welcome you 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 past 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 Buddha related to him the story of Kesava Jātaka contained in the **Catukka Nipāta** (This story was also referred to when the Brahmā Baka was tamed by the Buddha and has mentioned earlier.)

After hearing the Buddha’s discourse, King Pasenadi of Kosala saw the need to become intimate with the *bhikkhu* Sangha and thought of some way to fulfil this aim. He struck on the idea of marrying one of the Sakyan princesses. “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 anyone 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 Vāsabhakhattiya. 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 Buddha Gotama, son of Amitodāna. Vāsabhakhattiya 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 slaves 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, Vāsabhakhattiya, 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 Sāvatti 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 about what to do. But Mahānāma reassured them with the instruction that after the bogus princess was being seated at Mahānāma's 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.) (This was taken in by the delegation from Sāvatti.)

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) Vāsabhakhattiya, the Chief Queen, and she was 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 remarked: "Vāsabhakhattiya 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 '*viṭaṭubha*' 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: "Viṭaṭubha is the name, your Majesty, that his royal grandfather suggests for the princeling." The King mused: "Possibly, Viṭaṭubha is a clan name of yore with us" and named his son, Viṭaṭubha. Then with a view to pleasing the Buddha, the King made Viṭaṭubha, Commander in-Chief, even in his tender age.

Viṭaṭubha was brought up 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 Vāsabhakhattiya: "Mother, other princes get children's presents, such as dolls and the like, from their

maternal grandparents. 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 grandparent'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 grandparent'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 Vāsabhakkhattiyā had in the meantime sent a secret message to the Sakyans asking them to keep up appearances when Viṭaṭūbha arrived so that the whole conspiracy would not in anyway 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 his 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 have gone 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, the son of slave girl Vāsabhakkhattiyā." 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 Vāsabhakkhattiyā 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 Vāsabhakkhattiyā was a daughter of a slave girl.

When Viṭaṭūbha learned this news, he was quick to understand the situation. "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 Buddha 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 Buddha and said to Him: "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, Vāsabhakkhattiyā, and son, Viṭaṭūbha, to the slave's rank and status."

The Buddha 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: Vāsabhakkhattiyā 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 past 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 Kaṭṭhavaḥana of Bārāṇasī, 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. (Ref: **Ekanipāta** for the story of Katthavāhana.)

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 visited the Buddha before leaving Sāvattī. So, she went to the Jetavana monastery and made obeisance to the Buddha. On being asked where she was going next, Mallikā told the Buddha how she was being sent home to her father because she failed to produce any child. Thereupon, the Buddha 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 with these words and, making her obeisance to the Buddha, she went back to her husband. Bandula asked her why she had come back. She told him what the Buddha had said to her. Bandula pondered: “The Bhagavā is far sighted. He must have fore-knowledge about Mailikas probable pregnancy.” And so he let her stay with him.

Not long afterwards, Mailikā was pregnant. 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, they left Sāvattī and entered Vesali from the city gate assigned to Mahā Licchavī for enjoyment of tolls collected at that gate. Mahā Licchavī'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 Licchavis,” and he warned them. 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 schoolmate, 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 ignored 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 Mahā Licchavī's warning and drove on. Bandula, as the Commander-in-Chief, after proceeding a while, pulled at the bow string producing a thunderous sound. 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 Licchavī princes and struck the ground.

The Licchavī 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 Licchavī Prince."

When they did as they were told, the lifeless body of the rearmost Licchavī 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 would 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, who 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 the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna 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 her 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 asked 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 jīvitaṃ* (etc.). Then he rose from his seat and returned to the Jetavana monastery. (Ref: **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 Mallikā’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 in her parents' home 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, viz., Visākhā, Mallikā, wife of Bandula the Commander-in-Chief, and the daughter of a rich man of Bārāṇasī.

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 she (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.

Mallikā’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 *samsāric* 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 Tāvātimsa Deva realm. On account of her wish she was endowed with unrivalled 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. *Vimāna Vatthu*).

King Pasenadi of Kosala let the nephew of Bandula, named Dīghakārāyaṇa, 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 Buddha was sojourning at the market town of Medaḷupa, in the province of the Sakyans. The King of Kosala, wishing to see the Buddha, put up a rustic tent built of branches of trees in the vicinity of the Buddha's monastery and stayed there. There, leaving the regal paraphernalia with Dīghakārāyana, the Commander-in-Chief, he entered the Buddha'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 Buddha; and (2) he intended to have a private dialogue with the Buddha 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 in the meantime and that) they should return to the palace.

As the Kosala King went alone to the Buddha'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 Sāvattthi 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 Buddha, 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 as the Buddha. (Ref: **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 Savatthi 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 accepted the ministers' advice.)

Prince Viṭaṭūbha, after ascending the throne at Sāvattthi, 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 Buddha 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 by His psychic power and reappeared sitting 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 Buddha, he made obeisance to Him and said: "Venerable Sir, how is it that the Bhagavā is sitting underneath this skeleton of a tree when it is still hot? May You come and sit underneath shady banyan tree which is near our boundary." The Buddha 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 Buddha was there to give His benign protection to His kinsmen. So he withdrew his forces after respectfully making his obeisance to Him. The Buddha reappeared in the Jetavana monastery by His psychic power.

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

When King Viṭaṭūbha set out for the fourth time the Buddha saw that the time for the evil misdeeds of the Sakyan was taking effect and so He did not intervene. The past misdeeds of the Sakyans 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 Sakyans. The Buddha'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."

"The arrows come in the direction of our men."

"But there is no one being 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 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. Mahānāma was possessed of such merit that his presence underneath the water caused warmth in the realm of Nāgas. The King of Nāgas looked for the strange phenomenon and on seeing the plight of Mahānāma, he appeared before him and letting him sit on his hood, carried him down to the realm of Nāgas where Mahānāma 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. When he had waited 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 arrived at 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 groups, swarms of white ants made their stay impossible. They were driven to seek fresh quarter for the night. Those 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 locations, there arose black rain clouds and all of a sudden there was a deluge that caused the Aciravati 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 Sakyans 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 Buddha, 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 Buddha to relate the nature of their past evil action. And the Buddha 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 mass 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 Buddha came to the assembly and asked the *bhikkhus*: "*Bhikkhus*, what was that you were talking about when I came?" They told the Buddha about their subject of discussion. Then the Buddha 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 Buddha 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.

By 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 Viṭaṭṭha, (the Destroyer of Friends).

The Two Mallikās differentiated

There were (at the time of the Buddha) two Mallikās 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 mentioned earlier. 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 leaving the city, they met 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 Buddha. The Buddha accepted the alms in the alms-bowl, which was donated by the four Great Guardians of the Four Quarters.

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

Mallikā was overjoyed to hear the words of the Buddha 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 girls voice. Where as 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' home. 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-Kumnāsapiṇḍi Jātaka).

Thus the two Mallikās 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.

Chapter 39

HOW THE ĀṬĀNĀṬIYA PARITTA CAME TO BE TAUGHT

At one time, the Buddha was staying in the monastery on the Gijjakuta Hill near Rājagaha. During that time, Dharaṭṭha, Virūḷaka, Virūpakka and Kuvera, the Four Great Guardian Kings of the four quarters, held a conference at the celestial city of Āṭānāṭiya, the abode of Kuvera. After they had carefully arranged for the defences of Tāvātimsa, the abode of Sakka, King of Devas, (against the Asuras) at the four directions, by employing hordes of *yakkhas*, *gandhabbas*, *kumbhaṇḍas*, and *nāgas*, they composed stanzas called the *Āṭānāṭiya Paritta* on the subject of the seven Buddhas (preceding Buddha Gotama). “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 *nāgas* for their own protection. Around midnight, they went to the Buddha in resplendent appearances, their personal radiance flooding the entire Gijjhakuta Hill. After having approached the Buddha, 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 *Āṭānāṭiya Paritta* — Commentary).

The company of *yakkhas* who came with the Four Great Guardian Kings behaved in different ways in the presence of the Buddha: some of them made obeisance to Him and sat in a suitable place: some exchanged words of felicitations and sat in a suitable place; some raised their joined palms in the direction of Him 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 Buddha 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 these *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. These remote places are permanent residences of very powerful *yakkhas*, who do not show reverence to the Bhagavā. To win their confidence, to serve as protection for *bhikkhu*-disciples, *bhikkhunī*-disciples, male lay disciples and female lay 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 *Āṭānāṭiya Paritta* to the disciples.”

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

The Buddha accepted Vessavaṇṇa's proposition by remaining silent.

Seeing that the Buddha approved his suggestion, Vessavaṇṇa recited the *Āṭānāṭiya Paritta* thus:

The Āṭānāṭiya Paritta (Pāli).

- (1) *Vipassissa ca namatthu, cakku mantassa sirīmato,*
Sikhissipi ca namatthu, sabbabhutānu kampino.
- (2) *Vessabhussa ca namatthu, nhātakassa tapassino,*

Namatthu Kakusandhassa, mārasenā pamaddino.

- (3) *Koṇāgamanassa namatthu, brāhmaṇassa vusīmato,
Kassapassa ca namatthu, Vippamuttassa sabbadhi.*
- (4) *Aṅgīrassasa namatthu, saḷyaputtassa sirīmato,
Yo imaṇ dhammaṁ desesi, sabbadukkhāpanūdānaṁ.*
- (5) *Ye cāpi nibbutā loke, yathābhutaṁ vipassisuṁ,
Te janā apisuṇātha, mahāntā vītasāradā.*
- (6) *Hiraṁ devamanussānaṁ, yaṁ namassanti Gotamaṁ,
Vijjācaraṇa sampaññaṁ, mahāntaṁ vītasāradā.*
- (7) *Yato uggacchati sūriyo, ādicco maṇḍalī mahā,
Yassasugacchamānassa, saṁvarīpi nirujjhati,
Yassa suggati sūriye, divasoti pavuccati.*
- (8) *Rahadopi tattha gambhīro, samuddo saritodako,
Evaṁ taṁ tattha jānanti, samuddo saritodako.*
- (9) *Ito sā purimā disā, iti naṁ ācikkhatī jano,
Yaṁ disaṁ abhipālehti, mahārajā yasassiso.*
- (10) *Gandhabbānaṁ adhipati, dhataratthoti nāma so,
Ramatī nacca gītehi, gandhabbehi purakkhato.*
- (11) *Puttāpi tassa bahavo, ekanāmati me sutā,
Asītim dasa eko ca, indanāmā mahābbalā.*
- (12) *Te cāpi Buddhaṁ disvāna, Buddhaṁ ādicca bandhunam,
Dūratova namassanti, mahantaṁ vītasāradā.*
- (13) *Namo te purisā jañña, namo te purisuttama.
Kusalena samekhasi, amanussāpi taṁ vadanti,
Sutaṁ netāṁ abhiñhaso, tasmā evaṁ vademase.*
- (14) *Jinaṁ vandatha Gotamaṁ, jinaṁ vandāma Gotamaṁ.
Vijjācaraṇa sampaññaṁ Buddhaṁ vandāma Gotamaṁ.*
- (15) *Yena petā pavuccanti, pisuṇā piṭṭhimaṁsikā,
Pāṇātipātino luddā, corā nekatikā janā.*
- (16) *Ito sā dakkhiṇā disā,
Iti naṁ ācikkhatī jano.
Yaṁ disaṁ abhipāleti,
Mahārājā yasassi so.*
- (17) *Kumbhaṇḍānaṁ adhipati, Virūlho iti nāma so.
Ramatī nicca gītehi, kumbhaṇḍehi purakkhato.*
- (18) *Puttāpi tassa bahavo, ekanāmāti me suta,
Asītim dasa eko ca, indanāmā mahābbalā.*
- (19) *Te cāpi Buddhaṁ disavāna, Buddhaṁ ādicca bandhunam,
Dūratova namassanti, mahantaṁ vītasāradā.*
- (20) *Namo te purisā jañña, namo te purisuttama.
Kusalena samekhasi, amanussāpi taṁ vandanti
Sutaṁ netāṁ abhiñhaso, tasmā evaṁ vademase.*
- (21) *Jinaṁ vandatha Gotamaṁ, jinaṁ vandāma Gotamaṁ.
Vijjācaraṇa sampaññaṁ Buddhaṁ vandāma Gotamaṁ.*
- (22) *Yattha coggacchati suriyo, ādicco maṇḍalī mahā,
Yassa coggaccha mānassa, divasopi nirujjhati.
Yassa coggate sūriye, samavaritī pavuccati.*
- (23) *Rahadopi tatha gambhīro, samuddo saritodako.
Evaṁ taṁ tattha jānanti, samuddo saritodako.*
- (24) *Ito sā pacchimā disā, iti naṁ ācikkhatī jano,*

Yaṃ disaṃ abhipāleti, mahārājā yasassi so.

- (25) *Nāgānañ ca adhipati, virūpakkho ti nāma so,
Ramaṭī nacca gūtehi, nāgehi purakkhato.*
- (26) *Puttāpi tassa bahavo, ekanāmāti me sutam,
Asīti dasa eko ca, indanāmā mahābbalā.*
- (27) *Te cāpi Buddham disvāna, Buddham ādicca bhandunam.
Dūratova namassanti, mahāntam vītasārādam.*
- (28) *Namo te purisā jañña, namo te purisuttama.
Kusalena samekhasi, amanussāpi tam vandanti
Sutam netam abhinhaso, tasmā evam vandemase.*
- (29) *Jinam vandatha Gotamam, jinam vandāma Gotamam.
Vijjācaraṇ sampaññam Buddham vandāma Gotamam.*
- (30) *Yena uttara kurū ramā, mahāneru sudassano,
Manussā tattha jāyanti, amamā apariggahā.*
- (31) *Na te bījam pavapanti, napi nīyanti naṅgalā,
Akaṭṭhapākimam sālīm, paribhuñjanti mānusa.*
- (32) *Akanam athusam suddham, sugandham taṇḍulapphalam,
Tuṇḍikūre pacitavāna, tato bhunjañti bhojanam.*
- (33) *Gāvim ekakhuram katvā, anuyanti disodisam,
Pasum ekakhurañ katvā, anuyanti disodisam.*
- (34) *Itthim vā vāhanam katvā, anuyanti disodisam,
Purisam vāhanam katvā, anuyanti disodisam.*
- (35) *Kumariṃ vāhanam katvā, anuyanti disodisam
Kumāram vāhanam katvā, anuyanti disodisam.*
- (36) *Te yāne abhiruhitvā,
Sabbā disā anupariyāyanti,
Pasārā tassa rājino.*
- (37) *Hatthiyānam assayānam, dibbam yānam upaṭṭhitam,
Pāsādā sivikā ceva, mahārājassa yasassino.*
- (38) *Tassa ca nagarā ahu,
Antalikkhe sumāpitā.
Āṭānātā kusinātā parakusinātā,
Nāṭasuriyā parakusiṇanātā.*
- (39) *Uttarena kasivanto,
Janoghamaparena ca,
Nanavutiyo ambara ambara vatiyo,
Āḷaka mandā nāma rājadhānī.
Kuverassa kho pana mārissa māhārājassa visāṇā nāma
Rājadhānī,
tasmā kuvero mahārājā vessavaṇṇoti pavuccati.*
- (40) *Paccesanto pakāsenti
Tatolā tattalā tatotalā,
Ojasi tejasi tatojasī
Sūro rājā ariṭṭho nemi.*
- (41) *Rahadopi tattha dharaṇī nāma,
Yato meghā pavassanti
Vassā yato patāyanti,
Sabhāpi tattha Bhagālavatī nāma.*
- (42) *Yattha yakkhā payirupāsanti, tattha nicca phalā rukkhā.
Nānā dija gaṇā yutā, mayūra koṇcābhirudā,
Kokilādīhi vagguhi.*

- (43) *Jīvaṃīvaka saddettha, atho oṭṭhava cittakā,
Kukuttakā kuṭṭiraka, vane pokkharasātakā.*
- (44) *Suka sālīka saddettha, danda māṇavakāni ca,
Sobhati sabbakālaṃ sā, kuveranaḷinī sadā.*
- (45) *Ito sā uttarā disā, iti naṃ ācikkhatī jano,
Yaṃ disaṃ abhipāleti, mahāārāja yasassi so.*
- (46) *Yakkhānaṇca adhipati, kuvero iti nāma so,
Ramatī nacca gītehi, yakkheheva purakkhato.*
- (47) *Puttāpi tassa bahavo, ekanāmāti me sutam,
Asītim dasa eko ca, inda nāmā mahābbalā.*
- (48) *Te cāpi Buddham disvāna, Buddham ādicca bandhunam,
Dūratova namassanti, mahāntam vīta sāradaṃ.*
- (49) *Namo te purisājaṇṇa, namo te pivrisuttama.
Kusalena samekhasi, amanussāpi tam vandanti
Sutam netam abhiṇhaso, tasmā evaṃ vademase.*
- (50) *Jinaṃ vandatha Gotamaṃ, jinaṃ vandāma Gotamaṃ,
Vijjācaraṇa sampañṇāṃ, Buddham vandāma Gotamaṃ.*

— (This is the **Āṭānāṭiya Paritta**) —

Then Vessavanna said: "Venerable Sir, this is the **Āṭānāṭiya Paritta** which is to be used as protection for *bhikkhu*-disciples, *bhikkhunī*-disciples, male lay disciples, female lay 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 *nāga* were to possess with intention to harass any one of the *bhikkhu*-disciples, or *bhikkhunī*-disciples, or male lay disciples, or female lay disciples 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 Buddha, the disqualification that surround a recalcitrant *yakkha*, etc., Vessavanna went on to say that just as there were recalcitrant men who defied the authority of king, there were also recalcitrant *yakkhas* 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, male lay disciples and female lay disciples), thirty-eight deva Generals, such as *Inda*, *Soma*, *Varuṇa*, should be invoked and reported to, describing details. After that, Vessavanna bid the Buddha farewell in these words: "Venerable Sir, we have many affairs to attend to, we shall go now." (For the Myanmar rendering of **Āṭānāṭiya Paritta** and details of Vessavanna's additional remarks, reference may be made of **Pāthika Vagga**.)

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

The Buddha relates The Story of The Visit of The Four Great Guardian Kings

On the next morning, the Buddha 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, male lay disciples, female lay 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, Mettā 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.

Some teachers advised: 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 *mettā* 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 stupa precincts. An offering, at the place where the victim is lying, will be made to the Buddha together with offerings of lights. The stupa 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 stupa 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 *Āṭānāṭiya 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 *Āṭānāṭiya Paritta* be recited. (This is the procedure for *bhikkhu*-victims).

The Buddha's Discourse to Sakka: Sakka Pañha Sutta

At one time, the Buddha was residing at the Indasāla Cave where the Odina woodier tree stood on the slope of the Vedyaka hill, north of Ambasaṇḍa brahmin village, which lay to the east of the City of Rājagaha, in the province of Magadha.

(The brahmin village was known as Ambasanda because it was situated by the side of a mango grove. The Vedyaka 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 woodier 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 Buddha was staying at the Indasāla Cave where the Odina woodier 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. These devas with vast store of merit remember their previous 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 Tāvātimsa 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 *Pariochattaka*) which is a hundred *yojanas* high; the Paṇḍukambalā stab 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 Tāvātimsa realm; and celestial parks known as Nandavana Park, Cīttalatā Park, Missaka Park, Phāsuka Park.

Then Sakka pondered: “Is there any *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* 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 he 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 Buddha was residing at the Indasāla Cave. He then said to his companions, the Tāvātimsa devas: “Friends, the Bhagavā is residing at the Indasāla Cave where the Odina woodier tree stands on the slope of the Vedyaka hill near Rājagaha. Friends, it were well if we go there to see the Bhagava.” The Tāvātimsa devas said: “Very well, Lord.”

(Herein, the time and circumstances of Sakka's seeing the Buddha may be noted. A

few days ago, Sakka had paid a visit to the Buddha at the Jetavana monastery, in the company of his close attendants such as Mātali but without a big retinue. At that time the Buddha 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 visit Him in the company of devas from both the Catumahārājika and Tāvātimsa Deva realms to ask fourteen questions and that, at the end of the question concerning equanimity, he would attend Stream-Entry along with eighty thousand devas of Catumahārājika and Tāvātimsa Deva realms. Seeing this situation, the Buddha dwelled in the *jhānic* absorption of *arahatta-phala* so that Sakka did not get an opportunity to see him.

On his part, Sakka was thinking: “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 the Tāvātimsa 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 Buddha in the company of devas from Catumahārājika and Tāvātimsa. “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 Odina woodier tree stands on the slope of the Vedyaka hill near Rājagaha. It would be well if we approach 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, Tāvātimsa 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, they 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 goose flesh forming on their skin.

(It should be noted that the visit to the Buddha by Sakka and company was rather too early. They were there after nightfall, when even children had not gone to bed. It was the custom of devas and Brahmās to visit the Buddha 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 is not free of greed, hatred and bewilderment. Go now and ask permission of the Bhagavā for me 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 Buddha and

not too far either, just a suitable distance away from where the Buddha could hear his music.

Deva Pañcasikha's Songs to The Accompaniment of His Lute

From that appropriate position Deva Pañcasikha played his lute singing songs¹ 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 kalyānī Ānanda janantī 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.

- (2) *Vātova sedataṃ kanto pāṇīyaṃva pipsato
Aṅgīrasi piyāmesi dhammo arahatāṃva.
(3) Āturasseva bhesajjaṃ bhojanaṃva jighacchato
Parinibāpaya 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 *arahat* 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) *Sitokadaṃ pokkharaniṃ yuttaṃ kiṇṇakkhareeṇunā
Nāgo ghammābhitattova ogāhe te thamīdaraṃ.*

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 jitaṃ me tuttatomaṃ
Kāraṇaṃ 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,

1. The word-for-word renderings in the original Myanmar, beautiful and learned, are penned by the Sibhani Sayadaw who presided over the Fifth Buddhist Council 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 siri pavara mahā dhammarājā dhirājaguru title by King Thipaw. The Sayadaw wrote the Burmese meaning of the songs in his treatise “Kavi maṇḍana medanī”. Only the gist of each song is given here in English prose.

Am blinded by passion.

- (6) *Tayī gedhitacittosmi cittaṃ vipariṇāmitaṃ.
Patigantum na sakkomi vaṇikaghastova 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 main 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 dakkhiṇā.*

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 *Arahat*,

- (9) *Yaṃ me atthi kataṃ punnaṃ Arahantesu tādisu
Taṃ me sabbaṅgakalyāṇi tayā saddhiṃ 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 saddhiṃ 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 jigāṣāno tamahāṃ sūriyavacchase.*

The sage, son of sakya clan (born of King Suddhodāna 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 nandeyyaṃ kalyāṇi missibhāvaṃ 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 varaṃ dajjā tāvatimsā namissaro
Tā haṃ bhadde vareyyāhe evaṃ kāmo dalho mama.*

O, my beloved! If Sakka, Lord of Tāvātimsa,
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) *Sālaṃ 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 Buddha praised him: "Pañcasikha, your lute is in perfect harmony with your singing: neither the lute nor the singing dominated (or out rivals) each other."

(Note: The Buddha praised Pañcasikha not because he enjoyed the music, but only for some purpose. For He (being an *arahat*) is neutral towards all pleasurable or painful sensations because He is possessed of equanimity in six ways (vide Kōthika Sutta of Saḷāyatana Vagga, **Saṃyutta Pāli**). Yet He openly praises Pañcasikha to let him know that He approves of the devas action. If He did not give expressed approval, Pañcasikha might withdraw wrongly thinking that he was not welcome. In which case Sakka and company would not have the opportunity to put Sakka's questions and to hear the Buddha's answers to him that would lead to their enlightenment.)

After praising Pañcasikha, the Buddha asked him: "Pañcasikha, when did you compose these verses on the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha, the *arahat* 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 Uruvelā 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 *arahat*, and sensual pleasures." (The author repeats the verses here.) Venerable Sir, on my playing the lute and singing those verses, Sūrijavacchasa said to me: 'Lord, I had never seen the Bhagavā myself, but while I was dancing at the gathering of Tāvātimsa 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 Buddha's Presence

Sakka was glad that Pañcasikha was conversing cordially with the Buddha and said to him: “O Pañcasikha, go and say to the Bhagavā on my behalf: ‘Sakka, Lord of Devas, and his ministers with their retinues make obeisance with their heads at the feet of the Bhagavā.’” “Very well, Lord,” said Pañcasikha, and having approached the Buddha, he said: “Venerable Sir, Sakka and his ministers with their retinues make obeisance with their heads at the feet of the Bhagavā.”

Thereupon, the Buddha said: “Very well, Pañcasikha, may Sakka, his ministers and their retinues be well. Indeed, all beings — devas, human beings, *asuras*, *nāgas*, *gandhabbas* — want to be well.” (This is the customary mode of response of the Buddha to the arrival of mighty devas.)

When the Buddha had said that Sakka entered the Indasāla Cave and making obeisance to Him and stood at a suitable place. Pañcasikha and other Tāvātimsa devas also followed Sakka into the cave, made their obeisance to the Buddha 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 for the big crowd but its floor, which was normally uneven was then 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 which surrounded (enveloped) Him to a range of eighty cubits, where the deva's lights were outshone by the Buddha radiance.

Then the Buddha 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 Tāvātimsa devas had held me back.”

(In this context, “various matters concerning Tāvātimsa devas” may be explained here. Sakka as Lord of Devas, has to act as judge or arbiter in disputes between Tāvātimsa 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 these 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 Tāvātimsa 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). 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 Vessavanna, 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 retinues make obeisance with their heads at the feet of the Bhagavā.’” To this, Bhūjati replied to me: “Lord Sakka, this is not the time to see the Bhagavā; He is in solitary seclusion.” Then I said to her:

“Sister, in that case, when He rises from *jhāna* (*phala-samāpatti*), say to Him, on my behalf: ‘Venerable Sir, Sakka, Lord of Devas, and his ministers with their retinues make obeisance with their heads at the feet of the Bhagavā.’ How is it, Venerable Sir, did Bhūjati report to You of my message and do You recall it?”

The Buddha 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 Buddha resided in the Jetavana Monastic compound, namely: (1) Kareri Kuṭi, with the magnificent array of water sycamore trees at its entrance and whose boughs and branches intertwined with one another, provided 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 Gandha kuṭi; (4) monastic building built of celestial wood, called Salaḷāgara monastery. Each of them cost one hundred thousand pieces of silver. The Salaḷāgara monastery was donated by King Pasenadi of Kosala; the other three were donated by Anāthapiṇḍika.

— Commentary on the **Dīgha Nikāya**, Vol 2 —

Prior to the discourse on Sakka’s questions, when the Buddha was residing in the Salaḷāgara monastery, Sakka had paid a visit to the monastery but as his faculties were not fully ripe yet, the Buddha did not receive him, but continued to dwell on the *jhānic* absorption of Fruition for a predetermined duration.

Bhūjati was a Queen of Vessavanna, 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 Buddha with her joined palms raised above her head.

Sakka returned home after leaving his message with Bhūjati, after paying his respect toward the Buddha in Salaḷāgara 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 Buddha rose from His predetermined dwelling in the attainment of *arahatta-phala*. That being so, the Buddha’s first sense cognition thought was the sound of the chariot. However, it must be noted that the Buddha did not rise from *jhāna* absorption due to that sound; it was only the predetermined time for arising.

— Commentary on the **Dīgha Nikāya**, Vol 2 —

Sakka’s Report to The Buddha

Sakka continued to say: “Venerable Sir, I had learnt from those Tāvātimsa 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 Gopika

“Venerable Sir, in this city of Sāvattthi, there was once, a Sakyan princess named Gopika, who had faith in the Triple Gem and was in the habit of observing the Five Precepts. She disliked being a female and conducting herself well with a view to being reborn as a male person. She was reborn in the Tāvātimsa Deva realm as my son. He is known as Deva Gopika in Tāvātimsa 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 Tāvātimsa devas. These *gandhabba* devas enjoy sensual pleasures fully and they come to the gathering of devas in the Assembly Hall to entertain the (Tāvātimsa) 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 Tāvātimsa 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 Tāvātimsa 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 *jhāna* there and then, and were reborn in the Brahmāpurohita 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 *samaṇa* devas (devas who had been *samaṇas* 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. He saw that they had been *bhikkhus* in their previous existence. Then he reflected whether they had been established in morality and saw that they had been established in morality. He further reflected whether they had further merit and saw that they had attained *jhāna*. He again reflected where these *bhikkhus* lived and saw that they were the *bhikkhus* who went 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 *jhāna* usually are reborn in the Brahmā realms. These *bhikkhus* do not get reborn in the Brahmā 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 *aṭṭhiveda* 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.)”

“*Aṭṭhiveda* 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*) and (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 Brahmāpurohita 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 rewards, 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 residence, 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 Brahmā realms. Yet we have not been able to get rebirth in the higher deva realms or in the Brahmā 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, which are 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 attained *anāgāmi-phala* there and then.

An *anāgāmi-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 *anāgāmi-magga* was attained, these two *ariya* devas passed away from the deva existence and were reborn in the Brahmāpurohita 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 Brahmāpurohita realm, their bodies did not appear in that Brahmā realm. They remained in Tāvātimsa Deva realm (at the Assembly Hall for the discussion of the Dhamma) in the form of Brahmāpurohita Brahmās 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 Catumahārājikā deva.

(These details are as explained in the Commentary.)

After Sakka, Lord of the Devas, has related in prose to the Buddha the story of Deva Gopaka, he further spoke in fifteen stanzas on the same subject. Then in three more stanzas, he sang in praise of the Buddha’s attributes, the Teaching of the Buddha, and the purpose of his visit which was to attain the supramundane *magga-phala* like that attained by those two Brahmās. He then concluded his last three stanzas with a request that if the Buddha would permit, he would put certain questions (and hear the Buddha’s answers on them). The last of Sakka’s eighteen stanzas is as follows:

*Tassa dhammassa pattiya āgatamhāsi mārīsa
Katāvakaṣā 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 Brahmās gained. O, Venerable One, who is free from all forms of *dukkha*, if the Bhagavā would, out of compassion, permit us, we would ask some questions.

Then the Buddha 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, to tidy 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, his ministers 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 footsteps of those great persons.

He woke up early in the morning, took his breakfast of rice gruel, and taking the necessary tools and implements, he 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 levelled 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? Could 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 who 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 visit 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 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 by 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 investigating 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 *samsāra*. Now, are you robbers (as alleged by the village chief)?"

"Certainly not," they replied.

"Friends, asseveration 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 asseveration 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, he 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 my associates and I did was to make a solemn declaration: ‘If we are robbers and enemies of the King let the elephant tramples 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 reporting 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 he 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 shall 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 these four, Sudhammā 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. Sudhammā 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, Sudhammā bribed the chief carpenter with eight ticals of silver to see to her contribution in the project.

The chief carpenter agreed. He went to the village centre 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, except 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 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 work.

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

Sharing 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, created 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 the 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 Tāvatiṃsa Deva realm as Sakka, Lord of Devas. His thirty-three friends, at their death, were also reborn in Tāvatiṃsa 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 a 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 Tāvatiṃsa 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 Tāvatiṃsa realm to the credit of Queen Nandā, and for her donation for Public use of a garden, Cittalatā Park, sixty *yojanas* wide, appeared in Tāvatiṃsa 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 Tāvatiṃsa 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 this 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 Tāvatiṃsa 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 further 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 household 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, 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 and 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 live 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 live 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 Bārāṇasī.

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 as it was not appropriate for him to take her to Tāvātimsa 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 among 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 sell 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 who was Sakka in guise. After leaving the whole cart of golden cucumbers in front of the potter's house, he vanished to Tāvātimsa.

Sūjā is reborn as A Daughter of Vepacitti Asura

The potters daughter observed the Five Precepts throughout her life and, on her death, she was reborn as the daughter of Vepacitti Asura. 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 Asura planning to marry his daughter to a suitable husband, and called an assembly of *asuras*.

Sakka reviewed the destiny of Sūjā again. He saw that Sūjā was now born as an *Asura* 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 *asura*. As he sat in the midst of *asuras* no one noticed him as stranger.

Vepacitti Asura handed her daughter a garland saying: “Make your choice of the bridegroom by throwing this garland above the head of anyone of your fancy.” Sūjā looked around and, on seeing Sakka in the guise of an *asura*, 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 Sūjā’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 Asura 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 Tāvātimsa.

Thereafter, Sūjā said to her husband: “My Lord, I have no relatives here in Tāvātimsa. So take me wherever you go.” Sakka conceded to this wish.

(This is the story of Magha)

The Buddha had known the virtue of Sakka since the latter’s previous existence as Magha, the young man of Macala village. That was why He 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 his questions, he will understand readily.”

Then the Buddha replied to Sakka in verse:

*Puccha vāsava maṃ pañhaṃ yam kiñci manasicchasi.
Tassa tasseva pañhassa ahaṃ antaiṇ koromi te.*

Vāsava, Lord of Devas, whatever question you may like to ask, put it to Me. I, the Teacher of the three worlds, will clear any doubts and uncertainties concerning your questions.

Sakka’s Questions and The Buddha’s Answers

Thus obtaining the Buddha’s expressed consent, Sakka spoke in verse his (first) question thus:

(1) The First Question and Answer

On Covetousness and Stinginess

“Venerable Sir, all beings, whether deva or human, *asura*, *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 Buddha answered as follows:

“Sakka, King of Devas, all beings, whether deva or human, *asura*, *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 yogi, as turning away from others' well being. (To the yogi, 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 **Abhidhamma**)

The character of envy that reveals itself as begrudging others wellbeing and status should be explained regarding both lay persons and *bhikkhus*. To wit: Someone 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 **Abhidhamma**)

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 downfall. (Leda Sayadaw: **Paramattha Deplane**, Chapter on Mental concomitants) This is an explanation on envy (*issā*).

Macchariya: 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 *macchariya*, 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 *macchariya*.
- (3) *Macchariya* is manifested as unwillingness to share one's gain or status with any other person. If perforce when there is occasion to share it, the stingy person feels very strongly against 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 name-sake 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 **Abhidhamma** —

Five Kinds of Macchhariya or Stinginess or Meanness

- (1) Stinginess or meanness about living place: monastery, dwelling place, park, day resort, night camp etc., (*āvāsa-macchhariya*).
- (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 fulfils 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 newcomer 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: *Kula-macchhariya* (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, which are 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 paṭivedha-

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, devas, humans and Brahmas. They wish all beings to acquire the *paṭivedha-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 book knowledge may be justified on two counts:-

- (i) where the learner's integrity is doubtful 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 *samaṇa* to *brāhmaṇa* to a heretical ascetic. If such an unreliable *bhikkhu* were to be taught the *Piṭaka*, he might distort the subtle teachings of the *Piṭaka* 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 *Piṭaka* 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 arahatship even though not yet an *arahat*, that would be his ruination. Keeping the *Piṭaka* 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 excel 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-macchariya*), 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-macchariya*), 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 heart-burning 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-macchariya*), 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-macchariya*), 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 selfish 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 macchariya*), keeping one's knowledge to oneself, leads to rebirth as a

dullard, an ignoramus, a stupid person.

(Or explained in another way:)

- (1) *Āsāva-macchariya* 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-macchariya* 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-macchariya* 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-macchariya* 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-macchariya* 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 *sotāpatti-magga*. Unless envy and stinginess have been eliminated 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 Buddha'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 Buddha'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.”

(2) The Second Question and Answer

On Love and Hatred as The Causes of Covetousness and Stinginess

After receiving with delight the Buddha'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?”

To this question the Buddha 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, irrespective 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.

(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 someone were to ask that *bhikkhu* or lay person to loan, for a short time, that property 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, these 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 Mulaṭṭikā to the Aṭṭasālīnī.) 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.

(3) The Third Question and Answer

On How Love and Hatred arise due to Craving

Sakka received with delight the Buddha'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 Buddha 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 *paṭilābha-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.

(4) The Fourth Question and Answer

On How Craving arise due to Firm Opinion

After receiving with delight the Buddha'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 Buddha 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, *vitakka* 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 and (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 Buddha's answer that *vinicchaya-vitakka* is the cause of craving or hankering.

(5) The Fifth Question and Answer

On How Firm Opinion arises due to Illusory Concepts

Having learnt with great satisfaction the Buddha'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 Buddha replied:

"Sakka King of Devas, *vinicchaya-vitakka* has illusory perceptions (*saññā*) associated with *papañca-dhamma*, which tends to prolong the *saṃsāra*, 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."²

(Herein, there are three kinds of illusion that tend to diffuse the mind, they are, craving (*taṇhā*), conceit (*māna*) 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 (*rūpa-saññā*), perceptions about sounds (*sadda-saññā*), perceptions about odours (*gandha-saññā*), etc. *Vinicchaya-vitakka* is developed based on those illusory perceptions.)

(6 – 8) The Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Question and Their Answers

On The Practice of Meditation

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

-
2. 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 Setṭhila-- 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.

“Venerable Sir, by what practice does a *bhikkhu* extinct the illusory perceptions (group of *saññas* 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*, i.e. mentally agreeable sensation (*somanassa-vedanā*), 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) (i) 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 this statement is this: should you understand that in resorting to a certain pleasant sensation, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness 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.
- (ii) Of the two types of mentally agreeable sensation, you should 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 *upekkhā-vedanā*.
- (iii) Of the type of *somanassa-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 (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) (i) 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 this statement is this: you should understand that in resorting to a certain mentally disagreed sensation, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not resort to that unpleasant sensation.
- (ii) Of those two types of *domanassa-vedanā*, you should understand that in resorting to a certain unpleasant sensation, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should resort to that unpleasant sensation.
- (iii) 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 this statement is this: you should 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*.
- (i) Of those two types of *upekkhā-vedanā*, you should understand that in resorting to a certain neutral sensation, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not resort to that neutral sensation.
- (ii) Of those two types of *upekkhā-vedanā*, you should understand that in resorting to a certain neutral sensation, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should resort to that neutral sensation.
- (iii) 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 (*savitakka savicāra 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. *avitakka 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 *saññas* associated with diffusing factor, *papañca*) that lead to Nibbāna where all perceptions cease.”

When the Buddha 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 Buddha about the practice that leads to Nibbāna in a subjective manner. The Buddha 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 *upekkhā-vedanā*. Since the Buddha's answer consists of contemplation of three *vedānas*, 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 practice does a *bhikkhu* work towards Nibbāna?” The Buddha does not give a straight answer, such as: “In this way, a *bhikkhu* practices the way leading to Nibbāna.” Instead he replied: “Sakka, *somanassa-vedanā* 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 Buddha's answer relevant to Sakka's question? (One might ask.)

The answer: Yes, it is.

And the explanation is this: Sakka asks subjectively a practice towards attaining Nibbāna. It is a personal question. The Buddha gives the answer to suit the temperament of Sakka, for working towards Nibbāna. The answer revolves around contemplation of the mind, which is suited to Sakka's mental make-up. The Buddha 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 (*dukkha-vedanā*) is 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 Buddha 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 Buddha 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 kammaṭṭhāna*), 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 recorded.

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 (3) 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 are 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 which cognizes the physical phenomenon under contemplation, becomes evident. (In these three ways, the interrelationship between mind and body comes to be understood by the yogi.)

Comprehending Contact (Phassa), etc.

- (1) Contact, sensation, perception, volition, and consciousness are a group of five key mental concomitants that arise together. In the discussion on the three types of yogis, the one who perceives vividly contact (*phassa*) between mind and matter does not comprehend contact alone. Rather, he comes to realize that sensation (*vedanā*), which experiences the contact, is also there; that perception (*saññā*), which perceives the object of contemplation is also there; that volition (*cetanā*), which brings into play all associated mental factors is also there; that consciousness (*viññāṇa*), which cognizes the object of contemplation, is also there. Thus the five closely related mental factors headed by contact are comprehended.
- (2) The yogi, who perceives sensation, does not comprehend sensation alone. Rather, he comes to realize that, along with the arising of that sensation, there arises contact between the mind and the physical phenomena under contemplation; he also realizes that there also arises perception which perceives it; that there also arises volition which motivates the associated mental factors; and that there also arises consciousness which cognizes the object of contemplation. Thus the five mental factors headed by contact are comprehended.
- (3) The yogi, who perceives consciousness, does not comprehend consciousness alone. Rather, he understands that besides the consciousness, there also arises contact whereby the mind meets the object of contemplation; that there also arises sensation which experiences the contact; that there also arises perception which perceives the object; and that there also arises volition that motivates the associated mental factors. Thus the five mental factors headed by contact are comprehended.

Having comprehended contact and its four associated mental factors (*phassa pañcamaka*), the yogi contemplates on what is the basis of their 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 there 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 attain *magga-phala*. He strives for the development of insight, encouraging himself with the thought: “I am going to achieve *magga, phala, nibbāna* 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 arahatship attained.

In the above manner, the Buddha 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 arahatship.

In Sakkapañña Sutta, the Buddha 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 (*viññāṇa*) 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 (*sukha-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 Buddha first taught 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 Buddha to suit the hearer in each situation. It can be found, besides the present discourse to Sakka, in many other discourses, namely, Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta (**Dīgha Nikāya**), Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, Cūḷatanhāsaṅkhaya Sutta, Mahā Tanhā Saṅkhaya Sutta, Cūḷa Vedalla Sutta, Mahā Vedalla Sutta, Raṭṭhapāla Sutta, Magaṇḍhiya Sutta, Dhātuvibhaṅga Sutta, Āneñjasappāya Sutta (all in **Majjhima Nikāya**) and the whole of Vedanā Saṃyutta.

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 Pāli text.” This statement is rather terse and obscure. Its purport will, therefore, be brought out here:

The Commentary says: “The Bhagavā taught 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 Buddha 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 Buddha's method in teaching 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 Buddha 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 Buddha 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 Buddha'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)(i) above:

“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), these 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 Buddha said this *gehasita somanassa-vedanā* is not to be resorted to.

Reference (a)(ii) above:

“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 *jhāna*, realization of Nibbāna, Insight-knowledge, and all meritorious actions that break away from the hindrances are called *Nekkhamma*, renunciation or emancipation from worldliness. **Let’s expand this:** One sets one's goal of 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 *kasiṇa* 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 these activities are called pleasure bent on renunciation. If one cultivates the repeated arising of this kind of *nekkhammasita somanassa-vedanā*, demeritoriousness decrease and meritoriousness increases. That is why the Buddha said this pleasant sensation bent on renunciation should be resorted to.

(**Note:** *Gehasita 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 *jhānas* up to the third *jhāna*. In the Teaching, the two categories of pleasant sensation, the six *gehasita somanassa-vedanā* and the six *nekkhammasita somanassa-vedanā* occur frequently. With regard to *domanassa-vedanā* and *upekkhā-vedanā* 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 are also used with reference to the six sense objects.

Reference (a)(iii) above:

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 pleasurable 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 Buddha compares the two ways in which two *bhikkhus* many attain *arahatta-phala*.

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 (*Kāmā-vacara somanassa-vedanā*) and pleasant sensation pertaining to the first *jhāna* of the Fine Material Sphere (*Rūpa-vacara paṭhana-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 *arahatta-phala*.

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 (*Rūpa-vacara dutiya tatiya jhāna somanassa-vedanā*) and developing insight as mentioned earlier on, attains arahatship.

In the above two cases, the object of meditation of the second *bhikkhu* which is 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* which is 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* which is being not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, is superior than 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) *Somanassa-vedanā*.)

Reference (b)(i) above:

“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 Buddha said that unpleasant sensation arising out of the six sense objects should not be resorted to.

Reference (b)(ii) above:

“The unpleasant sensation which tend to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness (and should therefore be resorted to)” means *nekkhammasita domānassa-vedanā* (unpleasant sensation inclined to renunciation). To the *bhikkhu* who has renounced the worldly life and taken 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, 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 Pāli term *Pihā* needs some explaining. The expression: ‘the ardent desire to attain the supramundane’, does not mean that *pihā* takes the *arahatta-phala* 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 yogi 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 Buddha said that *nekkhammasita domanassa-vedanā* should be resorted to.

Reference (b)(iii) above:

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.

To further explain: 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 *jhānas* 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 attain *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?”

Furthermore, 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-samāpatti*), 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 practices extending from three months to six months, and then to nine months.

First of all, he commits himself to a three-month training schedule. During the first month, 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 and sitting. It may be well if this training ends up in *arahatta-phala*. Otherwise, he does not relent but takes upon himself an additional six months of rigorous training.

In these six months, three periods of two months each are marked out, i.e., waking portions and sleeping portion of the nights are adopted, as in the three-month training. After the six-month training, if he still does not attain *arahatta-phala*, the *bhikkhu* does not relent, but take an additional nine months of rigorous training.

This nine-month training 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 and sitting. After this manner of rigorous practice, if the *bhikkhu* still does not attain *arahatta-phala*, 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 Mahāsīva of Gāmantapabbhara. Tears may flow down on his face.

The Story of Bhikkhu-elder Mahāsīva

In Sri Lanka, there once lived a *bhikkhu*-elder named Mahāsīva who had eighteen groups or sets of *bhikkhus* learning at his feet. Thirty thousand of his pupils had attained arahatship 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 worldlyling. 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 *jhāna* in the air, descended near the *bhikkhu*-elder's monastery, and went 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 past to *bhikkhus* who practise Insight-meditation.)

The pupil: “Venerable Sir, I come to learn from you a discourse of appreciation (*anumodanā*) 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 the venerable one is cleaning his teeth and washing his face?"

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

"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 disappeared.

The Bhikkhu-elder Mahāsīva retires into The Forest

Venerable Mahāsīva then saw the real purpose of that *bhikkhu's* visit. "This *bhikkhu* does not want to learn the Teaching. 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 which he 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 *arahatta-phala* should not take more than a few days to attain. He would come back from the forest seclusion after attaining arahatship. So he did not bid farewell to his pupils when he left the monastery 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 *arahatta-phala*. "I have thought I could attain *arahatta-phala* in a few days," he thought, "but the *vassa* period has arrived. I will spend the *vassa* here and will accomplish my task at the end of the *vassa*, 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 arahatship. Mahāsīva reflected: “I had come here hoping to attain *arahatta-phala* 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: “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 attain *arahatta-phala*.” So he kept away his cot at a corner and resumed meditation. Another *vassa* passed by, and no arahatship was at hand. Each *vassa* 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 *vassa*) 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 among 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 *arahatta-phala* is still beyond my reach. Clearly, arahatship 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, I 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, *Samvega*, overtook him. He redoubled his right endeavour and (soon) attained *arahatta-phala* along with the four Discriminative Knowledges (*Paṭisambhida-ñāṇa*).

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 arahatship. 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, which 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 at the scene. Putting his Queen in front, he announced to the thirty thousand *arahat-bhikkhus*: “Make way, Venerable. Sirs, a woman is coming.” He then made obeisance to Mahāsīva and 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 *bhikkhu*-elder’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 *bhikkhu*-elder, 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 arahatship, 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 *domānassa-vedanā*. When he attains *jhāna*s or Insight-Knowledge or *maggā* 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. Such attainments 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 Buddha termed these attainments as figures of speech, taken from the point of view of result or that of cause.

Thus, according to 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 *maggā-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 this 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 arahatship. (Ref: 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*, the 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 arahatship.

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 (*Arahatta-phala*) also, the former is superior. That is why the Buddha 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) *Domanassa-vedanā*.

Reference (c)(i) above:

The neutral sensation (*upekkhā*) which tends to increase demeritoriousness and decrease 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, i.e. 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 Buddha said that *gehasita-upekkhā* should not be resorted to.

Reference (c)(ii) above:

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 (*tatramajjhataṭṭā*). It means detached attitude to both agreeable and disagreeable sense objects. *Vedanupphēkkā* and balanced attitude, equanimity (*tatramajjhataṭṭā*) are taken as *upekkhā*.)

That being so, resorting to the six kinds of neutral sensation inclined to renunciation, six *nekkhammasita-upekkhās*, at all times, i.e. from the time of becoming a *bhikkhu*, throughout all the stages of *bhikkhu* practice beginning with practice of Ten Reflections (*anussati*), till the attainment of *jhānas*, up to the fourth *jhāna*, decreases demeritoriousness and increases meritoriousness. Therefore the Buddha said *nekkhammasita-upekkhā* should be resorted to

Reference (c)(iii) above:

Of the two types of *nekkhammasita-upekkhā*, namely, the one associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind (*śavitaḱka śavicāra upekkhā*), (the neutral sensation that arises at all times, from the time of becoming 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 (*avitaḱka avicāra upekkhā*), (at the attainment of the second *jhāna*, etc.) the first one is superior to the second.

The above passage compares the *arahatta-phala* 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 *arahat*. (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 *jhānas*) gains Insight-knowledge, stage by stage, until he becomes an *arahat*.

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) *Upekkhā-vedanā*.

Sakka is established in Stream-entry Knowledge

Having discoursed on pleasant sensation, unpleasant sensation and neutral sensation that lead to arahatship, the Buddha 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 *saṃsāra* leading to Nibbāna 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 is the noblest intention 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 arahatship. Amongst the hearers, some attain Stream-entry, some become Once-returner, some become Never-returner, and some attain arahatship, according to the sufficing condition, i.e. the ripeness of their past merit.

To bring in a simile here:

The Buddha is like the royal father, the hearers of His 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 Buddha disseminates the Dhamma in the highest level, i.e. arahatship: From amongst the hearers some attain the first fruition, some the second, some the third, and some the fourth, i.e. arahatship, according to the capacity of understanding.

Sakka is reborn as Sakka A Second Time

After attaining Stream-entry, Sakka passed away in the presence of the Buddha 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. Whereas, 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, i.e. mind-born, temperature-born, and nutriment-born corporeality, all these dissolve simultaneously. The result is that there are no physical remains 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 requires some basic understanding³ of the arising of the aggregates of a human being and those of a deva at the

3. Some basic understanding: Readers could enhance their understanding of this chapter by studying

moment of conception.

- (i) At the moment of conception or rebirth (*paṭisandhi*) of a human being, three corporeality units (*kalāpas*), each a mere speck of an atom, come into being, namely, the body decad (*kāyadasaka-kalāpa*), the sex decad (*bhāvadasaka-kalāpa*), the base decad (*vatthudasana-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 (*thikhaṇa*), 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 *gavutas* 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, devas and Brahmās, 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.

(9–11) The Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh Questions and Answers

On The Patimokkha Restraint

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, *magga-phala*, the supramundane, for which there must be the cause by way of appropriate practice. Certainly, the supramundane *magga-phala* cannot be had merely by asking, like a bird soaring up the sky. There must be the practice that leads to the Supramundane. I shall now ask the Bhagavā the preliminary practice whereby arahatship is attained.” So he asked the Buddha:

“Venerable Sir, in which way does a *bhikkhu* practise the Bhikkhu Morality of Restraint (*Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla*)?”

On being asked thus, the Buddha 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

‘A Manual of Abhidhamma’ by Nārada Thera, Chapter Six, which deals with Analysis of Matter, containing sections on enumeration of matter, classification of matter, the manner of arising of material phenomana, etc.

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.”

(i) “Sakka, King of Devas, 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 such 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 such 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: you should understand that in adopting a certain mode of verbal conduct, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not adopt such mode of verbal conduct.

“Of those two kinds of verbal conduct, you should understand that in adopting a certain mode of verbal conduct, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should adopt such 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: you should understand that in taking up a certain quest, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not take up such quest.

“Of those two kinds of quests, you should understand that in taking up a certain quest, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should take up such 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 (*Pātimokkhasaṃvara-sīla*).”

When the Buddha 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 question six, seven, and eight, Sakka asked the practice that leads to Nibbāna through the cessation of illusory perceptions, and the Buddha 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 Buddha 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 Buddha's purpose. However, the Buddha 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 Buddha's method helped 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, can 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 Buddha 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. This is the reason for the Buddha'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-patha*) 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, slandering, 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 (*Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-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 without effort. Quest is essentially the effort needed in making the quest.
- (iv) Quest is of two kinds, ignoble and noble. The two kinds of quest are described in the Pāsarāsi Sutta, **Mūlapaṇṇāsa**. The gist of the teaching is this: where someone, 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.

- (v) **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 hermaphrodite'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 *bhikkhunīs*.

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 beginning, 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 Mahātheras Śāriputta 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 Mahātheras Śāriputta and Mahā Moggallāna, is verbal conduct that should be resorted to.
- (iii) Ignoble quest, such as that of Devadatta, is quest that should not be taken up. Noble quest, such as that of Mahātheras Śāriputta and Mahā Moggallāna, is quest that should be taken up.

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

The Buddha'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 arahatship.

(12) The Twelfth Question and Answer

On The Restraint of The Faculties (Indriya Saṁvara Sīla)

After receiving the Buddha'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 Buddha 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 Buddha had made this brief exposition, Sakka said to the Him:

“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 (*repeat:*) *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 (*repeat from above*) –; a certain odour cognizable by the nose tends to (*repeat from above*) –; a certain taste cognizable by the tongue tends to (*repeat from above*) –; a certain tangible object cognizable by the body tends to (*repeat from above*) –. 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 benefitted from the previous discourses of the Buddha 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 Buddha was given, he had the right understanding based on the Buddha's previous preachings and accordingly began to address the Buddha about his understanding.

The Buddha 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 Buddha'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-saññā*), 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 potters 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 paṭikūla-saññā*) of the food swallowed or if it sustains him to gain the Ariya Truth, like in the case of Sāmaṇera Śiva (nephew of Thera Mahā Śiva) who became an *arahat* 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 Śiva in the Sub-Commentary and in the Visuddhi-magga but do not find it. In the Visuddhi-magga, there is the story of Sāmaṇera Bhāginceyya Sangharakkhita who attained arahatship while taking his meal (Vis. I, Chapter on Sila)]
- (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 arahatship through exhaustion of the moral taints (*āsavas*) 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* during 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 Nālaka (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 (narrated below), 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 *vassa* 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-elder (who is the most senior of the three *bhikkhu*-elders) put this question to the youngest of the three *bhikkhu*-elders: "How far did you allow your mind to wander during the three months of the rains-retreat?" To which, he replied: "Venerable Sir, during these three months, I did not allow my mind to wander beyond the precincts of the monastery." The *bhikkhu*'s admission implies that his 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 *bhikkhu*-elders: “Friend, how far did you allow your mind to wander during the three months of the rains retreat?” To which the second *bhikkhu*-elder replied: “Venerable Sir, during these three months, I did not allow my mind to wander beyond my room.”

Then the two junior *bhikkhu*-elders asked of the Sangha-elder: “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 these 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 verbally 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 *bhikkhu*-elders 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.

(13) The Thirteenth Question and Answer

On The Various Elements

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

“Venerable Sir, do all *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* have the same teaching, the same practice, the same view, and the same ultimate goal?”

To this, the Buddha's reply:

“Sakka, King of Devas, not all of the *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* 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 *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* 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 *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas*?”

And the Buddha 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 *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* 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 Buddha points out this diversity as the reason for the differences in teachings, practices, views and goals among *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas*.)

(14) The Fourteenth Question and Answer

On The Final Crossing Over

Further, Sakka asked this question to the Buddha:

“Venerable Sir, do all *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* 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 diverse views take up the practice of the Ariya Path to attain Nibbāna.)

The Buddha answered:

“Sakka, King of Devas, not all *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* 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 *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas*, their teachings, practices, views and goals differ. Therefore, how could they attain Nibbāna, the ultimate reality, as their common goal? The Buddha makes this clearly in His 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 *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* 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 the Nibbāna the Indestructible, as their final goal. That being so, not all *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* 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 exchange 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 worldlings, 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 Buddha 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 *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* 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 hearing the Buddha'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 Buddha's discourse with much delight, Sakka, King of Devas said to Him:

"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 *samaṇas* and *Brāhmanas* outside this Teaching, the Bhagavā has given me the answer. The Bhagava has by this answer cleared all darts of doubt that had long been troubling me."

The Buddha then asked Sakka:

"Sakka, King of Devas, do you remember having put these questions to other *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas*?"

"Yes, I do, Venerable Sir."

"What were their answers? If it is not too much trouble, may I 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 *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* 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 *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* 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 forever 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 Buddha 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 Tāvātimsa and those of the *asuras*. The Tāvātimsa devas were the victor. Then as victor, I was very glad to reflect on the fact that the Tāvātimsa devas would now have the special privilege of enjoying both their own food pertaining to the Tāvātimsa 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 Nibbāna.

"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 Nibbāna."

The Six Benefits for Sakka on attaining Stream-Entry Knowledge

Then the Buddha 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:

(1) *Idheva tithamānassa devabhūtassu 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 Tāvātimsa 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.

(2) *Cutāham diviyā kāyā āyuṇ hitvā amānusaṃ
Amūlo gabbhamessāmi yatttha 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 Tāvātimsa 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.)

(3) *Svāham amūlhapaññassa viharieṇ sāsane rato
Ñāyena 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.

(4) *Ñāyena me carato ca sambodhi ce bhavissati
Aññatā 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 *sakadāgāmī-magga* arises, then, to gain still higher Path-Knowledge of *anāgāmī-magga* and *arahatta-magga*, I shall dwell in still further practice of the Path. When *sakadāgāmī-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.

(5) *Cutāham mānusa kāyā āyuṃ hitvātna mānusaṃ
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 Tāvātimsa Deva

realm as Lord of Devas. Venerable Sir, this is the fifth benefit that lies behind my extolling of my ariyahood.

(6) *Te pañītatarā devā akanitthā yassasino*
Ante me vattamānamhi so nivāso bhavissati.

O Venerable One free from *dukkha*, those devas, the *ariya*-Brahmās of the Akaniṭṭhā realm, the topmost of the planes of existence, is superior in all respects, such as life span and knowledge, to all other devas and Brahmās. They have big followership. When I have my last existence, I (known by the name of Maghava) shall be reborn in that Akaniṭṭhā Brahmā 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 at Indasāla cave; passing away and instant rebirth, also at Indasāla cave, 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 path to 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 *sakadāgāmī-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 *anāgāmī-magga* as Sakka, and being reborn in progressively higher existences in the five Pure Brahmā realms namely: Aviha realm, Atappa realm, Sudassā realm, Sudassī realm, Akaniṭṭhā realm; and to attain arahatship in the Akaniṭṭhā realm.

The sixth benefit, which is to result in rebirth in the five Brahmā-worlds should be noted here particularly for the immense durations of sublime existence in the Pure Abodes: As an *anāgāmī-puggala* (Non-Returner), Sakka will enjoy the ecstasy of a Pure Brahmā in the Aviha 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 finally, in the Akaniṭṭhā realm for sixteen thousand aeons. Thus a total of thirty-one thousand aeons of the ecstasy of the Brahmā existence.

In the matter of the kind of extraordinarily prolonged existence full of ecstasy there are only three outstanding *ariya* disciples under Buddha Gotama's Teaching, namely; Sakka, Anāthapiṇḍika 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 *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* who failed to answer his questions, but how he had to teach them the seven modes of conduct leading to Sakkahood. (Please refer to his story which was related to the Buddha earlier.)

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

Taṇhā sallassa hantāraṃ buddhaṃ appaṭipuggalaṃ
Ahaṃ vande mahāvīraṃ buddhamādicca bandhunam

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.

*Yam karomasi brahmauno samam devehi mārisa
Tadajja tuyham dassāma handa sāmāṇ karoma te*

O Venerable One, who is free from *dukkha*, formerly we had paid our tribute to the Brahmā, 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 sathā 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 humans. 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 Pañcasikha 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 attained 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 Buddha'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.

Chapter 40

THE BUDDHA DECLARED THE SEVEN FACTORS OF NON-DECLINE FOR RULERS

(As we have said earlier on,) the Buddha spent the earlier twenty *vassas* at various places and preached the noble Doctrine that led to the liberation of the multitudes and spent the latter twenty-four *vassas* in Sāvaththi only. After the end of the *vassa* or rains-retreat, He 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 cannot 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 saltish, so also in this book, only a few examples from the *suttanta* (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 *vassa* onwards which was the period close to His realization of Parinibbāna.)

At one time (when the Buddha had completed his forty-fourth *vassa*) the Buddha of Allusrious 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 Vesālī on the northern side. There was a caravan station known as Paṭṭanagāma (The present-day Patna was probably around 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 Licchavīs.

There were rich deposits of precious materials originating at the hillside near Paṭṭanagama. As King Ajātasattu learnt about the treasures and was making plans to go there, the Licchavīs reached there first and took away all the treasures. When King Ajātasattu arrived and learnt that the Licchavīs had stolen a march on him, he went back home with great fury.

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 Licchavīs. 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 Buddha is staying near my city, on his mountain abode on Gijjakuṭa Hill. I shall send a minister to Him and seek His advice, on my

proposed expedition. If my plan is of any benefit to me, He would remain silent; if it is against my own good, He 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 Vedeḥī, pays homage at Your feet. He enquires after the Bhagava's health 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 Bhagavā never speaks false."

"Very well, Your Majesty," said the Brahmin Vassakāra and he went to the Gijjakuṭa Hill amidst a splendid formation of carriages. Once there, he (ascended from the carriage) approached the Buddha, and after exchanging greetings and concluding courteous words of felicitation, sat at a suitable place. Then he said to the Buddha:

"Revered Gotama, King Ajātasattu of Magada, son of Queen Vedeḥī 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 Licchavī 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 Ānanda was at the back of the Buddha, 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 Buddha was merely an act of veneration.) When the Buddha had heard the Brahmin's words He did not say anything to him but entered into a dialogue with Venerable Ānanda:

(He said:) "Ānanda, do the Vajjī princes hold meetings frequently? Do they have meetings many times? What have you heard?"

(Ānanda:) "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

"Ānanda, 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

“Ānanda, 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.”

“Ānanda, 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

“Ānanda, 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.”

“Ānanda, 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 as 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 and was 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 where he was given a proper hearing. If found not guilty, he was released. If the judges suspected him of the crime, he was referred to a panel of learned persons who were 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 then 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 but, 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

"Ānanda, 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."

"Ānanda, 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 advise 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

“Ānanda, 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.”

“Ānanda, 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

“Ānanda, 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.”

“Ānanda, 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 times 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

“Ānanda, do the Vajjī princes see to it that *arahats* are given suitable protection and security so that those *arahats*, who have not yet visited the Vajjī country, may go, and so that those *arahats*, who have already arrived, 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 visited the Vajjī country, may go and so that those *arahats*, who have already arrived, may live in the Vajjī country in a genial atmosphere.”

“Ānanda, 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 visited the Vajjī country, may go, and so that those *arahats*, who have already arrived, 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 and ‘*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 visited their country, it is due to their lack of faith in the Triple Gem. In that case when *bhikkhus* visit their country, they would not welcome them, (**repeat:**) *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 as when *bhikkhus* visited their country, they would not welcome them, ... (*repeat from above*) ... 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 arrival of *arahats*, who have not yet visited that city.

If those *bhikkhus*, who have already visited that city, do not find a genial atmosphere, the *bhikkhus* will feel that they have visited 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 visited, 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 Buddha 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 Sāranda shrine in Vesālī.

“Brahmin, 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 Buddha: “Revered Gotama, careful abidance of just anyone 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 Buddha's words, expressed his delight, rose from his seat and departed.

(Sārāṇḍada Shrine was pre-buddhistic 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 was still known as Sārāṇḍada Shrine.

The Brahmin's suggestion of seduction was meant to resort to acts of friendliness towards the enemy with lavish presents and messages of goodwill 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 Licchavī princes and destroy them in two or three days time. By giving the discourse, King Ajātasattu 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 Licchavīs opportunities for more meritorious deeds that would establish them in good stead. Hence the discourse was given out of great compassion by the Buddha.)

The Fall of Vesālī

When Brahmin Vassakāra returned from the Buddha and got back to the palace King Ajātasattu asked him:

“Brahmin, what did the Bhagavā say?”

“Your Majesty, according to Buddha Gotama, the Vajjians cannot be captured unless through deceit or through causing a disunity among them.”

“If we employ deceit, we shall have to suffer losses in our armed forces. We had better try to cause a disunity among them. But Brahmin, 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 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 Licchavīs 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 Licchavīs 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 Licchavīs then learned the princely arts from him.

Vassakāra sows Dissent 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 Licchavīs 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 princes asked about the meeting and was told the truth it struck them as queer. Another wedge had been laid at another place.

On another occasion, Brahmin Vassakāra asked 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 Gangā, 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 Buddha 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 Buddha the seven factors of growth, non-decline for rulers at the mountain abode of the Buddha atop mount Gijjhakuṭa, and his departure (in all satisfaction) from there.)]

The Seven Factor of Non-decline of Bhikkhu

The First Set of Seven Factor of Non-decline

Even when the Buddha was giving a discourse on the Seven factors of growth for rulers to Brahmin Vassakāra, he had in mind of making a similar discourse for the guidance of *bhikkhus*, in the interest of the prolongation of His 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 Buddha said to Venerable Ānanda: “Go, Ānanda, and let all the *bhikkhus* living around Rājagaha gather in the assembly hall.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” said Ānanda 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, Ānanda approached the Buddha, made obeisance to Him, and standing at a suitable place, said to Him: “Venerable Sir, the community of *bhikkhus* is assembled. It is for the Bhagava to go as and when he wishes.”

Then the Buddha 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 Buddha 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

eneration towards the *bhikkhu*-elders, who are of long standing and senior in *bhikkhu*hood, 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 these 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 stupa 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 who have left the assembly hall might harbour suspicious thoughts against those staying behind. “Those *bhikkhus* have real business to discuss between themselves only” and such misunderstanding will

arise.

'*Dispersing in harmony*' may also mean rising up together eagerly to take responsibility to carry out the resolutions made at the assembly such as participation in Sangha acts concerning *simās* 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, such as alms-bowl, robes, 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 *Nisīdānasantata* rule or *Purāṇasantata* rule in the Pārājika Pāli, 2-Kosiya Vagga (the fifth rule at page 336, Myanmar translation). When the Buddha was staying in Sāvatti at the Jetavana Monastery, He 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 Buddha, other than the one bringing food for Him, should be liable to *pācittiya* offence, and breach of this offence should be conveyed to the Sangha. Now this is overdoing the Buddha's orders. These *bhikkhus* had no right to classify breach of the Buddha's words on that particular occasion as one of *pācittiya* 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. (Ref: **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 Puranasantata, the Arahāt Upasena, (brother of Sāriputta) refrained from making an (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 Council, 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 Council, 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 Council, 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, which was handed down from generations of teachers, and the essential points in the Doctrine, which were worthy to 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, these *bhikkhus* will gain the five benefits such as morality fulfilling the task of arahatship, 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, always 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 Buddha 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 He sees the potential for easier attainment of arahatship 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 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 and would not 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, will never go there. Those virtuous *bhikkhus*, who have been there, 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 share with them the Doctrine which could dispel doubts in them, teach them the training precepts, and preach to them the excellent Doctrine. These 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 visit 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 arrive, 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, if the visitor is proficient in the Vinaya; or learning the Suttanta, if the visitor is proficient in the Suttanta. Abiding by the instructions given by the virtuous visitors, the resident *bhikkhus* attain arahatship with the Four Discriminative Knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-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 Factor of Non-decline

Further, the Buddha 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 in detail.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” the *bhikkhus* responded. And the Buddha 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, studying, cleaning the stupa precinct, etc., as well as allow 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: “*Sannipatitānaṃ vo bhikkave dvayaṃ karanīyaṃ dhammā vā kathā ariyo vā tunhībhāvo* — 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 of 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 arahatship), is one who is bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for his decline.

The Third Set of Seven Factor of Non-decline

Further, the Buddha 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 Buddha 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*.

- i) Of these seven factors, the first factor of non-decline.

Saddhā – Conviction or faith, is of these 4 kinds:

- (a) *Agamanīya saddhā* 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) *Addigama saddhā* 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 Ratana.)
- (c) *Pasāda saddhā* 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) *Okappana saddhā* 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.

- ii) — (iii) In the second and third *Aparihāniya Dhammas*, the distinction between *hirī* and *ottappa* 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 just 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 *hirī*. 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*.

- iv) In the fourth *Aparihāṇiya Dhamma*, “a person of vast learning” means (a) one who is well read in the Pāli texts and literature (*pariyatti*), and (b) one who has penetrative knowledge of the truth that is, one who has gained Supramundane Knowledge (*paṭivedha*). 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 *bhikkhuns*, (For details about these three kinds of persons, refer to Commentary on the Vinaya entitled Samantapāsādikā, in the explanation on the *Pacittiya* in Ovāda vagga.) (d) a *bhikkhu* who, like the Venerable Ānanda, 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 *Aparihāṇiya dhamma*, this fourth kind of learned person is meant. Only such a person can become established in the Good Practice (*patipatti*), the Good Penetration (*paṭivedha saddhama*), because *pariyatti saddhama* is the foundation for both of them.

- v) In the fifth *Aparihāṇiya 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 subjects¹ 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.

- vi) In the sixth *Aparihāṇiya 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 Tipiṭakacūḷābhaya.

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 jasmine 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 Tipiṭakacūḷābhaya: When asked about his power of memory, this Mahāthera said: “Friends, there are four gates to the city of Anurāṭṭha. After the closing of three of these gates, when only the fourth gate was allowed to be used by the people, I would ask the name of each person going out in the morning. When they re-entered the city by the same gate in the evening, I could call up all of their names.”

- (vii) In the seventh *Aparihāṇiya 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 *Aparihāṇiya 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 Factor of Non-decline

1. eight subjects on which diligence should be built *Virivarambha Vattu*.

The Buddha 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*), which is a factor of (necessary condition for) Enlightenment, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- iii) *Bhikkhus*, so long as the *bhikkhus* cultivate Effort (*vīriya*) a factor of Enlightenment, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- iv) *Bhikkhus*, so long as the *bhikkhus* cultivate Delightful Satisfaction (*pīti*), a factor of Enlightenment, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- v) *Bhikkhus*, so long as the *bhikkhus* cultivate Serenity (*passaddhi*), a factor of Enlightenment, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- vi) *Bhikkhus*, so long as the *bhikkhus* cultivate Concentration (*samādhi*), a factor of Enlightenment, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- 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 Buddha teaches Insight development pertaining to *magga-phala* both at the mundane and supramundane levels.

The Fifth Set of Seven Factor of Non-decline

The Buddha 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*), they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- iii) *Bhikkhus*, so long as the *bhikkhus* cultivate the perception of the Foulness or Impurity of the body (*asubha*), they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- iv) *Bhikkhus*, so long as the *bhikkhus* cultivate the perception of the Faults of the *khandha* aggregates (*ādinava*), they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- v) *Bhikkhus*, so long as the *bhikkhus* cultivate the perception of Abandonment (*pahāna*), they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.
- vi) *Bhikkhus*, so long as the *bhikkhus* cultivate the perception of Detachment from desire (*virāga*), they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no

reason for their decline.

- 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 Buddha 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 Buddha 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 Buddha taught the assembly of *bhikkhus* five sets of seven factors of non-

decline and a set of six factors of non-decline.

Regarding factors i, ii, iii 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 religious mission, 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 Piṭaka as the most important action. With lay person, stimulating and organizing one's friends to do meritorious acts, such as going to a stupa or to the Bodhi tree to pay respect, 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 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 goodwill, 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, respecting 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. e.g., 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 *Sāranīya* 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 this practice. The reason is that 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 most senior 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 (*pīṭa*) 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 *Sāraṇīya* practice will find it not too difficult, if it is to be undertaken in the company of *bhikkhus* who are skilful in this practice, but will find it rather difficult if in the company of *bhikkhus* who are not so skilled. The reason is as follows:

Where the associate *bhikkhus* are skilful in *Sāraṇīya* 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 *Sāraṇīya* 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 within the (morning)time proper to do so, and has, more often than not, to go without food as all his collection having been distributed to others.

Twelve Years 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, (supposing) 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 *bhikkhuhood* 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 undertaken 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 Sāraṇīya Practice

(i) The primary benefit in fulfilling the *Sāraṇīya* practice is the abandonment of covetousness (*issā*) 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 most senior *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 him. (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, devas are ready to help him.

Some Stories related to The Sāraṇīya Practice

(1) Venerable Tissa feeds fifty wayfaring bhikkhus

Venerable Tissa was a forest dweller who lived in the forest abode known as Sena. His place for the alms-gathering was a village named 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 Venerable 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 *theras* remained waiting there.

As Venerable 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 him. As soon as Tissa called in front of her house, she poured the milk rice into his alms-bowl to the full.

Tissa returned to the group of *theras* and respectfully offered the alms-food, addressing to the most senior *bhikkhu*: “May the venerable ones accept my offering.” The Venerable looked surprised. “Fifty of us had been in that village, none of us have 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. Venerable 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, Venerable Tissa ate the leftover to his satisfaction too.

After Venerable Tissa had finished his meal, the *theras* asked: “Friend, when did you gain penetrative knowledge of the Supramundane?”

To this he 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?”

Venerable Tissa was obliged to admit his attainment to dispel doubts in those *bhikkhus*. Since the attainment of *Sāraṇīya* is not supramundane dhamma (*uttarimanussa dhamma*), he considered it proper to admit to it: “Venerable Sirs, I have fulfilled the *Sāraṇīya* 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 *Sāraṇīya* 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 this story to exemplify the fourth benefit which is the most significant here.

(2) Venerable Tissa at the National Offerings Ceremony

In ancient Sri Lanka, there was the Giribhanda Mahāpūjā, (an annual festival of offerings held on Mount Cetīya which was a grand national occasion.) When Venerable Tissa arrived there, he inquired from fellow-*bhikkhus* what 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 arrived, the King himself headed the offerings. The two choicest fabrics were placed foremost, ready to hand. But they did not reach the King's hand, when he was presenting the gifts to the *bhikkhu*-elders. Only other items reached his hand. When Tissa came along, the two pieces of fabrics strangely reached 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 give even a faint suggestion of him having attained *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 you."

"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 me."

"Venerable Sir! Excellent it is! Excellent it is! This miraculous happening becomes you well."

After respectfully paying obeisance to Venerable Tissa, the King went back to the palace.

This is an example of the fifth benefit.

(3) Therī Nāga

At one time, ancient 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 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 strangely silent. Go and enquire what's the matter." The younger *bhikkhunīs* 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 *bhikkhunīs* sufficient alms-food. He then said to them: "Venerable Ones, do not move away to another place. Always come 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 Bhikkhu 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 venerables 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 disciples. "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. Bhikkhu Nāga said: "Even if the alms-bowl stays aloft at seven palm-trees high, it is still the alms-food collected by a *bhikkhunī*, is it not Venerable Therī?" Then he

continued: “This disturbance and danger is not to last forever. 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 Brāhmaṇatissa scourge by eating the alms-food of a *bhikkhunī*. I shall not be able to bear such criticism of myself. (I must go now) you remain in mindfulness, Therī.’”

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 *bhikkhunīs* and twelve *bhikkhus* for seven years.

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,

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.

(Refer to **Anudīpanī**)

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 (*upāreara samādho*) and absorption concentration (*appanā samādho*), it is also called morality conducive to concentration. Since the Four Purity in Morality (*Catupānsudhi 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 *sāraṇīya* 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 Buddha discoursed 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 Buddha, after staying at Rājagaha for as long as He wished, said to Venerable Ānanda: "Come, Ānanda, let us go to the Ambalaṭṭhikā garden (Mango Grove)."

"Very well, Sir," Ānanda assented.

(Note: The Buddha addressed Ānanda from among many *bhikkhus* surrounding Him because Ānanda was always in close attendance.)

Having expressed his assent to the Buddha, Ānanda 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 Buddha, 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 Buddha 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-ñāṇa*.

"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 (*patippassaddhi-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 mundane 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 (*paṭipatssaddhi-pahāna*).

The Buddha's Sojourn at Nālanda

Then the Buddha, after staying at the Ambalatthikā garden for as long as He wished, said to Venerable Ānanda: “Come, Ānanda, let us go to the town of Nāḷanda.”

“Very well, Sir,” Ānanda assented, and called upon the *bhikkhus* to accompany the Buddha.

Venerable Sāriputta's Brave Utterance

Then the Buddha, accompanied by many *bhikkhus*, went to the town of Nāḷanda and stayed at the mango grove of Pāvārika, the rich man.

At that time, the Venerable Sāriputta approached the Buddha, and after making obeisance to Him, entered into a stirring and remarkable dialogue with Him:

Sāriputta: Venerable Sir, as regards Perfect Enlightenment, I am convinced that there has never been nor there is, nor will there be any *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* who can excel the Bhagavā.

Buddha: 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 *samaṇa* 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 (*samādhi*), 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 (*samādhi*), 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 *samaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas* 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 *dharmānaya-ñāṇa*, the 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, 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 *dharmavaya-nāṇa*, the 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 (*Sammāsambodhi-nāṇa*), is a term encompassing the *arahattamagga-nāṇa* and the Omniscience (*Sabbāññutā-nāṇa*), 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 *dharmavaya-nāṇa*, 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 Buddha).

During the sojourn at the mango grove of Pāvārika the rich man in the town of Nāḷanda, also considering His approaching death, the Buddha 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).”

The Buddha’s Discourse on Morality

Then after staying at the town of Nāḷanda for as long as He wished, the Buddha said to Venerable Ānanda: “Come, Ānanda, let us go to Pāṭali village.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” assented Ānanda, and he called upon the *bhikkhus* to accompany the Buddha. Then the Buddha, accompanied by many *bhikkhus*, went to Pāṭali village.

When the lay devotees of Pāṭali village heard that the Buddha had arrived at their village, they were very glad, for they had the great good fortune of having to receive the Buddha even without asking for it. They had just finished building a guest-house. How appropriate it would be if their first guest was the Buddha himself? “We shall request the Bhagavā to accept our offering of the guest-house and to listen to the Bhagava’s words of appreciation of our good deed,” they discussed among themselves. They approached the Buddha, 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

Buddha showed His consent by remaining silent.

Having received the Buddha's consent, the lay devotees of Pāṭali village rose from their seats, made obeisance to Him 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 the lamps. They arranged with the mothers to feed their infants early that evening and to put them to bed. Then they went back to the Buddha, made obeisance to Him, and stood on one side. They said to Him:

“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 villagers at the centre of the village. The main purpose in building it was to house visiting officials of the Licchavis and the Magadhans who often came and stayed at Pāṭali village, which was a border village. It was essential 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 Buddha's visit to the village it had just been completed. At first the villagers thought that the Buddha might prefer to dwell in the forest and so they did not make it ready to receive Him. Only when the Buddha consented to put up there, did the villagers prepare things to make it ready for His stay.)

Then the Buddha, 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 Buddha 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 Buddha in front of them.

Then the Buddha discoursed on the five disadvantages² befalling an immoral person and the five advantages that bless a person of virtue thus:

Five Disadvantages to An Immoral Man

"Householders, five disadvantages descend on an immoral person who lacks morality, and what are the five?"

- (i) Householders, in this world, the immoral person, who lacks 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, who lacks moral virtue, spreads far and wide. This is the second disadvantage befalling an immoral person who lacks morality.
- (iii) Householders, furthermore, an immoral person, who lacks 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, who lacks moral virtue, dies in a bewildered³ state. This is the fourth disadvantage befalling an immoral person who lacks morality.
- (v) Householders, furthermore, an immoral person, who lacks 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.

2. Disadvantage: *ādinava*. Also translated as danger, fault.

3. Bewildered; *Sammulha*. The commentary explains this as delirium.

“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, who possess 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, who possess 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, who possess 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.
- (iv) Householders, furthermore, a virtuous person, who possess 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, who possess 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*.

- (1) 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, thereby 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 *jhāna*, and loses the seven noble properties of *ariyas*⁴.
- (2) 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 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.

4. 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.

- (3) 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 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.
- (4) 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 oncoming 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!" He would scream in desperation and then breathe his last. This is what the Buddha means by "he dies in a state of bewilderment."
- (5) 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 Buddha 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 thereof, 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 Him, departed respectfully. Then not long after their departure, the Buddha retired in seclusion.

(Note: "The Buddha 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 Buddha, and He 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, two brahmins, Sunidha and Vassakāra, Chief Ministers of Magadha Kingdom, were building a (fortified) city at the site of Pāṭali village to keep out the Vajji 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 occupying, there, the officials responsible for the building of the city were inclined to build houses for princes and the king's ministers of great power. In the location where the devas of medium power were occupying, 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 occupying, 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 occupied by powerful serpents or *nāgas*, which, by demons, or which, by 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 by blessing, 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 who occupied various locations and these devas would leave their bodies after the four corners of the building site have been marked out. Prospective human occupants, who were 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 Buddha saw, with His Knowledge of the Divine Eye (*dibba-cakkhu*), how the devas in groups of a thousand each, were occupying plots of land at Pāṭali village. Then He woke up at dawn and asked the Venerable Ānanda: “Who are those that are building a city at (the site of) Pāṭali village?”

Ānanda replied: “Venerable Sir, the Brahmins Sunidha and Vassakāra, Chief Ministers of Magadha Kingdom, are building a (fortified) city to keep out the Vajjī princes.”

“Ānanda, the Chief Ministers are building the fortified city as though they were acting in consultation with the devas of the Tāvātimsa realm.

“Ānanda, 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.

“Ānanda, in the locations where the devas of great power are occupying, 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 occupying, 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 occupying, there the officials responsible for the building of the city are inclined to build houses for princes and king's ministers of lesser power.

“Ānanda, three catastrophes will bring about the downfall of the city of Pāṭaliputta. They are fire, floods, and internal dissension.” (Thus the Buddha 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 Buddha went to the Gaṅga river to wash His face and awaited for the time to go on the alms-round.

Then Sunidha and Vassakāra remembered that since their King Ajātasattu was a lay supporter of Gotama the Samāṇa, it would only be proper if they were to invite the Buddha to an offering of a meal, because they would be seeing Him in the village of Pāṭali. Further, they considered it a wise thing to request Gotama the Samāṇa, to bless their city-building project with auspicious words, for then the black devils would be driven away from the city site. So both went to the Buddha and stood at a suitable place. After exchanging memorable words of felicitation, they said to Him: “May it please the revered Gotama and the company of *bhikkhus* to accept our offering of food for today.” The Buddha, by His silence signified His acceptance.

Then the Magadhan Chief Ministers, Sunidha and Vassakāra, knowing that the Buddha had accepted their invitation, went to the place where they were putting up, and having prepared the choicest food and delicacies, informed the Buddha by messengers who said: “Revered Gotama, it is time (to proceed). The food offering is ready.”

Then in the morning, the Buddha rearranged His robes, and taking His alms-bowl and

great robe, went in the company of the *bhikkhus* to the place where the two Magadhan Chief Ministers were being housed, and sat at the place prepared for Him. Sunidha and Vassakāra attended to the Buddha and the *bhikkhus*, offering the choicest food and delicacies with their own hands till they caused them to stop, signifying they had enough. When the Buddha had finished His meal and had removed His hand from His alms-bowl, the Sunidha and Vassidara took low seats and sat at a suitable place.

To Sunidha and Vassakāra, who were thus seated, the Buddha 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 Magadhan Chief Ministers, Sunidha and Vassakāra, the Buddha rose from His seat and left.

Then Sunidha and Vassakāra followed the Buddha 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 Buddha left that day came to be known as, the ‘Gotama Gateway’. Then the Buddha 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 Buddha vanished from this side of the Gaṅga and reappeared on the other shore together with the company of *bhikkhus*.

The Buddha 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 He, 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, upon having overcome 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 Buddha’s Discourse on The Four Ariya Truths

Then the Buddha said to Venerable Ānanda: “Come Ānanda, let us go to Koṭi village.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” Ānanda assented and then called the *bhikkhus*. The Buddha, 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.)

During that time, the Buddha 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 (*saṃsāra*), never stopping, but ever hanging, from one existence to the next 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 sacca*) 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 next repeatedly.

- ii) *Bhikkhus*, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the Ariya Truth of the Origin of Dukkha (*Samudaya ariya sacca*) 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 next repeatedly.
- iii) *Bhikkhus*, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the Ariya Truth of the Cessation of Dukkha (*Nirodha ariya sacca*) 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 next repeatedly.
- 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 sacca*) 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 next repeatedly.

“*Bhikkhus*, now I have properly understood the Ariya Truth of Dukkha (*Dukkha ariya sacca*), I have penetrative knowledge of it; I have properly understood the Ariya Truth of the Origin of Dukkha (*Samudaya ariya sacca*) I have penetrative knowledge of it; I have properly understood the Ariya Truth of the Cessation of Dukkha (*Nirodha ariya sacca*), I have properly understood the Ariya Truth of the way to the Cessation of Dukkha (*Magga ariya sacca*), 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 *Anubodhi* 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 Buddha 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 understanding 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 off completely. The root of *dukkha* has been thus eradicated. For me there will be no more rebirth.”

While the Buddha 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 *saṃādhi* (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 (*āsava*s), 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 Discourse at Nātika Village

On Those Disciples whose Spiritual Progress is assured

Then after staying at Koti village for as long as He wished, the Buddha said to Venerable Ānanda: “Come, Ānanda, let us go to Nātika village.”

“Very well, Sir,” assented Ānanda, and he called upon the *bhikkhus* for the journey. The Buddha went to Nātika village accompanied by many *bhikkhus* and stayed in 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” (*ñātika*), from which Pāli word, *ñ* became corrupted into *n*, and hence the name *Nātika*. In that twin village there was a brick monastery which was the place of the Buddha's sojourn.)

During that time the Venerable Ānanda approached the Buddha and asked these questions:

“Venerable Sir, in *Nātika* village, a *bhikkhu* by the name of *Sāla* has passed away. What is his destination? What is his next existence?

“Venerable Sir, in (this same) *Nātika* village, a *bhikkhunī* named *Nandā* has passed away. What is her destination? What is her next existence?

“Venerable Sir, in (this same) *Nātika* village, a devotee named *Sudatta* has passed away. What is his destination? What is his next existence?

“Venerable Sir, in (this same) *Nātika* village, a devotee named *Sujātā* has passed away. What is her destination? What is her next existence?

“Venerable Sir, in (this same) *Nātika* village, a devotee named *Kukkuta*... (*repeat below*) ...a devotee named *Kaḷimba*... (*repeat below*) ...a devotee named *Nikaṭa*... (*repeat below*) ...a devotee named *Katissaha*... (*repeat below*) ...a devotee named *Tuṭṭha*... (*repeat below*) ...a devotee named *Santuṭṭha*... (*repeat below*) ...a devotee named *Bhaddha*... (*repeat below*) ...a devotee named *Subhadda* (**repeat:**) *has passed away. What is his destination? What is his next existence?*”

To these questions the Buddha answered them, one by one thus:

“Ānanda, due to the extinction of the *āsava*s (moral taints), *Sāla* the *bhikkhu* had realized in this very life Emancipation of mind (*arahatta-phala-samādhī*) and Emancipation through Knowledge (*arahatta-phala-paññā*) He died an *arahat*.

“Ānanda, through the eradication of the Five Fetters that lead to rebirth in the Sensuous Sphere, the lower planes of existence, *Nandā* the *bhikkhunī* has been reborn spontaneously in the *Brahmā* realm. She died an *anāgāmin* (a Never-Returner), with no possibility of returning (reverting) from that *Brahmā* existence and will realize *parinibbāna* (the utter passing away), there.

“Ānanda, through the eradication of the three Fetters wrong view of Five Aggregates as a self (*sakkāya-ditṭhi*), uncertainty and doubts (*vicikicchā*), belief in religious practices outside of the Ariya Path (*sīlabbataparāmāsa*) and the lessening of attachment (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*) and bewilderment (*moha*), *Sudatta* the devotee was a *sakadāgāmin* (a Once-Returner). He will make an end of *dukkha* after being reborn in the human world only once.

“Ānanda, 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 *sotāpanna* (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*.

“Ānanda, the devotee named *Kukkuta*... (*repeat below*) ...the devotee named *Kalimba*... (*repeat below*) ...the devotee named *Nikaṭa*... (*repeat below*) ...the devotee named *Katissaha*... (*repeat below*) ...the devotee named *Tuṭṭha*... (*repeat below*) ...the devotee named *Santuṭṭha*... (*repeat below*) ...the devotee named *Bhaddha* ... (*repeat below*) ... the devotee named *Subhadda*, (**repeat:**) *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 Brahmā realm. He died an anāgāmin (a Never-Returner), with no possibility of returning (reverting) from that Brahmā existence and will realize parinibbāna (the utter passing away), there.*

“Ānanda over fifty devotees from *Nātika* village, who have died, were *anāgāmin* (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 Brahmā realm, with no possibility of returning (reverting) from that Brahmā existence and they will realize *parinibbāna* (the utter passing away), there.

“Ānanda over ninety devotees of Nātika village, who have died, were *sakadāgāmin* (Once-Returners), who had eradicated the three Fetters (i.e. *sakkāya-dīṭṭhi*, *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.

“Ānanda, 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*, and were destined for fortunate existence, and are bound to attain the three higher *maggas*.”

The Mirror Discourse

“Ānanda, 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. Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, 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*), nor in the animal world, nor in the realm of wretched spirits burning with thirst and hunger (*peta*), nor 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*.’ I shall expound this discourse on the Mirror of Wisdom. Ānanda, what is this Mirror of Wisdom?

- i) Ānanda, in this Teaching, the *ariya* disciple (i.e. male or female disciple) has unshakable confidence in the Bhagavā, being convinced that:

The Bhagavā is worthy of homage (*Araham*); He is Perfectly Self-Enlightened (*Sammāsambuddha*); He is possessed of perfect knowledge and conduct (*Vijjā carana sampāna*); 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 (*ehi-passika*); 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 (*suppaṭipaññā*), i.e. Threefold Training in Morality, Concentration and Wisdom; they are endowed with straight forward uprightness (*ujjupaṭipaññā*); they are endowed with righteous conduct (*ñyāyapaṭipaññā*), and they are endowed with conducts which inspire awe and respect (*samicipaṭipaññā*). Thus conducting well in these four ways, serving as four grounds for their worthiness, the Sangha, comprising eight individual types of four pairs, is worthy of offerings, even those brought from a far; 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*.

“Ānanda, 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 Buddha, 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 Buddha's Sojourn at The Mango Grove of Ambapālī at Vesālī

Then after staying at Nātika village for as long as He wished, the Buddha said to Venerable Ānanda: “Come, Ānanda, let us go to Vesālī.”

“Very well Venerable Sir,” assented Ānanda, and called upon the *bhikkhus* for the journey. The Buddha, 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 Buddha'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 Buddha. In order that the young *bhikkhus* might not lose mindfulness on setting their eyes on the charming courtesan, the Buddha prepared their minds by giving a discourse thus:

“*Bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* should dwell in mindfulness and clear comprehension. This is My 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, so as to keep away sense-desires and distress that would otherwise arise in him. He keeps his mind on the mind steadfastly contemplating it as mind, so as to keep away sense-desires and distress that would otherwise arise in him. 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 My exhortation to you.”

Ambapālī, The Courtesan

When Ambapālī, the courtesan, heard the news that the Buddha had arrived at Vesālī and was staying at her mango grove, she had the most excellent carriages harnessed for the great occasion (to visit the Buddha), and mounting on such carriage and accompanied by other excellent carriages, she left the city of Vesālī for her mango grove. After riding in the carriage for as far as the carriages should properly go, she dismounted from her carriage and approached the Buddha on foot. She made obeisance to Him and sat in a suitable place.

To Ambapālī, the courtesan, who was seated at a suitable place, the Buddha 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 Buddha had pointed out to her the benefits of the Doctrine, exhorted her to gladden her in the practice, Ambapālī, the courtesan, said to the Buddha, “Venerable Sir, may it please the Bhagavā to accept my offering of food for tomorrow, together with the company of *bhikkhus*.” The Buddha accepted the invitation by token of His silence.

Then, Ambapālī, knowing that the Buddha had accepted her invitation, rose from her place, made obeisance to Him, and left respectfully.

The Licchavī Princes and Ambapālī

When the Licchavī princes of Vesālī heard that the Buddha had arrived at Vesālī and was staying at the mango grove of Ambapālī, they ordered the most excellent carriages harnessed, and mounting these carriages, they left the city, accompanied by other excellent carriages, which were 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 were also 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 together with His company of *bhikkhus* to an offering of meal tomorrow.”

“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 this young woman! We have been outdone by this young woman!”

Then the Licchavī princes rode on to Ambapālī mango grove. The Buddha 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 Tāvātimsa 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 Tāvatisma devas.”

[In this context, the Buddha said to the *bhikkhus*: “.....let them feast their eyes on the Licchavī as if the Licchavī groupings were the Tāvatisma 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-kathā*) 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 (*suba*). “But how is it that here the same instruction is not given?”

The answer is this: The Buddha says so in the interest of the *bhikkhus*. Here is the explanation:

Some of the *bhikkhus*, among the audience were not diligent in *bhikkhu* practice. The Buddha wishes to show to them that *bhikkhu*-practice can lead to the sort of human glory possessed by the Licchavīs. (compare this with the Buddha'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 Licchavīs would in due course furnish a concrete example of the impermanence of things. For these Licchavīs, so high in their present state comparable even to Tāvatisma 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. Then 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 Buddha's urging the *bhikkhus* to have a close look at the Licchavī princes.

Then the Licchavī princes rode in their carriages as far as their carriages should go and then they alighted and walked towards the Buddha. They made obeisance to the Buddha and sat at a suitable place. To the Licchavī princes thus seated, the Buddha 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 He 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 Him: “Venerable Sir, may it please the Bhagavā to accept our offering of food for tomorrow together with the company of *bhikkhus*.” Then the Buddha 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 Buddha's discourse, rose from their seats, made obeisance to Him and left 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 of *bhikkhus* 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. More explanations on this:

(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 Buddha

Then after the night had passed, Ambapālī, having had the choicest food and delicacies prepared in her mango grove, informed the Buddha by messengers who said: “Venerable Sir, it is time (to proceed). The food offering is ready.” Then in the morning, the Buddha rearranged His robes, and taking His alms-bowl and great robe, went to the house of Ambapālī, accompanied by His 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 Buddha which say: “..... I give this grove in donation to the Buddha.” The *Bhesajjakhandhaka* 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.’)

Ambapālī, attended on the *bhikkhus* headed by the Buddha, respectfully offering the choicest food and delicacies with her own hands. After the meal, she sat at a suitable place and said to the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, I give this garden Grove in donation to the Order of *Bhikkhus* headed by the Bhagavā.” The Buddha accepted the donation and after giving a discourse on the Dhamma to Ambapālī, He rose and departed.

While the Buddha 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 Buddha's Last Vassa at Veḷuva Village

Then the Buddha, after staying at Ambapālī's mango grove for as long as He wished, told Ānanda His wish to go to Veḷuva village in the vicinity of Vesālī and He proceeded there accompanied by a big company of *bhikkhus*.

During His stay at Veḷuva village (which was about the full moon of Vesakha, in his forty-fifth *vassa*), the Buddha said to the *bhikkhus*:

“*Bhikkhus*, enter upon the *vassa* period in the vicinity of Vesālī at the monasteries of your friends and acquaintances. As for me, I am going to pass the *vassa* in this Veḷuva village.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” the *bhikkhus* replied, and they entered into the rains-retreat (*vassa*) period at the monasteries of friends and acquaintances in the vicinity of Vesālī. The Buddha Himself entered the *vassa* period at Veḷuva village.

(The Buddha told the *bhikkhus* to dwell, during the *vassa* period, in the various monasteries in the neighbourhood of Vesālī because Veḷuva 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 Buddha's orders to the *bhikkhus* to stay not far away from Vesālī was that He knew that He would enter Parinibbāna 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 Him when He passed away, and they would feel very sorry for the lack of any hint from Him about His oncoming demise. By staying around Vesālī, they could get the opportunity of listening to His discourses, eight times a month. So it was out of compassion for the *bhikkhus* that the Buddha limited the area of *vassa* dwelling for the *bhikkhus* to the neighbourhood of Vesālī.)

The Buddha is afflicted with A Very Severe Illness

After the Buddha had entered into the *vassa* 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 attainment of 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 Buddha kept off the ailment through effort of Insight meditation and by abiding in the life-maintaining *phala-samāpatti*. Then the Buddha's illness faded.

(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 *arahatta-phala-samāpatti* of the Buddha is of three kinds: *Maggānantara*, *vaḷañjana*, 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 Buddha 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 Buddha made a solemn wish that He be free from any ailment for ten months up to the full moon of Āsāḷhā (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, *rūpa-sattaka* 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 *jīvita-saṅkhāra* or *āyu-saṅkhāra phala-samāpatti*.

The distinction between *khanika-samāpatti* and *jīvita-saṅkhāra-samāpatti* should be noted.

Khanika-samāpatti is preceded by ordinary mode of entering into Insight-meditation whereas *jīvita-saṅkhāra-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.

The Buddha 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 Ānanda approached Him,

paid his obeisance and, having seated at a suitable place, said:

“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 became 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 Buddha explained His position as against the Order of Bhikkhus thus:

“Ānanda, 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. Ānanda, 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. Ānanda, 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 Ānanda, 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?

“Ānanda, 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*. Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, let yourselves be your own refuge; 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.

“Ānanda, how does a *bhikkhu* make himself his own refuge, 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?

“Ānanda, 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, so as to keep away sense desire and distress that would otherwise arise in him. He keeps his mind on the mind, so as to keep away sense desire and distress that would otherwise arise in him. He keeps his mind steadfastly contemplating it as mind, so as to keep away sense desire and distress that would otherwise arise in him. 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.

“Ānanda, thus a *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.

“Ānanda, those *bhikkhus* who, either now or after I have passed away, make themselves their own refuge, 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. arahatship) among all the *bhikkhus* who cherish the Threefold Training.”

Thus did the Buddha conclude the discourse culminating in *arahatta-phala*.

The Demise of The Two Chief Disciples

After spending the last *vassa* period at Veluva village. At the end of that period, the Buddha left the village for Sāvattthi. Travelling by stages, He arrived at Sāvattthi and He stayed in 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 Buddha and took a seven day journey to his native village, 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, Venerable Cunda, younger brother of the Venerable Sāriputta, took Venerable Sāriputta's alms-bowl, robe, etc., together with the remains to Sāvattthi. These relics were enshrined under the Buddha's instruction at Sāvattthi. Thereafter, the Buddha went to Rājagaha. When He was in Rājagaha, on the day of the new moon in Tazaungmon, the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna entered *parinibbāna*.

(The details of the event will be described in the chapter on the Sangha.)

The relics of the the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna were enshrined under the Buddha's instructions at Rājagaha. After that the Buddha proceeded on His journey and, travelling by stages, arrived at Ukkacela. There, at the landing place on the Gaṅgā river, He gave a discourse concerning the demise of the two Chief Disciples (Refer to Ukkacela Sutta, **Saṃyutta III.**)

Then, in the morning, He went into Vesālī on His alms-round, and after His meal, leaving the place of eating, He said to Venerable Ānanda: "Ānanda, bring the leather sheet seat, let us go to the Capata shrine to spend the day there."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," said Ānanda, and taking a leather sheet seat, followed closely behind the Buddha.

The Buddha gives Hints about His Passing Away

Then the Buddha approached the Capata shrine and sat on the seat spread out for Him. The Venerable Ānanda making obeisance to Him, and seated himself at a suitable place. Then the Buddha said to Ānanda by way of clear hints:

"Ānanda, 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.

"Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, the Tathāgata could, if He so wishes, live the maximum life span."

Although the Buddha thus gave clear hints, the Venerable Ānanda failed to grasp them. And so it did not occur to him to entreat the Buddha along these lines (in these terms): "May the Bhagavā, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, wellbeing and happiness of devas and humans, 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 Ānanda'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 Vesālī) 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 *āyu-kappa* (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-samāpatti* 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 the Buddha did not choose to do so? The Buddha 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!” Thus, the Venerable Mahāsīva maintained the practical considerations that Buddhas take into account in not exercising their power of living till 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 *āyu-kappa* on the authority of the *Pakinnaka desanā atthakatha*.

(Refer to Commentary on **Dīgha Nikāya**).

The view of 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 the 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 *āyu-kappa* 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 (*attā*) 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 these illusions cannot fall victim to Mara's influence mentally. (The Venerable Mahā Moggallāna is an example). A worldling who has not rid of any of these illusions or an *ariya* who has overcome some of these illusion but still have some remaining in him is liable to be possessed by Māra.

Ānanda 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 the heart exerting pressure on it. The victim lies in a senseless state totally possessed by Māra.

In the case of Ānanda, Māra could not insert his hand through the mouth and oppress the heart. He merely presented some dreadful sense object before Ānanda, under the influence of which Ānanda could not think of the significance of the Buddha's intimation.

For a second time the Buddha said to Ānanda...(repeat p: below)...

For a third time the Buddha said to Ānanda:

(p:)

“Ānanda, pleasant is the city of Vesālī. And pleasant are the shrines of Udena, Gotamaka, Sattamba, Bahuputta, Sarandada, Cāpāta.

“Ānanda, 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.

“Ānanda, 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, Ananda, the Tathāgata could, if He so wishes, live the maximum life span.” Thus said the Bhagavā by way of clear hints.

Although the Buddha thus gave clear hints, Ānanda failed to grasp them. And so it did not occur to him to entreat the Buddha along these lines (in these terms): “May the Bhagavā, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, well being and happiness of devas and humans, out of compassion for the world, live the maximum life span! May the Well-Spoken One live the maximum life span!” Ānanda's mind was like that of one possessed by Māra.

(Herein, it might be asked: “Why did the Bhagavā, knowing well that Ānanda was being possessed by Māra, repeated his words of intimation three times?”

The answer is this: the Buddha foresaw that later, when Māra had released Ānanda, who would regain his senses. Ānanda would then entreat Him to live the whole of the life span. In that event, He would have reason to blame Ānanda 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 Buddha said to Ānanda: “Go now, Ānanda. Now you know the time to go.” “Very well, Venerable Sir,” assented Ānanda, then arising from his seat, he made obeisance to the Buddha and went to sit at the foot of a tree, not far away from Him.

Māra's Request

Soon after the Venerable Ānanda had left the Buddha's presence, Māra, the Evil one, approached Him and, standing at a certain place, addressed Him 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*, (**p1:**) *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 *bhikkhunīs*... (**repeat p1 above**) ‘...my male lay-disciples... (**repeat p2 below**)

‘... my female lay-disciples (**p2:**) *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 humans.’

“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 humans.

“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 Buddha to pass away) The first time was during the eight week of Buddha’s Sojourn in the vicinity of the Bodhi Tree, after He had attained Perfect Self-Enlightenment. At that time he said to the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, as the result of your fulfilling the Perfections with the aim at Buddhahood, you have now become the Buddha. You have attained 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 the second time) Māra, having seen that the Buddha had assented to Brahmā Sahampati’s request to preach the Doctrine, approached Him, who was sitting beneath the Ajapāla (Goat-herd’s) Banyan Tree where He stayed for the seventh week after Enlightenment. Mara 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 Buddha’s promise to Brahmā 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 Buddha replied to Māra that so long as His male disciples, the *bhikkhus*, His female disciples, the *bhikkhunis*, His male lay disciples, female lay disciples were 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 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 Buddha gave on that second request.)

On being requested thus, the Buddha said to Māra the Evil One: “Evil One, don’t you worry; the Parinibbāna of the Tathāgata will not be long in coming. Three months hence the Tathāgata will realize Parinibbāna.”

The Buddha renounces The Life-maintaining Mental Process

Then the Buddha, 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 Buddha’s making that resolution, the great earth quaked with a hair-raising and gooseflesh-causing vehemence.

Then the Buddha, perceiving this phenomenal occurrence, uttered a joyous utterance in verse.

*Tula matulañca sambhavam
Bhava samñkhāra mavasvaji muni
Ajjhattarato 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 is further expanded:

The Buddha 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 Buddha 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 *saṃsāra* is terminated in the mental make-up of the Buddha.

(Notes: In the statement, “*The Bhagavā decided mindfully and with deliberation to give up the life-maintaining mental process*,” ‘mindfully’ means the Buddha’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 *saṃsāra*, and that now he was free from the burden; and that to enable him to cast aside this burden, he had for over four *asaṅkhyeyyas* 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 Buddha 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 Āsāḷhā (May).

These thoughts which the Buddha 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’ (*āyu-saṅkhāra*), 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 *ūpālaka-phala-samāpatti* 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 Buddha, was resolving that He would not re-enter into the *phala-samāpatti* after three months; he would do so only up to the full moon of Āsāḷhā. By that resolution, the Buddha, in effect, renounced the condition for prolonging his life beyond three months.

When the Buddha 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 Buddha had relinquished the life-maintaining mental process, He felt delightful satisfaction with the thought that the burden of the body, which 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 Buddha 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 *dukkhas*, brought forth that joyous utterance concerning his relinquishment.)

Then the Venerable Ānanda 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?” He approached the Buddha, made his obeisance to Him, and sitting at a suitable place, addressed the Buddha 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 Buddha said: “Ānanda, there are eight causes of, or conditions leading to great earthquakes. They are:

- (1) 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, or the first condition leading to great earthquakes.
- (2) Further, Ānanda, a *samaṇa* or a *brāhmaṇa* 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, or the second condition leading to great earthquakes.
- (3) Further, Ānanda, 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, or the third condition leading to great earthquakes.
- (4) Further, Ānanda, on the occasion of a Bodhisatta was born, mindfully and with clear comprehension, this great earth shakes, quakes strongly, sways violently, and is convulsed. This is the fourth cause of, or the fourth condition leading to great earthquakes.
- (5) Further, Ānanda, on the occasion of a Buddha attaining Supremely Perfect-Enlightenment, this great earth shakes, quakes strongly, sways violently, and is convulsed.
- (6) Further, Ānanda, on the occasion of a Buddha expounding the Supreme Dhamma on the Four Ariya Truths, (His first sermon known as the Dhammacakka-puvattana Sutta), the great earth shakes, quakes strongly, sways violently, and is convulsed.
- (7) Further, Ānanda, 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.
- (8) Further, Ānanda, 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.

“Ānanda, these are the eight causes of, or the eight conditions leading to great earthquakes.”

(The Buddha'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 nine hundred 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 the causes 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 *jhāna*, with water as the object of concentration and thereby causing the upheaval of the great earth. They cause the earthquake for some noble purpose, e.g. the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna caused the Vejayanta pinnaced 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 Sāmaṇera Sangharakkhita

Sāmaṇera Sangharakkhita (nephew of Venerable Mahānāga) was a remarkable *sāmaṇera* who attained *arahatta-phala* 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 *bhikkhus* 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 Sāmuddika 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 pancake 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 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! Leave 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 arahatship even as my

head was being shaved. And today, I have been able to shake 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).

- 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 Buddha (in the matter of decay and death which 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 Buddha very happy with the delightful satisfaction in having accomplished His mission that had taken Him four *asaṅkheyyas* and a hundred thousand aeons (*kappas*) for attainment of Perfect Peace (*Anupādisesa 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 Buddha discoursed on the eight causes of great earthquakes, Venerable Ānanda, being of great wisdom, rightly concluded that the Buddha had relinquished the life-maintaining mental process that very day. The fact of Ānanda's appraisal of the situation was known by the Buddha but He did not allow Ānanda to disrupt the discourse and continued with other topics, such as the eight categories of assemblies, the eight *abhibhāyatanas*, and the eight *vimokkha*. (There are certain commentators who explain this action, on the part of the Buddha, as His strategy of alleviating the sorrow that would arise in Ānanda, if the fact of the relinquishing the life-maintaining mental process were to be allowed to surface itself. The fresh topics that the Buddha takes up without interrupting are thus meant to occupy Ānanda's mind with matters other than the Buddha's oncoming death.)

“Ānanda,” said the Buddha, “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 Tāvātimsa Deva realm, assembly of the devas led by Māra, and assembly of Brahmās.

“Ānanda, I remember having attended hundreds of assemblies of nobles. (p:) *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, a deva or a 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 who has vanished now? Was He a deva or a man? ’’

“Ānanda, I remember having attended hundreds of:

... assemblies of brahmins...(repeat p: above).

... assemblies of householders...(repeat p: above)

... assemblies of *bhikkhus*...(repeat p: above)

... assemblies of devas of the realm of the Four Great Kings...(repeat p: above)

... assemblies of devas of the realm of Tāvātimsa devas...(repeat p: above)

... assemblies of devas led by Māra...(repeat p: above)

“Ānanda, I remember having attended hundreds of assemblies of Brahmā. 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, a deva or a man? After I had, by 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 a deva or a man?”

“Ānanda, 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 Buddha had attained Enlightenment (Refer to Chapter 24), the Buddha's first visit to Kapilavatthu and meeting with His kinsmen (Refer to Chapter 26), the Buddha's meeting with Licchavī princes as told in the *Sunakkhatta vatthu*, *Saccaka vatthu* (Refer to Chapter 32). 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 Buddha did not assume any particular guise, but remained His ownself. 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 His taming of Jambupati.)

“*My voice was like their voice*” means the language that the Buddha used in speaking at the particular assembly. Regarding the voice itself, the Buddha had a voice like that of the Lord of Brahmas, a voice replete with eight marvellous qualities. When the Buddha happened to be seated on a throne, the audience would think that their king was speaking in a sweet voice. Only after He had finished the discourse and left the assembly, then the audience could see their real king and they were left wondering: “Who was there sitting on the throne, who talked to us in Magadhī on the Dhamma in such a sweet voice, and who is gone now? Was He a deva or was He a man?” They did not know that it was the Buddha.

It might be asked: “Why did the Buddha discoursed on the Dhamma to those who did not recognize Him? What benefit did He see there?” **The answer is:** the Buddha preached to them to prepare the ground for their enlightenment later. **Here's the explanation:** Although those hearers of the Dhamma did not recognize the Buddha and did not take real, interest in the Dhamma, since the Dhamma is replete with the excellent qualities such as “well-delivered” (*savakhāto*), 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 Buddha's encounters with Sonadanta, Kūḍadanta, 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 Buddha discoursed on the eight categories of assemblies to illustrate the fact that He was fearless. **Here’s the explanation:** After describing the eight categories of assemblies, the Buddha continued: “Ānanda, 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? Ānanda, in relinquishing the life-maintaining mental process, the Tathāgata did so fearlessly, with mindfulness and clear comprehension.”

(These words are contained in the **Pakīṇṇaka Dhamma Desanā Pāli** which was not recited at the Great Council but was quoted by the Commentaries.)

Eight Ways of Mastery of The Mind through Concentration

Then the Buddha continued His discourse without break thus:

“Ānanda, 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 (*kaṣiṇa* objects), which may be either unblemished or blemished (i.e. whose colour may be either good or bad). His mind gets fixed on these 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 these 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 *kaṣiṇa* objects), which may be either unblemished or blemished. His mind gets fixed on these 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 these 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 (*kaṣiṇa* objects), which may be either unblemished or blemished, as objects of preliminary concentration. His mind duly gets fixed on these small forms (as *kaṣiṇa* 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 these 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 *kaṣiṇa* objects), which may be either unblemished or blemished, as objects of preliminary concentration. His mind duly gets fixed on these big 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 these 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 *kaṣiṇa* 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 Bārāṇasī 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 jhānic absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees these 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 *kaṣiṇa* objects) that are yellow, with a yellow colour, yellow hue, or like Bārāṇasī 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 jhānic absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees these 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 *kaṣiṇa* objects) that are red, with a red colour, red hue, like a flower of the tree *Pentapetes phoenicea* (*baṇḍhu jīvaka*) which is red, with a red colour, red hue, or like Bārāṇasī 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 *appanā-jhāna*. After emerging from the jhānic absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees these 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 *kaṣiṇa* 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 Bārāṇasī 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 *appanā-jhāna*. After emerging from the jhānic absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees these 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, viz., 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 *abhibhāyatana-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 *abhibhāyatana jhānas* were taught by the Buddha 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 Buddha the extent of object of concentration is infinite. Nothing whatever can therefore daunt the Buddha's mind. In discoursing on the eight *abhibhāyatana-jhānas* to Venerable Ānanda, the Buddha intended to let the venerable disciple understand the fearless nature of the Buddha.

"Ānanda," the Buddha continued, "the Tathāgata, who has dwelt in the eight *abhibhāyatana-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? Ānanda, 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 Council but was quoted by the Commentaries.)

The Eight Stages of Release, Vimokkha

Then the Buddha without any pause continued to the next subject, on the eight stages of release (*vimokkha*), in His discourse to the Venerable Ānanda thus:

"Ānanda, there are eight stages of release (*vimokkha*). These are:

- i) Having attained *jhāna* 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 (*rūpa-saññā*), all forms of consciousness arising out of contact between sense and sense object (*paṭigha-saññā*), having disappeared and completely disregarding all other forms of multifarious consciousness (*nānatta-saññā*), the yogi, contemplating "that space is infinite", achieves concentration on that object of contemplation, and dwells in *ākāsānañcāyatana-jhāna*. This is the fourth Release.
- v) Having clearly advanced beyond the *jhāna* of Infinity of Space, the yogi, contemplating "that Consciousness is infinite," achieves concentration on that object of contemplation, and dwells in *viññāṇaṇcāyatana-jhāna*. This the fifth Release.
- vi) Having clearly advanced beyond the *jhāna* of the Infinity of Consciousness, the yogi,

contemplating "that nothing is there," achieves concentration on that object of contemplation, and dwells in *ākīñcañāyatana-jhāna*. This is the sixth Release.

vii) Having clearly advanced beyond the *jhāna* of nothingness, the yogi, contemplating the subtle consciousness, achieves concentration on it, and dwells in the *nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana-jhāna*. This is the seventh Release.

viii) Having clearly advanced beyond the *jhāna* of Neither-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.

“Ānanda, 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 maybe likened to the peaceful repose of a child in his father's chest. This freedom or release lasts as long as the *jhāna* 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 (*rūpāvacara-jhānas*).

Of these three, the first *vimokkha*, the *jhāna* of the Fine Material Sphere, is achieved by concentrating on internal as well as external objects. The second is the *jhāna* of the Fine Material Sphere, is 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* (dark-blue, 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 Buddha, it was a very pleasant thing to dwell in Release. He has no fear to experience Release. The Buddha discoursed on the eight stages of Release to let the Venerable Ānanda understand the fearless nature of the Buddha.

“Ānanda,” the Buddha 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? Ānanda, in relinquishing the life-maintaining mental process, the Tathāgata did so fearlessly, with mindfulness and clear comprehension.” (These also are the Buddha's words to Ānanda, as continued in the **Pakiṇṇaka Dhamma desanā**).

The Buddha relates The Whole Story about The Relinquishing of The Life-maintaining Mental Process

Having discoursed on the eight stages of Release, the Buddha continued His discourse without letting Venerable Ānanda to say anything:

“Ānanda, 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.’

“Ānanda, 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 *bhikkhunīs*...(repeat p1 & p2 below)

‘O Evil One, so long as my lay disciples...(repeat p1 & p2 below)

‘O Evil One, so long as my female lay-disciples (**p1:**) *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.*

(**p2:**) ‘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 humans.’

“Ānanda, Māra the Evil One, just now came to Me at the Cāpāta Shrine, and standing at a suitable place, again addressed Me thus:

‘Venerable Sir, let the Bhagavā realize Parinibbāna 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 *bhikkhunīs*,...(p)...my male 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 humans.

‘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 humans.

‘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.’

“Ānanda, 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 Parinibbāna.’

“Ānanda, 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 Buddha the whole story about the relinquishing of the life-maintaining mental process.

The Venerable Ānanda entreats The Buddha to live on

When the Buddha said this, the Venerable Ānanda entreated Him thus:

“Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, wellbeing and happiness of devas and humans, out of compassion for the world, live the maximum life span! May the Well-Spoken One live the maximum life span!”

Thereupon the Buddha said:

“Enough, Ānanda, Do not implore the Tathāgata now. The time for such entreaty is past.”

For a second time the Venerable Ānanda repeated his entreaty and the Buddha rejected it in the same words. When for a third time he repeated his entreaty the Buddha said to him:

“Do you have faith in the Enlightenment wisdom (*Bodhi-ñāṇa*) 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:

‘Ānanda, 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. Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, 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, Ānanda?”

“Yes, Venerable Sir, I do.”

“Ānanda, 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 humans, out of compassion for the world, live the maximum life span! May the Well-Spoken One live the maximum life span!’ Therefore, Ānanda, this failure to entreat Me then is your doing, your own omission.

“Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, this failure to entreat Me then is your own doing, your own omission.”

The Buddha relates Similar Instances of Omission on The Past of Ānanda to allay His Sorrow

(1) “Ānanda, on one occasion, I was staying on the mountain abode on the Gijjhakuṭa hill

in Rājagaha. (p1:) At that time I had said to you: ‘Ānanda, pleasant is the city of Rājagaha. Ānanda, pleasant is the Gijjhakuṭa hill. Ānanda, 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. Ānanda, 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 Powered. Therefore, Ānanda, the Tathāgata could, if He so wishes, live the maximum life span or even beyond the maximum life span.

“Ānanda, 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 Bhagavā live the maximum life span!

“Ānanda, 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 doing, your own omission.

“Ānanda, on one occasion, ...

- (2) I was dwelling at the foot of Gotama banyan tree in Rājagaha...(Repeat p1: above)
- (3) I was dwelling at the Corapāta cliff near Rājagaha...(Repeat p1: above)
- (4) I was dwelling in the Sattapaṇṇi cave in the side of Vebhāra mountain (where the Astonic scholaris tree grows) near Rājagaha ...(Repeat p1: above)
- (5) I was at Kaḷasia at the side of the Isigili mountain near Rājagaha...(Repeat p1: above)
- (6) at the ebony grove in the Sappasoṇḍika mountain range near Rājagaha...(Repeat p1: above:)
- (7) at the Tapodārāma monastery in Rājagaha...(Repeat p1: above)
- (8) at Veḷuvana monastery where black squirrels are fed...(Repeat p1: above)
- (9) at the mango grove of Jīvaka...(Repeat p1: above)
- (10)at the Migadāya wood in Maddakucahi near Rājagaha...(Repeat p1: above)

Ānanda, while I was dwelling at those places, too, I had said to you:

(1) Ānanda, Rājagaha is pleasant...(2) Ānanda, Gotama banyan tree is pleasant... (3) Corapāpta cliff is pleasant...(4) Sattapaṇṇi cave is pleasant..(5) Kaḷasla at the side of Isigli mountain is pleasant... (6) The ebony grove in the Sappasoṇḍika mountain rage is pleasant... (7) Tapodārāma monastery is pleasant...(8) Veḷuvana monastery where black squirrels are fed is pleasant...(9) the mango grove of Jīvaka is pleasant...(10) the Migadāya Wood in Maddakucchi is pleasant. Ānanda, 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. Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, the Tathāgata could, if He so wishes, live the maximum life span or even beyond the maximum life span.

“Ānanda, 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!’

“Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, this failure to entreat Me then is your own doing, your own omission.”

- a) “Ānanda, on one occasion, while I was living at the Udena Shrine in Vesālī, (p2:) there too, I said to you: ‘Ānanda, Vesālī is pleasant. The Udena shrine is pleasant. Ānanda,

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. Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, the Tathāgata could, if He so wishes, live the maximum life span or even beyond the maximum life span.

“Ānanda, 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 humans, out of compassion for the world, live the maximum life span! May the Well-Spoken One live the maximum life span!’

“Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, this failure to entreat the Bhagavā then is your own doing, your own omission.

“Ānanda, on one occasion, while I was staying

- b) at the Gotama Shrine in this very city of Vesālī--(*Repeat p2: above*)
- c) at the Sattamba shrine in this very city of Vesālī,...(*Repeat p2: above*)
- d) at the Bahuputta shrine in this very city of Vesālī...(*Repeat p2: above*)
- e) at the Sāranada shrine in this very city of Vesālī...(*Repeat p2: above*)
- f) “Ānanda, today, at the Cāpāla shrine, the Tathāgata has just said to you: ‘Ānanda, Vesālī is pleasant, the Cāpāla shrine is pleasant. Ānanda, 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. Ānanda 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, Ānanda, the Tathāgata could, if He so wishes, live the maximum life span or even beyond the maximum life span.

“Ānanda, 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 humans, out of compassion for the world, live the maximum life span! May the Well-Spoken One live the maximum life span!’

“Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, this failure to entreat the Bhagavā then is your own doing, your own omission.”

(The Buddha related the fifteen previous instances of Ānanda's failure to entreat Him 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 Buddha to attenuate the sorrow Ānanda was feeling at that time. Of course, Ānanda's failure on all these various occasions was due to Māra's mischief.)

“Ānanda, 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? Ānanda, 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.

“Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, let us

go to the pinnacled hall at the Mahāvana forest.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” assented Ānanda.

Then the Buddha, accompanied by the Venerable Ānanda, went to the pinnacled hall at the Mahāvana forest. There, He said to him: “Ānanda, go and summon all *bhikkhus* living in Vesālī to come and assemble in the assembly hall.” Ānanda caused all the *bhikkhus* living in Vesālī to gather in the Assembly Hall. Then he went to the Buddha, made obeisance to Him, and standing in a certain place, reported: “Venerable Sir, the *bhikkhus* are assembled. May the Bhagavā go to them as and when He wishes.”

Thirty-seven Factors of The Perpetuation of The Teaching

Then the Buddha 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, wellbeing and happiness of devas and humans.

These doctrines are:

- (a) the Four Methods of Steadfast Mindfulness (*Satipaṭṭhāna*);
- (b) the Four Supreme Efforts (*Sammāpadāna*);
- (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, wellbeing and happiness of devas and humans.”

Then the Buddha 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 Buddha 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 Buddha looked back like A Noble Tusker

Then the Buddha, rearranging His robes in the morning, He took His 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, He turned around and looked back towards Vesālī, like a tusker looking back. Then He said to Venerable Ānanda, “Ānanda, this will be the last time the Tathāgata looks on Vesālī. Come, Ānanda, let us go to Bhaṇḍa village.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” assented Ānanda.

(In this matter, the statement about the Buddha “*turning around to look back*” would need some comment. The Buddha's anatomy is unique among human beings. Ordinary people have bones joined together by touching at the ends (i.e., end to end). Paccekabuddhas have bones joined by hooks formed at the end of each bone (i.e., hook to hook). The Buddha's bone structure is a set of chain-links (i.e., ring to ring). With the exception of the arms, which consist 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 Buddha wants to look back, He has to turn back the whole body, as an elephant does.)

Although it was the Buddha'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 Buddha 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 Buddha's intention to do so.

It might be asked: “Why was Vesālī alone being mentioned as the place the Bhagavā has His last look at, and not other places, such as Sāvathī, 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 Buddha were to look back on these 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 Buddha's last visit there. The Buddha 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 Buddha's Discourse at Bhaṇḍu Village

Then the Buddha, accompanied by His 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*, (p1:) *it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the Ariya Morality, the virtue of the Noble One (Ariya Sīla) (p2:) 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*,.... (repeat p1: above) the Ariya Concentration (*Ariya Samādhī*)...(repeat p2: above)
- iii) *Bhikkhus*,....(repeat p1 above) the Ariya Wisdom (*Ariya Paññā*)...(repeat p2: above)
- 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; of the Ariya Wisdom;... 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 Buddha further said to the *bhikkhus* (in verse):

“(Bhikkhus;) Buddha Gotama, 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 humans), 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 arahat disciples).”

During His sojourn at Bhaṇḍu village the Buddha, 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 for as long as He wished, the Buddha said to the Venerable Ānanda: “Come, Ānanda, let us go to Hatthi village,... to Amba village, ... to Jamba village, and thence the town of Bhoga.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” assented Ānanda. And the Buddha, accompanied by a large following of *bhikkhus*, arrived at the town of Bhoga, where He dwelled at the Ānanda shrine. During His sojourn there, the Buddha 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 Buddha.’*

“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 (Text), 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 these *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 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 the 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, 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 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 the 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 Councils.

(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 Piṭaka

(*Matavagga*; 6 *Bhesajjakkhanda*)

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 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 *attā*, 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 Buddha 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.

- (a) *Sutta*: here refers to the Three Piṭakas.
- (b) *Suttānuloma*: the four Mahāpadesas (Great Authorities) described in the Vinaya and the four Mahāpadesas described in the Suttanta.
- (c) *Ācariyavāda*: miscellaneous exposition in elucidation of the doctrines of the Buddha that were made even during His lifetime at different places. Since they explain the Pāli texts, they were also called Commentaries (*aṭṭhakathā*). At the great Councils, 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 by three different names, which are *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 which were appropriate to the Piṭaka texts, elucidating wherever necessary, and thereby produced a new Commentary in Māgadhī, 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.
- (d) *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*, *Suttānuloma* and *Ācariyavāda*. *Attanomati* is also known as *Theravāda*, the doctrines upheld traditionally by *bhikkhu*-elders. Thus these four Vinayas are *Sutta*, *Suttānuloma*, *Ācariyavāda* and *Attanomati*, should be noted..

(v) The Three Great Buddhist Councils.

- (a) The first Great Council of five hundred *arahats* headed by the Venerable Mahā Kassapa.
- (b) The Second Great Council of seven thousand *arahats* headed by the Venerable Mahā Yasa.
- (c) The Third Great Council of one thousand *arahats* headed by the Venerable Mahā Moggaliputta.

These are the three great official Buddhist Councils.

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 Councils.

Then apply them to practical problems thus:

- (i) If a *bhikkhu* says: “This is the Doctrine, this is the Vinaya, this is the Buddha's Teaching,” citing the authority of the Buddha, 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 hearsay, 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 arise, 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 Councils, the statement should not be rejected, for rejection of the Piṭaka amounts to the rejection of the Buddha Himself. If the assertion is a *Suttānuloma* 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 then it 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 Councils”, it must conform to the texts approved at the three Great Councils. If it is not part of the Pāli text approved at the three Great Councils, it is to be regarded as spurious.

(The above are miscellaneous points to remember.)

While the Buddha was staying at the Ānanda 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 for as long as He wished, the Buddha said to the Venerable Ānanda: “Come, Ānanda, let us go to Pāvā.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” assented Ānanda. And the Buddha, accompanied by His 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 Buddha, he had benefited from His discourse and become a Stream-Winner. He built a big monastery in his mango grove and donated it to the Buddha. This was the last time the Buddha resided at the monastery.)

When Cunda, the goldsmith's son, heard the news that the Buddha had arrived and was staying at his mango grove monastery, he approached Him, made obeisance to Him, and sat in a suitable place. The Buddha pointed out to Cunda, 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 His discourse, Cunda, said to the Buddha: "Venerable Sir, may it please the Bhagavā to accept my offering of food for tomorrow together with the company of *bhikkhus*." The Buddha signified His acceptance by remaining silent.

Cunda, knowing that the Buddha had accepted his request, rose from his seat, and making obeisance to Him and 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," he announced to the Buddha.

(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 Buddha in the belief that it would not cause the passing away of the Buddha.)

Then in the morning, the Buddha, taking His alms-bowl and robe, went to the house of Cunda, accompanied by the *bhikkhus*, and sat on the seat prepared for Him.

Having thus seated, the Buddha 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 Buddha, and the other personally prepared food to the *bhikkhu-sangha*.

After finishing the meal, the Buddha said to Cunda: "Cunda, bury the remaining tender pork in a pit. I see no one else, besides me, in all the celestial world of devas, *māras* and Brahmas, or in this human world of *samanas* and *brāhmanas*, rulers and men who, should he perchance eat it, could digest it well" thus declared the Buddha categorically.

"Very well, Venerable Sir," assented Cunda and accordingly buried the remaining tender pork in a pit. Then he approached the Buddha, made obeisance to Him, and sat in a suitable place. And the Buddha taught Cunda a discourse on the Doctrine. Then the Buddha rose from His seat and departed.

Thereafter, subsequent to the meal offered by Cunda, the Buddha became afflicted with a severe illness, an acute form of dysentery with discharge of blood, causing great pain near unto death but He bore the pain with mindfulness and clear comprehension, without perturbation.

Then He said to Ānanda: "Come, Ānanda, let us go to Kusināgara."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," assented Ānanda.

(It should be noted here that the dysentery came upon the Buddha 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 strengthened the Buddha. If not for Cunda's highly nourishing food, the Buddha would not be able to withstand the onslaught of the severe illness. Thanks to Cunda's tender pork meal, the Buddha found strength to journey to Kusināgara on foot.)

The Buddha asks Ānanda to fetch Drinking Water

Then the Buddha left the road and went to the foot of a tree. There, He said to Venerable Ānanda: “Ānanda, fold my double-layered robe fourfold and place it on the ground. Ānanda, I am weary. I shall sit down for a while.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” Venerable Ānanda assented and he placed on the ground the double-layered robe folded fourfold. The Buddha sat on the seat thus prepared and said:

- (1) “Ānanda, go and get some drinking water. Ānanda, I am thirsty. I want to have a drink of water.”

The Venerable Ānanda 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.”

- (2) “Ānanda, go and get some drinking water. I am thirsty. Ānanda, I am thirsty. I want to have a drink of water.”

The Venerable Ānanda again said: “Venerable Sir, five hundred cans 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.”

- (3) “Ānanda, go and get some drinking water. Ānanda I am thirsty, I want to have a drink of water.”

After being commanded thrice by the Buddha, Ānanda 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 Ānanda 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 Ānanda took the drinking water in the alms-bowl, went back to the Buddha, 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 Buddha drank the water.

The Twelve Saṃsāric Debts of The Buddha

In this connection it would seem appropriate to mention briefly the twelve counts of recompense (which might be considered as twelve *saṃsāric* debts) the Buddha had to meet:

(1) The First Recompense

In His former existence, the Buddha-to-be (Bodhisatta) was a drunkard named Munāḷi. He accosted a Paccekabuddha 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 Buddha, He was publicly accused by Sundarī, the wandering female ascetic, as being luscious and having had an affair with her.

(2) The Second Recompense

In a former existence, the Bodhisatta was a disciple, named Nanda, to a Paccekabuddha 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 Cīṇjamāna as a wanton person who had caused her pregnancy.

(3) The Third Recompense

The Bodhisatta was once a learned brahmin teacher, who was well versed in the three Vedas, and 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 his five hundred pupils that the hermit was a sensuous hypocrite. The pupils, believed in what the teacher had said, spread the teacher's view of the holy hermit while he (hermit) was going alms-collecting.

These five hundred pupils were reborn as *bhikkhu*-disciples of the Buddha. Due to their slander against Bhima, 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 Buddha amounted to an accusation against the Buddha Himself.

(4) The Fourth Recompense

In a previous existence, the Bodhisatta 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 Buddha, 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, which was as a result of a huge boulder being dropped from the hillside by Devadatta. His big toe was internally bruised by the rock splinter.

(5) The Fifth Recompense

In one of His former existences, the Bodhisatta was a scamp and when he met a Paccekabuddha on the way, he gave vent to frolicsome tendencies and threw stones at the Paccekabuddha.

For that evil deed, the Buddha once came under attack by a band of archers sent by Devadatta who meant to kill Him.

(6) The Sixth Recompense

When the Bodhisatta was a mahout, he threatened a Paccekabuddha, who was on His alms-collection, with his elephant, as if to trample on Him.

On account of that misdeed, the Buddha was once threatened with a drunken elephant named Nālāgiri in Rājagaha which was sent (by Devadatta) to trample on Him.

(7) The Seventh Recompense

In one of His former existences, the Bodhisatta 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 His last existence, the Buddha had to undergo treatment by His big toe being cut open by Jīvaka, the celebrated physician, to heal it (when it was hit by a splinter caused by Devadatta's wicked scheme).

(8) The Eighth Recompense

In a former existence, the Bodhisatta was born into a fisherman's family. He used to take delight in witnessing his relatives 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 of that existence, they were reborn as Sakyans who were massacred by Viṭaṭūbha).

(9) The Ninth Recompense

When the Bodhisatta was born as a human being during the time of Buddha Phussa's Teaching, he railed the *bhikkhu*-disciples of the Buddha saying: "You may eat only barley, but not rice."

That vituperation had the consequence. In His last existence, the Buddha having to live on barley meal for the whole of the rains-retreat (*vassa*) period at the Verañja brahmin village (where He stayed at the invitation of Brahmin Verañja).

(10) The Tenth Recompense

Once the Bodhisatta was born as a professional boxer when he broke the back of his combatant.

As a consequence of that evil deed, the Buddha, in His last existence, often suffered from back-ache.

(11) The Eleventh Recompense

When the Bodhisatta 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 Buddha, in His last existence, was afflicted with a severe dysentery with discharge of blood, prior to His passing away.

(12) The Twelfth Recompense

The Bodhisatta was once born as a brahmin named Jotipala. He made blasphemous remarks about Buddha Kassapa saying: "How is it possible that this shaveling is Perfectly Enlightened? Perfect Enlightenment is a most rare thing."

That blasphemy had the consequence of delayed Enlightenment for Him. Other Bodhisattas attained Enlightenment in a matter of days or months, whereas Gotama, the 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 Buddha Himself, vide: Khuddaka Nikāya, Therāpadāna Pāli, 39, Avataphala Vagga; 10, Pubbakammapiḷotika Buddha apādāna.

The Story of Pukkusa, The Malla Prince

While the Buddha was sitting at the foot of the tree after having a drink of water, Pukkusa, a Malla prince, who was a disciple of Āḷāra Kālāma, was on his journey from Kusināra to Pāvā. Seeing the Buddha sitting at the foot of a tree, Pukkusa of the Mallas approached Him, made obeisance to Him, and sat in a suitable place. Then he addressed the Buddha:

"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, Āḷāra Kālāma, while on a journey, left the road and sat down at the foot of a tree by the roadside to spend the day. At that time, five hundred carts passed by, very close to him.

"Venerable Sir, a man who was following behind the five hundred carts went towards Āḷāra 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 very 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 Ālāra Kālāma, that man thought thus: 'Wonderful it is, marvellous it is, that the recluses remain in their tranquil state! This recluse Ālāra, although conscious and awake, did not see nor hear the five hundred carts that passed close by him!' And saying how deeply he revered Ālāra Kālāma, he went away."

Thereupon the Buddha 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, "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 Buddha 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 were killed. By that time, I had come out of the straw hut and was walking up and down in the open near the hut. A man from that crowd drew near Me, and after making obeisance to Me, stood at a suitable place. 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 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 Buddha

After the Buddha had said these words, Pukkusa of the Mallas said to Him:

“Venerable Sir, whatever high esteem, I had for Ālāra 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 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 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 Buddha, saying: “Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā, out of compassion for me, accept this pair of fine ceremonial lengths of cloth.”

The Buddha said: “In that case, Pukkasa, present one to me and one to Ānanda.” And so Pukkusa presented one piece to the Buddha, and the other piece to Venerable Ānanda.

(In this connection, one might ask: “Did Venerable Ānanda accept Pukkasa's gift?” And the answer is, Yes. Then the inquirer might point out to the previous agreement by Ānanda not to receive offerings originally made to the Buddha, (agreement to receive only four kinds of gifts and to refuse four kinds of gifts) made by him when he became the personal attendant to the Buddha. The gift was accepted in this case as an exception on these three reasons:

- i) Ānanda had, by this time, fulfilled his task as the Buddha's personal attendant supremely well.
- ii) This fact of his receiving the gift would stop others who might otherwise say that Ānanda had not served the Buddha well. So the Buddha did not favour him with any gift after twenty-five years of personal service.
- iii) Ānanda understood that the Buddha let Pukkusa enjoy the benefit of making the gift to the Sangha, for giving to Ānanda amounted to giving to the Sangha. The Buddha also knew that Ānanda would not use the cloth himself but, instead, would present it to Him.)

Then the Buddha pointed out to Pukkusa, 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 rose from his seat and after making obeisance to the Buddha, departed respectfully.

Not long after Pukkusa was gone, Venerable Ānanda placed neatly the pair of fine golden-hued robes on the body of the Buddha. Once they were placed on the person of the Buddha, the pair of robes appeared to lose their splendour, as against the natural splendour of the Buddha's person. Venerable Ānanda was awestruck. He exclaimed what he saw. Thereupon the Buddha explained to him thus:

“Ānanda, what you say is true. Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, 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 (*Anupādisesa Nibbāna*).

“Ānanda, these are the two occasions on which the natural colour of the Tathāgata's person becomes exceedingly clear and His complexion exceedingly bright.

“Ānanda, 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 Buddha said: “Come, Ānanda, let us go to the Kakudhā river.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” said the Venerable Ānanda in assent.

Then the Buddha proceeded to the Kakudhā river accompanied by a large number of *bhikkhus*. He entered the river, bathed in it, and drank its water. Back again on the river bank, He went to the mango grove by the river. There, He said to Venerable Cunda (Venerable Ānanda was then at the river bank drying (wringing) the loin cloth in which the Buddha 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 Buddha 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 Venerable Ānanda returned to the Buddha, He made the following special remarks about the last meal:

“Ānanda, it may happen that someone may cause unhappiness to Cunda, the goldsmith's son, by saying: ‘Friend Cunda, the Bhagavā 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 Buddha, 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 Sujāta'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 Buddha 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 Sujāta's milk-rice, the Buddha 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 Buddha extinguished the re-arising 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 Buddha'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 Buddha and enabled Him to renounce the five aggregates without difficulty, thus leading to *khandha-parinibbāna*.

- (b) On the day of Enlightenment, the Buddha, after eating the milk-rice offered by Sujāta, had the strength to dwell in the attainment of concentration comprising 2.4 million crores of absorptions (*devasikavaḷaṇṇa-samāpatti*) which was to become His daily routine. After eating Cunda's food offering, the Buddha was (in spite of His severe dysentery) also 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 learnt that his food-offering was the Buddha's last meal, after which, He 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 Buddha in dwelling in The 2.4 million crores of Sustained Absorptions

As discussed in **Saṃyutta Tika**, Volume I (Sagāthā Vagga Saṃyutta Tika; Brahmā Saṃyutta, 2: Dutiya Vagga, 5. Parinibbāna Sutta, pp 251-252)

According to some teachers (*Keci vāda*):

The Buddha, as of daily routine, dwelled in the absorptions of Great Compassion numbering 12 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-sikavaḷaṇṇa 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 Buddha needs just two or three thought-moments. That being so, it is routine for the Buddha to dwell in: 5 types of fine-material absorptions, 4 types of non-material absorptions, *appamaññā-samāpatti*, *nirodha-samāpatti* and *arahatta-phala-*

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 (*Apāre vāda*):

It was customary for the Buddha 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* (Refer to Chapter 16 on 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 Buddha, 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 Nikāya**, 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 Buddha's Last Repose

Then the Buddha said to Venerable Ānanda: “Come, Ānanda, 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,” Ānanda assented, Then the Buddha, 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 Ānanda: “Ānanda, lay the couch with its head to the north between the twin sal trees. Ānanda, I am weary, and wish to lie down.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” assented Ānanda, and laid the couch with its head to the north between the twin sal trees, And the Buddha 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 Pāvā to Kusināgara, a very large body of *bhikkhu*-disciples, almost beyond count, had gathered around the Buddha because from the time the news of His imminent passing away had gone out of the small village of Veḷuva, all *bhikkhus* living at various places, who had come to the Buddha, did not disperse.

The Twin Sal Trees

In the Sal grove of the Malla princes where the couch for the Buddha 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 Buddha commanded Ānanda to be laid for him, and which was duly complied with.

The Buddha's Exhaustion

“Ānanda, I am weary, and wish to lie down.” The significance of these words may be considered in the light of the Buddha's natural physical might, which was equal to the strength of a thousand crore of ordinary elephants, 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 the Buddha had eaten Cunda's food. The distance from Pāvā to Kusināgara was a mere three *gāvuta* (three quarters of a *yojana*, a *yojana* variously taken as seven and half to twelve and half miles), yet the Buddha had to make twenty-five pauses on His journey. At the end of the last leg of His journey, 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 Buddha's Choice of Kusināgara as His last repose

Here one might be tempted to ask: “Why did the Buddha 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 Buddha in choosing this insignificant town of Kusināgara as the place of His last repose. He saw the following three eventualities and considered:

- i) “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 which took two sessions of recitals at the Council and which revealed that even as of a human being as, when the Buddha, 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.”

These were the three reasons why the Buddha took so much trouble to get to Kusināgara.

The Sal Trees and Celestial Beings honoured The Buddha

As the Buddha lay there on the couch, the twin Sal trees burst forth into full bloom, though it was not the flowering season, and in adoration of the Buddha, rained blossoms, continuously scattering them over His body.

Also, celestial *mandāvara* flowers fell from the sky, continuously scattering themselves over the body of the Buddha, signifying the adoration of the Buddha by the celestial beings.

Also, celestial sandalwood powder fell from the sky, continuously scattering themselves over the body of the Buddha, signifying the adoration of the Buddha by the celestial beings.

And, celestial music wafted in the sky, celestial melodies resounded in the air above, in adoration of the Buddha.

The Best Way of honouring The Buddha

Then the Buddha said to the Venerable Ānanda:

“Ānanda, 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 Tathāgata, 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, celestial music wafts in the sky, celestial melodies resound in the air above, in adoration of the Tathāgata.

“Ānanda, all these forms of adoration cannot be called sufficient acts of honour, esteem, reverence, adoration or worship of the Tathāgata. Ānanda, the *bhikkhu* or *bhikkhuni*, or the male 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, Ānanda, 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.

“Mandārava flowers bloom in the Nandā Lake (in the Tāvātimsa Deva realm).” The leaf of the plant is about the size of an umbrella, and the pollen collects in each flower is as much as a basketful. Not only *mandārava* 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 Cakkavāḷa, Tāvātimsa Deva realm and Brahmā 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 *nāgas*, *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 worlds, celestial as well as terrestrial, were joined in sprinkling scented dust of all descriptions continuously onto the reclining Buddha at Kusināgara.

“*Celestial music*” also represents a universal symphony played by musicians of all the sentient worlds extending to ten-thousand world-systems, including devas, *nāgas*, *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 Buddha had descended from the Tāvātimsa Deva realm. And when the news of the Buddha's descent from the Tāvātimsa realm was received also, they thought of offering the garland on the day the Buddha 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 Buddha lying on His deathbed reached the garland-makers and that at the third watch of that very night the Buddha would be passing away, the Varuṇa devas and Vāraṇa 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 Tāvātimsa 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 Varuṇa devas and the Vāraṇa devas came before the Buddha 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 Buddha, 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 these great devas so that celestial music resounded in the air above.)

Even while the Buddha was lying there, on the couch, He saw the great gathering of devas and Brahmās which filled the entire world-system, from the earth's surface to the brim of this world-system and from its brim to the Brahmā-world. On seeing the zeal with which they were honouring the Buddha, the Buddha said the above words to the Venerable Ānanda. After mentioning the marvellous modes of worshipping the Buddha by the celestial beings (of the ten thousand world-systems), the Buddha pointed out that the material offerings (*āmiṣa-pūjā*) were not sufficient in themselves as the best way of doing honour to the Buddha, but that only following and practising the Doctrine is the best honour done to the Buddha. In saying these words, the Buddha 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 Buddha Dīpaṅkarā, lying face downward 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 *asaṅkhyeyyas* and a hundred-thousand *kappas*, were not for the purpose of being honoured by the celestial world with 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 sesame flower, unless the offering is made with a consciousness of the Buddha's attributes, then 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 Buddha had in mind the true interest of the vast multitudes, and also

the perpetuation of the Teaching. Here is the explanation: The Doctrine lays down the three-fold training of *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*. If offering of material things were allowed too freely, then, in future, the disciples of the Buddha 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 Buddha. Indeed it is so. The Buddha desires for honouring Him by practising the Dhamma (*dhamma-pūjā*). For, by right practice alone can the Teaching be perpetuated. That was the reason why the Buddha 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*), begins 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 *maggā-ñāṇa*.

A *bhikkhu*, who indulges in the six kinds of disrespect (*agārava*), disobeys the rules of *bhikkhu* conduct, and lives an improper life using the four requisites, which are acquired unlawfully and 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, etc.), which is 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 the four days prior to them, who is in the habit of giving charity, offerings of fragrant flowers to the Triple Gem, looking after his parents and ministers to the needs of men of virtue, is called a lay disciple who practises in accordance with the Dhamma. These observations apply equally to female lay disciples.

Honouring the Buddha by honouring the Dhamma (*Dhammānu dhamma paṭipatta*) is also called *nirāmisā-pūjā*. This kind of doing honour to the Buddha alone contributes to the perpetuation of the Teaching. So long as the four categories of the Buddha's disciples, i.e. *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.)

Venerable Upavāṇa

At that time, the Venerable Upavāṇa was standing in front of the Buddha, fanning Him. Then the Buddha said to 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 Venerable Ānanda thus: "This Venerable Upavāṇa had for a long time (during the first twenty years of the Bhagava's Buddhahood) been a close attendant to 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 he asked the Buddha:

“Venerable Sir, 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 Buddha, wishing to clear away from Ānanda's mind any idea of Venerable Upavāṇa being at fault and to make it clear that the Venerable Upavāṇa was not at fault, explained to him thus:

- (a) “Ānanda, (with the exception of the Asaññasatta Brahmās and Brahmās of the Non-Material Sphere) most of the devas and Brahmās 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.
- (b) “Ānanda, 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.”

(A note of explanation:-

- (a) Within the space close to the Buddha, devas and Brahmās 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 Brahmās, there were groups of devas and Brahmās 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 Brahmās. Even though tightly spaced, there was no deva or Brahmā 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 (*paṇṣakū*), which added to his bulk. So he was making an obstruction by standing himself in front of the Buddha, a genuine cause of complaint on the part of the devas and Brahmās. It might be asked: “Did not the devas and Brahmās have power to see through the *bhikkhu*?” The answer is: “No, they did not have.” For although devas and Brahmās can see through a worldlying, they cannot see through an *arahat*. The Venerable Upavāṇa was not only an *arahat* 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 Buddha Kassapa.)

The Guardian Spirit of the Shrine

Ninety-one aeons or *kappas* before the advent of Buddha Gotama, Buddha Vipassī 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. The shrine was of a *yojana* 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 sesame oil.

In the construction of the shrine, the devas belonging to terrestrial abodes raised a further *yojana* above the shrine built by human beings, which was further raised by another *yojana* by the devas of celestial abodes. Above that height, the Unhavalāhaka devas, the Abbhavalāhaka devas, the devas of Catumahārāja realm and the devas of Tāvātimsa realm added a *yojana* respectively to the structure so that altogether the shrine, in commemoration of Buddha Vipassī, 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 went 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, in turns, in the *deva-loka* and the human world, Buddha Kassapa had appeared in the world. When Buddha Kassapa 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 of one *yojana* 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 Buddha Gotama, he was reborn in a noble family. He 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 Buddha Kassapa.

After the Buddha had thus explained to the Venerable Ānanda that Venerable Upavāṇa was told to move aside in the crowd not because he was at fault but only to satisfy the devas, the Venerable Ānanda said to the Buddha: "Venerable Sir, what is the Bhagava's assessment of the state of mind that is present in the devas and Brahmās?" (By this, the Venerable Ānanda was enquiring how far the devas and Brahmās were able to bear the grief at the impending Buddha's decease.) The Buddha told Ānanda that the devas and Brahmās were in a state of despondency thus:

"Ānanda, 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!'"

"Ānanda, 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 Brahmā named Hatthaka went to the Buddha and as he tried to stand there, his body seeped into the earth. The Buddha had to remind him to transform his body into a gross kind of corporeality so as 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 Ānanda said to the Buddha: “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 Buddha, *bhikkhus* went to see the Buddha twice a year, before the rains-retreat period began and at the end of the rains-retreat period. They went to the Buddha before going into rains-retreat to learn the meditation method, and at the end of the rains-retreat period to report to the Buddha their attainments such as *magga-phala*. In Sri Laṅkā also, as in the days of the Buddha, *bhikkhus* used to assemble twice each year, before and after the rains-retreat period. *Bhikkhus*, on the shore on the Mahāgāma side, assembled at the Tissa monastery, which was donated by King Kākavaṇṇatissa while those on yonder shore assembled at Lohapāsāda Pinnacled Hall. Of those two groups, *bhikkhus* on the yonder 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, by *bhikkhus* on the shore on the Mahāgāma side, at the Tissa monastery.

Here the Venerable Ānanda was referring to these biannual functions that were customary during the Buddha's times.

Venerable Ānanda was careful in the observance of religious and social duties towards fellow-*bhikkhus*. Whenever he saw a *bhikkhu*-elder arrived, he would rise 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, finding a suitable lodging place for the visitor, he would clean it for occupation. Whenever he saw a *bhikkhu* of senior standing arrived also, he would welcome him, asked about his needs and render every possible help to him. This was because Ānanda 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 Buddha knew how Ānanda was feeling: “Ānanda 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 him:

“Ānanda, 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) Ānanda, the Lumbinī Sai 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) Ānanda, 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) Ānanda, 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) Ānanda, 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 traces of the five aggregates,’ and this reflection will inspire in him an emotional religious awakening; hence it is a place worthy of pilgrimage.

“Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, there will come to these four places *bhikkhus*, *bhikkhunis*, male 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.’ Ānanda, 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 Ānanda put a series of questions to which the Buddha answered in detail.

Ānanda: “Venerable Sir, how should we conduct ourselves with regard to women?”

Buddha: “Not seeing them, Ānanda.”

(Hence the best way, the Buddha 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 Buddha says it is best for a *bhikkhu* not to see a woman.)

Ānanda: “Venerable Sir, if we should (unavoidably) see them, what should we do?”

Buddha: “Do not speak to them, Ānanda.”

(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 Buddha 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 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 spoilt and it leads him to the four miserable states. That is why the Buddha says, “Do not speak to them.”)

Ānanda: “Venerable Sir, if we have occasion to speak to them what should we do?”

Buddha: “Ānanda, 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. Refer to **Salāyatana Vagga Saṃyutta**, 3. Gahapati Vagga; 4. Bhāradvāja Sutta)

Ānanda: “Venerable Sir, after the Bhagavā has passed away, how should we perform, as regards to the remains of the Tathāgata?”

Buddha: “Ānanda, do not trouble yourself about doing honour to the remains of the Tathāgata. I exhort you, Ānanda, devote yourselves to the Noble Practice. Strive in all earnest, without negligence, directing your mind towards Nibbāna. Ānanda, 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.”

Ānanda: “Venerable Sir, in what manner should those wise nobles, wise brahmins and wise householders perform regarding the remains of the Tathāgata?” (by this Ānanda 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 Buddha in the matter).

Buddha: “Ānanda, it should be performed as in the case of treating the remains of a Universal Monarch.”

Ānanda: “Venerable Sir, what is the procedure in the case of treating the remains of a Universal Monarch?”

Buddha: “Ānanda, (the procedure is this:) the body of a Universal Monarch, (after his decease) is wrapped up in new cloth, which is 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 cotton-wool 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 build a shrine in memory of the Universal Monarch at the junction of four highways. Ānanda, this is the procedure in performing in the case of the remains of a Universal Monarch.”

Stupa In Honour of The Buddha

“Ānanda, 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

“Ānanda, there are four types or classes of persons who are worthy of honouring by a

stupa in their memory. They are:

- i) A Tathāgata, the Homage-worthy, and Perfectly Self-Enlightened,
- ii) A Paccekabuddha;
- iii) An *Ariya* disciple of a Tathāgata;
- iv) A Universal Monarch.

“Ānanda, on account of what special benefit is a Tathāgata, the Homage-worthy, Perfectly Self-Enlightened, worthy of a stupa? Ānanda, a stupa, in honour of a Tathāgata, arouses in the pilgrims, who visit it, a keen sense of devotion, in the reverential thought: ‘This stupa is a shrine in memory of the Homage-Worthy, Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddha.’ Having reverentially recalled the memory of the Tathāgata, after the death and dissolution of their bodies, these pilgrims will be bound for fortunate destinations. They will be reborn in the deva realm. Ānanda, it is on account of this special benefit that a Tathāgata, Homage-worthy, Perfectly Self-Enlightened, is worthy of a stupa.

“Ānanda, on account of what special benefit is a Paccekabuddha worthy of a stupa? Ānanda, a stupa in honour of a Paccekabuddha arouses in the pilgrims, who visit it, a keen sense of devotion, in the reverential thought: ‘This stupa is a shrine in memory of a Paccekabuddha who discovered the four Ariya Truths by Himself (without the guidance of any Teacher).’ Having reverentially recalled the memory of the Paccekabuddha, after the death and dissolution of their bodies, these pilgrims will be bound for fortunate destinations, they will be reborn in the deva realm. Ānanda, it is on account of this special benefit that a Paccekabuddha is worthy of a stupa.”

“Ānanda, on account of what special benefit is an *ariya* disciple worthy of a stupa? Ānanda, a stupa in honour of an *ariya* disciple arouses in the pilgrims, who visit it, a keen sense of devotion, in the reverential thought: ‘This stupa is a shrine in memory of an *ariya* disciple of the Homage-worthy, Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddha.’ Having reverentially recalled the memory of the *ariya* disciple, after the death and dissolution of their bodies, these pilgrims will be bound for fortunate destinations; they will be reborn in the deva realm. Ānanda it is on account of this special benefit that an *ariya* disciple is worthy of a stupa.”

“Ānanda on account of what special benefit is a Universal Monarch worthy of a stupa? Ānanda, a stupa in honour of a Universal Monarch arouses in the pilgrims, who visit it, a keen sense of devotion, in the reverential thought: ‘This stupa is a shrine in memory of a Universal Monarch who lived (and ruled) by righteousness.’ Having reverentially recalled the memory of the Universal Monarch, after the death and dissolution of their bodies, these pilgrims will be bound for fortunate destinations; they will be reborn in the deva-world. Ānanda, it is on account of this special benefit that a Universal Monarch is worthy of a stupa.”

“Ānanda, these are the four types or classes of persons who are worthy of a stupa.”

These were the questions by the Venerable Ānanda and the detailed answers by the Buddha.

(In this connection, it might be asked: “Why is a Universal Monarch who lives and dies a lay person is honoured by a stupa whereas a *bhikkhu*, though yet a worldling, who is possessed of virtue, is not?”)

The answer is that the Buddha did not allow a stupa be built in honour of a virtuous *bhikkhu* who is still a worldling because that would be too common practice. For, if virtuous *bhikkhus* were declared by the Buddha to be honoured by a stupa, even in Sri Lankā alone, a great many stupas could be built so that these shrines would be very common. 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 honoured by a stupa, he is entitled to funeral rites on the same scales as the honour that is accorded to an *arahat* at his Parinibbāna.)

THE GREAT CHRONICLE OF BUDDHAS
The Noble Qualities of Venerable Ānanda

After the Buddha had given detailed answers to Venerable Ānanda's queries, Ānanda 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 Buddha unpleasant if he were to cry near the Buddha, 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 Buddha asked the *bhikkhus*: “*Bhikkhus*, where is Ānanda?”

“Venerable Sir,” the *bhikkhus* replied, “Venerable Ānanda has gone into the pavilion 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 Buddha said to a *bhikkhu*: “Go, *bhikkhu*, say to Ānanda in My words: ‘Friend Ānanda, the Teacher calls you.’ ”

Responding to that *bhikkhu's* message, the Venerable Ānanda went to the Buddha and (making obeisance to Him,) sat in a suitable place. To Ānanda sitting there, the Buddha said:

“Enough Ānanda, do not grieve, nor weep. Have I not previously told you that it is 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? Ānanda 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, Ānanda, you have attended upon the Tathāgata faithfully, whether in His presence or not, with infinite kindness in deed, with the welfare and happiness of the Tathāgata at heart; faithfully whether in His presence or not, with infinite kindness in words, with the welfare and happiness of the Tathāgata at heart, faithfully whether in His presence or not, with infinite kindness in thought, with the welfare and benefit of the Tathāgata at heart. Ānanda, you have earned much merit. Apply yourself to the task of Insight meditation, and you will soon attain arahatship.”

Thus said the Buddha to console Venerable Ānanda.

(Ānanda's personal service to the Buddha with infinite kindness in deed included all bodily activities, such as preparing the water and toothbrushes for the Buddha's morning ablutions. His infinite kindness in words included all courteous, respectful communication with the Buddha 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 Buddha's admonition. Infinite kindness in thought means after rising early and had his personal cleanliness attended, Ānanda would sit in a secluded corner and wish the Buddha 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 was folded somewhere, or as if a strong man were to smoothen the sky that was 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 the stem of the Jambu Tree

(Rose Apple Tree) which is a hundred *yojanas* high and a hundred *yojanas* wide, in order to incite wonder in the hearts of his audience. Regarding the meritorious qualities of Venerable Ānanda, the Buddha 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 Ānanda.

“*Bhikkhus*, the attendant *bhikkhus* of the Homage-worthy, Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddhas of the future will be as accomplished and devoted as My attendant Ānanda.

“*Bhikkhus*, Ānanda 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 male lay disciples to approach and see the Tathāgata, or this is the proper time for female lay 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 Buddha 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 Ānanda

“*Bhikkhus*, Ānanda has four marvellous and astounding qualities, they are:

- (i) If, *bhikkhus*, a company of *bhikkhus* should visit Ānanda, they are gladdened on seeing him. If Ānanda should give them a discourse on the Doctrine, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of his discourse, Ānanda remains silent, the company of *bhikkhus* is still unsatiated. (This is one marvellous quality)
- (ii) If, *bhikkhus*, a company of *bhikkhunis* should visit Ānanda, they are gladdened on seeing him. If Ānanda, should give them a discourse on the Doctrine, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of his discourse, Ānanda remains silent, the company of *bhikkhunis* is still unsatiated. (This is another marvellous quality)
- (iii) If, *bhikkhus*, a company of male lay disciples should visit Ānanda, they are gladdened on seeing him. If Ānanda should give them a discourse on the Doctrine, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of the discourse, Ānanda remains silent, the company of male lay disciples is still unsatiated. (This is another marvellous quality)
- (iv) If, *bhikkhus*, a company of female lay disciples should visit Ānanda, they are gladdened on seeing him. If Ānanda should give them a discourse on the Doctrine, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of his discourse, Ānanda remains silent, the company of female lay disciples is still unsatiated. (This is another marvellous quality.)

“*Bhikkhus*, these are the four marvellous and astounding qualities in Ānanda.”

(All the four categories of disciples who visited the Buddha also visited the Venerable Ānanda. Many visited him because he 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 Ānanda were found to be true. Ānanda would give a discourse fitting to each category of disciples. 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 male lay 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 *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas*?” These words, that *bhikkhus* are obliged to say to those who visited them, are the usual words that the Venerable Ānanda used when male lay disciples visited him. With female lay 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 visit 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.... (repeat p: below)
- iii) If, *bhikkhus*, a company of rich householders... (repeat p: below)
- iv) If, *bhikkhus*, a company of recluses (*p:*) should visit 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 Monarch.”

“*Bhikkhus*, in the same way, Ānanda has four marvellous and astounding qualities. They are:

- i) If, *bhikkhus*, a company of *bhikkhus* should come to see Ānanda, they are gladdened on seeing him. If Ānanda should give them a discourse, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of the discourse, Ānanda remains silent, the company of *bhikkhus* is still unsatiated. (This is one marvellous quality.)
- ii) If, *bhikkhus*, a company of *bhikkhunis*... (repeat p: below)
- iii) If, *bhikkhus*, a company of male lay disciples... (repeat p: below)
- iv) If, *bhikkhus*, a company of female lay disciples (*p:*) should come to see Ānanda, they are gladdened by seeing him. If Ānanda should give them a discourse, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of the discourse, Ānanda remains silent, the company of female lay disciples is still unsatiated. (This is another marvellous quality.)

“*Bhikkhus*, these are the four marvellous and astounding qualities of Ānanda.”

(The Buddha, in these words, compares Ānanda to a Universal Monarch.

The ruling class, who visits the Universal Monarch includes both crowned kings as well as uncrowned kings. They visited him because they have heard the good reputation of the Universal Monarch, such as: “The Universal Monarch is attractive and dignified in appearance, he roams his realms by air to administer peace and justice, and 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 visits 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 visits 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 visit him, he would ask: "How is it, recluses, are you being offered your requisites without stint? Are you arduous in your religious undertakings?"

The Buddha discoursed on The Mahāsudassana Sutta

After the Buddha had extolled the virtues of Venerable Ānanda, Ānanda said to the Buddha: "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, Sāvattī, Śāketa, Kosambī and Bārāṇasī. 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, Ānanda. Do not say: 'This insignificant small town', Ānanda."

"Ānanda, as it happened in the long, long past, there was a king named 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 Ānanda, this Kusināgara town was then King Sudassana's capital city named Kusāvātī. From east to west, it was twelve *yojanas* long, and from north to south, it was seven *yojanas* broad.

"Ānanda, the capital city of Kusāvātī was prosperous and flourishing, populous and thronging with all sons of people, and well provisioned. Just as, Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, the capital city of Kusāvātī was prosperous and flourishing, populous and thronging with all sorts of people and well-provisioned.

"The capital city of Kusāvātī, Ānanda, was never silent by day nor 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, drink, and chew.' "

(The ten sounds signify the peace and prosperity of Kuāvātī. 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 Kusāvātī such unpleasant sounds were never heard. Only pleasant welcome sounds of invitation to feasts and festivals were heard there.)

The Buddha discoursed on Kusāvātī, the royal city, by beginning with, "Ānanda, the royal city of Kusāvātī was surrounded by seven rings of fortifications, etc.", which, lasted for two recitals at the Council (Refer to **Dīgha Nikāya Mahāvagga**). Having concluded this long discourse on the grandeur of Kusāvātī, the Buddha said to Venerable Ānanda:

"Go you, Ānanda, 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 Ānanda, 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 Buddha went, there were always some devas who were devoted to

Him and lay disciples, heralding the glad tidings that resounded in the neighbourhood. On that particular evening, the Malla princes were engaged in a meeting so that they could not go and welcome the Buddha. The Buddha sent Ānanda at that late hour because there was no monastery built for Him 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 Buddha at His last moments.)

The Malla Princes pay Their Last Respects to The Buddha

When the Venerable Ānanda entered the city of Kusināra, the Malla princes were holding a meeting at the Council Hall. The Venerable Ānanda went up to them and announced, as detailed by the Buddha:

“O Vāseṭṭhas, tonight, in the third watch of the night, the Parinibbāna of the Tathāgata will take place. Come, Vāseṭṭhas, 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 Ānanda, 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 Ānanda. Then it occurred to Venerable Ānanda 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, by 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, he grouped the Mallas of Kusināra in families and caused them family-wise, to pay homage to the Buddha, announcing: “Venerable Sir, the Malla prince named such and such, with children, wife, ministers, and retinue, pays homage at the feet of the Bhagavā,” thus finishing the whole event 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 Samāṇa Gotama will take place.” Then it occurred to Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, thus: “I have already heard wandering ascetics, 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 Samāṇa Gotama will take place. A certain problem, an uncertainty, has arisen in my mind, and I am fully confident that the Samāṇa Gotama will be able to teach the Doctrine to me so that this uncertainty is cleared.”

Subhadda’s Previous Existence

(Before we discuss the previous existence of Subhadda, the wondering ascetic,) it is useful to know that there are three Subhaddas connected with the life story of Buddha Gotama. 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 Buddha 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 was enlightened in the Teaching of Buddha Gotama.

The reason for Subhadda's idea to meet the Buddha at the eleventh hour may be due to his past merit which 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 aside 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 by 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 sesame, 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 '*bundled-heap 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 Buddha Gotama. When the Buddha 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 **Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta**. Thus Koṇḍañña, who was the first human disciple to realize the Dhamma, was called Añāsi Koṇḍañña — 'Koṇḍañña 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. (Refer to Commentary on **Dīgha 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 Ānanda and said:

"O Venerable Ānanda, 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 Samaṇa 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 Ānanda, pray let me have the chance of seeing the Samaṇa Gotama!"

Thereupon, the Venerable Ānanda 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."

On that reply, Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, bethought himself: "Venerable Ānanda is withholding his assent. But one must be patient to get what one wants." And so he said for the second time: "O Ānanda, ..." the Venerable Ānanda refused again. For the third time Subhadda made his appeal as before. And for the third time Venerable Ānanda refused again.

The Buddha overheard the conversation between Subhadda and Ānanda. Since He had made this exhausting journey to Kusināra for the sake of Subhadda, He called to Venerable Ānanda: "Ānanda, it is not fitting to stop him. Do not prevent Subhadda from seeing Me. Ānanda, 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 Ānanda said: "Go, friend Subhadda, the Bhagavā has given you permission."

Then Subhadda approached the Buddha and offered courteous greetings to Him. After exchanging memorable words of felicitation with Him, Subhadda sat in a suitable place. Then he addressed the Buddha thus:

"O Revered Gotama, there are *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas* 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, such as, (i) Pūraṇa Kassapa, (ii) Makkhali Gosāla, (iii) Ajita Kesakambala, (iv) Pakudha Kaccāyana, (v) Sañcaya, son of Belaṭṭha, and (vi) Migaṇṭha, son of Nātaputta. 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 asked: "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 Buddha's intention in going 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 Buddha 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 Buddha gave this discourse:

“Subhadda, in whatever righteous Teaching, the Ariya Path of Eight Constituents is not found, therein there is not found a *samaṇa* of the first stage, a *sotāpanna-bhikkhu*, nor a *samaṇa* of the second stage, a *sakadāgāmi-bhikkhu* nor a *samaṇa* of the third stage, *anāgāmi*, nor a *samaṇa* of the fourth stage, an *arahat*.

“Subhadda, in whatever righteous Teaching the Ariya Path of Eight Constituents is found, therein there is found a *samaṇa* of the first stage (a *sotāpanna*), a *samaṇa* of the second stage (a *sakadāgāmi*), a *samaṇa* of the third stage (an *anāgāmin*), and a *samaṇa* of the fourth stage (an *arahat*).

“Subhadda, in this righteous Teaching of Mine, there is the Ariya Path of Eight Constituents. In this Teaching alone is found *samaṇa* of the first stage (a *sotāpanna*), a *samaṇa* of the second stage (a *sakadāgāmin*), a *samaṇa* of the third stage (an *anāgāmin*), and 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 (*sotāpanna*); 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 became A Bhikkhu and attained Arahatsip

When this was said by the Buddha, 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 Buddha 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).”

Subhadda replied:

“Venerable Sir, 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 Buddha said to the Venerable Ānanda: "Well, then, Ānanda, let Subhadda be initiated into the Order."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," Ānanda replied.

Then Subhadda said to Venerable Ānanda: "Friend Ānanda, 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 Ānanda 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 fifth. 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 Subhadda was brought before the Buddha.

Then the Buddha caused Sāmaṇera Subhadda to be admitted into the Order as a full-fledged *bhikkhu* and then taught him the appropriate method of meditation. 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, he became an *arahat* during that very night, as he was endowed with the four Discriminations. Then he went to the Buddha 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 Buddha.

(Herein, "*the last to become an arahat in the presence of the Buddha*" may mean any one of the following: (i) one who was initiated into the Order during the time of the Buddha, who was admitted into the Order as a *bhikkhu* after the Buddha's decease and who learnt Insight meditation, and attained *arahatta-phala*; (ii) One who was initiated and admitted into the Order as a *bhikkhu* during the time of the Buddha who learnt Insight-meditation after the Buddha's decease and attained *arahatta-phala*; (iii) One who was initiated and admitted into the Order as a *bhikkhus* who learnt Insight-meditation, and attained *arahatta-phala* after the Buddha's decease. The Venerable Subhadda was one who was initiated and admitted into the Order, who learnt Insight-meditation and attained *arahatta-phala* during the time of the Buddha. Thus he was the chief of those who became an *arahat* in the presence of the Buddha.)

The Story of Subhadda, The Wandering Ascetic, according to The Commentary on The Dhammapada

What is related above about Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, is according to the Mahāvagga Pāli (**Dīghanikaya**) 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 Buddha 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 wandering ascetics but have not done so to the Sāmaṇa Gotama because He is young. Now, the Sāmaṇa 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 Buddha was staying and requested the Venerable Ānanda to gain an audience with the

Buddha. The Venerable Ānanda refused as related above. However, the Buddha said to Venerable Ānanda: “Ānanda, do not prevent him. Let him put his question to Me.” Subhadda was accordingly admitted into the Buddha’s private quarters which was screened off from outside. He sat at the foot of the Buddha’s couch and addressed Him 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 Buddha Gotama?
- iii) Is it possible for any conditioned thing to remain permanent?

The Buddha answered the above three questions in the negative in the following stanzas:

(1) *Ākāseva padañ natthi samaṇo natthi bāhire
papañcābhiratā pajā nippapañcā Tathāgatā*

(2) *Ākāseva padañ natthi samaṇo natthi bāhire
saṅkhāra sassatā natthi natthi buddhānamiñjitarm*

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 devas, humans or Brahmās, take delight in the three factors that tend to prolong *saṃsāra*, 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 Buddha’s answer to it, he further asked the three questions as mentioned in the **Dhammapada**. After hearing the answers thereto, he became an *anāgāmin*. Then he became a Buddha's disciple, was admitted into the Order of Bhikkhus, devoted himself to the Threefold 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 Buddha gave admonition, His last one, which He addressed to Ānanda, but was directed towards all the large gathering of *bhikkhus*.

- a) “Ānanda, 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, Ānanda, dependency of such nature is uncalled for. 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.”
- b) “Whereas Ānanda, *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* 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).”

- c) “Ānanda, after I am gone, the Sangha may, if it wishes so, abolish lesser and minor Rules of the Discipline.”
- d) “Ānanda, after I am gone, let the Brahmā penalty be imposed upon Bhikkhu Channa.”

“But, Venerable Sir, what is the Brahmā penalty?”

“Ānanda, let Channa say what he likes. No *bhikkhu* should make any remarks on what he says, nor should they admonish him, nor check him.”

- (1) With regard to this first point: the Buddha means to say: “Ānanda, while I am living, I have taught you the Vinaya (in present day context are the five books, namely, Mahāvagga, Cūlavagga, Khandhaka, Parivāra and the Twin Set of Vibhaga, together with miscellaneous Commentaries) covering the seven classes of offences with their respective background cases, 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, under the Vinaya Piṭaka will, after I am gone, remain as your Teacher, discharge the function of the Teacher Himself

“Ānanda, 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 Endeavours, 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, under the Suttanta Piṭaka will, after I am gone, remain as your Teacher, discharging the function of the Teacher himself.

“Ānanda, 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 these *dharmas*, which I have taught 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 *dharmas*, 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 the Paṭṭhāna (in present context comprising twenty-four books or the Great Book). All these, under the Abhidhamma 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 (*vassa*) constituting the Dhamma and Doctrine (in present context are the three Piṭakas, five Nikāyas, nine divisions) numbering eighty-four thousand units. These eighty-four thousand units of *dhamma* factors are still with you. The Tathāgata 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 the Eighty-four Thousand Teachers, will guide you, supervise you on My behalf.” Thus the Buddha admonished and consoled the *bhikkhus*.

- (2) Under the next point marked (b) above, the Buddha instructed the rule of social conduct among *bhikkhus*.
- (3) Under the next point marked (c) above, the Buddha 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 He leave the matter in an equivocal state? The answer is: He saw the strength of conviction and the strength of wisdom in the Venerable Mahā Kassapa. The Buddha saw that even if He were to give an unequivocal directive on the matter now, the Sangha, in the council headed by the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, would not agree to abolish any rules, even the lesser and minor ones. (This is worth noting.)

After the Buddha had said these words to the Venerable Ānanda, 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, 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 Buddha said this, the *bhikkhus* remained silent. He asked a second time, but the *bhikkhus* remained silent. When asked for a third time, the *bhikkhus* also remained silent. Thereupon, He said to them:

“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 Him (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.

Venerable Ānanda said to the Buddha:

“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 Buddha said:

“Ānanda, 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.

“Ānanda, amongst these five hundred *bhikkhus*, even the least accomplished one is a *sotāpanna* (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 Ānanda in mind.)

Then the Buddha said to the *bhikkhus* as His last admonition:

*Handa dāmi, bhikkhave,
āmantayāmi vo,
Vayadhammā saṅkharā,
Appamādena sampādettha.*

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 Buddha’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 Buddha had uttered these words “*appamādena sampādettha*” (“strive diligently with mindfulness”), no more word was uttered. The whole Sal grove fell silent. The Buddha was then engaged in mental activity only, preparing Himself to realize utter cessation through passing away. His mind was now purely absorbed in meditation.

First, the Buddha entered into the first fine material *jhāna* (*rūpāvacara kṛiyā paṭhana jhāna*). Rising from the first *jhāna*, He entered into the second *jhāna*. Rising from the second *jhāna*, He entered into the third *jhāna*. Rising from the third *jhāna*, He entered into the fourth fine material *jhāna* (*rūpāvacara kṛiyā cattuttha jhāna*). Rising from the fourth *jhāna*, He entered and became absorbed in the non-material *jhāna* of the sphere of Infinity of Space (*arūpāvacara kṛiyā ākāśānācāyatana samāpatti*). Rising from the absorption of the sphere of Infinity of Space, He entered and became absorbed in the sphere of the Infinity of Consciousness (*viññānācāyatana samāpatti*). Rising from the absorption of the Sphere of Infinity of consciousness, He entered and became absorbed in the Sphere of Nothingness (*ākāṇṇācāyatana samāpatti*). Rising from the absorption of the Sphere of Nothingness, He entered and became absorbed in the Sphere of Neither-consciousness-nor-non-consciousness (*nevasaññā-nāsaññācāyatana 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 Buddha was absorbed in Cessation, there was no breathing. When Ānanda noticed the stoppage of breathing, he was alarmed and asked the Venerable Anuruddha: “Venerable Sir, is the Bhagavā dead?” Venerable Anuruddha explained to Ānanda: “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 and remaining absorbed in the first *jhāna* throughout the absorptions of non-material Sphere *jhāna* along with every step that the Buddha went through, entering and rising from each *jhāna*, up to the absorption of the Sphere of Neither-consciousness-nor-non-consciousness. Only when the Buddha became absorbed in Cessation, Anuruddha did not join Him at this stage. Therefore, he knew that the Buddha was remaining in the absorption of Cessation and he knew that during this kind of absorption death never takes place.)

Then the Buddha, rising from the absorption of Cessation, entered 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 and became absorbed in the Sphere of Nothingness. Rising from the Absorption of the Sphere of Nothingness, He entered and became absorbed in the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness. Rising from the absorption of the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness, He entered and became absorbed in the Sphere of Infinite Space. Rising from the absorption of the Sphere of Infinite Space, He entered into the fourth fine material *jhāna*. Rising from the fourth *jhāna*, He entered into the third *jhāna*. Rising from the third *jhāna*, He entered into the second *jhāna*. Rising from the second *jhāna*, He entered into the first *jhāna*.

(A few technical details:)

The Buddha 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 (<i>kasīṇa</i>)	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>mettā</i> , <i>karuṇā</i> and <i>muditā</i>	3
(f) Concept of the limit of Space	1
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 (<i>kaṣiṇa</i>)	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 <i>upekkhā</i> (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 Buddha remained in the myriads of absorptions numbering 2.4 million crores which was his daily routine. (Refer to Chapter 42: Contemplation of the Buddha). Like a traveller leaving home would bid all the family farewell with embraces and kisses, the Buddha dwelled in the bliss of the absorptions to the full before realizing Parinibbāna.

Then again, rising from the first *jhāna*, the Buddha entered into the second *jhāna*. Rising from the second *jhāna*, He entered into the third *jhāna*. Rising from the third *jhāna*, He entered into 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 Buddha realized Parinibbāna and made an end of *dukkha*.

Note: There are two kinds of *parinibbāna*, namely:

- Passing away after the end of dwelling in *jhāna* where the incumbent *arahat*, after entering into *jhāna* and rising from it, he reverts to life-continuum thought moment, during which he passes away.
- Passing away after the reviewing impulsion where the incumbent *arahat*, after entering into *jhāna* and rising from it, he contemplates on the *jhāna* 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 Buddha passed away after the second kind.

Chapter 41

UTTERINGS THAT AROUSE EMOTIONAL RELIGIOUS AWAKENING

When the Buddha passed away, there occurred simultaneously a great earthquake, so terrible as to cause the body hair to rise and gooseflesh to appear on the skin. Rumbles (of celestial big drums) reverberated in the sky.

When the Buddha passed away, at the moment of His passing away, Brahmā Sahampati uttered this stanza:

*Sabbe va nikkhi pissanti
Bhūtā loke samussayaṃ
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 devas, humans and Brahmās,
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 Buddha passed away, at the moment of His passing away, Sakka, King of Devas, uttered this stanza:-

*Anicca vata saṅkhārā
Uppādavaya dhammino
Upajjhivā nirujjhanti
Tesaṃ 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 Buddha passed away, at the moment of His passing away, the Venerable Anuruddhā uttered this stanza:-

*Nāhu, assāsapassāso
Thīta 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 cittena

Chapter 41

*Vedānaṃ ajjhavāsayaṃ
Pajjo tasseva Nibbānaṃ
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 Buddha passed away, at the moment of His passing away, the Venerable Ānanda uttered this stanza which aroused emotional religious Awakening:

*Tadāsi ya bhīṇsanakam
Tadāsi lomahāṃsanam
Sabhā kāra va rūpete
Sambuddhe parinibbate.*

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 Buddha 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 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 these words of the Venerable Anuruddha, the Venerable Ānanda asked:

"But Venerable Anuruddha, according to your observation, what is the state of mind that is present in the devas and Brahmās?"

"Friend Ānanda, 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 dishevelled 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 Ānanda, 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 dishevelled 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 Ānanda 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 common beings 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 Venerable Ānanda: "Go, friend Ānanda, enter Kusināra and tell the Malla princes: 'O Vasetṭhas, the Bhagavā has passed away. Do now what you deem fitting?'"

"Very well, Venerable Sir," Ānanda 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 honouring the Buddha 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 Ānanda went to the Council Hall and said to them: "O Vasetṭhas, the Bhagavā has passed away. Do now as you deem fitting."

On hearing the news from the Venerable Ānanda, 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 Buddha was, bringing 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 Buddha. Flowers and perfumes were placed at suitable locations, canopies of cloth were made, and pavilions 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 Buddha. "We shall perform the cremation tomorrow," they all agreed.

Then the second day was also passed in song and dance, by way of venerating, honouring, revering and paying homage to the remains of the Buddha, where flowers and perfumes were placed in suitable locations, canopies of cloth were made, and new pavilions set up with long cloth. In the same manner the third day, the fourth day, the fifth day and the sixth day were also 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 at the 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 Buddha, 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 with different intention from the devas.”

“What, Venerable Anuruddha, is the will of the devas?”

“Vasethas, your intention is this: ‘We shall cremate the remains of the Bhagavā at the 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 at the east of the town near the Makutaṇḍhana Shrine of the Malla princes, where we shall carry it first northwards by the northern road, hence via the North Gate into the town, then to the East Gate by the middle road, to the Makutaṇḍhana Shrine, and perform the ceremony with song and dance, flowers and perfumes, thereby venerating, honouring, 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 Mandāvara flowers everywhere, even including fence borders and rubbish heaps.

Then the devas and the Malla princes of Kusināra carried the remains of the Buddha 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 Buddha all along the route by both celestial and human dance and song, flowers and perfumes.

Mallikā, Widow of General Banjul, honoured The Remains of The Buddha

While the remains of the Buddha was thus being paid homage in the town, along the middle road, Mallikā, widow of General Banjul, on hearing the news, awaited in front of her house with her 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 Buddha with it (as her unique way of honouring the memory of the Buddha).

(The Mahālatā great gown was a rare kind of dress which only three outstanding persons owned, viz., 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 Buddha 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 Buddha. 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 Buddha’s body being 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 Tāvātimsa Deva realm and her wish fulfilled. (Ref: **Vimāna Vatthu**, Commentary on Paricchattakavagga, Mallikāvimāna Vatthu.)

Thereafter, the Malla princes carried the body of the Buddha 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 Ānanda: “Venerable Sir, in what manner should the remains of the Tathāgata be properly handled?”

“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, which is 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 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 visit 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, these 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 Buddha as instructed by the Venerable Ānanda. 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 Buddha 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. A funeral pyre with various kinds of scented wood was built, on which they placed the embalmed body.

The Story of Venerable Mahā Kassapa

When the funeral ceremony of the Buddha 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. Here is the explanation: All the companion *bhikkhus* had been brought up in an easy way. So when they travelled on foot under 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 rest and they would proceed in the cool of the evening and see the Buddha. 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 a celestial Mandāvāra flower above his head with a stick as the prop of an umbrella.

The Venerable Mahā Kassapa noticed the celestial Mandāvara 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 attains 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 Tāvātimsa 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 (verify his deduction and) asked the wandering ascetic. But if he were to mention about the Buddha 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 Buddha 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 lustre 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 Buddha 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 Buddha 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 Buddha in person while others had not. Those who had seen the Buddha wanted to see Him again (just because they had seen Him before); those who had never seen the Buddha also wanted to see Him because they had not seen Him before.

"If someone did not break the news of the demise of the Buddha before they arrived at Kusināra and on their arrival there, only to find the Bhagavā had 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 a remote 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 Samara Gotama passed away. As a matter of fact, I have brought this celestial Mandāvara flower from the place of His demise."

Thereupon, some of the *bhikkhus* who were with the Venerable Mahā Kassapa and 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* among the Venerable Mahā Kassapa's five hundred *bhikkhus* and 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. Only now we are all well liberated from that great Samaṇa. 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 Buddha

"Why did Bhikkhu Subhadda say those horrendous words?" it might be asked. The answer: "Because he bore a grudge against the Buddha."

Now to relate the story: Subhadda was a barber by profession before he became a *bhikkhu*. He had two sons, both *sāmaṇeras*, living together with him in the town of Ātuna, who were gifted with pleasant speech and well-known as skilful barbers. Once, when the Buddha went to Ātuna from Kusināra with a company of one thousand two hundred and fifty *bhikkhus*, he received the news of the happy event and, intending to offer a great offering of rice gruel, he said to his two *sāmaṇera* sons: "Sons, the Bhagavā is coming to Ātuna with one thousand two hundred and fifty *bhikkhus*. Go now, sons, carry your barber's tools with you, and collect, in vessels or in bags, from every house in the town whatever provisions, such as rice, oil, salt, and other eatables, being offered. Let us prepare rice gruel with those things and offer gruel to the Bhagavā."

Subhadda's two *sāmaṇera* sons obeyed the instruction of their father. Thanks to their melodious speech and skill of their profession, the towns people sponsored them in their trade. Even those who did not actually needed a hair cut or a hair-do submitted themselves to them. After the job was done they asked the *sāmaṇera* 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 generous in their gifts to the *sāmaṇeras*. 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 home. Instead, the donors had to help to carry them.

Then with the arrival in Ātuna of the Buddha 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 which 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 form and had to be first eaten and then drank. 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.

The Buddha, 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 Brahmā 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 Buddha and said: "May the Venerable Bhagavā accept my thick gruel as food offering."

The Buddha inquired after how the food had been made, what ingredients were used, etc. (as described in **Vinaya Mahāvagga**, 6-Bhesajakkhandha) and being told of the facts, He reprimanded Bhikkhu Subhadda on a number of counts. The Buddha then laid down fresh

Vinaya rules: (i) *Akappiyasamādāna*, taking upon oneself improper activity which is liable to *dukkata* offence; and (ii) *Khurabaṇḍa parihaṇa*, keeping up the outfit of a barber by one who had been a barber which is also liable to *dukkata* of 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 so, the Buddha 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 Samaṇa 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 Samaṇa has ruined me. He is inimical (antagonistic) to me.” Thus ruminated Bhikkhu Subhadda. He bore a grudge against the Buddha. But he knew that: ‘This Samaṇa 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 Buddha was alive.

Now that he heard the news that the Buddha was no more, he felt at ease and was greatly pleased. Hence his vulgar remarks.

Venerable Mahā Kassapa's Plan

On hearing the wild remarks uttered by Bhikkhu Subhadda, Venerable Mahā Kassapa was very concerned. 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 such a *bhikkhu* were to be left unchecked the number of his kind 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 was conceived by him, through the thoughts described as follows:

“If I were to expel, on the spot, this old *bhikkhu*, who is 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, therefore, hold my patience.

“For the teachings of the Bhagavā are at present like a big heap of flowers not strung 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 strung into garlands.

“The Bhagavā had come to Kusināra after travelling three *gāvutas* to enable me to pay my last respects to Him. 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 smiles of the moon’, He referred to me by way of example. In these three events, He showed His intention of leaving the custodianship of His Teaching to me. (Refer the three discourses concerning Admonition, in **Kassapa Sāriyutta**). So long as a true son of the Bhagavā as myself is living, let this wicked man not grown in his influence in this Teaching. Before depravity gets a footing, before depravity mars the true Dhamma, before new fangled 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 cremated The Body of The Buddha

Then four of the most senior Malla princes (of robust physique) washed their heads, donned themselves in new clothes, and intending to set fire to the funeral pyre of the Buddha, 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 means 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 these devas, the devas who had particular devotion to the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, when they were lay supporters of the *bhikkhu*, saw the critical situation that their esteemed *bhikkhu* was still on the way from Pāvā to Kusināra. So they made their wish that this funeral pyre be not ignitable until he 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. He replied to them: “The devas wish otherwise.”

“Venerable Sir, what is the wish of the devas?”

“Vasett̥has, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa is now on his way from Pāvā to Kusināra, in the company of five hundred *bhikkhus*. The devas have willed that, until he has paid homage 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 a *bhikkhu*, named Venerable Mahā Kassapa, was coming to pay homage at the feet of the Buddha, and that the funeral pyre of scented woods would not catch fire until he had done so, 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 there lives such a great *bhikkhu*, when 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 arrived and went to the funeral pyre of scented woods at the Maṇḍabandhana 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 Buddha and knew for certain which end of the body was the Buddha's feet. And standing at the end where the Buddha's feet lay, he entered upon the fourth *jhāna* which is the prelude or bases of special apperception (power) and, rising from that *jhāna*, he 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 his solemn wish was made, the Buddha'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 Buddha firmly in his 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 Buddha 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 Buddha.

After the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, the people and the five hundred *bhikkhus* had paid homage at the Buddha's feet as much as they liked, and at the instant the Venerable Mahā Kassapa let go the Buddha's feet, the lac-coloured feet of the Buddha 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 Buddha'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 Buddha'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 Buddha.

After Venerable Mahā Kassapa and his 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 Buddha 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 Buddha, 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 Buddha 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, He 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, of these: (i) The smallest are of the size of mustard seed, having the shape of the red jasmine buds, and a total collection of about six *alḥaka* measures¹. (ii) The medium size relics are of the size of a broken rice, look like pearls, and have a total collection of about five *alḥaka* measures. (iii) The big-size relics are of the size of a grain of green gram, having a golden colour and a total collection of about five *alḥaka* measures. (Ref: Commentary on the **Mahā Vagga**, **Dīgha Nikāya** and **Buddhavaṃsa Pālī**)

After the spontaneous combustion of the Buddha'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 ploughshares each, to scatter and cool the ashes. A particularly wonderful phenomenon here is that although flame were rising fiercely through the boughs, branches and foliage of the Sal trees around the funeral pyre, but not a leaf or a blossom was burnt. Insects living in the Sal trees were going about their own way, quite unharmed.

Last Rites regarding The Remains of The Buddha

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 durra 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.

Then they made a ceremonial roadway from the Council Hall to the Makuṭabandhara Shrine with half wall of matting and long cloth on either side of the route, along it they put up canopies which were studded with gold and silver spangles. Fragrant things, flowers and precious jewels were also 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, which contained the relics of the Buddha, on the royal elephant fitted with bejewelled ornaments. (The reader should visualize the ceremonial route which stretched between the Council Hall, which was in the town of Kusināra, and

1. *Alḥaka*: A measure of capacity for grains.

the funeral site at the Makuṭabandhana Shrine, which lay to the east of the town.)

The Malla princes, in a ceremonial procession with song and dance, led the royal elephant bearing the golden casket containing the relics of the Buddha 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, which was supported by sculpted figure of a lion (a platform decorated with seven kinds of jewels). There they placed the Buddha'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 was an army of archers in close formation. And outside the ring of archers, there was an army of lancers in close formation. Thus the security guard extended to a *vojana* 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 Buddha 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 these 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 Buddha 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 Buddha and they said among themselves: "Even such a great person as the Buddha has passed away. Nothing in the world can make Him alive again. Among worldlings, our King is unrivalled in the matter of devotion to the Buddha. 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. sesame oil, honey, butter and molasses). Then they said to King Ajātasattu:

"Your Majesty, we had had a bad dream. To avert 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 Buddha 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 devas and humans, 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. Then King Ajātasattu regained his 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 regained consciousness, 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 pots of cool clear water from his head.

When King Ajātasattu regained consciousness, again 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 Jāvaka, Mango grove. There, gazing at the place where the Buddha 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 Buddha, recalling the glory of the Buddha in sixty stanzas.

He then 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 Licchavī princes of Vesālī, (iii) the Sakyans of Kapilavatthu, (iv) King Buli (Kābuli) of Allakappa, (v) the Kōḷiyan 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 Buddha had passed away at Kusināra. He also sent an envoy to the Malla princes of Kusināra saying: “O Malla Princes of Kusināra, the Bhagavā was of the ruling class. I am also of the brahmin 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 *gāvutas*' (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 vain glorious 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.)

Doṇa The Brahmin distributes The Relics

When Doṇa, 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 Buddha. His verses are known as **Doṇagajjita**, Panegyric to the Buddha by Doṇa. (which describes 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 Doṇa got the ability to versify such a weighty panegyric should be noted here. On a certain occasion, when the Buddha was travelling from Ukkatṭha to Setabya, He left His footprint with the solemn wish: “May this footprint of Mine remain intact until Brahmin Doṇa has viewed it.” and rested He underneath a tree.

When Brahmin Doṇa 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 Buddha and met Him (resting under the tree). The Buddha gave a discourse to him and Brahmin Doṇa became devoted to the Buddha. 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 Doṇa, for in all the Southern Island Continent in those days almost all youths of good families had been pupils of Brahmin Doṇa. Very few of them would not know him as a teacher. When Brahmin Doṇa knew that the princes were now paying attention to him he said to them:

“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, 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 remind of the Bhagavā. O what a misfortune for us!”

When Brahmin Doṇa saw the princes in their grief and 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 *alḥaka* measures, for the whole amount of the relics measured sixteen *alḥakas*.

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 devas and humans? 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 and placed it reverentially in a golden basket (chalice) and took it to the Tāvātimsa Deva realm where he enshrined it in the Cūḷāmani 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.” So he said to the princes:

“O Sirs, let me keep the *Alḥaka*-measure basket used in dividing the relics. I shall erect a stupa in its honour.”

The princes agreed and so Brahmin Doṇa got the *Alḥaka*-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 Buddha had passed away, and they also, like King Ajātasattu, sent an envoy (to Kusināra to demand their share of the relics) and also marched to 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 from the site of cremation.

Building Relic-Stupas in Reverence

- (1) King Ajātasattu of Magadha built a stupa at Rājagaha where he enshrined the relics of the Buddha in reverence.
- (2) The Licchavī princes of Vesālī built a stupa at Vesālī where they enshrined the relics of the Buddha in reverence.
- (3) The Sakyan princes of Kapilavatthu built a stupa at Kapilavatthu where they enshrined the relics of the Buddha in reverence.

- (4) The Kābuli princes of Allakappa built a stupa at Allakappa where they enshrined the relics of the Buddha in reverence.
- (5) The Koliya princes of Rāma village built a stupa at Rāma village where they enshrined the relics of the Buddha in reverence.
- (6) The Brahmin of Veṭṭhadīpa built a stupa in his Veṭṭhadīpa country and enshrined the relics of the Buddha in reverence.
- (7) The Malla princes of Pāvā built a stupa at Pāvā and enshrined the relics of the Buddha in reverence.
- (8) The Malla princes of Kusināra built a stupa at Kusināra and enshrined the relics of the Bhagavā in reverence.
- (9) Brahmin Doṇa built a stupa and enshrined the *aḥaka*-measure basket in reverence.
- (10) The Mauriya princes of Pippalivana built a stupa and enshrined the charred pieces of firewood from the site of cremation in reverence.

Thus there were 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

Its 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 eight *usabhas* wide, which was levelled. He made elaborate arrangements similar to what the Malla princes did with their passage route for the relics between the Makutabandhana 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 in Rājagaha, King Ajātasattu ordered the people to assemble in a gathering of 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 for 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 Rājagaha.

Believers in wrong views raised an outcry that King Ajātasattu held funeral ceremonies on the passing away of Samāṇa 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 worldling 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 these 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 which had 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 recorded 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.

Venerable Mahā Kassapa and King Ajātasattu co-operated in Building A Secret Relic Depository

After the various king and brahmins had erected their respective 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 these stupas were liable to be pilfered by holders of wrong views: and,
- (2) that if a secret depository were to be built these 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 humans.

So, he 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, 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 homage 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 *nāgas* 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 Mahāvihāra Monastery in Sihladīpa (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 then 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 Buddha 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 Cetīya 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 Suddhodāna, father of Buddha Gotama, Queen Māyā Devī, mother of Buddha Gotama, the seven remarkable birth-mates that were born or appeared at the birth of Buddha Gotama to-be, etc. were placed there. 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.

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.”

Then 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 went 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 built 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 which was kept in the depository by the Venerable Mahā Kassapa and erected (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 Sāmaṇera Nigrodha. His remarkable devotion to the Buddha and His Teaching found expression 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*, *bhikkhunīs*, male lay disciples and female lay 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 continued to do so in Kapilavatthu. He failed again there and proceeded to Rāma village.

The *nāgas* 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 other places where the relics were known to have been enshrined. He went to the Allakappa province, Veṭṭhadīpa province, Pāvā, Kusināra, one by one, he pulled down the stupas at each place but finding no relics in any of them, 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 Sāmaṇera, 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: ‘Sāmaṇera, remember 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 psychic 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 these *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 Discovered The Sacred Relic Chamber

King Asoka was able to locate the spot. “This must be the place where King Ajātasattu deposited the relics,” he decided and ordered the excavations. Clearing 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 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 statues 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, Jambādīpa.”

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 attained 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 (*Āsāḷhā*) 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 (*Āsāḷhā*) in the 97th year of the Great Era.
- (4) He attained 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 (*Āsāḷhā*) 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.

Ledi Sayadaw's Stanzas venerating The Seven Memorable Days in The Life of The Buddha

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 Brahmās
Of the ten thousand universes,
Lord of the three worlds, object of my adoration,
Descended (from Tusitā Deva realm)
Into his royal mother's womb
On Thursday, the full moon of *Āsāḷhā*
An occasion promising the peace for devas and humans.
2. Ten months after conception,
On Friday, the full moon of *Vesākha*,
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 humans.

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 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 Monday, the full moon of *Āsāḷhā*.
4. After six years of seclusion in the forest,
Came the time for Perfect Enlightenment.
On Wednesday, the full moon of *Vesākha*,
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 Dhammacakka-pavattana Sutta,
To the Group of Five Ascetics
And an assemblage of devas and Brahmās
Coming from ten thousand universes.
That was Saturday, the full moon of *Āsāḷhā*
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 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 Sunday.
In the waxing moon of *Vesākha*
8. Reflecting on the seven memorable days

THE GREAT CHRONICLE OF BUDDHAS

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!

This is the conclusion of chapter on the Jewel of the Buddha.

Chapter 42

THE DHAMMA RATANĀ

The Dhamma Ratanā is made up of the nine supramundane *dhammas*, which are the four *maggas*, the four *phalas*, Nibbāna; and *priyatti*, all the Teachings of the Buddha forming the Tipiṭaka 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 devas, humans and Brahmās, only nine special attributes beginning with *Araham*, were specially taught by the Buddha 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 Araham Sammāsambuddho vijjācaraṇa sampanno sugato lokavidhū amuttaro purisa damma sārathi satthā deva manussānam 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 attained 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 devas, humans and Brahmās.
- (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 Nibbāna through the four *magga-ñāṇas*; 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) *Anuttaro purisa dammasārathi*, because He is incomparable in taming those who deserve to be tamed.
- (7) *Sattādeva manussānam*, because He is the Teacher of devas and humans, 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 (*vasa*), splendour of physical perfection (*sirī*), power of accomplishment (*kamma*) and diligence (*payatta*).

Explanation of The Above Attributes

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) *Arahām*.

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 Arahām. They are:

- (a) It means the Buddha who has destroyed by the supramundane path (*lokuttarā-magga*), all the defilements (*kilesas*), 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), attained 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 *Arahām* 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 *arahām* 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 proclivities 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 thoroughly. This absolute casting off of all defilements together with proclivities is the attribute of Arahām 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 *Arahām*. 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 for so long a chain of existences that even after becoming an *arahat*, the Venerable Pilindavaccha could not help himself with addressing 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) *Araham* 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 *araham* and the Buddha's mind-body continuum of five aggregates is the possessor of that attribute.
- (d) *Araham* 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, which are 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 (*puññābhi-saṅkhāra*) 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 (*apuññābhi-saṅkhāra*) 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 (*aneñjābhi-saṅkhāra*) 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 *saṃsāric* 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 (*āsava*s) 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 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 *araham*; the mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

Another explanation:

The beginningless round of existences is called the cycle of *samsāra*. 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 these spokes of the wheel of *samsāra*. 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 *araham* in this fourth interpretation. The mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

(c) *Araham* can also be interpreted as “he who is worthy of homage by devas, humans and Brahmās.” 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 humans do not make their offerings and pay homage to any other deity but the Buddha.

Let us take some important instances of this fact: Brahmā 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 devas, humans and Brahmās, that is, the attribute of *araham*. The mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute. (The reader is asked to relate these five interpretations to the meaning of *araham* 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. But they are not able to teach the Truth, which they discover, to other persons, they do not deserve the epithet *Sammāsambuddha*. They are only called *Samibuddha*. The *ariya* disciples know the Truth only with the assistance of some teachers 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 *Sammābuddha*. The Buddhas are *Samibuddha*, knower of the Truth and all knowable things through Self-Enlightenment. They are also *Sammābuddha* 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 this 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. Mullapannāsa**), 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** (*pubbenivāsa-ñāṇa*): By this knowledge, the Buddha can see the past existences of Himself and other beings.
- (ii) **Knowledge of the deva eye** (*dibbacakkhu-ñāṇa*): By this knowledge, the Buddha can see things at far away places, things concealed, and things too subtle for the ordinary human eyes to see.
- (iii) **Knowledge of the extinction of moral intoxicants** (*āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*): This is *arahatta-phala-ñāṇa* which extinguishes all the four moral intoxicants

The Eight Knowledges:

- (i) to (iii) as above and
- (iv) **Insight Knowledge** (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*): Understanding the impermanence, woefulness and unsubstantiality of all conditioned mental and physical phenomena.
- (v) **Psychic power of the mind** (*manomayiddhi-ñāṇa*): Power to assume various forms through mastery of mind accomplished by jhāna practice.
- (vi) **Multifarious kinds of psychic power** (*iddhividha-ñāṇa*): Power to conjure up great numbers of various forms, human or otherwise.
- (vii) **Knowledge of the Deva Ear** (*dibbasota-ñāṇa*): 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** (*cetopariya-ñāṇa*): 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 third 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 saṇvara*): Observance of *bhikkhu* precepts of restraint, *Pātimokkha Saṇvara Sīla*.
- (ii) **Control of the faculties** (*indriyesugutta dvāratā*): 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** (*bojane matanutā*): 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. On the hand, if the gift is big but 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 His stomach. More important, He never takes food without cultivating the *bhikkhu's* contemplation while eating.
- (iv) **Wakefulness** (*jāgariyā nuyoga*): Wakefulness does not mean not just remaining without sleep. The Buddha spends the whole day; during 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 twenty-four hours in a day, the Buddha sleeps just four hours, i.e. between 10p.m. and

2a.m., to recuperate His energy; the remaining twenty hours are spent in meditation and *bhikkhu* practice.

(v - xi): The Seven Properties of virtuous persons:

- (v) Confidence in the Triple Gem, *saddhā*.
- (vi) Mindfulness, *sati*.
- (vii) Sense of shame to do evil, *hiri*
- (viii) Sense of horror to do evil, *ottapa*.
- (ix) Wide learning (of the doctrine), *bāhusacca*.
- (x) Diligence, *vīriya*.
- (xi) 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 *Caraṇa*.

Knowledge (*vijjā*) and perfect practice of morality (*caraṇa*) 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 the 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 *vijjācaraṇa sampaññā* which belongs to the Buddha alone for the reasons given below:

There are two factors in this attribute, they are, 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 to 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 combined together are called the attribute of *Vijjācaraṇa Sampanno*. The mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this 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; *gala*: 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-ñāṇa*). 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 above three 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 the hearer likes 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 this 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

Rājakumāra Sutta; a brief account follows:

At one time, the Buddha was staying in Veļuvana monastery at Rājagaha. During that time, Prince Abhaya, son of King Bimbisāra approached his teacher, Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta, and, making obeisance to him and sat in a suitable place. Then Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta said to Prince Abhaya:

“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?”

(1) “Prince, go to Samana Gotama and say this: ‘Venerable Sir, would you say something that is unacceptable or unwelcome to someone?’ And if Samana Gotama were to reply: ‘Prince, the Tathāgata would say something that is unacceptable or unwelcome to someone.’ In that case, you should say to Samana 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.’

(2) “If, on the other hand, Samana 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.’

“Prince, if you only confront Samaṇa Gotama with the above questions, 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 Nāṭaputta four months to think out the above questions with which to harass the Buddha. 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 these teachers. Only when the Buddha appeared in the world, these adherents, who possessed previous merit, left them in large 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 a question to confront Samaṇa Gotama, a question so neat that Samaṇa Gotama would be caught 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 Veļuvana monastery where the Buddha was staying, and after making obeisance to the Buddha, 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 Buddha: "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 palace) 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 Buddha 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 Buddha, returned to his palace.

In the next morning, the Buddha 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 Buddha as taught by Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta thus:

"Venerable Sir, would the Venerable One say something that is unacceptable or unwelcome to someone?" The Buddha said to Prince Abhaya: "Prince Abhaya, regarding your question, no single answer can be given in a straight 'yes' or 'no'. (The Buddha, 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 Buddha crushed the question like a mountain 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 Buddha and said to Him: "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 Nāṭaputta 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 Buddha, 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 Buddha 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 by 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 these 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 of 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 unguent 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 these six cotton blossoms there were in my hands six strong slave men. These 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 men 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 Buddha: “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 and answers to fit their possible questions? Or do the answers come to mind instantly?”

The Buddha 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: ‘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 skilful 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 Buddha 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 arahatship with the four Discrimination (*paṭisambhidā*), the six special apperceptions (*chaḷabhiñṇa*) and knowledge of five outstanding features, namely, penetration, facility, quickness, breadth and brilliance. (For details refer to **Apāḍāna Pāli**,

(5) Lokavidū

Loka, the five aggregate that are clung to (*upādāna-khanadha*); (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 (*okāsa-loka*).
Vidu, the one who has analytical knowledge and complete comprehension.

The **Visuddhi-magga** explains *lokavidū* in two ways:

- (1) 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).

- a) 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 *satta-loka*.
- b) The aggregates of non-living things, such as the infinite world-systems (*cakkavāḷa*), 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 *okāsa-loka*.
- c) Both the living things and non-living things are conditioned by causes and are called *Sankhāra*. The world is subject to rising and falling, and hence called *Loka*. Thus we have the term *saṅkhāra-loka*. This *saṅkhāra-loka* is fully understood by the Buddha.

We shall expand on this as explained in the **Visuddhi-magga**: (2) “*Eko loko sabbe sattā āhāraṭhitikā* — all beings have each its own conditioning factors; this is a world in itself” (*Paṭisambhidā-magga* quoted here). Therefore, *loka* here means *saṅkhāra-loka*. (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.)

- (1) The Buddha has full knowledge about the conditioned world in that He knows it (i) as a single factor that causes all conditioned things; (ii) as two conditioned things, mind and matter; (iii) as three conditioned things in the three kinds of sensation; (iv) as four conditioned things in the four conditional factors, *āhāra*; (v) as five conditioned things in the five aggregates that are clung to; (vi) as six conditioned things in the internal sense-bases; (vii) as seven conditioned things in the seven stations of consciousness; (viii) as eight conditioned things in the eight worldly conditions; (ix) as nine conditioned things in the nine bases of existence for beings; (x) as ten conditioned things in the ten corporeal sense-bases; (xi) as twelve conditioned things in the twelve sense bases; (xii) as eighteen conditioned things in the eighteen elements.
- (2) Just as the Buddha has full knowledge of the conditioned world, so also He knows fully about the world of living beings in that: (a) He knows the proclivities of individuals, *āsaya*. (b) He knows the latent tendencies in individuals, *anusaya*. (c) He knows the habitual conduct of individuals, *carita*. (d) 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 layer of 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.

(a) *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, *diṭṭhi-āsaya*, 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, *yathābhūta ñāṇa-āsaya*.

In knowing the proclivities of individuals, the Buddha knows: (i) that this individual is bent on faring in the round of existences and has a proclivity towards the wrong view of annihilation; (ii) that this individual is bent on faring in the round of existences and has a proclivity towards the wrong view of eternalism; (iii) that this individual is bent on liberation from the round of existences, a pure being, and has Insight-knowledge; and (iv) that this individual is bent on liberation from the round of existences and has Path-knowledge.

(b) *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) *Kāmarāgānusaya*, 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, (*p:*) *that this individual is full of* the seed element of hatred, ...(*repeat p:*)... the seed element of conceit, ... (*repeat p:*)...the seed element of wrong views, ... (*repeat p:*)... the seed element of uncertainty, ...(*repeat 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-ñāṇa* 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, *vitikkama-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.

(c) *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*); this individual is predominantly of hateful conduct (*dosa-carita*); this individual is predominantly of bewildered conduct (*moha carita*); this individual is predominantly of faithful conduct (*saddhā-carita*); this individual is predominantly of wise conduct (*bhuddhi-carita*); this individual is predominantly of a cogitative conduct (*vitakka carita*). Further, the Buddha also knows the nature of these six types of conduct, the defiling conditions, the purifying conditions, the essential conditions, the results, and the consequences of these six types of conduct.

(d) *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 (*hīṇadhi-mutti*), and the natural preference for, or leaning toward noble things (*paññadhi-mutti*). 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, such as whether a certain

person is of evil disposition or of noble disposition.

Further, the Buddha knows the degree of disposition in each individual, such as 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 (*anusaya*); the three volitional activities (*abhisankhāras*) or the six types of habitual conduct (*carita*), and the types and degrees of leaning or disposition (*adhimutti*).

- (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 (*cakkavāḷa*), mansions, forests and mountains, etc.

Here is the explanation:

A world-system called *Cakkavāḷa* or *Lokadhātu* is bounded on four sides with tall mountains like a stone fencing. (*cakka*, circular; *vāḷa*, encircling ring of mountains.) The term *Cakkavāḷa* comes to be so called because it is a world-system encircled by rocky mountains. A world-system is 1,203,450 (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 3,610,350 (three million six hundred and ten thousand, three hundred and fifty) *yojanas*.

In a world-system, the earth's thickness is 240,000 (two hundred and forty thousand) *yojanas*, 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) *yojanas* in thickness. Beneath the mass of water there is the mass of air which is 960,000 (nine hundred and sixty thousand) *yojanas* 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) *yojanas* deep and rises 84,000 (eighty-four thousand) *yojanas* above the water.

- (1) Encircling Mount Sineru, there is the first ring of mountains called Yugandhara, (half) of which 42,000 (forty-two thousand) *yojanas* is submerged in the ocean and (half) of which 42,000 (forty-two thousand) *yojanas* rises up above the water.
- (2) Beyond (the first) ring of Yugandhara mountains, there is the (second) ring of mountains called Īsadhara of which 21,000 (twenty-one thousand) *yojanas* is submerged in the ocean and 21,000 (twenty-one thousand) *yojanas* rises up above the water.
- (3) Beyond the (second) ring of Īsadhara mountains, there is the (third) ring of mountains called Karavīka of which 10,500 (ten thousand and five hundred) *yojanas* is submerged in the ocean and 10,500 (ten thousand and five hundred) *yojanas* rises up above the water.
- (4) 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) *yojanas* is submerged in the water and 5,250 (five thousand two hundred and fifty) *yojanas* rises up above the water.
- (5) 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) *yojanas* is submerged in the ocean and 2,625 (two thousand six hundred and twenty-five) *yojanas* rises up above the water.
- (6) Beyond the (fifth) ring of Nemindhara mountains, there is the (sixth) ring of mountains called Vinataka of which 1,312 (thirteen hundred and twelve) *yojanas* is submerged in the ocean and 1,312 (thirteen hundred and twelve) *yojanas* rises up above the water.

- (7) Beyond the (sixth) ring of Vinataka mountains, there is the (seventh) ring of mountains called. Assakaṇṇa of which 656 (six hundred and fifty-six) *yojanas* is submerged in the ocean and 656 (six hundred and fifty-six) *yojanas* rises up above the water.

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 Jambudīpa, 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; add on the eastern side, the Eastern Island continent called Pubbavideha, each of them surrounded by five hundred lesser islands.

In the Southern Island Continent of Jambūdīpa, the Himavantā mountain is five hundred *yojanas* high and three thousand *yojanas* 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 *yojanas* across; from the ground up to the trunk where the big boughs branch out, the height of the trunk is fifty *yojanas*, the big boughs are each fifty *yojanas* long, each with a foliage a hundred *yojanas* across, and a hundred *yojanas* high.

Of the same dimensions, the following six other great trees which last till the end of the world-system: the Trumpet flower tree in the realm of Asurā at the old site of Tāvātimsa devas, at the foot of Mount Sineru; the Silk Cotton tree in the realm of Garudas, the Nuclea 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 Tāvātimsa Deva realm.

The circular ring of mountain that marks the limit of the universe has 82,000 (eighty-two thousand) *yojanas* submerged under the ocean and 82,000 (eighty-two thousand) *yojanas* rising up above the water.

The shape of the Jambūdīpa Island Continent is a trapezium (the shape of the front purl 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).

— **Visuddhi-magga Mahāṭīkā**, Volume I —

In each world-system there is (the mansion of) the Moon which has a diameter of forty-nine *yojanas*; (the mansion of) the Sun which has a diameter of fifty *yojanas*.

The realm of Tāvātimsa devas, the realm of Asuras, the Avīci Niraya, the Jambūdīpa Island Continent — each of these four places is ten thousand *yojanas* wide. They are called the Four Areas of Ten-thousand (*yojanas*) width.

The Northern Island Continent is seven thousand *yojanas* wide; the Eastern Island Continent is of the same size; the Northern Island Continent is eight thousand *yojanas* 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 *apāya*.

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

Tāvātimsa Deva realm is located on the summit of Mount Sineru. These two deva realms are, therefore, terrestrial. Above the Tāvātimsa Deva realms lies Yāma 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 (*Kāma sugati bhūmi*). These Seven Fortunate realms and the four miserable states of *apāya* together are called the eleven Sensuous Realms (*Kāma bhūmis*).

Above the six deva realms pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere, there are three Brahmā realms of Brahmapārisajjā (Brahmas' retinue), Brahmapurohitā (Brahmas' Ministers) and Mahābrahmā (Great Brahmas) which are the three Brahmā realms pertaining to the first *jhāna* of the Fine Material Sphere (*Rūpā-vacara*). They are on the same plane.

Above the three Brahmā realms pertaining to the first *jhāna* of the Fine Material Spheres, there are the three Brahmā 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 Brahmā realms pertaining to the second *jhāna* of the Fine Material Sphere, there are the three Brahmā realms pertaining to the third *jhāna* of the Fine Material Sphere on the same plane, namely, *Parittasubhā* (Brahmas of limited glory), *Appamāṇāsubhā* (Brahmas of measureless glory), and *Subbhakiṇṇa* (Brahmas of refulgent glory).

Above these realms there are two Brahmā 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'), *Sudasī* ('clear-sighted') and *Akañiṭṭha* ('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 Brahmā realms pertaining to the Fine Material Sphere.

Above the sixteen Brahmā realms pertaining to the Fine Material Sphere, there are the four Brahmā realms pertaining to the Non-Material Sphere, namely, *Ākāśānañcāyatana* (Infinity of Space), *Viññāṇaṇcāyatana* (Infinity of Consciousness), *Ākiñcaññāyatana* (Nothingness), and *Nevaśaññāvēśaññāyatana* (Neither-Consciousness-nor-Non-Consciousness), lying one above the other successively.

Thus, there are sixteen Brahmā realms of Fine Material Sphere and four Brahmā realms of Non-Material Sphere, altogether making twenty Brahmā 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

Visuddhi-magga gives *anuttaropurisa-dhammasārathi* in two separate meanings: *anuttaro* explained as one attribute and *dhammasārathi* 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; *sarathi*, tamer, i.e. skilful teacher or instructor). Those deserving to be tamed include devas, humans and Brahmās. For example, the Buddha tamed *nāga* kings, namely, Apalāla, Cūḷodara, Mahodara, Aggisikha, Dhūmasikha, and Aravāḷa, 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; Ambaṭṭha, the young man; Brahmins Pokkharasāti, Soṇadanta and Kūṭadanta, etc. He also tamed powerful devas, such as Āḷavaka, 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 arahatship. Therefore, *Purisadammāsārathi* means making savage beings to be established in the lower morality, and to guide those possessed of lower morality (i.e. half tamed) to attain the higher benefits leading to *arahatta-phala*. This knowledge of instructing others is the attribute of *dammāsārathi*. The five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

In the combined interpretation of *annutaro* and *purisadammāsārathi*, 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, such as 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 *arahatta-phala*. When the disciple has attained *arahatta-phala* 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 *anuttaropurisadammāsārathi*; the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

(7) *Satthādevamanūssānaṃ*

This means the Buddha who guides devas and humans to gain for themselves the benefits at present, the 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 devas and humans to gain present benefits, benefits in the future, and the benefit of Nibbāna is the attribute of *satthādeva-manussānaṃ*. The five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

Another explanation: The Buddha is like the master of a caravan, hence He is called *Satthādeva-manussānaṃ*.

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 and (v) a journey passing through a 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 *satthādeva-manussānaṃ*; the

five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

(The attribute *sattādeva-manussānam* should not be taken only to mean to cover devas and humans. The term *devamanuussānam* 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 *maggaphala* in their next existence or in the third existence. The Commentary gives the example of Maṇḍuka Devaputta which is related below.)

The Story of Maṇḍuka Devaputta

At one time, the Buddha was staying at a monastery close to 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 the absorption of Compassion, He saw that, if He held a sermon in the evening, a frog would come and being absorbed in the sound of the Dhamma speech, it would be killed accidentally, and be reborn in the deva realm. And that deva would come to Him, accompanied by his big retinue which would be seen by 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 Buddha went into the city of Campā for alms-round in the morning. When the morning meal was finished, He 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 *arahatta-phala*.

In the evening, when the four kinds of assembly were gathered at the lecture hall near Gaggarā Lake, the Buddha 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 Buddha, 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 Buddha’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 flog 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 it died in full consciousness of the clear conviction in the goodness of the Dhamma, it was reborn in the Tāvātimsa Deva realm, with a golden mansion twelve *yojanas* 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 Buddha, 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 Buddha in worshipping attitude.

The Buddha knew the deva, who was the flog which 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 Buddha (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 *yojanas*!

“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 Buddha delivered the discourse in detail, suited to the audience, by judging their past merits that would serve as sufficing condition for enlightenment. By 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 Buddha, turned round with the Buddha 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 being 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, *Sabbāññūta-ñāṇa*. If, however, the attribute *buddho* is taken as supreme knowledge as the same for *sammāsambuddho*, then the former relates to the penetrative aspect (*Paṭivedha Ñāṇa*) of the Buddha's wisdom while the latter relates to the skilful aspect (*Desanā Ñāṇa*) 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 Niddesa Pāli**. The Commentary also explains it in six different ways, while **Visuddhi-magga Mahāṭṭhaka** 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) *Sirī*, (v) *Kamma*, and (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* (supramundane will power) and *lokicittissariya* (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 *āpo-kasiṇa* 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 *āpo-kasiṇa* 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 Buddha has to go through four different thought-processes. Likewise, to get a stream of fire glow from the desired part of His body, the Buddha enters into the preliminary absorption of *tejo-kasiṇa* 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 *tejo-kasiṇa* 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 *jhānic* absorption.

Likewise, in supramundane consciousness of *arahatta-phala*, the Buddha has unsurpassed power of will. Due to this power, He enters into the absorption of *arahatta-phala* 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 *arahatta-phala*. (Ref: **Aṭṭhasalinī Mūlatikā**). This is how the Buddha has amazing control of will power in supramundane consciousness.

Eight Mundane Features of The Buddha's Willpower

In the Teaching, eight mundane features of the Buddha's willpower 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 Asurā (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 Brahmā 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.). (Ref: Chapter 50 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) *Isitā*: Dominating the will of others. All the Buddha-routine is accomplished through this power; all beings having to fulfil 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 Uruvelā Naga, overpowering their powers in every respect, such as emitting fire, vapour, etc.
- (h) *Yathānavasāyitā*: 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 strewn 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 supernatural powers are accomplished. The Buddha stands unrivalled in this knowledge.

These eight mundane powers and the mastery in mundane willpower and supramundane willpower 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 *arahatta-phala* 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-exaggerated. There are certain personages of wide repute, deserving of them but their repute does not reach the three worlds (i.e. the deva-world, the human world, the Brahmā-world).

The reputation attributed to the Buddha is such that the achievers of non-material absorptions, (*arūpa jhāna*) can remain in the non-material Brahmā-world (*arūpa Brahmā*) and contemplate on the nine supreme attributes of the Buddha. Since the Buddha's fame reaches even the non-material Brahmā-world, it hardly needs saying that this fame spreads in the Fine Material Sphere and the Sensuous Sphere as well.

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 was such that all devas, humans and Brahmās could never satisfy themselves in gazing at His superb appearance. For, He was endowed with the thirty-two marks of the Great man as well as eighty lesser characteristics. Those who went to see the Buddha had to leave only because the proper time to stay before His presence had run out but they felt discontented with feasting their eyes on the sheer majesty of the person of the Buddha.

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 devas, humans and
Brahmās.
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 Dīpaṅkarā, 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 bodheyyam*).

“May I attain liberation from the round of rebirth, and may I be able to lead the multitudes to liberation (*Mutto moceyyam*).

“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 tāreyyam*).”

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 had thus gained Enlightenment, had gained liberation from the round of rebirth, and had 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 was reinforced by the Path-Knowledge in devoting Himself to the originally set task of helping others. This zeal was 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 was 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!"

(vi) **Payatta** (Diligence)

Payatta means unrivalled diligence. (Consider the fivefold Buddha routine¹ carried out untiringly every day.) His untiring zeal in keeping up the fivefold Buddha routine earned Him the love and esteem of the living world. The Right Effort (*sammā 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 possessed 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 devas, humans and Brahmins.

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 by 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, untinted with any expectation of 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 Arahant, 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:

Arahant 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-

1. Five fold Buddha routine:

1. Early morning routine — Going on alms-round, acceptance of meals by donors, giving discourses of appreciation to donors.
2. After meal routine — Advice to Saṅgha, 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 Saṅgha.
4. Middle watch of the night — Discourse to *devas*, *brahmas*.
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.

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 by Himself.

Sugata proclaims both the Buddha's accomplishment by Himself and the achievement in working for the welfare of others, together with the underlying cause of both.

Anuttaropurisadammasārathi and *satthādevamanussāna* clearly demonstrate the Buddha's achievement in bringing the welfare of others.

Buddho brings out the meaning of accomplishment by Himself 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, viz. *Arahant*, *Sammāsambuddho*, *Vijjācaraṇasampanno*, *Lokavidū*, portray the root causes of attributes that the Buddha is endowed with.

Anuttaropurisadammasārathi and *Sattādevamanussānam* 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 **Visuddhi-magga Mahāṭīkā**, Volume I)

Contemplation of The Buddha (Buddhā-nussati Bhāvanā)

Myanmar devotees, who can 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 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.

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 (*kāma-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 Arahant, 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 *arahant*) 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-ruppa 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 yogi 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 analogy. For, although there are as many as thirty-two aspects or parts of the body, all of them have a single reality, which is 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 yogi 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 Him which is comparable to the *ariyas'* devotion to Him. Repeated recollection of the Buddha develops his mind such 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 even 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 yogi's 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, as if 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 **Visuddhi-magga**. For greater details the reader may refer to 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 pacattam veditabbo viññuhi.

- 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 Magadhan 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, it wins the laurels of victory.
- iii) The Dhamma, the nine supramundane factors, is *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.

Explanation of The Above Attribute

(1) Svākkhāta

In *Svākkhāta*, Dhamma refers to the Doctrine (*pariyat*), the four *maggas*, the four *phalas* and Nibbāna (the *pariyat* and the nine supramundane factors).

The *pariyat* is excellent in the beginning, excellent in 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 in the beginning; its second and third lines are perfect and therefore perfect in the middle; its fourth line is perfect and therefore perfect at the end. In a discourse, it has an introduction that makes it perfect in 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 in the middle. In a discourse consisting of a

number of connected thoughts, the first connection of logical relationships is perfection in the beginning. The last connection of logical relationship is perfection at the end. The remaining logical relationships are perfection in 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 in 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 arahatship or enlightenment as a disciple. Thus, the three Piṭakas have the intrinsic excellence in the beginning in Morality; the intrinsic excellence of the middle in Concentration and Insight-wisdom; the intrinsic excellence at the end in Nibbāna. Or taken in another light, they are excellent in the beginning through Morality and Concentration; excellent in 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 in the beginning by declaring the true Buddha, excellent in 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 in the beginning through Perfect Self-Enlightenment; excellent in the middle through Paccekabuddhahood, and excellent at the end through Enlightenment as a disciple.

The Buddha's 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 *arahatta-phala*. Therefore, in listening to the Doctrine, if you have the ultimate objective of *arahatta-phala*, 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 in 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 in the middle. Since proper practice leads to *arahatta-phala*, the result of the practice is the excellent at the end. In this way is the Pariyat Doctrine excellent in the beginning, in 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, *sāsaṇa brahmā cariya*, and the noble practice of the Path, *magga brahmā 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, these 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 these mundane terms but expounds the Four Foundations of Steadfast Mindfulness (*Satipaṭṭhāna*), 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 (e.g.) ka, ca, ṭa.
- ii) *Dhanita akkharas*, strongly stressed words (e.g.) 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, (e.g.) kā kū, ke, ko.
- iv) *Rassa akkharas*, letters associated with short vowels, (e.g.) ka, ki, ku.
- v) *Gaur akkharas*, 'weighty' words all the *dīgha akkharas* and short sounding words with conjunct-consonants trailing behind belong to this class. (e.g.) 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 (e.g.) Kā.
- ix) *Sambandha akkharas*: two successive words with a connected sound (e.g.) 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 (e.g.) In *suṇātu me*, there must be a pause between *suṇātu* and *me*.

The above ten rules are called the Ten *Vyañjana buddhis*. *Vyañjana* means words uttered as vocal expressions of the mind. *Vyañjanabuddhi* means the mind and mental concomitants that cause the utterance of words. The words thus uttered also are called *Vyañjanabuddhi* 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 *niggahita*. 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 *Visuddhi-magga* 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 gospels 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*, and 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 (*catusvārajjāñāna*). The Commentaries usually relate *svākkhāta* with these four factors (Knowledges). The four are given below:

The Four Kinds of Perfect Self-confidence (Vesārajjā-ñāna)

- (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* and *phala*," and truly are those factors of 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 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 reasons 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*, and 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 these 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 *Vesārajjāñānas*. 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 in the beginning, in 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 *svakkhāta* above).

The remaining two 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 *svakkhāta* 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* and 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 Nibbāna is declared by the Buddha in terms of permanence, deathlessness, etc. is the attribute of its being well-expounded. (This is how *Magga*, *Phala* and Nibbāna, the Supramundane factors, are well-expounded.)

(2) *Sandiṭṭhiko*

This attribute only relates to the Supramundane *Samī* (self), *diṭṭha* (the truth realizable by the *ariya*). All *ariyas*, 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 wish 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-ñāna* (Path Knowledge) attained by him, experiences its Fruition or *Phala-ñāna* 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 (*paccevakḥhanā*) perceives his own *magga-ñāna*, 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 *dhmma* 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 *samdiṭṭhiko*. (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* by uprooting all defilements through clear comprehension of the nine supramundane factors.)

Here the interpretation is: “that the supramundane *dhmma* are worthy of comprehending.”

(*Sandiṭṭham arahatīti sandiṭṭhiko*;)

Sam diṭṭham: ‘for comprehending’; *arahati*: ‘is worthy’ (worthwhile); *iti*: ‘therefore’; *samdiṭṭhiko*: ‘it is worth-while knowing’.

The supramundane *dhmma* are worthwhile comprehending by anyone who means to make an end of *dukkha*. The supramundane *dhmma* 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 *dhmma* are truly *sandiṭṭhiko*

(3) Akālika

This attribute relates only to the Ariya Path. Refer to the meaning of *akālika* 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, *akālika*.

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 *dhmma* 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 *sotāpatti-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 Buddha 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 Buddha, “the number of existences that have been prevented from arising by *sotāpatti-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) Paccattam Veditabbo

Under this attribute, three types of *ariyas* should be noted, namely, (i) the *Uggahaṭṭitaññū*, one 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 ownself, can one get rid of the defilements within oneself. Dwelling in the Fruition is possible only when one has attained the Fruition-Knowledge by 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, *paccattam-veditabbo*.

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 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 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. 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. **Visuddhi-magga 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 in 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: “*Sandiṭṭham 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 worthy 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 these 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 arahatship, 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 **Visuddhi-magga Mahā Tika** about how the five later attributes of the Dhamma can also belong to the Doctrine.

The Nine Supreme Attributes of The Sangha

Suppaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakasaṃgho ujuppaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakasaṃgho, nāyappaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakasaṃgho sāmīcippaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakasaṃgho. Yadidaṃ cattāri purisayugāni aṭṭhapurisa puggalā esa bhagavato sāvakasaṃgho āhuneyyo pāhuneyyo dakkhiṇeyyo añjalīkaraṇīyo anuttaraṃ puññakhettaṃ lokassa.

(The Pāli text of the nine supreme attributes of the Sangha) Its meaning:

- (1) The community of the disciples of the Buddha, i.e. the eight classes of the *ariya* Sangha, take up the *bhikkhu* practice well, and hence are *suppaṭipanno*.
- (2) The community of the *ariya* disciples of the Buddha are endowed with straight-forward uprightness (*ujuppaṭipanno*) because they follow the straight Middle way.
- (3) The community of the *ariya* disciples of the Buddha strive to attain Nibbāna, hence they are *nāyappaṭipanno*.
- (4) 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*.

The disciples of the Buddha, the Ariya Sangha consisting of eight categories of disciples in four pairs. These really great persons:-

- (5) - are worthy of receiving offerings brought even from afar; (*āhuneyyo*)
- (6) - are worthy of receiving offerings specially set aside for special guests; (*pāhuneyyo*)

- (7) - are worthy of receiving offerings made for the sake of Nibbāna; (*dakkhiṇeyyo*)
- (8) - are worthy of receiving obeisance by the three worlds; (*añjalikaraṇīyo*)
- (9) - are the incomparably fertile soil for all to sow the seed of merit; (*puñṇakhettaṃ lokassa*)

Miscellaneous Notes

Sāvakaśaṅghā: The eight classes of *ariyas* are *Sāvakaśaṅghā* in their true meaning. However, the virtuous *bhikkhus* are also called, in an extended meaning, *Sāvakaśaṅghā* since they also follow the Teaching of the Buddha obediently. The word '*sāvaka*' is defined as: "*Sakaccaṃ suṇantīti sāvaka* —he who listens (the Teaching) respectfully." Here, 'to listen respectfully' means to live up to the Teaching that will lead to arahatship. According to this definition, only *ariyas* are *Sāvakaśaṅghā* in the true sense and worldlings are called *Sāvakaśaṅghā* 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 arahatship and so they are also called *Sāvakaśaṅghā* in an extended sense of the word.)

Sangha: the community who are of the same moral standard. Hence '*Sangha*' 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.

Suppaṭṭipano, etc.

In the nine attributes of the Sangha, the first four beginning with *suppaṭṭipano*, 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 Buddha's 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 Buddha's mission in a multitude of ways to suit the natural bent of the hearer. Thus the right practice is the Buddha's true message, the essential feature of His entire Teaching. One who follows the right practice is one who practices well, a *suppatipaṇṇā puggalo*.

- (1) The Community of the Disciples of the Buddha are endowed with the proper practice because they follow the right practice.
- (2) 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 unfailing 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.
- (3) 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.
- (4) 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 Sangha are endowed with correctness of practice.

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

- (1) The Ariya Sangha 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.
- (2) The Sangha 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.
- (3) Nibbāna, which is penetrable only by *magga-phala-ñāṇa* is called *Ñāṇa* (knowledge). Since the Sangha strive for realizing *ñāṇa*, they are endowed with the practice leading to Nibbāna.
- (4) Worshipping, welcoming, raising joined palms by way of obeisance, and offering of the four *bhikkhu* requisites are acts of veneration called *Samīcīkamma*. Devas and men perform these acts of veneration towards the Sangha, having regard for the morality, concentration and wisdom of the Sangha. Anyone, lacking in morality, concentration and wisdom, does not deserve veneration. As for the Community of the Disciples of the Buddha, the taking up of the right practice which is the Ariya 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 *arahat*).

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.

(5) **Āhuneyyo:** (*a*: even brought from afar; *huna*, the four requisites as offerings; *eyya*, entitled to receive). The Ariya Sangha can, on account of their four attributes as conditions such as *suppaṭipanno* 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* Sangha goes 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* Sangha 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 Sangha are possessed of the attribute of *āhuneyyo*.

(**Another interpretation:**) (*a*: even brought from afar; *huneyya*, worthy to offer the four *bhikkhu* requisites) The Ariya Sangha 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 Sangha goes to them on alms-collection, but should go and make offerings to the Sangha 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 Sangha deserve to receive such offerings on account of the four conditions that they are endowed with. In this sense also the Ariya Sangha are possessed of *āhuneyyo*.

(Still another interpretation:) The Ariya Sangha 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 *brāhmaṇa* tradition, they keep a sacrificial fire called *āhavanīya* (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 *āhavanīya*, the Ariya Sangha who can bestow great merit to the donor are truly *āhuneyyo*. For the so-called *āhavanīya* 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 Sangha, being possessed of the four noble attributes as condition, unfailingly bestow much merit to the donor, and are truly *āhuneyyo*.

*Yo ca vassasatam jantu
aggaṇ paricare vane
ekaṇca bhāvitattānaṃ
muhuttamapi pījaye
sā yeva pūjanā 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 Sangha.

(6) *Pāhuneyyo*: Guests who visit 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 Sangha, if the Sangha visits your place, i.e., Guests come only next to the *sangha*. The Sangha 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* Sangha appear in the world only when the Buddha appears. And the arising of a Buddha takes incalculable aeons. Further, the Sangha 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 Sangha are entitled to receive special offerings meant for one's valued guests, *Pāhuneyyo*.

(7) *Dakkhineyyo*: '*Dakkhiṇā*' has been defined as: "*Dakkhaṇṭi etāya sattā yathādippatāhi 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 for future wellbeing 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 wellbeing.

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 these 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 annihilation, believes in afterlife. Only when existence after death is believed, will there be alms-giving for one's own wellbeing 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, motivated by the belief in future benefit.)

The Ariya Sangha 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 Sangha 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 Sangha who bestow merit on the offering.” This is another meaning by which the attribute of *Dakkhiṇeyyo* may be understood.

(8) *Añjalikaraṇīyo*: Being endowed with the four noble qualities based on their right practice, the Ariya Sangha are worthy of being venerated with joined palms raised to the head. The term for this attribute is defined as: “*añjalikaraṇīya etthāti añjalikaraṇīyo* — Those wishing to earn merit pay obeisance to these eight *ariyas*, hence the Ariya Sangha are *añjalikaraṇīyo*.”

(9) *Anuttaram puññakhattam lokassa*:

Anuttaram: “*atthi ito uttaranti amttaram*”

(Definition) “There is no better field for sowing merit than the Ariya Sangha.” Although by definition “there is no better field than the Ariya Sangha,” but, in fact there is not even any field of merit equal to the Ariya Sangha. Hence this attribute has been rendered as “the incomparably fertile field for sowing merit.”

Khetta means a field for cultivation of crops. *Puñña khetta* means a field where merit is cultivated, a metaphor for the Ariya Sangha. Just as a field nurtures the seeds sown in it, so also the Ariya Sangha nurture the seeds of good deeds (acts of merit) sown in them (done towards them). Here the Sangha nurture the good deeds of the donors through the morality, concentration and wisdom which are like the nutrients of the soil. Thus the Ariya Sangha 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 Sangha 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 puññakhattam lokassa*.

Contemplation of The Sangha

The yogi who wishes to contemplate on the Sangha should commit to memory the nine attributes of the Sangha in Pāli and its translation as given above. He should recite each of them, such as *suppaṭipanno*, at a speed neither too slow nor too fast, reflecting on its meaning. One who reflects on the attributes of the Sangha, 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 Sangha sharpens the initial application of the mind and the 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 Sangha)

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 *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 Sangha 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 Sangha, which is mental cultivation pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere, the yogi is called one who has achieved *upacāra-jhāna* of the contemplation of the Sangha. (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 Sangha

The virtuous one, who repeatedly contemplates on the Sangha, becomes exceptionally devoted to the Sangha comparable to the *ariyas* devotion to the Sangha. 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 Sangha. His mind is always ennobled by the awareness of the attributes of the Sangha so that his body is like a congregation chamber of the Sangha (Sima) where the Sangha are being assembled, and therefore is worthy of veneration. His mind is bent on acquiring the attributes of the Sangha. Being constantly aware of the attributes of the Sangha, he feels like one in the very presence of the Sangha and is incapable of committing any evil, through shame and dread to do it, whenever occasion for it arises. Making the contemplation of the Sangha 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 Sangha.

Two Kinds of Meditation

Contemplation of the Buddha, Contemplation of the Dhamma and Contemplation of the Sangha are all various forms of meditation. Meditation is of two kinds: meditation for refreshing the mind and meditation for Insight.

Explanation:

(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 on the Buddha or the Dhamma or the Sangha. 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 the sharpened 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 Sangha 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 Sangha 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 Brahmā?” 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 deva, or *māra*, or a Brahmā; 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 “Arahant”. 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 his 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 **Āṅguttara Nikāya**, the Ones, *ekāka*)

Dependent Origination: Paṭiccasamuppāda

In Chapter 17 we have undertaken to deal with Dependent Origination and this is the occasion for it. We shall explain Dependent Origination in a manner neither too brief nor too detailed.

*Saccam satto patisandhi paccayākārameva ca
Duddassā caturō dhammā desetuṇca 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 Sayadaw’s 13 expository, Myanmar verses on Paṭicca-samuppāda.

The Text: Paṭicca-samuppāda Uddesa:-

Avijjā paccaya sankhāra sankhāra paccaya viññāṇaṃ viññāṇa paccaya nāmarūpaṃ nāmarūpa paccaya saḷāyatanaṃ saḷāyatana paccaya phasso phassa paccaya vedanā vedāna paccaya tanhā tanhā paccaya upādānaṃ upādāna paccaya bhavo bhava paccaya jāti jāti paccaya jarāmaraṇaṃ soka parideva dukkha domanassupāyāsā sambhavanti evametassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa samudayo hoti.

Avijjā paccaya sankhāra: 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.

Sankhāra paccaya viññāṇaṃ: With volitional activities, pertaining to the present and future existences as condition, birth-linking Consciousness comes about.

Viññāṇa paccaya nāmarūpaṃ: With birth-linking Consciousness as condition, mind and body comes about.

Nāmarūpa paccaya saḷāyatanaṃ: With mind-and-body as condition, the six kinds of sensitive corporeality, called the six Sense-doors, come about.

Saḷāyatana paccaya phasso: With the six Sense-doors as condition, the six kinds of contact, with their respective sense objects, come about.

Phassa paccaya vedanā: With the six kinds of contact as condition, six kinds of sensation, that cognize or experience the sense objects, come about.

Vedanā paccaya tanhā: 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.

Tanhā paccaya upādānaṃ: With the six kinds of craving as condition, clinging, i.e. deep-rooted attachment, comes about.

Upādāna paccaya 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 paccaya jāti: With the causal process of one's own actions as condition, recurrence of fresh existences or rebirth comes about.

Jāti paccaya jarāmaraṇa 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)

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.

Verse One

(1) *Avijjā paccaya saṅkhāra*

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 *Saṅkhāra*, etc. (results).

Elucidations

Of these twelve factors, Ignorance is the root condition of the earlier part of *saṃsāra*. Hence it is mentioned first, as between *avijjā* and *saṅkhāra*, the former is the cause and the latter the result. *Saṅkhāra* 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 Brahmās, or to the four Non-Material realms of Brahmās. The evil deeds are motivated by evil volitions called *apuññabhi saṅkhāra*. The good deeds that tend to the seven fortunate existences and the Fine Material realms are motivated by good volitions called *Puññābhisankhāra*. The volitions in the four types of good deeds leading to the four Brahmā realms of the Non-Material Sphere are called *Āneñjabhisankhāra*. 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 above.)

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 worthy 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 *saṃsāra* 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 Brahmā-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 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-saṅkhāra*), 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-saṅkhāra*) that lead to the Sensuous Sphere and the Fine Material Sphere or unshakable volitions (*aneñjabhi-saṅkhāra*) 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) *Saṅkhāra paccaya viññāṇam*

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 Brahmā 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 which are 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 buildings 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 (*upaṭhāna-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 *samaṅgīta* 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 **Paṭiccasamuppāda Dīpanī**).

Resultant consciousness, function-wise, 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-decad 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) *Viññāṇa paccaya nāmarūpaṃ*

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 devas, humans 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 cat's-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 paccaya saḷāyatanam*

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 in 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 corporality arise simultaneously with birth-linking consciousness.

In the case of Brahmās, 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 they 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. 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 paccaya 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 a flint is struck against the steel striker in a flint match.

Due to the coming together of sense-door, sense object and sense-consciousness, (e.g. 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-experience as 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 paccaya 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 *sukha-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, whether 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 paccaya 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) *Taṇhā paccaya 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 *attā*.

- 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 alligator; 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 Buddha’s time, 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. (Ref: 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 behaviour. (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 (*attā*), *Attavādupādāna*:** The mistaken belief in Self or *attā* 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, and not being able to perceive corporeality apart from oneself; (b) that mental phenomena are self, and erroneously holding that self has corporeality just like a tree has its shade; (c) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that corporeality exists in self just like the scent existing in flower; (d) that mental phenomena is self and erroneously holding that self exists in corporeality just like a ruby kept in casket.

(2) With regard to sensation: (a) that sensation is self and not being able to perceive sensation apart from oneself; (b) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that self has sensation just like a tree has its shade; (c) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that sensation exists in self just like the scent existing in flower; (d) that mental phenomena is self and erroneously holding that self exists in sensation just like a ruby kept in casket.

(3) With regard to perception: (a) that perception is self and not being able to perceive

perception apart from oneself; (b) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that self has perception just like a tree has its shade; (c) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that perception exists in self just like the scent existing in flower; (d) that mental phenomena is self and erroneously holding that self exists in perception just like a ruby kept in casket.

(4) With regard to volitional activities: (a) that volitional activities is self and not being able to perceive volitional activities apart from oneself; (b) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that self has volitional activities just like a tree has its shade; (c) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that volitional activities exists in self just like the scent existing in flower; (d) that mental phenomena is self and erroneously holding that self exists in volitional activities just like a ruby kept in casket.

(5) With regard to consciousness: (a) that consciousness is self and not being able to perceive consciousness apart from oneself; (b) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that self has consciousness just like a tree has its shade; (c) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that consciousness exists in self just like the scent existing in flower; (d) that mental phenomena is self and erroneously holding that self exists in consciousness just like a ruby kept in casket.

Therefore, twenty wrong views about the five aggregates give rise to twenty different kinds of wrong view. This view which persists throughout *samsāra* 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 paccaya 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 **Vibhaṅga**, 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:-

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 are 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 *apāya*.

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 achieve this, 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 of having 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, and, 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 Brahmā-world of Fine Material Sphere or Non-Material Sphere has higher sense pleasures than those of the Sensuous Sphere. And, being obsessed by this allurements of superior sense pleasures of the Brahmā-world, he practises *jhāna* of the Fine Material Sphere or the Non-Material Sphere, and achieves it, and, as the result, he 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 this worldling pertaining to the Sensuous Sphere and the Brahmā 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*), and 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 Brahmā 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, and 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. The merit of this worldling pertaining to a fortunate existence in the Sensuous Sphere and the exalted type of merit pertaining to the Brahmā 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 paccaya 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 “*saṅkhāra paccaya viññānām*”, it has been shown that due to volitional activities, good and bad consciousness arises. This 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 paccaya 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 (*samaṅgīṭā*) 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 paccaya jāti*” (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 these 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 *Asaññasatta* 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 *jarā* (ageing); and the third, *bhaṅga-khaṇa*, is called *marañā* (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 off-spring 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 *Uparipannāsa*, Cūḷa Kamma Vibhaṅga Sutta wherein it is stated: “*kamman satte vibhajati yadidam hīnapaññatāya* — It is only *kamma* that conditions beings either to be inferior or superior.”)

(11) *Jāti paccaya jarāmarañam*

Kamma-bhava conditions *upapatti-bhava*. The initial phase of the arising of *upapatti-bhava* is called *jāti*. 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 *thī* and *bhaṅga-khaṇas*. When *jāti* (*upāda*) arises, *jarā* (*thī*) and *marāṇa* (*bhaṅga*) follow suit just as a rising tide brings water along with it.)

Since *jāti* is the condition that gives rise to *jarā-marāṇa*, (without *jāti* there can be no *jarā-marāṇa*) the Buddha declares: “*Jāti paccaya jarā marañam*”.

(Considering what has been said above, it should be carefully noted that *jāti* refers to the moments of the arising of the stream of the five aggregates; *jarā* refers to the moments of the ageing of these aggregates; and *marāṇa* refers to the moments of dissolution of these 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 deva or human or other types of various beings, let 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; the second phase of middle age; and the third phase of old age. Each phase lasting for thirty-three years and four months. Just as these three phases are the natural process of a human'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) *Khaṇa-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 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 grey, 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, such as greying 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: greying of hair, falling off of teeth, wrinkling of skin, etc. are more and more apparent.

Whereas the physical signs of ageing, such as greying 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. Likewise, the burnt up area of a fire accident testifies 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 myriads 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) **Khanika-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 a wink of an eye or in a flash of lightning. Of the twenty-eight types of corporeality, twenty-two of them (i.e. leaving aside the four corporeal types of salient features (*lakkhana*) and two 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) **Samuccheda-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 substrate 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:

- (a) Death due to the end of life span whereas the kammic potential is still present, is **āyukkhaya-maraṇa**.
- (b) Death due to the exhaustion or end of the kammic potential even though the life span is not ended yet, is **kammakkhaya-maraṇa**.
- (c) Death due to the end of both (i) and (ii) above, is **ubhayakkhaya-maraṇa**.
- (d) Death due to an abrupt intervention of some evil *kamma*, although the life span and the kammic potential above are still present, is **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 someone 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 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 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 someone from amidst the circle of dear ones into any of the five new destinations is the work of *jāti*. The molestation and weakening of the victim, rendering him quite helpless 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 someone 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) *Evame tassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandassa samudayo hoti*.

In the long long course of *saṃsāra*, 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 deva or human (or brahmin), thus binding them 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.

The Four Kinds of Analytical Knowledge (*Paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*)

It has been said above that as soon as the Buddha attained 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) ***Attha paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa***: Herein *attha* means: (a) things that are dependent on conditions, i.e., understanding results of causes, (b) Nibbāna (c) meaning of words (*Pāli*), (d) resultant thoughts (*vipāka*) (i.e. mind and mental concomitants), (e) non-causative thoughts (*kiriya*) (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 knew discriminately and comprehensively about everything, and was able to expound these to others. The great non-causative consciousness (*mahā kiriya 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 *arahatta-phala*, such as that of the Venerable Ānanda, 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) ***Dhamma paṭisambhidā-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 Buddha (*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 knew discriminately and comprehensively about every *dhamma* and was 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 Ānanda, Analytical Knowledge of *dhamma* means the great meritorious consciousness associated with knowledge. (The same applies with regard to the next two Analytical Knowledge).

(iii) ***Nirutti paṭisambhidā-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. *māgadhi*) 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) ***Paṭibhāna paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa***: This is the Analytical Knowledge that “*attha paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa* has discriminative and comprehensive knowledge about results; that *dhamma paṭisambhidā-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 *paṭibhāna paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*, like the previous *paṭisambhidā-ñāṇas*, 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 bhikkhus 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, *paṭibhāna samhhiḍā-ñāṇa* discriminately knows the functions of the three other Analytical Knowledges, but it cannot discharge these functions itself. This has been explained in the Commentary on the **Vibhaṅga**.

The Six Kinds of Knowledge which are solely within The Province of The Buddha

(ASĀDHĀRAṆA ÑĀṆA)

There are six kinds of knowledge which are possessed only by the Buddha and are not found in Paccekabuddhas or disciples, namely:

(i) **Indriyaparopariyatta-ñāṇa**: Knowledge that discusses 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. (Ref: 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 individual’s 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 was due to the possession of the above two special knowledges that the Buddha could deliver the right message to the right-hearer. Even the Venerable Sāriputta, being not endowed with these 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 his hearers, with the result that his discourses, in a few occasions, fell flat on the hearers.

(iii) **Yamakaṇṭhāriya-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 Kapilavattu, to humble 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 humble the followers of other faiths; (d) On the occasion of the congregation concerning Pāthikaputta.

(iv) **Mahākaruṇāsamāpatti-ñāṇa**: Knowledge consisting of the Buddha-compassion on seeing the multitude struggling in the stormy ocean of *saṃsāra*. He has great compassion on all beings that are living in the world which is like a burning prison. The knowledge that enables the Buddha to attend His compassionate mind on those beings, is associated with dwelling in the jhānic 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) **Sabbāññutā-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 **Patisambhidā magga**.

(vi) **Anāvaraṇa-ñāṇa**: This knowledge is defined as, “*Natthi āvaraṇaṃ etassāti anāvaraṇa* — 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 *sabbāññutā ñāṇa*. It is called *Anāvaraṇa-ñāṇa* in the same sense as *saddhā* (conviction), *vīriya* (effort), *sati* (mindfulness), *saṃādhi* (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, viz. 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 and future), as to the immediate results and contributory or subsidiary result.
 - iii) *Sabbatthagāminīpatipadā-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) *Anekadhātu-nāṇā*: 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-buddha 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 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 capabilities of Pacceka-buddhas and disciples.) (Ref: 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, and 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 *arahat*, (4) Rupturing the Buddha's blood vessels, (5) Causing schism amongst the Sangha.

After examining beings by means of the first three Knowledges, to see the state of their past actions, their defilements and their resultants, whether they were handicapped for enlightenment or not in these three areas, the Buddha attended 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. (**Āṅguttara Nikāya** (*Ṭikā*)).

(This is about the Ten Powers)

The Fourteen Buddha Knowledges

The fourteen Buddha Knowledges are, Knowledge of the Four Truths, the four *Patisambhidā-ñāṇas*, and the six *Asāharaṇa-ñāṇas*. Out of those fourteen, Knowledge of the Four Truths and the four *Patisambhidā-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-ñāṇas 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, Ālavaka, who can endanger the life of the Buddha within the usual life period, (adopted by all Buddhas,) of the four-fifth of the life span period of the epoch (pertaining to each Buddha.)

There is no one, such as Mahesara, Brahmā Baka, or Asura, who can sully or dampen the All-Knowing Wisdom of the Buddha.

- (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 past, 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 of the future, extending over myriads of aeons, and not the slightest obstruction can mar this vision.
- (3) 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.
- (4) 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.
- (5) 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.

- (6) 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.
- (7) 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.
- (8) 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.
- (9) His effort, which is rightly directed in three ways, namely, dauntless determination as Bodhisatta in being prepared to traverse an ocean of burning 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 yojanas 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.
- (10) 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 quarters, like Mount Meru that withstands stormy winds that blow from the eight directions, the *jhānic* power (*appanā samādhi*) which is the very basis of all psychic powers (*abhiññās*), such as *iddlividha*, *dibba cakkhu*, *cetopariya*, *pubbenivāsānussati*, *yathākammūpaga*, *anāgatamsa*, never shows the slightest decline.
- (11) 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-nāṇa*, consisting of 2.4 million crores of times each day, never shows the slightest decline.
- (12) 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 deva, human beings, Brahmās 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.
- (13) 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.
- (14) He never indulges in any hasty action that is liable to be censured by the wise as thoughtless or ill-considered conduct.
- (15) He never commits any action that is liable to be called inadequate or uncomprehensive.
- (16) He never commits any action that is liable to be called impulsive by the wise.
- (17) He never indulges in the slightest remiss concerning His self-assigned task of bringing benefit to Himself and to the world at large.
- (18) He never lets any moment pass without being mindful of the six sense objects that come within cognisance of the six sense- doors.

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 anyone 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 Buddha 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 (*Vesāraja-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 verifies 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:

We shall now consider some important points regarding the Dhammacakka-pavattana Sutta and the **Anatta-lakkhaṇa 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 Vesākha, 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 throughout 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 (Brahmā) realm at the top. By that time, Brahmās, numbering eighteen crores, who had matured root of merit as sufficing condition to perceive the Four Truths had already assembled at the Deer Park, Isipatana, where the sermon was to be delivered. When this first sermon was delivered by the Buddha, the sun was setting in the west and the moon was appearing on the eastern horizon.

The theme of the Dhammacakka-pavattana Sutta is this:

The Buddha exhorted the Group of Five ascetics to avoid the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification and pointed to them the middle way, which consists 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 proclaims that He is the Buddha because He has fulfilled those requirements.

As the discourse continues, Koṇḍañña, who ‘entered the stream of knowledge’, was the first *sotāpanna*, 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 Brahmās. 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 Brahmās, 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 Buddha 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 Buddha to make him a *bhikkhu*. The Buddha 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 Buddha himself.

This is the gist of the Dhammacakka-pavattana 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 (*paṭivedha 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 Knowledges arose in the heart of the Buddha. By means of them the Buddha caused the Wheel of the Dhamma to turn, caused it to happen.

This Wheel is said to be turning up to the moment when the Venerable Koṇḍañña and the eighteen crores of Brahmās attained *sotāpatti-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*) *sotāpatti-phala puggalas* in Koṇḍañña and the eighteen crores of Brahmās 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 Buddha Kassapa became extinct, up to this point under Buddha Gotama, nobody had been able to turn this Wheel through the above-mentioned two Buddha-Knowledges. (**Sārattha Tika**)

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 Anatta-lakkhaṇa Sutta

Some Important Remarks.

After the Buddha had Koṇḍañña established in *sotāpatti-phala*, He tended to the Group of Five ascetics for their spiritual development like children. From the first waning day of Vesākha, He did not go on the alms-round but, instead, remained back to teach them His doctrine. On the first waning day, and on the second waning day Venerables Vappa and Bhaddiya attained *sotāpatti-phala* respectively, both of them being called up by the Buddha Himself: “Come, *bhikkhu*.”

Then the Buddha let the Venerables Koṇḍañña, Vappa and Bhaddiya to go on the alms-round, and taught the doctrine to the Venerables Mahānāma and Assaji. The Buddha and His five disciples sustained themselves on the alms-food collected by the three *bhikkhus*. Then on the third and fourth waning day of Vesākha, the Venerables Mahānāma and Assaji were established in *sotāpatti-phala*, both being called up by the Buddha Himself: “Come, *bhikkhu*.”

After all the five ascetics became established in *sotāpatti-phala*, the Buddha, on the fifth waning day, decided to expound the doctrine further so as to lead them to arahatship. And accordingly on that day He taught them the *Anatta-lakkhaṇa Sutta*.

The theme of the *Anatta-lakkhaṇa Sutta* is that:

(a) First, the Buddha introduced 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 this similar question method, the Buddha 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 Buddha 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 Buddha expounded on the impermanent nature of the five aggregates with regard to their impermanent character. (Ref: **Uparipannāsa**, 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. Ref: **Khandha Saṃyutta**; 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 somewhat remote to ones thinking. Therefore, the Buddha 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 Buddha 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 Buddha 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 Buddha sums up the result that is achieved by a person of right view, culmination in *arahatta-phala*. “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 (*paccavekkhaṇā-ñāṇa*).

- (c) The sutta ends with a short description about the attainment of arahatship by the five *bhikkhus* in the course of the exposition.

From this discourse, it is clear that the Group of Five ascetics gained arahatship 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 failings,
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;

(p:)

*It arises and perishes in no time.
Woeful, dreary, painful it is
to be subjected to risings and failings,
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;

... (**repeat p: above:** change 'Sensation' to 'Perception') ... *just woeful and not-self.*

- (iv) The aggregate of volitional activities, too, does not last long;

... (**repeat p: above:** change 'Sensation' to 'Volitional activities') ... *just woeful and not-self.*

- (v) The aggregate of consciousness, too, does not last long;

... (**repeat p: above:** change 'Sensation' to 'Consciousness') ... *just woeful and not-self.*

Ratana Sutta

We have said in Chapter 31 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 with care being taken to include its essential features.)

Reflecting on the many noble qualities of the Buddha such as: the ten kinds of Perfection (*pāramīs*) of three grades, i.e. Ten Perfections in the ordinary degree, Ten Perfections 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 to arise 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 Dhammacakka-pavattana 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 Ānanda 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 **Dhammapada**, Volume Two, **Pakīṇṇaka 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 bhūtani...*” 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 nāgas or garudas, or the celestial worlds, there is no treasure that can equal the Tathāgata. This 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. This 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. This is the incomparable quality in the Sangha consisting of these 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 *sotāpatti-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 *sotāpatti-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 *sotāpatti 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 *patipadā-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 *maggā* (Path-knowledge) quickly, is called 'a quick attainer'; a yogi with Insight, who attains *maggā* tardily, is called 'a slow attainer'. Thus there are these four modes of practice for each of the three kinds of *sotāpatti-phala* attainers, making 12 classes of *sotāpatti-ariyas*. With the Once-returners or *sakadāgāmī-puggala*, there are three kinds, such as *kāma-sakadāgāmī*, *rūpa-sakadāgāmī* and *arūpa-sakadāgāmī*. These three kinds multiplied by the four modes of practice makes twelve classes of Once-returners or *sakadāgāmī-puggala*.

With the Non-returners or *anāgāmī-puggala*, there are five kinds, such as: (i) *antarā parinibbāyī anāgāmin* (ii) *upahacca parinibbāyī anāgāmin*, (iii) *sasaṅkhāra parinibbāyī anāgāmin* (iv) *asaṅkhāra parinibbāyī anāgāmin* (v) *uddham̐sota akaniṭṭhagānū anāgāmin*. The *anāgāmī-ariyas* dwell in five Pure Abodes or Suddhā- vāsa Brahma realm, out of which five classes of *anāgāmin* dwell in Avihā realm, five in *Atappā* realm, five in *Sudassā* realm, five in *Sudassī* realm, and four (i.e. these other than *uddham̐sota-akaniṭṭhagāmin anāgāmin*) in Akaniṭṭha realm, thus making twenty-four classes of *anāgāmī-puggala*.

The *arahats* are of two kinds: *Sukkhavipassaka arahat* and *Samathāyānika arahat*. The former refers to those *ariyas* who attain *arahatta-phala* without achieving *jhāna* 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:

Sotāpannas	12	kinds of <i>phala</i> attainers
Sakadāgāmin	12	"
Anāgāmin	24	"
Arahat	2	"
Maggā attainers	4	"
	54	

In gaining *maggā-nāṇa*, an *ariya* may, at the moment of the arising of *maggā-nāṇa*, 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*.)

- Those *arahats-ariyas*, who strive with steadfast minds under Buddha Gotama's teaching, are released from the defilements. They have their mind well settled on

Nibbāna, the deathless Element. Having attained *arahatta-phala*, they enjoy the bliss of Nibbāna without having to incur any expense. This 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. This 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. This 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. & 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.) This 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 and becomes endowed with it. This has been pointed out by the Buddha. This 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). This 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). This 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, these wise ones have their aggregates extinguished. This 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 with ‘*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 Pāli 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.

Chapter 43

FORTY-ONE ARAHAT-MAHATHERAS AND THEIR RESPECTIVE ETADAGGA TITLES

I shall now narrate the stories of Mahātheras on the authority of the exposition of the **Ēkaka-Nipata**, **Etadagga-Vagga** of the **Aṅguttara Nikāya Commentary** beginning with the story of Koṇḍañña Mahāthera, taken from among the members of the noble Sangha, the Buddha's Disciples who were endowed with such attributes as *suppaṭipaññātā*.

(1) KOṆḌAÑÑA MAHĀTHERA

In narrating the stories of these Mahātheras, I shall do so in four stages: (a) aspiration expressed in the past, (b) ascetic life adopted in final existence, (c) attainment of unique spirituality and (d) *etadagga* (top) title achieved.

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

Counting backward from this *Bhadda-kappa*, over a hundred thousand aeons ago, there appeared the Buddha Padumuttara. (The reason for the Buddha having this name has been mentioned in Chapter IX: Padumuttara Buddhavaṃsa). Having appeared among the three classes of beings, Buddha Padumuttara, in the company of a hundred thousand monks, made His alms-rounds visiting a series of villages, townships and royal cities in order to release many compassionately [from suffering] and arrived at His (native) city of Hamsāvātī. His father, King Ānanda, heard the good news of his son's visit, and together with his people and officials extended welcome to the Buddha. As the Buddha gave a sermon to the crowd headed by King Ānanda, some became *sotāpannas*, some *sakadāgāmins*, some *anāgāmins* and the rest *arahats* at the end of the sermon.

The King then invited the Buddha for the next day's meal, and the next day he sent for the Buddha with a message about the meal-time and made a grand offering of food to the Him and His company of a hundred thousand monks at his golden palace. Buddha Padumuttara gave a talk in appreciation of the meal and went back to the monastery. In the same way, the citizens gave their *mahā-dāna* the following day. The third day saw that of the King. Thus the *mahā-dāna* performed by the King and the citizens on alternate day went on for a long time.

At that time, a good clansman, the future Koṇḍañña, was born in a prosperous household. One day, while the Buddha was preaching, he saw the citizens of Hamsāvātī with flowers, perfumes, etc. in their hands, heading to where the Buddha's delivery of the sermon took place and he went along with them too.

In the meantime, Buddha Padumuttara declared a certain *bhikkhu* as the first of all *rattaññū* (long-standing) *bhikkhus* to realize the Four Truths and to gain release from *samsāra* thereby in His dispensation. When the clansman heard this, he reflected: "Great indeed is this man! It is said that, leaving aside the Buddha Himself, there is no other person before him who has realized the Four Truths. What if I too become a monk like him, realizing the Four Truths before all others do in the dispensation of a coming Buddha!" At the close of the Buddha's preaching, the clansman approached the Buddha and invited saying: "Please accept my offering of food tomorrow, Exalted Buddha!" The Buddha accepted the invitation by keeping silent.

Knowing clearly that the Buddha had accepted his invitation, the clansman paid his respect to the Buddha and returned home. During the whole night, he spent decorating the seats with fragrant festoons of flowers and also by preparing delicious food. The following day, he treated the Buddha and His company of a hundred thousand monks at his house to a sumptuous feast of *sālī* rice with gruel and other courses as side-dishes. When the feast was over, he placed, at the feet of the Buddha, an entirely new and soft but thick pieces of cloth made in the country of Vaṅga and enough to make three robes. Then he reflected as

follows: “I am not a seeker of a small religious post but I am a seeker of a big one. A day's *mahā-dāna* like this may not be adequate if I aspire for a lofty designation. Therefore, I shall aspire after it by performing *mahā-dāna* for seven days successively.”

Thus, the clansman gave *mahā-dāna* in the same manner for seven days. When the meal-offering was over, he had his store-house of garments opened and put fine and nice clothes at the feet of the Buddha and offered three-piece sets of robes to the hundred thousand monks. He then approached the Buddha and said: “Exalted Buddha, just as the *bhikkhu* whom you admiringly declared an *etadagga* seven days ago, may I be able to become the first to penetrate the Four Truths after donning the robe in the dispensation of a coming Buddha.” Having said so, he remained paying respect in prostration at the Buddha's feet.

Hearing the clansman's words of aspiration, Buddha Padumuttara tried to see in His vision, saying to Himself: “This clansman has done most significant acts of merit. Will his aspiration be fulfilled or not?” He then came to know clearly that “It will definitely be!”

Indeed, there is no hindrance at all, even as an atom, that would cover His vision when a Buddha tries to see the past or the future or the present events. All the events in the past or the future, though there be a barrier of crores and crores of aeons, or all the events in the present though there be a barrier of thousands of universes, they are all associated with reflection. (As soon as they are reflected, they become manifest distinctly.) In this way, with His intellectual power that knew no hindrances, Buddha Padumuttara saw in His vision thus: “A hundred thousand aeons from now, there will arise singularly, an Exalted One, Gotama by name, among the three classes of beings. Then will this clansman's aspiration be fulfilled!” Knowing thus, the Buddha prophesied to the clansman: “Dear clansman, a hundred thousand aeons from now, a Buddha, by the name of Gotama, will appear in the three worlds. When Buddha Gotama delivers the first sermon, ‘the Wheel of the Law’; at the end of this sermon, the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta, with its three functions, will you be established, together with eighteen crores of Brahmās, in *sotāpatti-phala*.

Story of Two Brothers: Mahakala and Culakala

Having performed acts of merit such as alms-giving for a long period of a hundred thousand years, the wealthy clansman, the future Koṇḍañña, was reborn in a celestial abode on his death. While he was repeatedly being reborn either in the deva-world or human world, ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and nine aeons elapsed. (That is to say he enjoyed only divine or human lives, knowing no rebirth in any woeful states, for 99909 aeons.) After living through such a long duration, ninety-one aeons, when counted backwards from this *Bhadda* aeon, the future Koṇḍañña, was born in the family of a householder and named Mahākāla, in a village near the gate of the royal city Bandhumatī. His younger brother was known as Cūlakāla.

At that time, the future Buddha Vipassī expired from Tusitā celestial abode and took conception in the womb of Bandhumatī, the Chief Queen of King Bandhuma. (As has been described in the Chapter IX). He duly became an Omniscient Buddha. As He was requested by Mahā Brahmā to preach, He pondered as to whom He should preach first. He then saw His own younger brother Prince Khaṇḍa and the Purohita's son, the young Tissa. “These two,” He decided, “are capable of penetrating the Four Truths first.” He decided thus: “I will preach to them. I will also do favour to my royal father.” He then took an aerial journey, by His psychic power, from the Mahābodhi tree and descended at the Deer Park called Khemā. He sent for Prince Khaṇḍa and Tissa and taught them a sermon, at the end of which, both of them were established, together with eighty-four thousand sentient beings, in arahatship.

The eighty-four thousand clansmen, who went forth together with the future Buddha Vipassī, heard of the event and they went to Him to listen His Dhamma and were duly established in arahatship too. Buddha Vipassī appointed Khaṇḍa Thera and Tissa Thera, His Chief Disciples and placed them on His right and left hand side respectively.

On receiving the news, King Bandhuma became desirous of paying homage to his son,

Buddha Vipassī, went to the Park, listened to the sermon and took the Three Refuges. He also invited the Buddha for the next day's meal and departed after paying respect to the Buddha. On arrival at his palace, an idea arose while sitting in his grand pavilion: "My older son has renounced the word and has become Buddha. My second son has become Chief Disciple on the Buddha's right-hand side. The Purohita's son, the young Tissa, has become Chief Disciple on the left. The rest of the eighty-four thousand monks used to surround and attend upon my son while they were all lay men. Therefore, the Sangha, headed by my son, was under my charge before and so should they be now too. I, alone, will be responsible for the provision of them with the four requisites. I will give others no chance to do so." Thinking thus, the King had the walls of cutch-wood built on either side of the route, from the gate of the monastery to the palace and had them covered with canvas. He had festoons hung which were as thick as the trunk of a toddy palm and decorated with gold stars; he also had canopies put up. As for the ground, he had it covered with exquisite spreads. On both sides of the route within the walls, he had pots filled with water and placed near the flowering bushes and had perfumes placed among flowers and flowers among perfumes. Then he sent the Buddha with a message that it was now time for the meal. In the company of His monks, Buddha Vipassī came to the palace along the route fully covered and partook His meal and went back to the monastery. Nobody else had a chance just to see the Buddha. How could one have an opportunity to offer food and to honour Him? Indeed nobody else could.

Then there took place a discussion among the citizens:

"It has now been seven years and seven months since the arising of the Buddha in the world. But we have had so far no opportunity just to see the Buddha, what to speak of offering food, honouring Him and listening to His sermon. Absolutely, we have no such privileges at all. The King personally attended to the Buddha adoringly with the notion that 'The Buddha is only my Buddha, the Dhamma is only my Dhamma and the Sangha is only my Sangha.' The arising of the Buddha is for the welfare of the world of sentient beings, together with devas and Brahmas, but not only for the King's welfare. Indeed, it is not that the hell-fire is hot only to the King and is like a blue lotus to others. Were it well, therefore, if the King gave us the Exalted One (our right of service to the Buddha); if not, we shall battle with the King and take over the Sangha to do acts of merit towards them. Let us fight for our right. But there is one thing: we citizens alone might not be able to do so. Let us, therefore, find a chief who will lead us."

Accordingly, they went to the general of the army and openly told him of their plan and directly asked: "O General, will you be one of us or will you join the King?" Then the general said: "I will be one of you. But there is one condition, you must give me the first day for my service to the Buddha." And the citizens agreed.

The general went to the King and said: "The citizens are angry with you, Great King." When asked by the King about the reason, he said: "Because you alone are attending to the Buddha and they do not have such a chance, so they say. Great King, it is not too late yet. If they were given permission to serve the Buddha, they would no longer be angry. If not, they said they would give battle to you." Then the King replied: "General, I shall wage war but by no means shall I give up the Sangha." "Great King," said the general, putting the King in a difficult position: "Your servicemen are threatening that they will take up arms against you. Whom would you call up to encounter the looming war?" "Are not you my general?" asked the King persuasively. "I cannot fight being separated from the citizens, Great King," said the general.

The King then realized: "The force of the citizens is great. The general too is one of them." He therefore made a request, saying: "In that case, friends, let me feed the Sangha only for another period of seven years and seven months." But the citizens did not agree and rejected the request. The King reduced the duration of his proposed *dāna* step by step to six years, five years, and so on and finally to seven days. Then the people came to a unanimous decision, saying among themselves: "Now that the King has asked for seven days to perform the the act of food offering, it is not good for us to be so stubborn in

rivalry with him.”

King Bandhuma gave away, in seven days, all his offerings, which were meant for seven years and seven months. For the first six days, he did so without letting the people see. On the seventh day, however, he invited the citizens and showed them his grand offering of *dāna*, saying to sound them out: “Friends, will you be capable of giving such a grand *dāna*?” “Great King,” retorted the citizens: “but your *dāna* took place only with our help, isn’t it?” And he asserted. “Yes, we are capable.” Wiping the tears with the back of his palm, the King paid obeisance to the Buddha and said: “My dear son, Glorious Buddha, I have decided to support you together with one hundred and sixty-eight thousand monks for life with the four requisites, giving no assignments to others. But now I am compelled to allow the people to attend to you. In fact, they were angry with me and complaining about their deprivation of right of giving alms. My son, Exalted Buddha, from tomorrow onwards please do them a favour!” Thus did he pathetically utter words of compliance in despair.

The next day, the general gave a grand *dāna* to the Sangha with the Buddha at its head, as the agreement he had with the people. (Hence the story of Saddhāsumana may briefly be told as contained in the **Aṅguttara Commentary** Vol III.)

Story of Saddhāsumanā

On the day allotted to him, the general, while supervising his grand *dāna*, issued the order saying: “Care must be taken so that no other person should get a chance to offer even a spoonful or ladleful of rice,” and he placed sentries to keep watch around the area. That very day, a widow of a wealthy merchant of Bandhumatī was crying in great distress (because, she did not get a chance to offer her share of *dāna* for the first day). She complained pitifully, saying to her daughter who had just come back from the games she played with her five hundred female playmates: “My darling daughter, if your father were alive, I could have been today, the first to feed the Buddha.” The daughter responded saying words of comfort: “O mother, please do not worry! I will do something so that the Sangha, headed by the Buddha, would accept and partake of our meal first.”

After that, the daughter filled the gold bowl, which was worth a hundred thousand, with milk-food unmixed with water. She added butter, honey, molasses, etc. to enrich the food. She covered it with another gold bowl turned upside down and tied both the gold bowls with garlands of jasmine so that it might look like a ball of flowers. When the Buddha entered the city, she carried it herself on her head and left the house in a company of her many attendants.

On the way a dialogue took place between the wealthy lady and the watchmen:

Watchmen: Do not come here, daughter!

Lady: Dear uncles! Why don’t you allow me to go? (People of past good deeds speak endearing words. Others are not able to reject their repeated request.)

Watchmen: We are to keep watch, by the general’s order, that nobody else must be allowed to offer alms-food, daughter.

Lady: But, uncles, do you see any food in our hands that warrants you to bar me like this?

Watchmen: We see only the ball of flowers.

Lady: Well, did your general then say even offering of flowers was not allowable?

Watchmen: As for an offering of flowers, it is allowable, daughter.

The lady then saying to the watchmen, “In that case please go away. Do not prevent us, uncles,” she went to the Buddha and offered her gift with a request, “Please, Glorious Buddha, accept my offering of the ball of flowers.” The Buddha glanced at a watchman, signalling him to bring the floral ball. The lady made obeisance and said:

“Glorious Buddha, may my life throughout *saṃsāra* be free from want and worry. May I be lovable to many, like this ball of jasmine flowers, and be named Sumanā in all my coming existences.”

As the Buddha answered: "May you be well and happy," and the lady then paid respect to Him joyfully and departed.

The Buddha went to the general's house and took the seat prepared for Him. The general brought rice gruel and offered it Him. The Buddha covered the bowl with His hand. The general thought that the Buddha did not accept the gruel because the monks had not all come yet. When all had come, the general reported saying that all were present and seated. The Buddha said: "We have already had a bowl of food which we received on the way. When the covering jasmines were removed from the bowls the milk-rice with puffs of steam was found. Then the general's young serviceman who had brought the floral ball said: "General, I have been cheated by a distinguished woman who told me that it was just a ball of flowers." The milk-rice was sufficient for all the monks beginning with the Buddha. Only after giving the milk-rice to the Buddha did the general hand over the offerings that were made by himself. When the partaking of food was over, the Buddha delivered a sermon on auspiciousness and left.

When the Buddha had left, the general asked his men about the lady's name and they told her that she was the daughter of a wealthy merchant. "What a wise woman she is! If such a wise woman administers a household, it may not be difficult for the house-father to attain divine pleasures." Speaking in praise of the lady, the general managed to take her in marriage and placed her as the mistress of the house.

While taking charge of the wealth of both houses, her father's as well as the general's, she gave *dāna* to the Buddha till the end of her life. She was reborn in the celestial, abode, the world of sense pleasures. At that very moment, a rain of jasmines fell heavily, filling the whole divine city to about knee-deep. "This divine damsel has brought her own name, even by herself," so saying all the devas named her "Sumanā Devī".

Sumanā Devī was away from woeful states for ninety-one aeons, taking rebirth in celestial and human abodes. Wherever she was reborn, there rained jasmines continuously and she continued to be known only as Sumanā Devī or Sumanā Kumārī. In the dispensation of the present Buddha, she was born of King Kosala's Chief Queen. Simultaneously, in the households of the King's various ministers, all her maids were born on the same day as Sumanā's. On that very moment, jasmines flowers rained very heavily to about knee-deep.

Seeing that phenomenon, the King thought: "My daughter must have done a unique act of merit in the past" and became overjoyed. "My daughter had brought her name by herself," and he let her bear the very name Sumanā. Pondering: "My daughter must not have been born alone," the King had her birth-mates searched all over the city and hearing that five hundred girls were born, the King took the responsibility of feeding, nursing and bringing up all the five hundred birth-mates. He also ordered that each month the five hundred girls must be brought and presented to his daughter.

When Princess Sumanā was seven, the Buddha, in the company of monks, visited Savatthi as had been invited by the wealthy Anāthapiṇḍika through a messenger, for he had completed the construction of the Jetavana monastery. Anāthapiṇḍika went to King Kosala and said: "Great King, the Exalted One's visit to our City of Savatthi means auspiciousness for you and us. Therefore, please send Princess Sumanā and her five hundred maids with water-filled pots, perfumes, flowers, etc. to welcome the Exalted One and receive Him. The King replied, saying: "Very well" and did as told by the merchant. Under the orders of the King, Sumanā approached the Buddha and paid Him homage with perfumes, flowers, etc. and stood at a suitable place. When the Buddha preached to Sumanā, even on His way, she and all her companions were established together in *sotāpatti-phala*. So were the five hundred girls, five hundred women and five hundred male lay devotees being established in the same Fruition at the Buddha's Dhamma assembly. In this way, on the day the Buddha visited the monastery, before He reached it but while on the way, two thousand people became *sotāpanna-ariyas*.

When the Princess came of age, King Kosala gave her five hundred chariots and emblems of royalty so that she might use them on her travel, if any, with her five hundred

companions. In those days, there were three women who received five hundred chariots and royal emblems from their parents. They were: (1) Princess Cundī, daughter of King Bimbisāra, (2) Visākhā, daughter of the wealthy merchant Dhanañcaya, and (3) Sumanā, daughter of King Kosala as her account has been just given. This is the account of Saddhāsumanā.

As had been said, the day after the general had the permission from the King and performed *dāna* to the Buddha on a grand scale. The citizens organized an offering that was greater than the King's and performed *mahā-dāna* to the Sangha headed by the Buddha. When the meal-offering by the whole city was accomplished, the villagers near the city-gate arranged their paying homage, as it was their turn to do so.

Then Householder Mahākāla discussed with his younger brother Cūlakāla: "Our turn to pay homage to the Exalted One is tomorrow. What kind of homage shall we offer?" "Brother," replied Cūlakāla, "Please think by yourself of what is proper." Then Mahākāla said: "Dear brother, if you follow my plan, from our land of sixteen *pai*, full of ripening *sālī* paddy, we shall take out the newly ripened paddy from the ears and cook milk-rice, which is befitting to the Exalted One?" Cūlakāla presented his view: "Brother, if we do so, nobody will be benefited. Therefore I do not agree to that."

Then Mahākāla said: "If you do not agree to it, I wish to have my share of property." So the sixteen *pai* of land was divided into two halves, each measuring eight *pai* and a fence was erected in the middle of the two portions. Then Mahākāla took out the tender grain from the ears, to which he added milk unmixed with water. He had it cooked and *catumadhu* put to it, and offered (1) the (first) food to the Sangha headed by the Buddha. The strange thing was that the ears from which the grain had been taken out became full again with grain as before. (It was a *dāna* of the first grain formed in their earliest stage of development.)

Mahākāla similarly gave the following in charity: (2) the first portion of the paddy, that had partially developed to yield newly appeared grain, to be pounded; (3) the first portion of the paddy that had fully developed or ripened; (4) the first portion of the paddy that had been reaped; (5) the first portion of the paddy that had been made into sheaves; (6) the first portion of the paddy that had been piled up in sheaves; (7) the first portion of the paddy that had been threshed; (8) the first portion of the paddy that had been winnowed and (9) the first portion of the paddy that had been stored up in the granary.

In this way, each time he grew paddy, he accomplished *dāna* of the first portion (*agga-dāna*) nine times. And never did the harvest of his paddy becomes low despite his *dāna*. In fact, the amount of paddy even increased and became bigger than before. This indeed was the Thera's wholesome deed in connection with his expressed aspiration made in the past.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

The virtuous Mahākāla, the future Koṇḍañña Mahāthera, performed acts of merit in this way throughout the Buddha's life as well as throughout his, and he wandered from the human abode to the divine and vice versa and enjoyed divine and human luxuries. When our Buddha was about to arise, he was reborn in a wealthy brahmin family in the brahmin village of Doṇavatthu, near the city of Kapilavatthu. On his naming day, the young brahmin was given the name of Koṇḍañña. While being brought up, he was educated in the three Vedas and was accomplished in physiognomy of a great man.

At that time, our Buddha had passed away from the Tusitā celestial abode and took His conception in the womb of Mahāmāyā, Chief Queen of King Suddhodāna of Kapilavatthu, and was duly born. On the naming day, the King presented one hundred and eight Brahmins with absolutely new garments and fed them with sweet pure milk-food. He selected from among them eight highly intelligent brahmin wise-men and let them be seated in serial order in the court-yard. He then had the little Prince, the Bodhisatta, put lying on white linen and brought to the Brahmins who were to examine the baby's body-marks.

The brahmin, who occupied the first seat among the eight, raised his two fingers and

predicted: "If this boy remains a layman, he will become a Universal Monarch. If he lives an ascetic life, he will definitely become a Buddha in the three worlds!" In the same way, the remaining six Brahmins declared, by putting up two fingers. Of those eight Brahmins, the youthful Koṇḍañña was the youngest. When his turn to predict, he studied very carefully the marks on the body and (having pondered that one who would become a Universal Monarch should not have the mark of a Universal Monarch on one's soles but the boy had the same mark on his.) he put up only one finger, boldly predicting: "There is absolutely no reason for the Prince to stay in the middle of a household. The Prince will indeed become a Buddha!"

After the predictions, the wise Brahmins went back to their respective homes and summoned their sons and gave instructions saying: "Dear sons, we have become old. We may or may not be living by the time Prince Siddhattha, son of King Suddhodāna, attain Omniscient Buddhahood. When the Prince does, you, dear sons, should become monks in his dispensation."

King Suddhodāna brought up his son in comfort by providing him with great protection, facilities and resources beginning with his appointment of attendants. When he became sixteen years of age, the Prince enjoyed deva-like royal luxuries and at the age of twenty-nine, when he became intellectually more mature, he saw the disadvantages of sense-pleasures and the advantages of renunciation. So, on the day his own son Rāhula was born, he performed a great act of renunciation by riding the royal steed, Kaṇḍaka, in the company of his connatal and personal officer, Channa, and by going through the city-gate that was opened by gods. On that single night, he passed through the three cities of Kapilavatthu, Koliya and Devadaha, and proceeded to the bank of River Anomā where he put on the robe and other paraphernalia which were brought and offered by Ghaṭikāra Brahmā. Soon, he arrived at the city of Rājagaha in the very pleasing manner, like a Mahāthera of sixty years' standing and eighty years of age. After going on alms-round, he partook his meal in the shadow of the Paṇḍava Hill. Though King Bimbisāra invited him to stay on and promised to give him kingdom, he turned down the offer, and proceeding, he reached, in due course, the grove of Uruvelā. "Oh!" he exclaimed and uttered: "This flat ground is very pleasant! For clansmen who wish to devote themselves in meditation, it is the ideal place." With this reflection, he sojourned in that grove and commenced his meditative practice of *dukkara-cariya*.

By the time of the future Buddha's renunciation, all the wise Brahmins, except Koṇḍañña, had deceased. The youngest Koṇḍañña alone remained in good health. On hearing the news that the Bodhisatta had gone forth, he visited the sons of these deceased Brahmins and said: "It is said Prince Siddhattha had become an ascetic. No doubt the Prince will attain real Buddhahood. If your fathers were alive, they would go forth even today. Come, if you wish to do so. Let us become monks in the wake of that great man." But the seven sons were not unanimous in their aspirations: three did not like the idea. Only the remaining four donned the robe under Koṇḍañña's leadership.

After becoming ascetics, the Band of Five (*Pañca-vaggī*) went on round for food in villages, towns and royal cities and reached the Bodhisatta's dwelling eventually. While the Bodhisatta was practising his meditation of austerity for six long years, they entertained great hope, thinking: "He will soon attain Buddhahood! He will soon attain Buddhahood!" So thinking, they attended to the future Buddha, staying and moving about him.

In the sixth year, the Bodhisatta came to realize that the practice of *dukkara-cariya* would absolutely not earn him the Noble Path and Fruition (*ariya-magga-phala*) though he had passed the time by eating just a rice-grain, a sesame seed, etc. and had become emaciated and weary. (As has been described in Chapter 7) he collected food in the village of Senānī and ate whatever was available, such as rice and hard cakes. Then the Band of Five, as compelled by the law that dictates the lives of all Bodhisattas, were fed up with the Bodhisatta and left him for Isipatana the Deer Park.

After the Band of Five had thus left him, by eating whatever was available, such as rice and hard cakes, the Bodhisatta's skin, flesh and blood became normal in two or three days. On the full moon day, (the day he was to become enlightened) he took the excellent milk-

food offered by Sujātā, wife of a wealthy merchant. He then placed his bowl in the current of River Nerañjarā and came to decide that he would become a Buddha definitely, on that very day. In the evening, having been spoken of in praise in all manner by the Nāga King Kāla, he went to the Mahābodhi, the site where the Mahābodhi tree was and sat cross-legged on the Aparājita Throne, the unshakable seat, facing the eastern universe. Having developed his fourfold exertion, he drove away Māra the Deity just before sunset, acquired *pubbenivāsa-ñāṇa* in the first watch of the night, *dibba-cakkhu-ñāṇa* in the middle watch and, in the last watch he was absorbed in the wisdom of *Paṭicca-samuppāda* doctrine. He reflected, with his diamond-like great *vipassanā-ñāṇa* (*Mahāvajira Vipassanā Ñāṇa*), on its twelve factors forward and backward, up and down, and finally attained Buddhahood, having gain unique Omniscience (*asādhāraṇa sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*), which is the property of all Buddhas (as has been told in the section of the Buddha's Enlightenment). On that very Throne under the Mahābodhi tree, the Buddha passed seven days, being absorbed in the *arahatta-phala-samāpatti*.

In this way, the Buddha stayed in the seven places and on being requested by Sahampati Brahmā, He considered, asking Himself: “To whom should I preach first?” Then He came to know that the religious teachers, Ālāra and Udaka, had deceased and when He continued to think, He remembered thus: “To the Band of Five, I have been thankful very much. They served Me while I was engaged in the austere practice. What if I should preach to them first.” Such an idea is conceived by all Buddhas as a rule. In fact, with the exception of Koṇḍañña, there was none who could first grasp the Four Truths in the dispensation of the respective Buddha. As for Koṇḍañña, his capabilities of grasping the four Truths, first and foremost was because he had performed significant acts of merit for a hundred thousand aeons and had given the unique *dāna* of the first crop, nine times to the Sangha headed by the Buddha, as has been told above.

(c) Attainment of Unique Spirituality

Taking His bowl and robe, the Buddha set out to the Isipatana Deer Park and duly reached the dwelling of the Band of Five Bhikkhus. The five *bhikkhus* saw the Buddha coming and they made an agreement among themselves not to fulfil their obligatory duties, but, as the Buddha was approaching nearer they could not keep their original agreement: one took the bowl and robe from the Buddha, another prepared the seat for Him; still another brought water for washing His feet; the fourth washed the Buddha's feet; and the fifth brought a round fan made of palm-leaf to fan Him; thus they rendered their respective services.

When the five *bhikkhus* had taken their seats near the Buddha after doing their duties, the Buddha delivered the *Dhammacakka-pavattana Sutta* with three functions to the five *bhikkhus*, with the Venerable Koṇḍañña as the principal listener in His presence.

A New Name for The Thera: "Aññāsi Koṇḍañña"

At that time the Buddha thought: “As the ascetic Koṇḍañña was first to penetrate the Four Truths which I have brought with thousands of difficulties, he deserves the name Aññāsi Koṇḍañña,” and so He uttered a solemn utterance: “*Aññāsi vata bho Koṇḍañño; aññāsi vata bho Koṇḍañño!* — Oh, Koṇḍañña has penetrated the Four Truths! Oh, Koṇḍañña has penetrated the Four Truths!” Because of this solemn utterance, Venerable Koṇḍañña came to be known as “*Aññāsi Koṇḍañña*, the ‘Penetrating Koṇḍañña’ ” from that time onwards.

(d) Etadagga Title Achieved

In this way, the Venerable Koṇḍañña became a *sotāpanna* on the full-moon day of Āsālhā (June-July) in the year 103, Mahā Era (the year the Buddha attained Buddhahood). Likewise, the day after the full moon, Bhaddiya Thera also became a *sotāpanna*; two days after the full moon, Vappa Thera, three days after the full moon, Mahānāma Thera, and four days after the full moon, Assaji Thera. Five days after the full-moon, at the end of the delivery of the Anatta-lakkhaṇa Sutta, all five members of the Band were established in *arahatta-phala*. At that time, the number of *arahats* among human beings were six, i.e. the

Buddha Himself and the Band of Five Theras.

From that time onwards, to the *ariya-magga* and *phala*, the Buddha led fifty-five friends headed by Yasa, the son of a wealthy merchant; thirty-three Bhadda Princes, in the Kappāsika grove; a thousand former matted-hair ascetics, on the stone plateau of Gayāsīsa and others. After leading a large multitude of people to the Noble Path and Fruition, on the full moon day of Phussa (December-January), in the same year, the Buddha arrived in Rājagaha and established brahmin householders, numbering a hundred and ten thousand headed by King Bimbisāra in *sotāpatti-phala* and ten thousand such householders in the Three Refuges. Having caused the abundant blossoming and fruition of His teaching, with the eight wonders and three trainings, throughout the Jambudīpa, the entire land of which He caused to be illuminated bright with the colour of the robes and caused the environs to be blown by the rushing wind from the moving monks and other noble ones. Later on, once when He arrived at the Jetavana monastery of Sāvatti City and while remaining there at the monastery and sitting on the Dhamma Throne, the seat for a Buddha, He delivered a sermon and in the course of His delivery, He became desirous of declaring that His eldest son, Koṇḍañña, was the best of all who were first to realize the Four Truths; and He uttered:

*Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakanam bhikkhūnam rattaññūnam
yadidaṃ Aññāsi Koṇḍañño.*

O monks, of My monk-disciples who are of long standing (*rattaññū*), Aññāsi Koṇḍañña is the foremost (*etadagga*).

Thus speaking in praise of the Venerable Koṇḍañño, the Buddha declared him the *Rattaññū Etadagga*.

(Herein “*rattaññū*” literally means “one who knows night-time”, that is to say “one who has passed through the long duration of many nights since one’s renunciation.” In the Buddha’s dispensation there was none who realised the four Truths earlier than Koṇḍañña. Hence Koṇḍañña was the one who knew many nights (i.e. who lived over the greatest number of years) since he became a monk. (According to this explanation, a *rattaññū* individual means “the senior-most in monkhood.”

Or, as Venerable Koṇḍañña realized the four Truths before all others, since his realization, he had passed through many a night. According to this, the word in question means “the earliest knower of the Four Truths.”

Or, as every *arahant* is conscious of day-time and night-time, he earns the epithet *rattaññū*, “one who is aware of the divisions of day and night time.” Because Venerable Koṇḍañña was the earliest of all *arahants*, he stood out from other *rattaññūs* *arahats* knowing the divisions of time).

Aññāsi Koṇḍañña Mahāthera after His Attainment of Arahatsip

The Venerable Aññāsi Koṇḍañña attained arahatsip on the fifth day after the full moon of Āsāḷhā. On the full moon day of Phussa that year, the Buddha arrived in Rājagaha and on the first waxing day of Māgha (January-February), the future Chief Disciples (Sāriputta and Moggallāna) donned the robe. On the seventh day, the Venerable Moggallāna became *arahat* and the Venerable Sāriputta did so on the full-moon day. In this way, there arose complete categories of *arahants*, such as Chief Disciples, Great Disciples and Ordinary Disciples, in the Buddha’s dispensation, all going for alms-round (in a single line, with the most senior in front and the most junior last in the line). When the Buddha gave a discourse, He sat on the Dhamma Throne, the Buddha-seat decorated in the middle of the assembly. The Captain of the Dhamma, Venerable Sāriputta, sat on the right side of the Buddha and Venerable Moggallāna on the left side.

At the back of the two Chief Disciples, a seat was prepared for Venerable Koṇḍañña. The remaining monks took their seats surrounding him. Because Koṇḍañña was the first to understand the four Truths in the Buddha’s dispensation and because he was senior also by age, the two Chief Disciples were respectful to him, they regarded him as Mahā Brahmā, as

a huge mass of fire, or as a highly poisonous serpent. They felt somewhat scared, though they occupied the front seats. They were also shy and embarrassed. Venerable Koṇḍañña then reflected: “For the front seats, these two Chief Disciples had fulfilled their *pāramīs* for one *asaṅkhyeyya* and a hundred thousand aeons. Though they are taking those seats, they were less confident, shy and embarrassed. I shall do whatever necessary to make them stay at ease.” This was a reason (for his vacant seat.)

Besides, Koṇḍañña was a highly powerful *mahā-thera*. Like the attributes of the Buddha, his attributes spread among the people in this universe as well as among the devas and Brahmās of the ten thousand universes. Therefore, whenever the divine and human beings visited and honoured the Buddha with perfumes, flowers, etc. they immediately (after that) approached the Venerable Koṇḍañña and honoured him, remembering: “This Venerable One was the first to comprehend the unique doctrine of the Four Truths.” There is also a religious custom, according to which the visited monk is to give a Dhamma-talk or to exchange greetings with them. As for the Venerable, he was inclined only to remain blissfully in the attainment of *phala-samāpatti* (*ariya-vihāra*). Therefore, to him, Dhamma-talks given to and greetings exchanged with the visitors appeared superfluous. This was another reason.

For these two reasons, the Venerable desired to stay away from the Master. As he foresaw that his nephew, the young Puṇṇa, son of the brahmin lady Mantānī, would become a famous Dhamma-preacher (*Dhamma-kathika*), he went to the brahmin village of Doṇavatthu and made his nephew a monk and helped him become a resident pupil (*antevāsika*) with the thought that he would stay behind near the Exalted One. Then he approached the Buddha and made a request: “Glorious Buddha, to me a rural residence is not suitable. I am not capable of staying with the laity. Therefore, kindly permit me to live in the Chaddanta forest.” And the permission was granted by the Buddha.

Having obtained the permission from the Buddha, Venerable Koṇḍañña packed up his bedding, and taking his bowl and robe, he went to the Maṇḍakini lake in the Chaddanta forest. In the region around Chaddanta, eight thousand elephants, who were experienced in serving Paccekabuddhas and who were long-lived like spirits, became happy as they thought: “A large expanse of fertile field has come to us so that we might sow the seeds of meritorious deeds.” So they shovelled a path with their feet and got rid of grass to make a walk for the Thera. They also cleared the walk of twigs and branches that might be in his way and after making his residence clean, the eighty-thousand elephants held a discussion among themselves thus:

“Friends, if we expect ‘this elephant will do what is necessary to the Thera’ or ‘that elephant will do it for him,’ the Thera will then have to return to his dwelling from alms-round with his bowl washed as before, as if he had been to a village of his relatives. Therefore, let us serve him by taking turns so that there might be no negligence. We must be careful especially when it is an assignment of a particular one (without ignoring with the thought it is not mine).”

And so they took turns in serving the Venerable. The elephant on duty would arrange water for washing the face, and twigs for brushing the teeth. The arrangement went on like this. The elephant whose assignment was to serve, made fire by rubbing the dry firewood that could burn easily such as pine. With this fire, he baked stones and rolled them down by means of sticks into the water in the stone basins. After ascertaining the water's being hot enough, he would place a tooth brush made of firewood stick. Then the same elephant assigned would sweep the meditation hut that was the Venerable's dwelling, both inside and out with a broom made of branches. He would also perform [other] duties including his feeding of the Venerable in the way that will soon be described.

The Maṇḍakini lake where the Venerable resided was fifty *yojanas* wide. The middle area of the lake, measuring twenty-five *yojanas*, was entirely free from algae and other aquatic plants. The water was crystal clear. In its outer circle, where the water was waist deep, there flourished white-lotus thickets of half a *yojana's* width, surrounding the lake of fifty *yojanas*; beyond the white lotus thickets existed red-paduma lotus thickets also of half a

yojana's width; beyond them white-*kumudra* lotus-thickets...; beyond them blue-lotus thickets...; beyond them red lotus thickets...; beyond them fragrant red paddy fields...; beyond them creeper thickets full of such tasty vegetables as cucumber, gourd, pumpkin, etc. and measuring half a *yojana* in width; beyond them existed sugar-cane thickets also of half a *yojana* width, encircling the lake. The sugar-cane stalks growing there were as thick as the trunk of an areca palm.

Beyond the sugar-cane thickets lay banana tree thickets, also of half a *yojana's* width encircling the lake. Those who happened to have eaten two bananas or so would suffer, feeling stiff and uneasy; beyond the banana tree thickets lay jack-fruit grove bearing fruit, each being the size of a large jar; beyond that grove lay *Eugenia* grove; beyond that lay mango grove; in this way there lay further groves of fruit trees. In short, it could not be said there were no edible fruit around the Maṇḍākinī lake. There were fruit of all kinds.

During the flowering period, the wind blew, carrying the pollens from the blossoms and placed them on the lotus leaves. Drops of water fell on these leaves. By the heat of the sun, the pollens were cooked and became solidified milk. It was called lotus-honey (comb). It was brought to the Venerable by the elephants in turns.

The lotus stems were as thick as the tilling log. These stems too the elephant took and gave to the Venerable. The lotus stems were as large as a drum head. Each joint of the stems contained about one *pattha* of lotus milk. That lotus milk too the elephants brought and offered to the Venerable.

The elephants mixed the lotus stock with honey and offered them to the Venerable. They placed the sugar-cane plants, which were as thick as areca palm, on the stone slab and crushed them with their feet. The juice then flowed into stone cups and holes and was cooked by the heat of the sun and it became solidified sugar-cane cakes that were like solidified milk (*godan* stones). They then brought these sugar-cane cakes and offered them to the Venerable.

On the Kelāsa hill, in the Himavanta, lived a god named Nāgadatta. The Venerable Koṇḍañña sometimes went to the doorway of his mansion. The god filled the Venerable's bowl with pure milk food made of newly produced butter and powder of lotus-honey. The god gave a *dāna* of sweet smelling butter and milk by the lot for twenty thousand years during the life time of the Buddha Kassapa. Hence, such pure milk food containing butter and powder of lotus-honey appeared to him as nourishment. In this way the Venerable Koṇḍañña dwelt near the Maṇḍākinī lake in the Chanddanta forest. When he reflected on his life process (*āyu-saṅkhāra*), he found that it was coming to an end. When he further reflected as to where he should decess, it occurred to him thus: "These eight thousand elephants who have served me for twelve years have done what is difficult to do. I am greatly thankful to them. I shall first go to the Exalted Buddha and seek His permission to pass into Parinibbāna and shall do so in the meditation hut near these elephants." Having decided thus, he immediately appeared at Veḷuvana monastery in Rājagaha and visited the Buddha. He bowed his head touching the feet of the Buddha and sucked them in his mouth; he also pressed them with his hand forcefully. He then mentioned his name in his supplication to the Buddha: "Glorious Buddha! Koṇḍañña I am, Speaker of good words! I am Koṇḍañña."

(Herein, the reason for Venerable Koṇḍañña's mention of his own name was this: at that time among the monks around the Buddha some elderly monks knew him but younger ones did not. Therefore, it occurred to him: "The young monk who do not know me might offend me with the thought who is this white-haired, bending, toothless and failing old monk? Who is he that is talking with the Exalted Buddha? These young monks who wronged me might land in a woeful state. If I mention my name, those who previously did not know me will now realize who I am. Thus the two groups of monks, viz. one older and aware of my name and the other younger and coming to know me now, will be pleased and faithful at the thought: "Ah, here is a Great Disciple (*Mahā-sāvaka*) who has renounced like the Exalted Buddha throughout the system of ten thousand worlds and this would lead them to the realm of devas." In order to close the road to the woeful states and open that to

the deva abodes for the beings, the Thera disclosed his name in his announcement to the Buddha.)

At that time, a thought arose in the mind of the Venerable Vangīsa thus: “This Venerable Aññāsi Koṇḍañña visited the Exalted One after twelve long years; he touched the feet of the Exalted One with his head and suck the feet with his mouth. And, he also pressed them with his hand. Mentioning his name, he also said: ‘Glorious Buddha! Koṇḍañña I am. Speaker of good words! I am Koṇḍañña.’ What if I should sing appropriate verses in praise of this Venerable in the presence of the Buddha.” So he rose from his seat, adjusted his robe so that it covered his left shoulder, raised his joined hands towards the Buddha and addressed Him thus: “Glorious Buddha, these clear verses (*patibhanagatthā*) came into my head! Speaker of good words, these clear verses came into my head!”

Thereupon, the Buddha granted His permission, saying: “Dear son Vangisa, you may have clear verses in your head as you wish.” Accordingly, Venerable Vangīsa sang appropriate verses in praise of the Venerable Koṇḍañña in the presence of the Buddha as follows:

- (1) *Buddhā’nu buddho so thero
Koṇḍañño tibbanikkamo
Lābhī sukha-vihārānam
vivekānam Abhiñhaso.*

That Thera, who is known by his clan name Koṇḍañña and who has visited the supremely glorious Buddha, is distinguished as *Buddha’nubuddha*, for he is the first who understood the four profound Truths, having contemplated intelligently after the Buddha. He is endowed with unique, forceful energy of right exertions. He achieves without interruptions the three forms of seclusion, the means of blissful living.

- (2) *Yam sāvakena pattabbam
satthu sāsana-kārīnā
Sabbassa tam anuppattam
appamattassa sikkhato.*

The Sangha of noble disciples, who follow the Buddha's exhortation, should attain the four Paths, the four Fruitions, the Analytical Knowledge, etc. through their wisdom. That top personality of glory, the Venerable Koṇḍañña, attained them all i.e. the Paths, the Fruitions, the Analytical Knowledge, etc. ahead of several other disciples, as smoothly supported by necessary facilities, for he has possessed mindfulness and practised assiduously in the threefold training.

- (3) *Mahānubhāvo tevijjo
cetopariyāyakovido
Koṇḍañño buddhadāyādo
pāde vandati satthuno.*

The Venerable, who is known by his clan name Koṇḍañña, who is highly powerful, who clearly possesses the threefold Knowledge of *pu*, *di* and *ā*, who is the owner of *cetopariya-abhiññas* as he knows all the mental activities, who has inherited first and foremost, the nine supramundane legacy of the Buddha, has respectfully paid homage at the Buddha's lotus feet by touching them with his head, sucking them (in his mouth), and gripping them with his hands indeed.

By the time these verses had been sung, silence reigned in the assembly. Knowing of the silence, Venerable Koṇḍañña exchanged a few words with the Buddha and asked for permission: “Exalted Buddha, my life process has come to an end. I am going to pass into

parinibbāna.” “Where will you pass into *parinibbāna*, my dear son Koṇḍañña?” questioned the Buddha. The Venerable replied: “Glorious Buddha, the elephants who served me for twelve years have done something that is difficult to do. Therefore, I shall pass into *parinibbāna* somewhere around the elephants, by the lake in the Chaddantta forest.” The Buddha granted His permission by keeping silent.

(Herein, when Venerable Koṇḍañña requested permission to attain *parinibbāna*, if the Buddha were not to grant permission, it might tantamount that the Venerable took delight in the round of suffering in the three worlds, which he himself had taught to be something sickening. On the other hand, if the Buddha were to grant permission, it might mean that He encouraged him to die. In order to avoid these two ends, therefore, the Buddha, following the neutral way, asked: “Where would you pass into *parinibbāna*?”)

Thereupon the Venerable Koṇḍañña made obeisance to the Buddha and spoke: “Exalted Buddha, formerly when you were practising *dukkara-cariya*, we visited you for the first time to attend to you. In other words, my first obeisance took place in the Deer Park. Now this is my last!” While many people were lamenting, the Venerable paid homage to the Buddha, came out from His presence and, standing at the doorway, admonished the people: “Do not be sad! Do not lament! There is none among those conditioned, be they Buddhas or Disciples, who will not come to destruction.” While the people were looking on him, the Venerable disappeared from there and reappeared near the lake, in the Chaddanta forest, where he bathed. Thereafter, he put on the robe properly, put away his bedding and spent the three watches of the night engaging in meditation of *phala-samāpatti*. (He was absorbed in the *phala-samāpatti* for the whole night.) Just before morning came with its very brilliant light, the Venerable entered the *Anupādisesa-parinibbāna*.

No sooner had the Venerable Koṇḍañña entered *parinibbāna*, all the trees in the Himavanta burst open with flowers and fruit both at the top and bottom and they bent down as well. The elephant, whose turn it was to serve the Venerable, performed his usual duties early by placing water for washing the face and tooth-brush made of twigs and stood at the end of the wall without knowing the Venerable’s *parinibbāna*. Not seeing the Venerable coming, though he had waited till sunrise, the elephant began to wonder: “The noble Venerable used to take an early walk and used to wash his face. But now he has not come out from his dwelling even at sunrise. What could be the reason for this?” So he opened the door of the dwelling wide enough to see into it, he saw the Venerable sitting. He stretched out his trunk to investigate whether there was in-breath or out-breath and it came to know there was neither. Then, coming to know that the Venerable had entered *parinibbāna*, he put his trunk in his mouth and trumpeted aloud. The sound of its trumpet echoed all over the Himavanta.

The elephants held a discourse in unity. The Venerable’s body was put on the largest elephant. The others surrounded him, each carrying branches that had fully blossomed. After repeatedly went around the Himavanta and paying homage, they conveyed the remains to the lake in the Chaddanta forest.

Then Sakka summoned Deva Visukamma and gave him an order: “Dear Visukamma! Our elder brother, the Venerable Koṇḍañña, has passed into *parinibbāna*. Let us do homage to him. Create a coffin measuring nine *yojanas* and adorn it with a pinnacle!” Visukamma created as he had been asked. The remains of the Venerable was put in the coffin and returned to the elephants

Carrying the coffin together and repeatedly moving around the whole Himavanta, measuring three thousand *yojanas*, the elephants paid homage. From the elephants, the coffin was taken by devas of the sky who performed funeral rites. Thereafter, the coffin was taken by devas of rain-clouds, devas of cold-clouds, and devas of hot-clouds, Catumahārāja devas, Tāvātimsa devas and so on. In this way, the pinnacled coffin containing the Venerable’s body reached up to the realm of Brahmās. Again the Brahmās returned it to the devas and in this way the coffin went back to the elephants.

Each deva or Brahmā brought two sandalwood pieces, each being about the breadth of

four fingers. The pile of such sandalwood pieces was nine *yojanas* high. Upon the pile of sandalwood was put the coffin carrying the Venerable's body. Five hundred monks appeared simultaneously and recited the Dhamma throughout the night. The Venerable Anuruddha gave a sermon in the Assembly. As a result, many devas realized the Four Truths and were released [from *samsāra*] thereby.

The night saw the burning of the remains. On the following morning, at dawn, the pile of burning fragrant wood was extinguished and the monks filled the water-filter with the relics, which were as white as Jasmine buds and brought them to the Buddha, who was readily waiting and welcoming at the doorway of the Veḷuvana monastery.

Growth of a Cetiya out of the Earth

Holding the filter containing the relics, the Buddha delivered a discourse befitting that occasion and causing religious emotion [in the minds of those present], after which He stretched out His hand towards the earth. Instantly, a colossal *cetiya*, resembling a huge silver bubble, emerged, penetrating the great earth. The Buddha enshrined the relics of the Venerable Koṇḍañña with His hands in that *cetiya*. It is said that the *cetiya* exists even today.

(2-3) THE TWO CHIEF DISCIPLE

SĀRIPUTTA AND MOGGALLĀNA MAHĀTHERAS

In this dispensation, the Venerables Sāriputta and Moggallāna are known as the two Chief Disciples of the Buddha. These two Venerables had mostly worked together for: their Perfection during the period of their performance of meritorious deeds for that goal. In their last existence too, they renounced the world together and became monks together. Hence their accounts are given together in the **Aṭṭhakathās** and **Tikās**. Following these treatises, in this book too, their accounts will be given together.

(a) Aspirations expressed in The Past

From this present *kappa*, one *asaṅkhyeyya* and a hundred thousand aeons ago, the future Sāriputta, a virtuous person, was born in a wealthy brahmin family and was named Sarada the youth. The future Moggallāna, another virtuous man, was also born in a another family and was named Sirivaḍḍhana the householder. They became intimate friends, having played together in their childhood.

One day, while Sarada the youth was examining and managing the wealth of his household (which was inherited from his forebears), as his father had died, a thought arose in him thus: "I know only about this existence. I do not know about hereafter. It is absolutely certain that beings born are subject to death. It will be proper, therefore, if I shall become a kind of recluse and seek the doctrine for liberation from *samsāra*."

Sarada went to his friend Sirivaddhana and asked: "Friend Sirivaḍḍhana, I shall become a recluse and seek the doctrine for liberation from *samsāra*. Will you be able to become one, together with me?" "No, friend, I am not," answered Sirivaḍḍhana. "You, friend, go ahead." Then it occurred to Sarada: "Among those who pass into hereafter, there is none who is able to take his friends and relatives with him. It is indeed true that only his good or bad deeds are his own property [as they follow him]."

Thereupon, he opened his treasure houses and performed a great *dāna* to the destitutes, poor people, travellers and beggars. Thereafter, he made his way to the foot of a mountain and became an ascetic. Those who became matted-hair ascetics in the wake of Sarada numbered seventy-four thousand. The ascetic Sarada himself acquired the fivefold mundane psychic power and the eightfold *jhāna* attainment. He also taught his followers how to make preparations for *kasiṇa* meditation and practise that meditation and they too gained the same power and attainment.

At that time, Buddha Anomadassī appeared in the world. (The city and other particulars have been given in the Chapter 9.) One day, when Buddha Anomadassī surveyed the world

of sentient beings after emerging from His *jhāna* of *karuṇā-samāpatti* at daybreak, He saw the ascetic Sarada and decided, thinking: “When I visit Sarada, a grand Dhamma-talk will take place. The ascetic will express his aspiration for Chief Discipleship, flanking on the right-hand side of some Buddha in future. His friend, Sirivaddhana, will do similarly for the other Discipleship, flanking on the left. By the end of the talk, Sarada's seventy-four thousand followers, those ascetics who accompanied Sarada, will attain arahatship. I should, therefore, pay a visit to Sarada's dwelling at the foot of the mountain.” Taking His bowl and robe and He set forth alone, without informing anybody else, like a lion-king. While Sarada's pupils were away gathering fruit, Buddha Anomadassī made a resolution that Sarada should come to know Him as an Omniscient Buddha, and while Sarada was looking at Him, the Buddha descended from the sky and stood on the ground.

As he had seen the magnificence and the physical splendour of Buddha Anomadassī, Sarada studied them in accordance with physiognomical treatises and unwaveringly believed: “One, who is possessed of these marks, would become a Universal Monarch if he were to live a household life, but, if he were to put on the robe, he would become an Omniscient Buddha.” He, therefore, welcomed the Buddha, paid homage with five kinds of touching and gave the prepared seat to Him. The Buddha sat down in that seat and the hermit also took an appropriate seat for himself.

At that time, the seventy-four thousand pupil hermits returned, carrying with them fruit of various sizes with immensely rich flavour and nutrition. Seeing the seating arrangement of the Buddha and that of their teacher, they remarked to him: “Master, we wonder, believing that there was no person higher than you in the world. But now it seems that this noble man is far superior to you.” The master reprovingly replied: “How dare you say so, pupils! You wish to compare a mustard seed with the great Mount Meru which is one hundred and sixty-eight thousand *yojanas* high. Do not weigh me against the Buddha.” Then the pupils said among themselves: “If this were an unworthy one, our master would not have given such a simile. Indeed He must be supreme!” So saying, they all prostrated at the feet of the Buddha and venerated Him with their heads.

Thereafter, the hermit told his pupils: “Dear sons, we have no gift that is proper to the Buddha. It was during His hour for collecting alms-food that He came to our residence at the foot of the mountain. Let us give alms to the best of our ability. Bring, pupils, big and small fruits that appear nice and wholesome.” Thus, he had the fruit brought and, having washed his hands, he himself offered the fruit by putting them in the bowl. No sooner had the Buddha accepted the fruit than devas put ambrosia in the bowl. Sarada offered water that had been duly filtered by himself. Having eaten the fruit, the Buddha washed His hand and sat calm and quiet. While the Buddha was sitting thus, Sarada summoned all his pupils and remained speaking to the Buddha, words that ought to be remembered for long. Then the Buddha resolved that His two Chief Disciples should visit Him in the company of monks at this mountain foot. The two Chief Disciples (Venerables Nisabha and Anoma), knowing the Buddha's desire, immediately appeared, accompanied by a hundred thousand *arahats* and, after paying homage to the Buddha, stood at suitable places.

Thereupon, the hermit Sarada called his hermit-pupils and ordered: “Dear sons, the seat made for the Buddha is still low. The hundred thousand monks are also without seats. You, dear sons, should today do highly appreciable honour to the Buddha. Bring beautiful and fragrant flowers from the foot of the mountain.” The time spent on giving the order seemed even longer. The power of the mighty ones is wonderful beyond imagination. Instantly, therefore the the hermit pupils miraculously brought flowers of beauty and fragrance and made them into the Buddha seat, measuring a *yojana*. The floral seat made for the two Chief Disciples measured three *gāvutas* each and that for the rest of monks measured half a *yojana* or two *gāvutas*. Even for the youngest monk, the seat was one *usabha* in measurement.

After making the seats in this manner, Sarada stood before the Buddha and addressed Him with his joined hands raised: “Exalted Buddha, please take this seat of flowers for my long welfare and happiness.” Buddha Anomadassī surmounted on the seat and sat down and remained there, engaging in *nirodha-samāpatti* for seven days. Knowing what the

Buddha was doing, the two Chief Disciples and the rest of monks, while remaining in their respective seats, in the wake of the Master, engaged themselves in *jhānas*.

Sarada the hermit, stood, holding a floral umbrella over the Buddha. While the Buddha was being absorbed in *nirodha-samāpatti*, the hermit pupils sought various roots and fruit during the food gathering hour and ate them. For the rest of the time, they stood, raising their joined hands in the direction of the Buddha. Sarada, however, did not move even for searching for fruit but held the umbrella over the Buddha and spent the time by means of the food of rapture.

Emerging from *nirodha-samāpatti*, the Buddha asked the Chief Disciple, Venerable Nisabha, who was sitting near Him on His right side: “Preach, dear son, a sermon in appreciation of the flowers, to the honouring hermits.” With his mind immensely gladdened, as a heroic warrior who had received a great reward from the Universal Monarch, the Venerable Nisabha preached by virtue of his perfect intelligence as a Disciple. At the end of the Venerable Nisabha’s preaching, the Buddha asked the other Chief Disciple, Venerable Anoma, who was flanking on the left side: “You too preach a sermon, dear son.” Reflecting on the Buddha’s words contained in the Three Piṭakas, the Venerable Anoma gave a sermon.

The realization of the Truths and the attainment of release did not affect yet a single hermits despite the preaching of the two Chief Disciples. Thereafter, Buddha Anomadassī, having remained in His incomparable state of a Buddha, preached. By the end of His preaching all seventy-four thousand matted-hair hermits attained *arahatta-phala*. Sarada alone remained unaffected. Then the Buddha stretching His right arm and pronounced: “Come, monks.” At that very moment the hair and beard of all these ascetics disappeared and they became monks already equipped with the eight items of requisites.

Sarada's Aspiration for Chief Discipleship

It may be asked: Why did he fail to attain arahatship though he was a great teacher? **The answer is:** Because he was then distracted. **Expanded answer:** Since the time when Nisabha the Chief Disciple, the Right Flanker, started preaching, Sarada had been repeatedly distracted by the thought: “It would be well if I should gain the same position as this Chief Disciple’s in the dispensation of the Buddha to come.” Because of this distraction, Sarada failed to penetrate and gain the knowledge of the Path and Fruition. (He was left behind with no acquisition of the *magga* and *phala*.)

After his pupils had become *chi-bhikkhus*, Sarada the hermit paid homage to the Buddha and asked, while standing before Him: “What is the name of the monk who is sitting just next to you?” When the Buddha replied: “His name is Nisabha, my Right Chief Disciple, who, in my dispensation, can turn the Wheel-Treasure of the Dhamma after Me, who had reached the apex of the perfect wisdom of a Disciple and who had penetrated the fifteen forms of *paññā*.” Sarada the hermit said: “As a result of my act of merit by honouring You with a floral umbrella held over You for seven days, I do not long for the state of a Sakka nor that of a Brahmā but I wish to become a real Chief Disciple, the Right Flanker, like this noble Venerable Nisabha during the dispensation of some Buddhas in the future.”

When Buddha Anomadassī tried to foresee through His *anāgataṃsa-ñāṇa* whether Sarada’s wish would be fulfilled, He foresaw that it would be fulfilled after one *asaṅkhyeyya* and a hundred thousand *kappas*. So He said to the hermit: “Your wish would not go unfulfilled. In fact, when an *asaṅkhyeyya* and a hundred thousand *kappas* have elapsed, the Buddha Gotama will appear in the three worlds. His mother will be Queen Mahāmāyā; His father, Suddhodāna; His son, Rāhula and His left-flanking Chief Disciple, Moggallāna. But you will become Buddha Gotama’s right-flanking Chief Disciple by the name of Sāriputta.” Having prophesied thus, He gave a Dhamma-talk and after which He rose into the air in the company of monks.

Sarada the hermit then approached the Venerables who had been his old pupils and said: “Venerable Sirs, please tell my friend Sirivaddhana the householder thus: ‘Your friend

Sarada the hermit has wished, at the foot of the Buddha Anomadassī, for the rank of the Right-flanking Disciple. For that of the Left-flanking Disciple of Gotama, a coming Buddha, you, householder, may decide.” After giving the message thus, Sarada went hurriedly ahead of them by another road and stood at the door of the house of Sirivaddhana.

Thinking: “Oh, my master has come after a long time. He has long been absent?” Sirivaddhana gave a seat to Sarada and he himself sat down in a lower seat and asked: “Venerable Sir, but your retinue of residential pupils does not show up.” “Well, they do not, friend. Buddha Anomadassī visited our hermits; we honoured the Sangha headed by Him to the best of our ability. The Buddha preached to us. By the end of the preaching, all the seventy-four thousand hermits attained arahatship and became monk, except myself.” “Why you did not become likewise?” asked Sirivaddhana. “Having seen Venerable Nisabha, the Buddha's Right-flanking Chief Disciple,” replied Sarada, “I wished for a similar position during the dispensation of the coming Buddha Gotama. You too can wish for the (second) Chief Discipleship occupying the Buddha's left hand seat.” When the hermit urged him thus, his friend replied: “I have no experience of talking with the Buddha.” Then Sarada said encouraging him: “Let the talking with the Buddha be my responsibility. On your part, make an arrangement for your great act of merit (*adhikāra*).”

Having listened to Sarada's advice, Sirivaddhana levelled the ground measuring eight *pai* in front of the doorway of his house and covered it with white sand, scattered over it confetti of flowers of five kinds with parched rice as the fifth. He also built a shed roofed with blue lotus flowers, prepared the seat for the Buddha and arranged things dedicated in honour of the Buddha. Then only did he give a signal to Sarada to bring the Sangha headed by the Buddha. Taking his cue from Sirivaddhana, Sarada brought the Sangha, with the Buddha at its head, to Sirivaddhana's house.

Sirivaddhana welcomed the Buddha and took His bowl and robe and respectfully brought Him into the shed and offered water to Him and His Sangha and then with excellent food. When the meal was over, he gave highly valued robes to the Buddha and His Sangha. Thereafter, he said: “Exalted Buddha, this act of merit performed by me is not intended for a small reward. Therefore, kindly do me a favour in this way for seven days.” The Buddha kept silent in agreement. Sirivaddhana then performed a great alms-giving (*mahā-dāna*) in the same manner for a week. On the last day of the alms-giving, while standing with his joined hands raised respectfully in the direction of the Buddha, he said thus: “Exalted Buddha, my friend Sarada has aspired for the position of a Chief Disciple and the right-flanker to the Buddha Gotama. I too aspire for the position of the left-flanker Chief Disciple to that very Buddha Gotama.”

When the Buddha surveyed the future, He saw that the aspiration of Sirivaddhana would be fulfilled. So He prophesied: “An *asaṅkheyya* and a hundred thousand aeons from now, you will become a second Chief Disciple, the Left-flanker.” Hearing the Buddha's prophecy, Sirivaddhana was overjoyed. After giving a talk in appreciation of the *dāna*, the Buddha returned to the monastery in the company of monks. From then onwards, till his death, Sirivaddhana made efforts to perform acts of merit. On his passing away from that existence, he was reborn in the *Kāmāvacara* deva-world. Sarada the hermit developed the four sublime practices (*Brahmā-vihāra*) and was reborn in the *Brahmā* realm.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in The Final Existence

The Commentary says nothing elaborately about their good works done during the existences after their lives as the hermit Sarada and the Householder Sirivaddhana, but it gives an account of their lives in the last existence.

Just before the appearance of our Buddha Gotama, a virtuous man, the future Venerable Sāriputta, who had formerly been hermit Sarada, was conceived in the womb of a brahmin woman, a merchant's wife, Rūpasārī by name, in the village of Upatissa, near the city of Rājagaha. On that very day, another virtuous man, formerly Sarada's friend, Sirivaddhana, the future Moggallāna, took conception in the womb of Moggalī (wife of another merchant) in the village of Kolita, also near Rājagaha. These two great families had been

very friendly households since seven generations ago.

When they were born, after ten months had elapsed, each boy was looked after by sixty-six nurses. On the naming day, the son born of Rūpasārī was named Upatissa because he was the scion of the head of Upatissa village. The son born of Moggalī was named Kolita as his family was chief in Kolita village. When the two boys grew up, they became accomplished in all kinds of crafts.

The ceremonial paraphernalia of the youth Upatissa included five hundred golden palanquins to accompany him constantly whenever he paid a visit to the river, to the garden or to the hill for sport and pleasure. As for the youth Kolita, it was five hundred chariots drawn by the best breed of horses that usually went along with him. In Rājagaha, there was an annual festival held on the hilltop. For the two friends, the couches were fixed and prepared at the same place. Both took their seats together, and while watching the show, they laughed when humour was effected and shocked when horror was; they also gave awards when they were supposed to do.

After enjoying the show in this manner many times, one day they became more sober at the show and were no longer amused by funny scenes nor frightened by horrible ones. Also, there were absolutely no more awards given where they were expected. Both of them thought thus: "Where are those things attractive to the eyes on this festive occasion? Those who participate in the show and those who come to see it will all disappear before the end of a hundred years. We should therefore search for some form of spirituality for our escape from *samsāra*." They remained reflecting on the miseries of life.

Thereafter, Kolita said to his friend Upatissa: "Friend Upatissa, you show no satisfaction as on the other days. What are you thinking about, friend?" Upatissa replied: "Friend Kolita, I found nothing worthy in watching the show. Enjoyment of the festivity is useless; it is empty. I was, therefore, sitting with the thought that I ought to seek something for myself that would lead to liberation from *samsāra*." Having said this, he asked: "Friend Kolita, why are you also wearing a long face and looking displeased?" Kolita's answer was the same as Upatissa's. Knowing that his friend was contemplating the same thing, Upatissa consulted, saying: "Our common idea, dear Kolita, is something well conceived. Those who seek release from *samsāra* should adopt an ascetic life. Under whom shall we become ascetics?"

At that time, the great wandering ascetic, Saṅjaya, the leader of a religious sect, was staying in Rājagaha with a large gathering of pupils. The two friends agreed to become ascetics in the presence of Saṅjaya, each with his five hundred attendants. Since the time of the two friends' association with him, Saṅjaya had attained the height of his possession of retinue and fame.

Within two or three days, the two wanderers, Upatissa and Kolita, became well-educated in all the doctrines of the teacher Saṅjaya and they asked: "Teacher, is that all that you have mastered? Or, is there still some more that we have to learn?" "That is all I have mastered," replied Saṅjaya, "you have learned all the doctrines of mine." The two friends then discussed between them:

"In that case, it is useless to remain observing celibacy (*brahmā-cariya*) under this teacher, Saṅjaya. We have come from the life of householders in quest of release from *samsāra*. Never shall we be able to achieve that release in his presence. Vast is the Jambudīpa. If we wonder about villages, towns and royal cities and search, certainly we shall find some teacher who will give us the means leading to liberation."

From that time onwards, they visited the places, which they learned were the resort of learned monks and brahmins and had doctrinal dialogues and discussions. There were, however, no monks and brahmins who were really learned and able to answer the questions raised by the two wandering friends. In fact, it was the two friends who had to solve the problems put forth by the so-called learned sages. Having failed to find someone whom they should regard as their teacher, though they had roamed about all over the Jambudīpa

and making inquiries, they returned to their ascetic dwellings and made an agreement between themselves that whosoever received the doctrine concerning immortality earlier, should inform the other.

The time was the first waxing moon of Māgha, about half a month after the arrival of the Buddha in the city of Rājagaha. (Readers are referred to Chapter 25. This Chapter contains such episodes as (b) Conversion of the two friends and their pupils from the state of wandering ascetics to that of *ehi-bhikkhus* in the presence of the Buddha and (c) their attainment of the height of wisdom as Disciples. These episodes will therefore be omitted here.)

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

In the year He became enlightened, the Buddha passed His *vassa* in the Deer Park; thence He went to the Uruvelā forest and converted a thousand hermits headed by the three Kassapa brothers and established them in arahatship by means of the Āditta-pariyāya Sutta. On the full moon day of Phussa, He arrived at Rājagaha in the company of a thousand monks. After a fortnight, on the first waxing moon of Māgha, Upatissa met the *arahat*, Assaji, a member of the Band of Five, in Rājagaha. Having listened to the verse beginning with “*Ye dhamma hetuppabhavā,*” from the Venerable Assaji, Upatissa became a *sotāpanna ariya*. So did Kolita, after having heard the verse through Upatissa. Thereafter, both noble *sotāpanna* friends and their followers became *ehi-bhikkhus*. Before they became such monks, the followers attained arahatship the moment they heard the discourse from the Buddha. As the wisdom of Discipleship was too great to achieve, the future Chief Disciples were still away from that state, and it was on the seventh day of his bhikkhuhood that Mahā Moggallāna became *arahat* and it was on the fifteenth day, that is, on the full-moon day of Māgha, that Sāriputta did. (Vide Chapter 25.)

In this manner, the two Venerables reached the apex of their perfections and wisdom in Chief Discipleship while the Buddha was staying in Rājagaha. But, at a later time, while He was at the Jetavana monastery, Sāvattihī, He uttered in praise of them:

“*Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ mahāpaññānaṃ yadidaṃ Sāriputto.*”

“Monks, among my disciples who are of great wisdom, Sāriputta is the foremost.”

“*Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ iddhimantānaṃ yadidaṃ Mahā Moggallāno.*”

“Monks, among my disciples who are of great supernatural powers, Mahā Moggallāna is the foremost.”

With these words, the Buddha placed the Venerable Sāriputta the foremost in great wisdom and the Venerable Moggallāna in the foremost in great supernatural powers.

These two Venerables had practised for the welfare of sentient beings for forty-four years since they became *bhikkhus*. The discourses given by them are quite numerous in the five Nikāyas or the three Piṭakas. They are so numerous that it is almost impossible to reproduce them here, especially, the **Paṭisambhidāṃga Pāli**, the **Mahāniddeya Pāli** and the **Cūlaniddesa Pāli** which embody the words of Venerable Sāriputta. His *Thera-gāthā* forms a potpourri of his doctrines. So does Moggallāna's *gāthā*, his doctrinal miscellany. Those who desire them may read the translations of the texts concerned. Here in this work, however, the account of their attainment, after making efforts for the welfare of sentient beings for forty-four years will be given,

Venerable Sāriputta's Attainment of Parinibbāna

Having observed his last and forty-fifth *vassa* at the small village of Veḷuva, near the city of Vesālī, the Buddha emerged from that *vassa* and (as has been stated above) left the village by the same road which He had taken in reaching there. After setting forth for the

last time, the Buddha arrived in Sāvatti and entered the Jetavana monastery. The Captain of the Dhamma, Venerable Sāriputta, served the Buddha and went to his dwelling. When his pupils had fulfilled their duties to him at his dwelling and left, he would sweep the place and spread the leather mat; then he would wash his feet, sat down crossed-legged and engaged in *arahatta-phala*.

When the prescribed time for meditation was over, the Venerable rose from it and wondered whether the Buddha would attained Parinibbāna first or His Chief Disciples. He came to know that the Disciples usually did earlier. And when he examined his life process, he found out that it would go on only for seven more days. He further considered where his attainment of *parinibbāna* should take place.

“Venerable Rāhula attained *parinibbāna* in Tāvātimsa and Venerable Kondañña at the lake in Chaddanta. Where should I do so?” he pondered repeatedly and remembered his mother, the Brahmin lady Rūpasārī as follows:

“Oh, my mother has no faith in the Triple Gem, namely, the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, despite her being the mother of seven *arahats*. Has that mother of mine possessed spiritual potentials for any of the Paths and Fruitions?”

When he reflected thus, he came to know that she had, from her past acts of merit, the potentials that would lead to *sotāpatti-magga*. He continued to reflect as by which approach would she realize the Four Truths, and it manifested to him thus:

“My mother's realization of the four Truths and conversion will happen by me preaching to her and not by any other's. If I were to be indifferent without caring to convert her, people may come out with words of reproach, saying: ‘Venerable Sāriputta is a dependable person to others. This is true. The day the Venerable One preached the Samacitta Sutta (*Āṅguttara Nikāya* I) a hundred thousand crores of devas and Brahmās attained *arahatta-phala*. Those who attained lower Fruitions are countless. Those who gained liberation by realizing the four Truths elsewhere have also been witnessed. Besides the celestial families, who have faith in the Venerable, are eighty thousand in number. That very Venerable Sāriputta is now helpless just to remove the wrong views of his own mother.’ Therefore, after eradicating my mother's false notions, I shall attain *parinibbāna* in the very chamber in which I was born.”

Having decided thus, an idea to inform the Buddha, seek His permission and set out even on that day, appeared in him. So he ordered his young brother Cunda: “Dear Cunda, inform my five hundred monk-pupils to make themselves ready with their bowls and robes. The Captain of Dhamma, Venerable Sāriputta, is desirous of going to Nālaka, his native village.” Venerable Cunda did as he was told by his older brother.

The five hundred monks packed their beddings, took their bowls and robes and gathered round their master in unison. The Mahāthera himself packed his own bedding, swept his dwelling, stood at its doorway and viewed the place, thinking: “This is my last viewing. There will no longer be my coming again.” Together with the company of his five hundred pupils, he went to the Buddha, paid homage to him and said in supplication: “Exalted Buddha! May the Glorious One give me permission to leave. May the speaker of good words grant me permission. The time has come for me to attain *parinibbāna*. My life-process has been given up.”

(Herein, the word ‘*anujānātu*’ of the sentence “*anujānātu me bhante bhagavā...*” of the text is translated “give me permission” and such is the required meaning. Its literal meaning, however, is “May you know of my proposed entry into *parinibbāna*”, that is to say, “I am aware of my coming attainment of *parinibbāna*. May you also be aware of the same.”)

When other disciples, who were also *arahats*, came and sought permission for their demise, and if the Buddha said: “Do so!” those with wrong views would blame Him: “The Buddha speaks in praise death!” If, on the other hand, He said: “No, dear son, do not do that yet!” they would blame Him all the same, saying: “He speaks in praise of suffering!”

Hence there was neither way of replying on the part of the Buddha. That was why the Buddha asked the Venerable Sāriputta: “Dear Sāriputta, where will you attain *parinibbāna*?” The Venerable answered: “There is, Exalted Buddha, my birthplace in Nalaka village, in the country of Magadha. There will I do so.” “Now you are aware, dear son, of the time of your *parinibbāna*. It may be very difficult for your brethren, particularly, to see a man of your stature any longer. You had better give them sermons.”

Understanding that the Buddha wanted him to engage in preaching preceded by his performance of miracles, the noble Venerable paid homage to the Buddha, rose up into the air to the height of a toddy palm tree, came down and paid homage at the Buddha's feet. Again he rose into the air to the height of two toddy palm trees, came down and paid homage at the feet of the Buddha once more. In this way he rose up to the height of three, four, five, six and seven toddy palm trees and displayed hundreds of miraculous feats. While so doing, he preached. How did he preach?

He preached while showing his person; he preached while hiding his person; he preached while showing and hiding the upper part of his person; he preached while showing and hiding the lower part of his person; sometimes he created and showed the shape of the moon; sometimes he created and showed that of the sun, sometimes he did the shape of a great mountain; sometimes he did that of a great ocean; sometimes he became a Universal Monarch: sometimes Vessavaṇa Deva-King; sometimes Sakka, King of Gods; sometimes Mahā Brahmā. In this way the Mahāthera preached while performing hundreds of miracles. The entire city of Sāvattī assembled. Having preached in this way to his heart's content, he came down and paid homage at the Buddha's feet and stood firmly like a golden gate-post.

Then the Buddha asked: “Dear son Sāriputta, what is your kind of preaching called?” The Venerable replied: “Exalted Buddha, it is called *Sīhaviḍḍita*, something like the sport of a lion.” The Buddha delightedly approved of the Venerable's reply by saying: “Dear son Sāriputta, yours is indeed *sīhaviḍḍita* preaching! Your is indeed *sīhaviḍḍita* preaching.”

The Venerable's Last Homage to The Buddha

Firmly holding the turtle-like feet of the Buddha by the ankles with his hands in dark red like the colour of the liquefied lac, the noble Venerable Sāriputta said in supplication:

“Exalted Buddha, I have fulfilled the *pāramīs* for an *asaṅkhyeyya* and a hundred thousand aeons just to pay homage at these two feet of yours. The result of the fulfilment of my heart's desire has now successfully reached its apex. There is no prospect of reunion with you somewhere in some existence through rebirth from now on. Familiarity or friendliness connected with this life has been totally cut off. Now shall I enter the city of Nibbāna, which is free from old age, death and dangers, which is blissful, calm, secure, which hundreds of thousands of Buddhas have entered. Should there be any wrong doings, physical and verbal, done by me to your displeasure, kindly forgive me. To me the final moment has come now, Exalted Buddha.”

“My son Sāriputta, I forgive you. There is nothing whatever wrong physically or verbally on your part. You may now go, my dear son, wherever you wish.” Thus, the Buddha gave His permission.

Immediately after the Buddha had given permission, the Venerable Sāriputta pressed and gripped the Buddha's feet most vigorously. When he stood up, the great earth quaked instantly down to the water below, very strongly as though it were saying: “Though I am able to shoulder Mount Meru, the universe, the Himavanta and the seven surrounding mountains, I cannot today bear this aggregate of virtues.” A loud crash of thunder occurred, roaring tumultuously across the entire sky. Huge clouds arose in a second and let *pokkharavassa* rain fall heavily.

The Buddha thought: “Sāriputta has paid homage to my frame as I am sitting. Now I shall let him do so as I am standing.” So He rose from the Dhamma-throne, the Buddha-seat, from which He usually gave sermons, and walked towards the Fragrant Chamber and stood on the wooden board studded with gems. The Buddha, who was thus standing, the

Venerable Sāriputta circumambulated, keeping Him on his right and made obeisance from the front, from the back, from the left and from the right of Buddha. Then he made his last supplication:

“Exalted Buddha, I expressed my wish, prostrating at the feet of the Buddha Anomadassī an *asaṅkhyeyya* and a hundred thousand aeons ago, just for seeing You. My wish has now been fulfilled, I have had a chance to view You. When I expressed my wish, I listened continuously to the prophetic word of Buddha Anomadassī, and I visualized You through my knowledge and that was my first sight of You. My seeing You now is my last. There is no more chance for me to see You again.”

Thereafter he raised his joined hands, which were graceful and bright with the ten nails, towards the Buddha and walked backward till the visibility of the Buddha ended. Having paid respect thus, he departed together with his five hundred pupils. Then again the earth failed to bear the Venerable’s excellence and quaked down to the water below.

The Buddha asked the monks surrounding Him: “Dear sons, go and see your elder brother off!” All four classes of the assembly then left the Buddha alone at the Jetavana monastery and went out without anyone remaining there, to give the Venerable Sāriputta a send-off. The citizens of Savatthi too learnt that the Venerable was leaving Jetavana as he desired to attain *parinibbāna* after seeking permission from the Buddha. Wanting to get a glimpse of the noble Venerable, they came out from the city gate that was wholly crowded, with no room for exit or entry. Carrying perfumes and flowers and with their hair dishevelled, they wailed: “Venerable Sir, to which *thera* should we go now, enquiring: ‘Where is Venerable Sāriputta of great wisdom? Where is Venerable Sāriputta, the Captain of the Dhamma?’ Into whose hands do you entrust the Exalted Buddha and leave, noble Venerable?” Wailing in this way, they followed the Venerable step by step.

As the Venerable Sāriputta was of great wisdom, he exhorted the crowd briefly: “This path leading to death of every arising being is something which nobody is able to overcome.” He also asked the monks: “You too stay behind, monks, and do not neglect the Exalted One.” Thus he sent them back and headed for Nālaka village together with his own followers. To those people who went along with him lamenting: “Formerly the Noble One used to travel only to come back. But his journey now is of no return?” The Venerable gave an exhortative discourse, saying: “Dear donors, virtuous ones! Be persons of mindfulness. Conditioned things, whether physical or mental, happen like this. After arising, do they end in passing away!” By this advice concerning mindfulness, the Venerable persuaded them to go home.

After uplifting the people, on the way for seven days, spending just one night at each place, but without prolonging his stay, he travelled on and on till he reached Nālaka one evening. He stopped and rested at the foot of a banyan tree near the village gate.

Then the nephew of the Venerable, a boy by the name of Uparevata, came out of the village. Seeing the noble Venerable, he went near him and stood, paying respect. The Venerable asked the nephew: “Uparevata, is your grandmother at home?” When the boy answered that she was, the Venerable said: “Go and tell her of our arrival in the village. If she asks the reason for our coming here, say that we shall stay here the whole day and ask her in my name to clean the chamber where I was born and also to arrange lodgings for five hundred monks.”

Uparevata, went to his grandmother Rūpasārī and told her: “O grandmother, my uncle (Upatissa) has come.” “Where is he now?” asked the grandmother. The boy answered: “At the city gate.” “Is he alone or is there somebody else too?” “Yes, there are five hundred monks who have come along.” “Why did he come?” the grandmother asked him again and the boy related all as instructed by the Venerable. “Oh, why did he want me to clean and arrange lodgings for such a great number of monks?” wondered the lady. “After he becoming a monk in his youth, perhaps he desires to return to laity now that he has grown old.” With this thought, she cleaned the chamber which was the birthplace of the Venerable and prepared the accommodations for the five hundred monks. She also lighted the

standing lamps and sent for the Venerable.

The noble Venerable, having ascended to the upper terrace together with the five hundred monks and having entered the chamber and sat down there, he dismissed them saying: "Go to your respective places." As soon as the monks were out, a severe ailment occurred to the Venerable's body. Deadly pains, from discharge of blood, developed incessantly. The treatment given to him involved exchange of a vessel in for a vessel out. Thinking: "I do not like the way my son is suffering," the Brahmin lady Rūpasārī stood, leaning against the doorway of her chamber.

Then the Four Deva Kings surveyed the present whereabouts of the noble Venerable, the Captain of the Dhamma and they saw him lying on his deathbed in his chamber, his birthplace, in the village of Nālaka. And they decided to go there to pay their last respect and to give their last treatment. On arrival, they stood near him in respect-paying attitude. When the Venerable asked who they were, they answered that they were the four kingly deities. "Why did you come?" enquired the Venerable and they answered: "We come to look after you, Sir." He sent them back, saying: "Enough! I have a monk as my nurse. You may return!" When they went back, Sakka came in the same way. When Sakka departed, Mahābrahmā came. Both Sakka and Mahābrahmā were sent back by the Venerable with the same words.

Having seen the coming and going of devas and Brahmā, the Brahmin lady Rūpasārī became desirous of knowing who those beings were that came and paid homage to her son. She went near the doorway of the chamber and asked (her younger son Cunda who was already there): "Dear son Cunda, What is the matter?" Cunda explained to his mother that the Venerable was sick, and he told Venerable Sāriputta of their mother's presence. When the Venerable asked why she came untimely, the mother replied that she did so to see her ailing son, and asked: "Who are those persons, dear son, that visited you first?" "Those who came first to me, madam, are the Four Great Deva Kings." "Are you superior to those Deva Kings, son?"

The Venerable answered: "Madam, those four Deva Kings are like the guardsmen of our residence. Armed with their swords they have protected our Master, the Exalted Buddha, since His conception." The mother continued to ask: "Who are those that came immediately after the Deva Kings?" "He is Sakka." "Are you superior to Sakka too?"

The Venerable answered: "That Sakka, madam, is like a young *sāmaṇera* who carries my bowl and other articles. When our Master, the Exalted Buddha, descended from the Tāvātimsa abode to the human world after His Teaching of the **Abhidhamma** there, Sakka came along carrying the Master's bowl and robe." The mother asked again: "Who is he that came shining, immediately after Sakka's visit?" "Madam," answered the Venerable, "the one who came last is Mahābrahmā, your God and Master." "Dear son, are you also superior to Mahābrahmā, our God?"

Then the Venerable said: "Oh, yes, madam! On the day our Teacher, the Exalted Buddha, was born, four Mahābrahmās, not just one, came and received the Bodhisatta, the Supreme One, with a gold net."

Mother's Attainment of Spirituality

Then the mother reflected: "What I have seen now is my son's magnificence. I wonder how the magnificence of my son's Master, the Exalted Buddha, would like? It must indeed be inestimable!" While she was thus wondering, the five kinds of joy (*pīti*) occurred to her and pervaded her whole body. The Venerable perceived: "Now joy and happiness (*pīti somanassa*) has occurred to my mother. This is a very suitable occasion for me to give a Dhamma-talk to her." So he asked: "Madam, what are you thinking about?" "I am wondering, son, that what I have seen now is my son's magnificence and what is your Master's would be like, for it must be inestimable." Then the Venerable explained: "Madam, when our Master, the Exalted One, was born, when He gave up the world, when He gained Enlightenment and when He delivered the First Sermon of Dhammacakka, the system of ten thousand worlds trembled roaringly. There is none in the world who equals our Master in such virtues as morality, mental concentration, wisdom, emancipation and

insight through emancipation. For these reasons, He is the possessor of such attributes as *Arahant*, and *Sammāsambuddha*.” With this introductory speech, Venerable Sāriputta gave a Dhamma-talk expounding elaborately the attributes of the Buddha.

At the end of the sermon by her beloved eldest son, the mother was established in *sotāpatti-phala* and said reprovingly: “My dear son Sāriputta, why did you fail to give me such wonderfully substantial happiness? Why did you have the heart to do like this?” Thinking: “I have paid my debt of gratitude to my mother for my birth. *Sotāpatti-phala* is good enough for her,” the Venerable sent her away, saying: “Go, madam!” Then he asked his brother Cunda about the time. When the reply was: “Almost daybreak,” the Venerable called a meeting of monks and when Cunda informed him that the monks had been assembled, he asked Cunda to help him sit up.

The Venerable apologetically addressed the assembly: “Friends, if there is any unpleasant deed or word on my part while you were wandering along with me for forty-four years, kindly forgive me.” The assembly of monks replied: “Venerable Sir, during our wandering with you, without deserting you for forty-four years, we saw no unpleasant deed or word of yours. In fact, it is you, Venerable Sir, who are to forgive us.” When they had said apologetic words, he gathered his robe and covered his face and lay on his right side. Like the Buddha, he entered upon the nine *jhānas* that were to be taken up serially; he was absorbed in them progressively and then regressively; again he proceeded in his absorption from the first *jhāna* up to the fourth *jhāna*. Immediately after his emergence from the fourth *jhāna*, the Venerable attained *Khandha-Parinibbāna*, Complete Extinction of the physical and mental aggregates occurring through *Anupādisesa* element, the element of Nibbāna without any remnants of the aggregates, causing immediately the great earth to roar echoingly.

Being aware that her son did not say a word and wondering what had happened to her son, the mother Rūpasārī enquired by running her hands on the back of his sole and felt, and she came to know well that her son had attained *parinibbāna*. So making a loud noise, she touched the Venerable’s feet with her head and cried, uttering: “Dear son, we did not know of your virtues previously. Now we have no opportunity to invite hundreds of thousands of monks, with you at their head, to my house for feeding! There is no chance to offer you robes! No occasion to have hundreds of dwellings built!” Thus, she wailed till dawn. As soon as dawn came, the mother summoned goldsmiths, had the treasures opened and gold bars weighed with a huge pair of scales and handed them over to the goldsmiths, ordering: “Brothers, make with this gold bullion five hundred spired halls and five hundred pavilions.”

Sakka too called Visukamma Deva and commanded him: “Friend Visukamma, the Captain of the Dhamma, Venerable Sāriputta, has attained *parinibbāna*. Create five hundred spired halls and five hundred pavilions of gold.” Visukamma created them all under Sakka’s command. In this way, there were five hundred spired structures and five hundred pavilions caused to be built by the mother and another five hundred spired halls and another five hundred pavilions created by Visukamma, totalling two thousand golden structures.

Thereafter, a large hall was built with a big golden pinnacle in the middle, at the centre of the Nālaka village and other pinnacles were made for lesser halls. Then the ceremony for funeral rites took place. In this ceremony, devas mingled with humans and humans with devas and thus they all paid homage to the remains of the Venerable, making the ceremony more crowded.

The Story of Revatī The Female Devotee

The Venerable’s female devotee, Revatī by name, came to the funeral with three golden vases made to honour her Master. At that moment, Sakka too came to the human world with the intention to do honour to the Venerable and with him were divine dancing girls as his companions, numbering two crores and five million. Learning of Sakka’s visit, people turned back and moved away. In the crowd was Revatī, who also tried to move back like

others, but as she was heavy with child, she could not get to a safe place and fell down in the midst of the people. Not seeing her the people trod on her and went away. Revatī died on the spot and was reborn in a golden mansion in Tāvatiṃsa. Instantly she had a body about three gāvutas, resembling a huge gem stone. Her ornaments were about the load of sixty cans and her retinue of divine maids were a thousand in number.

Then the maids place a big mirror in front of her. When she saw her luxuries, she pondered: “This wealth is great indeed! What kind of good works have I done?” And this led her to know: “I paid homage to the Venerable Sāriputta with three golden vases. The people stepped on me and got away. I died on the spot and took instant rebirth in this Tāvatiṃsa. I shall tell the people clearly of the result of my wholesome deeds done to the Venerable. So she went down in her own flying mansion to the realm of human beings.

Seeing the golden mansion from a distance, the people were amazed wondering: “What is the matter? Are there two suns rising brightly?” While they were thus talking, the big mansion descended near them, and showed its shape. Then they said: “This is not a sun. It is a gigantic gold mansion!” While the people were saying among themselves, the golden mansion descended nearer in a moment and halted in the sky just above the funeral pyre of fragrant wood piled up to burn the remains of the Venerable. The Goddess Revatī left the mansion in the sky and went down to earth. “Who are you?” asked the people and Revatī replied: “Do you not know me? I am Revatī by name. After honouring the Venerable with three golden vases, I was trodden on by the people to death and was reborn in Tāvatiṃsa. Behold my fortune and splendour. You too now give alms. Do other acts of merit as well.” Thus she spoke in praise of the beneficial results of good works. She paid homage and circumambulated the funeral pyre by keeping it at her right, she then went back to her divine abode of Tāvatiṃsa.

(This is the story of Revatī.)

Conveyance of The Relics to Sāvatti by Cunda

Having performed the funeral rites for seven days, the people made a heap of fragrant wood, its height measuring ninety-nine cubits. They put the Venerable’s remains on top of the fragrant wooden heap and lighted it with wisps of fragrant grass on the site where the cremation took place, a Dhamma-talk was given throughout the night. At day-break, the Venerable Anuruddha extinguished the fire of the funeral pyre with scented water. Then Venerable Sāriputta’s young brother, Cunda Thera put the relics in the water filter, and thinking: “I must not stay here now in this Nālaka village. I shall report the attainment of *parinibbāna* by my older brother, Venerable Sāriputta, the Captain of the Dhamma, to the Exalted One.” So he took the water-filter containing the relics and collected the Venerable’s requisites, such as bowl, robe, etc., and went to Sāvatti. He spent only one night, not two nights, at each stage of his journey and eventually arrived at Savatti.

Then Cunda Thera bathed in the lake near the Jetavana monastery, returned to the shore and put on his robes properly. He reflected: “Buddha are great personalities to be respected, like a stone umbrella. They are difficult to approach like a snake with its erected hood or like a lion, tiger or an elephant in heat. I dare not go straight to the Exalted One to inform Him. Whom should I approach first?” Reflecting thus, he remembered his preceptor: “My preceptor, the custodian of the Dhamma, the Venerable Ānanda, is a very close good friend of my brother. I shall go to him and relate the matter and then I shall take him with me and speak to the Exalted One.” So he went to Venerable Ānanda, paid respect to him and sat down at a proper place. And he said to Venerable Ānanda: “Venerable Sir, Venerable Sāriputta has attained *parinibbāna*. This is his bowl and this his robe, and this the water-filter containing his relics.” Thus he presented one article after another while speaking to Venerable Ānanda. (It should be noted that Cunda Thera did not go straight to the Buddha but to Venerable Ānanda first, because he had profound respect for the Buddha as well as for his preceptor.)

Then Venerable Ānanda said: “My friend Cunda, we have some verbal excuse to see the Exalted One. Come, friend Cunda, let us go. Let us approach the Exalted One and tell Him of the matter.” So saying Venerable Ānanda took Cunda Thera to the Buddha, paid respect

to Him, took their proper seats. Thereafter the Venerable Ānanda said to the Buddha:

“Exalted Buddha, this Cunda Thera who has been known as a novice (*saman'uddesa*) has informed me that the Venerable Sāriputta has attained *parinibbāna*. This is the Venerable's bowl, this his robe and this his water-filter with his relics.”

So saying, Venerable Ānanda handed over the water-filter to the Buddha.

The Buddha stretched out His hand to receive the water-filter and placed it on His palm and addressed the monks:

“Monks, my dear sons, fifteen days ago Sāriputta performed a number of miracles and sought my permission to enter *parinibbāna*. Now only his bodily relics remain which are as white as the newly polished conch shell.

“Monks, that monk Sāriputta was one who had fulfilled *pāramīs* for an *asankhyeyya* and a hundred thousand aeons. He was the individual who turned the Wheel of the Dhamma that had been turned by Me previously or one who had taught the Wheel of the Law that had been taught by Me. Marvellously did he occupy the place that was next to me.

“That monk Sāriputta caused the *Sāvaka-sannipāta*, the Assembly of Disciples, with his presence extremely well. (The *Sāvaka-sannipāta* emerged on the day he became an *arahat*.) Besides Me, he was peerless in possessing wisdom throughout the *Jātikhetta*, the system of ten thousand worlds.

“That monk Sāriputta was of great wisdom, of vast wisdom, of active wisdom, of quick wisdom, of sharp wisdom, and of wisdom destructive to *kilesa* (passion), of few wants, easily contented, free from *nīvaranas* (hindrances), unmixed with people and highly energetic. He admonishes others by pointing out their faults, condemns evil deeds and evil doers regardless of their social positions.

“Dear monks, (a) that monk Sāriputta embraced asceticism after renouncing his great wealth in five hundred existences; (b) that monk Sāriputta had forbearance that was as mighty as the great earth; (c) that monk Sāriputta was least conceited as a horn-broken bull; (d) that monk Sāriputta was as humble-minded as a beggar's son.

“Dear monks, behold the relics of Sāriputta who was of great wisdom! Behold the relics of Sāriputta who was of vast wisdom, of active wisdom, of quick wisdom, of sharp wisdom, of wisdom penetrative to *kilesa*, of few wants, easily contented, free from *nīvaranas*, unmixed with people and highly energetic. He admonished others by pointing out their faults, condemned evil deeds and evil doers regardless of their social positions!”

(After uttering thus in prose, the Buddha went on to speak the following verses:)

- 1) *Yo pabbaji jātisatāni pañca
pahāya kāmāni manoramāni.
Taṃ vītarāgaṃ susamāhit'indriyaṃ
parinibbutaṃ vandatha Sāriputtaṃ*

O my dear sons, monks! That noble monk, named Sāriputta, unflinchingly and completely discarded sense pleasure that could delight the foolish mind. He adopted an ascetic life with great faith for five hundred existences. To that noble monk, named Sāriputta, who now has totally cut off craving and passion, whose sense-faculties were well restrained, who has attained *parinibbāna* and ceased suffering, bow your heads in homage with your faith respectful and conceit destroyed.

- 2) *Khantibalo pathavisamo na kuppati
na cā'pi cittassa vasena vattati.*

*Anukampako kārūṇiko ca nibbuto
parinibbutaṃ vandatha Sāriputtaṃ.*

O my dear sons, monks! That noble monk, named Sāriputta, had great forbearance as his strength; resembling the great earth he showed no anger to others; never yielded to the whims of the unstable mind; he looked after many beings with loving-kindness; he was immensely compassionate; he quenched the heat of *kilesa*. To him, who has attained *parinibbāna* and ceased suffering, bow your heads in homage with your faith respectful and conceit destroyed.

3) *Caṇḍālaputto yathā nagaraṃ pavitṭho
nicamāno carati kaḷopihaṭṭho.
Tathā ayaṃ vicarati Sāriputto
parinibbutaṃ vandatha Sāriputtaṃ.*

O my dear sons, monks! Just as the son of a poor beggar who enters towns and villages looking for food with a worn out cup made of bamboo strips in his hand, wanders without conceit but humble-minded, even so this noble monk, named Sāriputta, wandered knowing no pride but in all humility. To him, who has attained *parinibbāna* and ceased suffering, bow your heads in homage with your faith respectful and conceit destroyed.

4) *Usabho yathā chinnavisāṇako
aṭṭhayaṇto carati purantare vane.
Tathā ayam vihāreti Sāriputto
parinibbutaṃ vandatha Sāriputtaṃ.*

O my dear sons, monks! Just as the horn-broken bull wanders in towns, villages and forests, absolutely, harmless to other beings, even so the noble monk, named Sāriputta, wandered doing no harm to others and lived in harmony with four postures of lying, sitting, standing and walking. To him, who has attained *parinibbāna* and ceased suffering, bow your heads in homage with faith respectful and conceit destroyed.

Beginning thus the Buddha praised the virtues of the Venerable Sāriputta in five hundred verses.

The more the Buddha praised, in all manner, the Venerable's virtues, the greater Venerable Ānanda's helplessness. As a chicken, near a cat's mouth, trembles, so does the Venerable Ānanda helplessly tremble. Accordingly, he asked the Buddha:

"Exalted Buddha, having heard of the Venerable Sāriputta's *parinibbāna*, I feel as though my body becomes stiff, the directions blur my eyes, the Dhamma does not manifest itself to me. (I am not inclined to learn any unlearned Dhamma-texts nor am I interested to recite what I have learnt.)"

Then in order to cheer him up the Buddha said as follows:

"My dear Ānanda, does Sāriputta attain *parinibbāna* taking with him the aggregate of your *sīla* virtues or taking with him the aggregate of *samādhi* virtues, *paññā* virtues, *vimutti* virtues, *vimuttiñāna-dassana* virtues?"

Thereupon Venerable Ānanda replied:

"Exalted Buddha, the Venerable Sāriputta does not attain *parinibbāna*, taking the aggregate of my *sīla* virtues, my *samādhi* virtues, *paññā* virtues, *vimutti* virtues, or *vimuttiñāna-dassana* virtues.

"In fact, Exalted Buddha, the Venerable Mahāthera exhorted me, made me plunge into the Dhamma, made me understand the Dhamma, and made me set up the Dhamma. He made me to become ardent and happy to practise the Dhamma. He was anxious to preach to me. He respected his co-residents. I always remember his

Dhamma influence, his Dhamma instruments and his righteous support.”

The Buddha knowing that the Venerable Ānanda was really in great distress, said to him as follows, for he desired to abate his sorrowful feelings:

“My dear Ānanda, have I not talked to you long before about separation from one's beloved while alive (*nānābhāva*), separation by death (*vinābhāva*) and separation being in different existences (*aññathābhāva*)? Dear Ānanda, herein how would it be possible to wish that something, having the nature of newly coming to life, clearly coming into existence and being subject to conditioning and destruction, should not pass away? Indeed there is no such possibility!

“My dear Ānanda, while a big substantial tree is standing, its largest branch might come to destruction; similarly, while the community of worthy monks is existing, Śāriputta ceases to live. Herein how would it be possible to wish that something, having the nature of newly coming to life, clearly coming into existence and being subject to conditioning and destruction, should not pass away? Indeed there is no such possibility.

“My dear Ānanda, live not by depending on others but by depending on yourself. Live not by relying on other doctrines but by relying on the supramundane ones!

“My dear Ānanda, how should a monk live not by depending on others but by depending on himself? How should one live not relying on other doctrines but by relying on supramundane ones?

“My dear Ānanda, in this dispensation, a monk lives, eradicating craving and grief that tend to appear in the world, by putting strong efforts, by reflecting, by being mindful, by repeatedly seeing the body as the body. By putting strong efforts, by reflecting, by being mindful, (one lives, eradicating craving and grief that tends to appear in the world), by repeatedly seeing feelings as the feelings, by repeatedly seeing the mind as the mind,... by repeatedly seeing phenomena as phenomena.

“My dear Ānanda, in this way a monk lives not by depending on others but by depending on himself. He lives not by relying on other doctrines but by relying on supramundane ones.

“My dear Ānanda, if monks, at present or after my demise, live by not depending on others but by depending on themselves, by not relying on other doctrines but by relying on supramundane ones, all of them will become noblest (*Arahats*), indeed among those, who take the three trainings favourable.”

Speaking to him in this way, the Buddha gave some relief to the Venerable Ānanda. Thereafter, He had the bone relics of the Venerable Śāriputta enshrined in a *cetiya* in the city of Sāvattthi.

This is an account of Śāriputta Mahāthera's attainment of Parinibbāna.

Moggallāna Mahāthera's Attainment of Parinibbāna

After having the relics of Venerable Śāriputta enshrined in a *cetiya* in Sāvattthi, as has been said, the Buddha gave a hint to Venerable Ānanda that He would travel to Sāvattthi. Venerable Ānanda then informed the monks of the Buddha's proposed journey to that city. In the company of a large number of monks, the Buddha set out from Sāvattthi to Rājagaha and took residence in the Veḷuvana monastery.

(Herein, the Buddha attained Enlightenment on the full-moon day of Vesākha (April-May). On the first waxing day of Māgha, the Venerables Śāriputta and Moggallāna joined the Sangha and on the seventh day, the Venerable Moggallāna attained arahatship. On the fifteenth day, the full moon of Māgha, Śāriputta became an *arahat*.

(On the full moon day of Kattika (October-November) of the year 148 Mahā Era, the day the Buddha completed 45 *vassas* and the two Chief Disciples, 44 *vassas*, the Venerable Śāriputta attained *parinibbāna* in his native village Nālaka. It should

be noted briefly in advance that the Venerable Moggallāna did the same at the Kālasilā stone slab on Mount Isigili, Rājagaha, on the new-moon day of that month of Kattika. The account of Venerable Sāriputta's attainment of *parinibbāna* has been given. Now that of Venerable Moggallāna's is as follows:)

While the Buddha was staying at the Veḷuvana monastery of Rājagaha, the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna was sojourning at the stone slab, named Kālasilā, on Mount Isigili.

As the Venerable was at the height of his supernormal powers, he used to visit the realm of devas as well as to that of Ussada hell. After seeing for himself the great enjoyment of divine luxuries by the Buddha's followers in deva-world and the great suffering of heretical disciples in Ussada, he returned to the human world and told the people that such and such a male or female donor was reborn in deva-world, enjoying great luxuries but among the followers of heretics such and such a man or a woman was reborn in a certain hell. People therefore showed their faith in the Buddha's teaching and avoid heretics. For the Buddha and his disciples, the people's honour and hospitality increased whereas those for the heretics decreased day by day.

So the latter conceived a grudge against the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna. They discussed and decided, saying: "If this monk Moggallāna lives longer our attendants and donors might disappear and our gains might diminish gradually. Let us have him killed." Accordingly they paid a thousand coins to a chief robber, named Samaṇaguttaka, to put the noble Venerable to death.

With the intention to kill the Venerable, the chief robber Samaṇaguttaka, accompanied by a large number of robbers, went to Kālasilā. When the Venerable saw him, he disappeared into the air by means of his supernormal powers. Not finding the Venerable, the chief robber went back that day and returned again the next day. The Venerable evaded him in the same way. Thus six days had elapsed.

On the seventh day, however, due to his misdeed done in the past, the *aparāpariya akusalakamma* took effect. The *aparāpariya* unwholesome deed of the Venerable was as follows:

In one of his former existences, when he was inexperienced, wrongly following the slanderous words of his wife, he wished to kill his parents. So he took them in a small vehicle (cart) to the forest and pretending to be plundered by robbers, he attacked his parents. Being unable to see who attacked them because of their blindness and believing that the attacker were real robber, they cried for the sake of their son saying: "Dear son, these robbers are striking us. Run away, dear son, to safety!"

With remorse, he said to himself: "Though I, myself, beat them, my parents cried, worrying about me. I have done a wrong thing!" So he stopped attacking them and making them believe that the robbers were gone, he stroked his parents' arms and legs and said: "O mother and father fear not. The robbers have fled." and he took them home.

Having no chance to show its effect for a long time, his evil deed remained like a live charcoal covered by ash and now, in his last existence, it came in time to seize upon and hurt him. A worldly simile may be given as follows: when a hunter sees a deer, he sends his dog for the deer, and the dog, following the deer, catches up at the right place and bites the prey. In the same way, the evil deed done by the Venerable now had its chance to show its result in this existence of the Venerable. Never has there been any person who escapes the result of his evil deed that finds its opportunity to show up at an opportune moment.

Knowing full well of his being caught and bitten by his own evil deed, the Venerable Mahāthera was unable to get away by his supernormal power at the seventh attempt. This was the power that had been strong enough to make Nāga King Nandopananda tamed and to make the Vejayanta palace tremble. As a result of his past wickedness, he could not disappear into the air. The power that had enabled him to defeat the Naga King and to make the Vejayanta tremble, had now become weak because of his former highly atrocious act.

The chief robber, Samaṇaguttaka, arrested the Venerable, and together with his men hit him and pounded him so that the bones broke to pieces like broken rice. After doing this

deed known as *palālapīṭhika* (pounding the bones to dust so they become something like a ring of straw used as a cushion to put something on; it was a kind of cruelty.) After so doing and thinking that the Venerable was dead, the chief robber threw the body into a bush and left together with his men.

Becoming conscious, the Venerable thought of seeing the Buddha before his demise and having fastened his pounded body with the bandage of his psychic powers, he rose into the sky and appear before the Buddha and paid homage to the Master. Thereafter, the following conversation took place between the Venerable and the Buddha:

Mahāthera: Exalted Buddha, I have given up the control of my life process (*āyusaikhāra*). I am going to attain *parinibbāna*.

Buddha: Are you going to do so, my dear son Moggallāna?

Mahāthera: Yes, I am, Venerable Sir.

Buddha: Where will you go and do that?

Mahāthera: At the place where Kālasilā stone slab is, Exalted Buddha.

Buddha: In that case, dear son Moggallāna, give a Dhamma-talk to Me before you go. I will not have another opportunity to see a Disciple like you.

When the Buddha said thus, the noble Venerable, replying: “Yes, Exalted Buddha, I shall obey you,” paid homage to the Buddha and flew up into the air up to the height of a toddy palm tree, then that of two palm trees and in this way he rose up to the height of seven trees, and as the Venerable Sāriputta had done before on the day of his *parinibbāna*, he displayed various miracles and spoke of the Dhamma to the Buddha. After paying homage respectfully, he went to the forest where Kalasīla was and attained *parinibbāna*.

At that very moment, a tumult arose in all six planes of deva-worlds. Talking among themselves: “Our Master, Venerable Moggallāna, is said to have attained *parinibbāna*.” Devas and Brahmās brought divine unguents, flowers, fragrance, smoke and sandalwood power as well as various fragrant divine firewood. The height of the funeral pyre made of sandalwood was ninety-nine cubits. The Buddha Himself came together with His monks and standing near the remains, supervised the funeral arrangements and had the cremation conducted

On a *yojana*-vast environs of the funeral site, fell a rain of flowers. At the funeral ceremony, there were human beings moving about among devas and devas moving about among human beings. In due course, among devas stood demons; among demons, Gandhabba devas; among Gandhabba devas, Nāgas; among Nāgas, Garuḷas; among Garuḷas, Kinnarās; among Kinnarās, umbrellas; among umbrellas, fans made of golden camara (yak) tail; among these fans, round banners, and among round banners were flat ones. Devas and humans held the funeral ceremony for seven days.

The Buddha had the relics of the Venerable brought to Him and a *cetiya* was built. In it the relics were enshrined near the gateway of the Veḷuvana monastery.

Murderers punished

The news of the murder of Venerable Mahā Moggallāna spread throughout the whole Jambudīpa. King Ajātasattu sent detectives to all places to investigate and arrest the murderous robbers. While the murderers were drinking at a liquor shop, one of them provokingly slapped down the liquor cup of another fellow. Then the provoked man said, to pick a quarrel: “Hey, you wretched one, a stubborn fellow! Why did you do that and make my cup fall to the ground?” Then the first man annoyingly asked: “Hey, you scoundrel! How was it? Did you dare to hurt the Venerable first?” “Hey, you evil one! Did you not know that I was the first and foremost to harm that the monk?” the other man defiantly retorted.

Hearing the men saying among themselves: “It was I who did the killing. It was I who murdered him!” the King's officers and detectives seized all the murderers and reported (to King Ajātasattu) on the matter. The King summoned them and asked: “Did you kill the

Venerable Mahā Moggallāna?” “Yes, we did, Great King,” the men replied admitting. “Who asked you to do so?” “Great King, those naked heretics did, by giving us money,” the men confessed.

The King had all the five hundred naked heretics caught and buried together with the murderers in the pit, navel-deep in the courtyard. They were covered with straw and burnt to death. When it was certain that they all had been burnt, they were cut to pieces by ploughing over them with a plough fixed with iron spikes.

(Herein the account of Venerable Mahā Moggallāna’s attainment is taken from the exposition of the Sarabhaṅga Jātaka of the **Cattālisa Nipāta**; that of the punishment of the murderers from the exposition of Mahā Moggallāna Vatthu of the **Dhammapada Commentary**.)

Regarding the fact that the Buddha Himself supervised the funeral of the Venerable Moggallāna, the monks in the Dhamma-hall remarked: “Friends, since Venerable Sāriputta’s *parinibbāna* did not take place near the Buddha, he did not receive the Buddha’s honour. On the other hand, Mahā Moggallāna received it because he attained *parinibbāna* in the neighbourhood of the Buddha.” When the Buddha came and asked the monks what they were talking about, they gave the answer. The Buddha then said: “Monks, Moggallāna was honoured by Me not only in this life but also in the past.” The Buddha told them the Sarabhaṅga Jātaka of the **Cattālisa Nipāta**. (The detailed account of the Sarabhaṅga Jātaka may be taken from the the **Five Hundred and Fifty Jātaka Stories**.)

Soon after the *parinibbāna* of the two Chief Disciples, the Buddha went on a great circular (*mahāmaṇḍala*) tour in the company of monks and reached the town of Ukkacela where He made His alms-round, and delivered the Ukkacela Sutta on the sand banks of the Gaṅgā. (The full text of the Sutta may be read in the *Mahāvagga Saṃyutta*.)

(4) MAHĀ KASSAPA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

A hundred thousand aeons ago, Buddha Padumuttara appeared and, with the city of Hamsāvati as His alms-resort, He resided in the Deer Park called Khemā. While He was so residing, a wealthy person of eighty crores, named Vedeha (the future Mahāthera Mahā Kassapa), had his delicious early meal and observed Uposatha. With unguents, flowers, etc. in his hand, he went to the monastery where he made obeisance and sat down at a proper place.

At that time, the Buddha announced about His Third Disciple, Mahā Nisabha by name, saying: “Monks, among my disciples who themselves practise the *dhutaṅga* austerities and advise fellow monks to practise the same, Nisabha is foremost (*etadagga*).”

Hearing the Buddha’s words, Vedeha was very pleased and his faith increased and when the audience had left as the occasion came to an end, he respectfully paid homage to the Buddha and said: “Exalted Buddha, please accept my alms-food tomorrow.” “Donor,” replied the Buddha, “the monks are too many!” “How many are they, Exalted Buddha?” When the Buddha said they were six million and eight hundred thousand, he said boldly: “Exalted Buddha, without leaving even a single *sāmaṇera* at the monastery, kindly have my meal offering together with all of your monks.” The Buddha accepted the invitation of the devotee Vedeha by keeping silent.

Knowing well that the Buddha had accepted his invitation, Vedeha returned home and prepared a great offering and on the next morning sent a message to the Buddha announcing the time for having the meal. Taking His bowl and robe, the Buddha went to Vedeha’s house in the company of monks and sat on the prepared seat. When the pouring of dedication water was over, the Buddha accepted the rice gruel, etc. and did the distribution and partaking of food. Sitting near the Buddha, Vedeha remained very pleased.

At that time, while on alms-round, Venerable Mahā Nisabha came to that road. Seeing the Venerable, Vedeha got up from his seat and drew near the him, showing his respect, he asked: “Venerable Sir, please hand your bowl to me.” The noble Venerable handed the

bowl to Vedeḥa. “Please come into my house,” said Vedeḥa, “the Exalted One is still seated there.” “It is unbecoming to get into the house,” the Venerable replied. So the devotee filled the bowl with food and offered it to him.

After sending off the noble Venerable and returned home, Vedeḥa took his seat near the Buddha and said: “Exalted Buddha, although I told him that the Exalted Buddha was still in my house, he did not want to come in. Does he possess virtues that are greater than Yours?”

Never has a Buddha *vannamacchariya*, reluctance to speak in praise of others. Accordingly, the Buddha gave His reply as follows immediately after the lay devotee had asked:

“Donor, expecting food, we are seated in your house. But Nisabha never sits, waiting for food. We occupy a dwelling near a village. But Nisabha stays in a forest dwelling. We stay under a roof. But Nisabha dwells only in open air. These are Nisabha's unusual attributes.”

The Buddha elaborated the Venerable's virtues as though He filled the ocean with some more water. As for Vedeḥa, he developed greater faith with greater satisfaction as though more oil is poured into the lamp that is burning with its own oil. So he came to a conclusion: “What use is there for me, by human and divine luxuries? I shall resolve to become foremost among *dhutavāda* monks who themselves practise *dhutaṅga* austerities and advise their co-residents to do so.”

Again, the lay devotee Vedeḥa invited the Sangha headed by the Buddha to his food for the next day. In this way, he offered a great *dāna* and on the seventh day, he distributed, in charity, three-piece robes to the monks. Then he fell at the feet of the Buddha and told of his wish as follows:

“Exalted Buddha, with the development of deed accompanied by loving-kindness (*mettā-kāyakamma*), word accompanied by loving-kindness (*mettā-vacikamma*), and thought accompanied by loving-kindness (*mettā-manokamma*), I have performed acts of merit for seven days such as this *mahā-dāna*. I do not long for the bliss of devas, the bliss of Sakka nor the bliss of Brahmā as a result of my good work but may it be some wholesomeness that will enable me to strive for becoming foremost among those who practised the thirteen *dhutaṅga* practices in the lifetime of a coming Buddha, similar to the position that has been achieved now by the Venerable Mahā Nisabha.”

Buddha Padumuttara surveyed Vedeḥa's future with his psychic power, wondering “whether he will achieve it or not, for it is so great an aspiration” and he saw the man's wish would definitely be fulfilled. So the Buddha said prophetically as follows:

“Donor, you have expressed your wish for the position you love. In future, at the end of a hundred thousand aeons, a Buddha by the name of Gotama shall arise. You shall then become the third Disciple, named Mahā Kassapa, of the Buddha Gotama!”

Having heard the prophecy, lay devotee Vedeḥa was happy as though he was going to attain that position even the following day, for he knew that “a Buddha speaks only the truth.” For as long as he lived, Vedeḥa performed various sorts of charity, kept the precepts and did other wholesome deeds and on his death, he was reborn in a divine abode.

Life as Ekasāṭaka Brahmin

From that time onwards, the devotee enjoyed luxury in the divine and human worlds. Ninety-one aeons ago, Buddha Vipassī appeared and was staying in the Deer Park called Khemā, with the City of Bandhumatī as His alms-resort. The lay devotee, former Vedeḥa, then passed from the divine world and took rebirth in an unknown poor brahmin family.

Buddha Vipassī used to hold a special convocation, once in every seven years and gave discourses. In so doing, He held day and night sessions so that every being might be able to attend. For the day session, He preached in the evening and for the night-session, He spent

the whole night. When the convocation was drawing near, there arose a great noise and, devas, roaming about the whole Jambudīpa, announced that the Buddha would deliver a discourse.

The brahmin, the future Mahā Kassapa, heard the news. But he had only one garment. So did his housewife, the brahmin woman. As for the upper garment, the couple had but one. That was why he was known all over the town as “Ekasāṭaka Brahmin, -- the Brahmin with one garment.” When a meeting of brahmins took place to discuss some business, the Brahmin himself went to the meeting leaving behind his wife at home; when an assembly of brahmin women occurred, the Brahmin stayed at home and his wife went there, putting on the same piece of upper garment.

On the day the Buddha was to speak, Ekasāṭaka asked his wife: “O dear wife, how is it? Will you go to hear the discourse at night or will you go for the day session?” “We womankind are unable to listen the sermons at night, I shall attend the day session.” So saying she (left her husband at home and) went along with other female lay devotees and donors to the day session wearing the upper garment. There, she paid respect to the Buddha, sat at a proper place and listened to the sermons and went home together with the female companions. Then, leaving his wife, the Brahmin, in his turn, put on the same piece of upper garment and went to the monastery at night.

At that time Buddha Vipassī was gracefully seated on the Dhamma-throne and, holding a round fan, spoke the Dhamma-words like a man swimming in the celestial river or like a man stirring up the ocean forcefully with Mount Meru used as a churning stick. The whole body of Ekasāṭaka, who, sitting at the end of the assembly and listening, was filled with the five kinds of *pīti* profusely, even in the first watch of the night. Hence he folded the upper garment and was about to give it to the Buddha. Then he became reluctant to do so as stinginess (*macchhariya*) occurred in him, increasingly manifesting a thousand disadvantages of giving it away. When stinginess thus occurred in him, he utterly lost his willingness to offer because of his worry that had overwhelmed him as follows: “We have only one upper garment between my wife and myself. We have nothing else for a substitute. And we cannot go out without it.” When the second watch of the night came, the five kinds of *pīti* re-appeared in his mind, and he lost his enthusiasm once more as before. During the last watch too he felt the same joyful emotion. But this time the Brahmin did not allow stinginess to appear again and was determined, saying to himself: “Whether it is a matter of life or death, I will think about the clothing at a later time.” With this determination, he folded the garment, placed it at the feet of the Buddha and whole-heartedly offered it to the Master. Then he slapped his bent left arm with his right three times and uttered aloud also three times: “Victory is mine! Victory is mine!”

At that time, King Bandhuma, seated behind the curtain, at the back of the throne, was still listening to the Dhamma. As a king, it was he who should desire victory; so the shout, “Victory is mine!” did not please him. He, therefore, sent one of his men to enquire what the shout meant. When the man went to Ekasāṭaka and asked about it, the Brahmin answered:

“Man, all princes and others, riding elephants, horses, etc and carrying swords, spears, shields and cover, defeat their enemy troops. The victory achieved by them is no wonder. As for me, like a man who with a club strikes the head of a bull and made the beast run away, the beast that had followed him and jumped about to kill him from behind, and I have defeated my stingy heart and successfully given in charity the upper garment of mine to the Buddha. I have overcome miserliness which is invincible.”

The man came back and reported the matter to the king.

The King said: “Friend, we do not know what should be done to the Buddha. But the Brahmin does.” So saying, he sent a set of garment to the Brahmin. The Brahmin thought to himself: “The King gave me nothing as I kept silent at first. Only when I talked about the Buddha's attributes did he give this to me. What use is there for me with this set of garment that occurred to me in association with the Buddha's attributes?” So thinking he also

offered the set of garment to the Buddha.

The King asked his men as to what the Brahmin did with the garment-set given by him and came to know that the poor man had also given it away to the Buddha. So he had two sets of garment sent to the Brahmin. Again the Brahmin gave them away to the Buddha. The King then had four sets sent to the Brahmin, who again gave them away to the Buddha. In this way the King doubled his gift each time and had thirty-two sets sent to the Brahmin. This time the Brahmin thought: "Giving away all to the Buddha without leaving some for us seem to mean that we are increasingly receiving the garments." Accordingly, out of the thirty-two sets, he took one set for himself and another set for his wife and gave the rest to the Buddha. Since then the Brahmin had become friendly with the Master.

Then one day, in the extremely cold evening, the King saw the Brahmin listening to the Dhamma in the presence of the Buddha. He gave the Brahmin his red rug which he was putting on and which was worth a hundred thousand, asking him to cover himself while listening to the Dhamma. But the Brahmin reflected: "What is the use of covering this putrid body of mine with this rug?" He therefore made it a canopy and offered it to the Buddha, fixing it above the Buddha's couch in the Fragrant Chamber. Touched by the Buddha's six-coloured rays, the rug became all the more beautiful. Seeing the rug, the King remembered what it was and said to the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, that rug once belonged to me. I gave it to Ekasāṭaka Brahmin to put on while attending your Dhamma assembly." The Buddha replied: "Great King, you honoured the Brahmin, and the Brahmin honoured me." The King thought to himself: "The Brahmin knows what should be done to the Exalted Buddha but we do not." So thinking, the King gave all kinds of useful articles to the Brahmin, each kind equally numbering sixty-four. Thus, he performed the act of charity called *Aṭṭhaṭṭaka* to the Brahmin and appointed him Purohita.

Understanding that *aṭṭhaṭṭhaka*, 'eight by eight', means sixty-four, the Purohita sent daily sixty-four vessels of food for distribution among the monks by lot. Thus, he established his *dāna* for as long as he lived, and on his death, he was reborn again in the realm of devas.

Life as A Householder

Passing away from the realm of devas, the future Mahā Kassapa was reborn in the house of a layman, in the city of Bārāṇasī, during the Buddhantara Period, the two Buddhas, Koṇāgamana and Kassapa, appeared in this *bhadda-kappa*. When he grew old, he married and while living a householder's life, he, one day, took a stroll towards the forest. At that time, a certain Paccekabuddha was stitching a robe near a river-bank, and as he did not have enough cloth to make a hem he folded up the unfinished robe.

When the householder saw the Paccekabuddha, he asked the latter why he had folded the robe. When the Paccekabuddha answered that he had done so because he did not have enough cloth for the hem. Hearing this, he gave his own clothes, saying: "Please make the hem with this, Venerable Sir." Then he expressed his wish, praying: "In my coming existences in *samsāra*, may I know no lack of things."

Later on, at the householder's residence, there was a quarrel between the householder's sister and his wife. While they were quarrelling, a certain Paccekabuddha appeared, to receive alms-food. Then the householder's sister offered the food to the Paccekabuddha and said: "May I be able to avoid her even from a distance of hundred *yojanas*," and she meant by 'her', the householder's wife. While standing at the doorway, the wife heard the wish, and thinking: "May the Paccekabuddha not partake of the other woman's food," she took the alms-bowl and threw away the food and filled the bowl with mud before she gave it back to the Paccekabuddha. Seeing what the wife was doing, the sister scolded her, saying: "Hey you stupid woman, you may abuse me, or even beat me if you wish but it is not proper to throw away the food and fill the bowl with mud and give it back to the Paccekabuddha, who have fulfilled *pāramīs* for so long a period of innumerable years."

Then only did the householder's wife regain her moral sense and said: "Wait, please, Venerable Sir." Then she begged his pardon and threw away the mud from the bowl and washed it thoroughly and rubbed it with fragrant powder. She then filled the bowl with

catumadhu, and poured butter which was white like the colour of thickly grown lotus, and added brilliance thereby. Handing the bowl back to the Paccekabuddha, the wife said: "Just as this food shines, even so may my body emanate brilliant rays." The Paccekabuddha spoke words of appreciation, gave His blessing and flew up into the sky. The husband and wife performed meritorious deeds throughout their lives and upon their death they were reborn in the divine world.

Life as A Bārāṇasī Merchant

Again, when they passed away from the divine world, the householder was reborn during the lifetime of the Buddha Kassapa, in the city of Bārāṇasī, as the son of a wealthy merchant who owned eighty crores worth of riches. Similarly, his wife became the daughter of another wealthy merchant.

When the son came of age, that very daughter was brought to his home as his wife. Because of her past misdeed, the result of which until then had been latent, but, as soon as she passed the threshold while entering the house, the putrid smell issued forth from her body was as though the toilet was opened. When the merchant son asked whose smell it was and came to know that it was the odour of the bride who had just come, he ordered that the bride be expelled and sent back to her parents' house in the same pomp and grandeur that had attended her when she came. In this way, she had to return to her parents' home from seven different places because of the foul smell that appeared as soon as she entered the threshold of her husband-to-be's house. Terrible indeed is an evil deed!

At that time, as Buddha Kassapa had attained Parinibbāna, people began to erect a relic-shrine (*dhātu-cetiya*), a *yojana* high with bricks of gold worth a hundred thousand and was made from pure gold bullion. While the *cetiya* was under construction, it occurred to the lady thus: "I am the one who had to return from seven places. What is the use of my living long?" So she sold her jewellery and with the money thus obtained she had a gold brick made, one cubit long, half a cubit wide and four fingers thick. She then took the gold brick together with orpiment and eight lotus stalks and went where the shrine was situated.

At that moment, a brick was wanted to fill the gap that appeared when an encircling layer of bricks were laid as part of the shine. So she said to the master mason: "Please, Sir, fill the gap with my brick." "O lady," replied the master mason, "you have come at an opportune moment. Do it by yourself."

When permitted wholeheartedly thus, the wealthy daughter climbed up to that spot and, having mixed the orpiment with the liquid ingredient, she filled the gap with her brick by means of that cohesive mixture. Then she paid homage by placing the lotus stalks at the brick and expressed her wish: "In whatever existence in *samsāra*, may the sandalwood fragrant emanate from my body and lotus fragrance from my mouth!" After worshipping the shrine respectfully she went home.

At that moment, the wealthy merchant's son, to whom the lady was to be married first, remembered her. A festival was held in full swing then. The son asked his men: "Once there was a girl brought to my house; in whose house is she now?" When the men answered that the young lady was still at her father's house, the man said: "Friends, go and fetch her. Let us enjoy the festival together with her." So saying he sent his men for her.

When they got to the young lady's residence, they paid respect to her and stood there. When the lady asked about their visit, they spoke of their purpose. "Brothers," said the lady, "I have offered all my ornaments in honour of the *cetiya*. I have no more to put on." The men reported the matter to their master. "You just bring the girl," said the man, "she will get some jewellery." So the lady was brought to him by his men. As soon as the merchant's daughter entered the house, the whole house was filled with sandalwood fragrance as well as that of lotus.

The wealthy son asked: "The first time you came here your body issued forth foul smell. But now it is sandalwood fragrance from your body and lotus' from your mouth. What is the reason for that?" When the whole story of her meritorious act was told, the man's faith developed as he thought: "Ah, the Buddha's Teaching is indeed able to free one from the

cycle of suffering!” Accordingly, he wrapped the golden shrine, measuring a *yojana*, with velvet blankets. At certain places, he made decorations in the form of golden padma lotus flowers so as to add exquisite beauty to the shrine, the flowers being the size of a chariot's wheel. The hanging stems and stalks of the golden lotus were twelve cubits in length.

Life as King Nanda

Having done meritorious deeds in that existence, the wealthy husband and wife lived the full span of life and were reborn in a divine realm on their death. Again, when they passed away from that realm, the husband was reborn at a place a *yojana* away from the city of Bārāṇasī, in the family of a noble man, while the wife became the eldest princess in the palace in that city.

When both came of age, an announcement was made to hold a festival in the village where the noble man's son (Nanda) lived. Then Nanda asked his mother for a dress to put on while enjoying the festive amusements and got a washed, second hand dress. The son asked for another dress on the ground that the one given to him was coarse. The mother gave another dress as a substitute. But it was also rejected because of its roughness. When the rejection was repeated several times in this way, the mother said: “We are of such a noble man's household, dear son. We are not fortunate enough to have clothes better than this.” “In that case, mother, I shall go where finer clothing is available.” “I wish you, dear son,” replied the mother, “kingship of Bārāṇasī even today.” Thus the mother gave her consent with such auspicious words.

Having done obeisance to his mother, the young Nanda asked her permission to go. And the mother willingly gave her permission. But she did so because of her conviction, thinking: “Where is my son going? He has nowhere else to go. He will be staying here and there in my home.” But Nanda left his village for Bārāṇasī and took a nap with his head covered on the stately stone-couch in the royal garden. That was the seventh day after the King's demise.

The ministers performed the funeral rites and held a meeting in the courtyard, discussing among themselves: “Only a daughter was born to the King. He had no son. A kingdom without a king is unseemly. Who should become the monarch?” They proposed one another for kingship saying: “Be our king!”, “(No) You should become the ruler.” Then the Brahmin *purohita* said: “We should not see many persons [to choose from]. Let us send the state chariot to search for the deserving one!” When the *purohita's* decision was agreed by all, they let the state chariot loose that was followed by the four army divisions with the five kinds of musical instruments played.

The chariot departed through the eastern gate of the city and ran towards the royal garden. Some people suggested that the chariot should be turned back because it was running towards the garden as a result of its force of habit. The suggestion, however, was rejected by the *purohita*. The chariot entered the garden, circumambulated Nanda three times and stopped and set itself ready for Nanda to get on. After removing the edge of the covering cloth, from Nanda, the *purohita* studied his soles and declared: “Let alone the Jambudīpa, this man is worthy to rule over the four continents with their two thousand surrounding smaller islands.” He also ordered the musicians to play three times.

Then Nanda removed the cloth that covered his face and saw the ministers, with whom he entered a conversation:

Nanda: For what purpose did you come here?

Ministers: Great King, the kingship of Bārāṇasī has come to you.

Nanda: Where is the King?

Ministers: He has passed away, Sir.

Nanda: How many days have elapsed since his passing away?

Ministers: Today is the seventh day.

Nanda: Did not the late King have a son or a daughter?

Ministers: He had only one daughter, but no son, Great King.

When the ministers said thus, he accepted the kingship, saying: "In that case, I shall act as King." Then the ministers constructed a pavilion for consecration and brought the princess who was fully bedecked and made him King of Bārāṇasī after duly holding royal consecration ceremony.

Thereafter, the ministers offered a dress costing a thousand coins to the consecrated Nanda. "Friends, what sort of clothing is it?" asked King Nanda. "Great King, it is for you to put on." "Friends," enquired the King, "this is but a coarse clothing. Have you not got a finer one?" "Great King, there is no finer one among the clothes to be used by men," replied the ministers. "Did your late King put on such a dress?" asked Nanda. When the ministers answered in the positive, King Nanda remarked: "Your late King did not seem to be one of great fortune. Bring a golden jar [full of water]. We shall get very fine clothing." The ministers brought it and handed it to the King.

Rising from his seat, the King washed his hand and mouth, and carrying the water with his cupped hand, he tossed it in the direction of the east. Then eight wish-fulfilling trees emerged, breaking up the great massive earth. When he did the same in the southern, the western and, northern directions, eight trees in each direction emerged. In this way there were thirty-two wish-fulfilling trees in the four directions. King Nanda wrapped the lower part of his body in a divine robe and put on another one for the upper part. Then he had an announcement made by the beat of drum. The announcement being: "In this state of King Nanda let no women spin yarns!" He also raised the royal white umbrella, bedecked himself with adornments, entered the city on the back of an elephant, ascended the upper terrace of the palace and enjoyed a great kingly life.

After some years of Nanda's enjoyment of kingly life, the Queen, watching his life, showed her manner, expressing pity as she thought: "Rare indeed is a new act of merit!" When the King asked why her manner expressed pity, she reminded: "Your luxurious life is really great. That is because you have truly performed good deeds with faith in the past. But now you do nothing for future happiness." "Whom should we give alms?" argued the King, "There are no virtuous recipients!" "Great King, Jambudipa is not void of *arahats*. You better arrange things to be given. I shall bring worthy individuals to receive," said the Queen boldly.

The next day the King had the offerings arranged at the eastern gate of the city. The queen performed a vow early to observe the precepts and facing to the east and prostrating, invited by word of mouth: "If there be *arahats* in the eastern direction, may they come and accept our alms-food!" Since there were no *arahats* in that direction, nobody came to do so. The offerings had to be made to destitutes and beggars. On the next day, similar arrangements took place at the southern gate. The third day saw them too at the western gate. But no *arahats* came from those directions either as there were none.

On the fourth day, the offerings were arranged at the northern gate, and when the Queen extended her invitation as before, Paccekabuddha Mahāpaduma, the oldest of five hundred Paccekabuddhas, who were all sons of Queen Padumavatī, addressed his younger brothers: "Brother Paccekabuddha, King Nanda has invited you. Accept his invitation with pleasure!" The Noble Ones accepted the invitation with pleasure. They washed their faces at the Anotatta lake and then disappeared from there and reappeared at the city's northern gate.

The citizens went to the King and informed him: "Great King, five hundred Paccekabuddhas have come." With the Queen, the King went to the Paccekabuddha and welcomed them with folded hands. Holding the alms-bowl, he brought the five hundred Paccekabuddhas to the upper terrace of the palace after performing the great act of alms-giving. When the performance was over, the King, sitting at the feet of the eldest member of the assembly and the Queen, at the feet of the youngest member, made a request, saying: "Venerable Sirs, if you stay in our garden, you all will be happy with our supply of requisites. There will also be growth of merit on our part. Therefore, please give us your promise to stay in the garden of Bārāṇasī City." The promise was given to the King, who made full accommodations, such as five hundred lodgings, five hundred walks, etc., in the

royal garden. The four requisites were also provided to them so that they might find no trouble.

When such provision had lasted for some time, a state of unrest and disturbance took place in the border areas. The King asked his Queen to look after the Paccekabuddhas during his absence to quell the border rebellion.

As the King had instructed, the Queen supported the Paccekabuddhas with the four requisites carefully. After some days, just before the King's return, the life process of the Paccekabuddhas came to an end. So the eldest one, Mahāpaduma, spent all three watches of the night in *jhāna*, and standing and leaning against the wooden back-rest, attained *anupādisesa-parinibbāna*. In the same manner the rest of Paccekabuddhas attained Parinibbāna.

On the next day, the Queen prepared the seats for the Paccekabuddhas by applying cow-dung, strewing flowers and letting the air pervaded with perfumes, and waiting for their arrival. As she did not see any signs of their approaching, she sent a male servant, saying: "Go, my son, and find out the reason. Is there any mental or physical discomfort happening to the Venerable Ones?"

When the royal servant went to the garden and looked for Paccekabuddha Mahāpaduma, after opening the door of His dwelling, he did not see Him there. So he went to the walk and saw Him standing and leaning against the wooden board. After paying homage to Him, the servant invited the [first] Paccekabuddha saying: "It is time to have meal, Venerable Sirs!" There was no reply at all. Thinking that the Paccekabuddha was sleeping, the servant moved nearer and felt the back of His feet. After making such investigations, he came to know full well of the Paccekabuddha's attainment of Parinibbāna, for His feet were cold and stiff. So he went to the second Paccekabuddha and then subsequently, until the last one. When he investigated thus, he realized that the Paccekabuddhas had all reached the state of total extinction. On his return to the palace, the Queen asked him: "Where are the Paccekabuddhas, son?" "They had all attained Parinibbāna, Madam," answered the servant. The Queen wept bitterly and went out from the city to the royal garden with citizens and performed funeral rites and cremation. She took their relics and had a *cetiya* built (with the relics enshrined).

Having brought the border areas to normalcy, the King returned to the city and on seeing the Queen who had come to meet him, he asked: "Dear Queen, did you attend to the Paccekabuddhas without any negligence? Are the Noble Ones well?" When the Queen replied that they had passed into Parinibbāna, the King was shocked and reflected: "Even to these Wise Ones of such nature occurred death! How can there be liberation from death for us!"

The King did not proceed to the city but immediately went to the royal garden. He called his eldest son and handed kingship over to him and himself adopted the life of a recluse (like a monk in the dispensation of a Buddha). The Queen too, thinking: "If the King becomes a recluse, what is there for me to do? Of course, there is none!" she followed suit as a female ascetic in the royal garden. Having developed *jhānas*, both were reborn in the realm of Brahmās.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

While they were still in the Brahmā's realm, the time had come for our Buddha to arise. At that time, Pippali the youth, the future Mahā Kassapa, took conception in the womb of the wife of a wealthy brahmin, named Kapila, in the brahmin village of Mahātitttha, in the Magadha country whereas, his wife, the future Bhaddākāpilānī, took conception in the womb of the wife of another wealthy brahmin, a Kosiya descendant, in the city of Sāgala, also in the Magadha kingdom.

When they grew up, the young Pippali, being twenty years of age and Bhaddākāpilānī was sixteen, the former's parents noticed that their son had come of age and insisted that he be married, saying: "Dear son, you have come of age to raise a family. One's lineage should last long!" As Pippali had come from the Brahmā-world, he refused to agree and

said: "Please do not utter such words into my ears. I shall attend to you as long as you live, and when you are gone, I shall take up a homeless life as a recluse." After two or three days, the parents again persuaded him. The son remained resolute. Another persuasion took place but that too fell on deaf ears. From that time onwards, the mother was insistent.

When the insistence became too unbearable, Pippali thought: "I shall let my mother know that how much I want to become a monk!" So he gave a thousand *ticals* of gold to the goldsmiths, asking them to create a gold statue of a girl out of it. When the statue had been created and polishing had been done, he dressed the statue with red garments and adorned it with colourful flowers and brilliant ornaments. Then he called his mother and said: "O mother, I shall remain at home provided I get a girl as beautiful as this statue! If not, I shall not do so."

Since the brahmin mother was wise, she considered: "My son is one who has done good works, who has performed alms-giving, who has expressed his noble aspiration. While he was engaging in acts of merit in his past existence, it was unlikely that he did them alone. Indeed my son must have an excellent woman, very pretty like the golden statue, with whom he did meritorious deeds." So considering, she summoned eight Brahmins, had a great honour made to them and had the gold statue placed on a chariot and said: "Go, brothers! If you see a girl resembling this gold statue in a family who equals ours in caste, lineage and wealth, give the statue to her as a gift or as a pledge." With these words she sent the Brahmins away.

The eight Brahmins admitted, saying: "This indeed is a task to be done by the wise like us." So saying, they left the village and discussed among themselves on the destination of their journey. Then they decided unanimously thus: "In this world, the country of Madda was the home of beautiful women. Let us go to Madda land." So they were to the city of Sāgala which lay in that state. Having left the statue at the bathing ford in that city, they were watching from a proper place.

At that time, the female attendant of Bhaddākāpilānī, the daughter of a wealthy brahmin, bathed her and bedecked her with ornaments and left her in the chamber of splendour before she went to the bathing ford. On seeing the statue she thought: "My mistress has come ahead of me!" Then she scolded her and grumbled in various ways. "Hey little stubborn daughter! Why are you staying here alone?" As she said: "Go home quick!" she raised her hand to strike her mistress. When she actually did strike the back of the statue, the whole of her palm was hurt very much as though she had struck a stone slab. The female attendant step back and spoke harshly to pick up a quarrel thus: "Oh! Although I saw this woman of such awful touch and thick neck, how foolish I have been to mistake her for my mistress! She is not worthy ever to hold my lady's skirt!"

Then the eight Brahmins surrounded the attendant, asking: "Is your mistress of such beauty?" "What beauty is of this lady? Our lady's beauty is more than a hundred times or a thousand times superior to that of this lady," retorted the attendant, "if she sits in a room of twelve cubits, it is not necessary to light a lamp there; darkness can be expelled by her natural complexion." "In that case," said the Brahmins, "come, let us go!" So saying they took the attendant, and having brought the gold statue, they went to the house of the wealthy Brahmin of Kosiya clan and stopped at the doorway to announce their visit.

The Brahmin treated them well as a host and asked them as to where they came from. They replied that they came from the home of the wealthy Brahmin Kapila of Mahātittha village, in the Kingdom of Magadha. When the host asked for the reason, they told him of the purpose of their visit. "Friends," said Brahmin Kosiya: "It is a welcome purpose. Kapila Brahmin is equal to me by birth, by descent and by wealth. I shall give our daughter as a bride." Having promised thus, Brahmin Kosiya took over the statue. The visiting Brahmins then sent a message to Brahmin Kapila, saying: "The bride has been found. Go ahead with whatever is necessary."

Getting the news, the servants of Pippali transmitted it to him gleefully, saying: "Master, the bride for you, who looks like your gold statue, has been found, it is learnt!" But Pippali reflected: "I thought it was impossible to get her. Now they said that 'the bride has been

found!’ As I do not want her, I shall write a letter and send it to her.” So he went to a secluded place and wrote a letter as follows:

“I would like my dear sister to marry another proper man of equal by birth, descent and wealth. I am one who will adopt the life of a recluse in a forest. I do not wish you to be in distress later on.”

Then he sent the letter secretly to Bhaddākāpilānī.

When Lady Bhaddākāpilānī, learnt the news that her parents were desirous of giving her in marriage to Pippali the youth, son of the wealthy Brahmin Kapila of Mahātittha village, Magadha country, she similarly went into seclusion and wrote the following letter:

“I would like my brother to get married with another woman of equal caste, family and wealth. I am one going forth and becoming a female recluse. I do not want you to be unhappy afterwards.”

She then sent the letter in secret to Pippali.

When the two parties of messengers met in midway, Bhaddākāpilānī’s men asked: “From whom is the letter you are carrying, friends, and to whom is it going?” Pippali’s men replied honestly: “The letter is sent by our master Pippali to Bhaddākāpilānī.” They also asked in return: “From whom is the letter you are conveying and for whom is it meant?” Bhaddākāpilānī’s men gave a straightforward reply: “It is from our mistress to Pippali.”

When the messengers from both sides agreed to open and read the letters, they were amazed to know the significantly spiritual sense of the letters and said: “Look what the groom and the bride are doing!” Then they tore both the letters and threw them away in the forest. They also wrote two new letters expressing reciprocal agreement and gladness and sent them to their respective senders. In this way, the time for marriage between Pippali, the son of a wealthy merchant, and Bhaddākāpilānī, the daughter of another wealthy merchant, came about as brought by their parents and the middlemen, despite their unwillingness for household life.

Unwithered Garland of Flowers

On the day of their marriage both of them brought a garland of flowers each; he placed his and she hers in the middle of their bed. Having had their dinner both simultaneously went to their bed and got on to it, Pippali by his right side and Bhaddākāpilānī by her left. They made an agreement thus: “The party, the garland of whose side withers, is to be regarded as having lustful thoughts. And the garlands should be left untouched.” Both of them spent the night without being able to sleep throughout all three watches lest one should unconsciously touch the other. The garlands remained unwithered. By day, they behaved like brother and sister even without a smile tinged with pleasure.

Immensely Wealthy Life

Both the wealthy son and the wealthy daughter kept themselves aloof from fondness of sensual pleasure (*lokāṃśa*) and took no care of their household business at the same time. Only when their parents passed away did they manage the business. The wealth belonged to Pippali was great: his gold and silver was worth eighty-seven crores. Even the gold dust which he threw away each day after using it for rubbing his body could amount to twelve Magadha cups (equal to six *patthas*) if collected. He owned sixty mechanized dams. The measurement of his farm was twelve *yojanas*. He had fourteen large villages as the colony of his servants and workers, fourteen divisions of elephant troops, fourteen divisions of cavalry and fourteen divisions of chariots.

Spiritual Emotion of Pippali and His Wife

One day, the wealthy Pippali went to his farm riding a fully equipped horse and while he was stopping at the edge of the farm, he saw crows and birds picking up earthworms and insects and eating them. He asked his servants what the crows and birds were eating and the servants answered that they were eating earthworms and insects. Again he asked: “Who is responsible for the evil acts of the crows and birds?” “As the farm is ploughed for you,

Sir, you are responsible for those evil deeds,” replied the servants. The reply stirred up Pippali's spiritual emotions, causing him to reflect seriously thus: “If I am responsible for the evil deeds done by the crows and birds, what is the use of eighty-seven crores worth of my gold and silver. Indeed none! Nor is there any use of my riches, such as the twelve-*vojana* vast farm, the sixty mechanized dams and the fourteen large villages of my workers. Indeed there is no use of them all! Therefore, I shall hand over these riches to my wife Bhaddākāpilānī and go forth to become a monk!”

At that moment, his wife, Bhaddākāpilānī, had sesame from three big jars spread out on mats and placed in the sun. While seated and surrounded by her maids, she saw crows and other birds picking and eating sesame worms. When she asked her maids, she came to know what the birds were eating. On further enquiry she was informed that she must be responsible for the evil acts done by the birds as the job was done for her sake. She too reflected seriously thus: “Oh, it is enough for me, if I just get four cubits of cloth to wear and a cupful of cooked rice to eat. (I cannot wear more than four cubits of cloth; nor can I eat more than one cupful of cooked rice.) If I am responsible for these wrongdoings done by others, surely I will not be able to surface myself from *saṃsāra*, the cycle of suffering, even after a thousand existences. When my husband comes, I shall give all my wealth to him and leave household life and become a female recluse.”

The Couple's Going Forth

The wealthy Pippali returned home and had a bath, went up to the upper terrace and sat down on a high seat, which only noble personalities deserve. Then the feast worthy of a Universal Monarch was arranged and served to the merchant. Both the wealthy Pippali and his wife Bhaddākāpilānī ate the meal, and when their servants went away, they retired to their quiet resort and stayed quietly at ease.

Thereafter, the two discussed between themselves as follows:

Pippali: Madam Bhaddā, when you came to this house, how much wealth did you bring?

Bhaddā: I brought my wealth by fifty-five thousand carts.

Pippali: The wealth brought by you and the wealth extant here in this house, such as eighty-seven crores of riches, sixty mechanized dams, etc. I entrust them all with you.

Bhaddā: Oh, but where are you going?

Pippali: I am going to make myself a recluse, Madam,

Bhaddā: Oh, Sir, I too have been readily waiting for the time of your coming back. I too shall become myself a female recluse.

To these two individuals who were endowed with *pāramīs*, the three existences of sensual pleasures (*kāma*), materiality (*rūpa*) and immateriality (*arūpa*) manifested to be three leaf-huts blazing with fire. The two great personality of *pāramī*, therefore, had the robes and bowls bought from the market and had one's hair shaved by the other. Saying: “We dedicate our renunciation of the world to the noble *arahats*.” They came down from the main terrace with their bags, in which were put their bowls, hanging from their left shoulders. None of the servant and workers at home, male or female, recognize the two *pāramī* seekers.

Then the couple left the brahmin village of Mahātittha and went out by the servants' village gate. They were seen and recognized from their behaviour that they were their master and the mistress. Crying bitterly the servants fell at their feet and asked sorrowfully: “Master and mistress, why do you make us helpless?” The couple replied: “We have become recluses as we were shocked by the likeness between the three existences and the leaf-hut on fire. If we were to set you free from servitude, one after another there will be no end even after a hundred years. Get your heads washed and be liberated from servitude and live free.” So saying they left while the servants were wailing.

Parting Company with Each Other

While he was going ahead, Pippali the noble Thera thought in retrospect thus:

"This beautiful Therī Bhaddākāpilānī, who is precious as much as the whole Jambudīpa has been following me. There is reason for anybody to misunderstand us, thinking: 'These two cannot part from each other even though they have become recluses; they are doing something not in harmony with their ascetic guise.' And if one misunderstands us, one is in danger of being reborn in a state of woe. Therefore I should desert this fair lady, Therī Bhaddākāpilānī."

As he went on ahead, the noble Thera found a junction of two roads and stopped there. Having followed from behind, Therī Bhaddā (Bhaddākāpilānī) stopped there too and stood with her hands joined in reverence. Then the noble Thera addressed the Therī: "Bhaddā Therī, people seeing a beautiful lady like you following me might offend us by wrongly thinking: 'These two individuals cannot part from each other despite their ascetic life and would thereby be reborn in a woeful state.' So take whichever road you choose between these two. I shall go by the road you do not prefer."

Therī Bhaddā too replied thus: "Oh, yes, Sir! womankind means blemish to a monk. People would also blame us, saying that we are unable to leave each other even after becoming ascetics. You, Sir, follow one road. I shall follow the other. Let us be separated." Then she circumambulated exactly three times, and paid homage respectfully with the five kinds of veneration at the four places, such as the front, the back, the left and the right of the Thera. With her hands joined and raised, she said: "Our love and intimacy as husband and wife that started a hundred aeons ceases today." She added: "You are of nobler birth, so the road on the right befits you. We womenfolk are of lesser birth. So the left one suits me." Saying thus she proceeded by the left road.

When the two walked separate paths, the great earth quaked, roaring echoingly as if it were uttering: "Though I can bear up the universal mountains and Mount Meru, I cannot do so with regard to the virtues of these two marvellous personages!" There appeared thundering sounds in the sky, too. The universal mountains and Mount Meru grew up higher and higher (because of the earthquake).

Meeting with The Buddha

By that time, the Buddha arrived in Rājagaha after observing the first *vassa* and (in that year of His Enlightenment) was still sojourning in the Veluvana monastery. (It was a time before His journey to Kapilavatthu.) While He was staying in the fragrant chamber of the monastery, He heard the noise of the quake of the great earth and He reflected as to the cause the earth quaked, He came to know thus: "On account of the power of their virtues, Pippali the young man and Bhaddākāpilānī, the young woman, have become ascetics after unflinchingly renounced their incomparable wealth, dedicating their lives to Me. The quake took place at the junction where they parted. On my part, it will be proper only if I do a favour to them." So He went out of the fragrant chamber, personally carrying His bowl and robe. And even without asking any of the eighty great Disciples to accompany Him, He travelled alone to a distance of three *gāvutas* to extend His welcome. He sat cross-legged at the foot of the banyan tree, known as Bahuputtaka, between Rājagaha and Nālanda.

What was peculiar to the Buddha now was that He did not sit there as an unknown monk practising *dhutaṅga* austerities. In order to promote the faith of the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, who had never seen Him before, the Buddha did not conceal His natural splendour that shone forth with the major and minor marks, instead, He sat there, emanating the massive Buddha's rays and illuminating brilliantly up to a distance of eighty cubits. The rays that were of the size of a leafy umbrella, or that of a cart-wheel or that of a pinnacled gable, spread from place to place brightening the whole forest grove, as though it were a time when a thousand moons or a thousand suns rose with all their brightness. Therefore, the whole forest grove was very pleasant with the splendour of the thirty-two marks of a great man, like the sky brightened by stars, or like the water surface with the five kinds of lotus blossoming in groups and clusters. Though the natural colour of the

trunk of the banyan tree must be white, that of the leaves green and the old leaves red, but by the splendour of the Buddha's body, the whole of the Bahuputtaka banyan trees, with many branches, was all gold and yellow on that very day, as they were bathed with the luminous rays of the Buddha's body light.

Venerable Mahā Kassapa thought: "This Venerable One must be my Teacher, the Buddha. Indeed I have become a monk, dedicating my monkhood to this very Teacher." From the spot on which he stood and saw the Buddha, the Venerable walked nearer, bending his body. At all these three places he adoringly venerated the Buddha and received his discipleship by declaring three times thus: "*Satthā me Bhagavā, sāvako'ham asmi* — Glorious Buddha, you are my Teacher! I am your disciple!"

Then the Buddha replied: "Dear son Kassapa, if you showed such immense reverence to the great earth, it might not be able to withstand it. As for Me, who have fared well like former Buddhas, the tremendous reverence shown by you, who are aware of such immensity of my qualities, cannot make a single hair of My body tremble. Dear son Kassapa, be seated, I shall give you My inheritance." (This is how the exposition of the Etadagga Vagga, Ekaka Nipāta of the **Aṅguttara Commentary** and the exposition of the Mahā Kassapa Thera-Gāthā, Cattālisa Nipāta of the **Theragāthā Commentary**.)

In the Cīvara Sutta of the Kassapa Saṃyutta, **Nidāna-vagga**, however, it is said as follows: When the Venerable Kassapa solemnly declared his discipleship thrice, the Buddha said:

"Kassapa, if a man, without knowing a pupil of all-round perfect mentality, says: 'I know', or without seeing him, says: 'I see', his head will fall off. As for me, I say: 'I know' because I do know him, or I say: 'I see' because I do see him."

(Herein the meaning is: if a teacher, outside the dispensation of the Buddhas, admitted, saying that he knew or saw without actually knowing or seeing an extremely faithful disciple with all mentality who showed extreme veneration as Venerable Mahā Kassapa did, the head of that teacher would drop off his neck, as a ripe toddy-palm fruit does from its stem. Or it might split into seven pieces.)

(Herein it may further be explained as follows: If Venerable Mahā Kassapa were to direct his great veneration, generated by such faith, to the great ocean, its water might disappear like drops of water falling into a tremendously hot iron pan. If he were to direct his veneration towards the mountain of the universe, it would break up into pieces like a ball of husks. If he were to direct it to Mount Meru, the mountain would be destroyed and tumble down in disarray like a lump of dough pecked by a crow's beak. If he were to direct it towards the great earth, its soil would be scattered like a great pile of ashes being blown off by the wind. But, the Venerable's veneration of such might could not make a hair, on the back of the Buddha's instep, trembled. Let alone Venerable Kassapa, even thousands of monks equal to the Venerable would be unable to do so by performing their veneration. Theirs was powerless even to disturb a soft hair on the Buddha's instep, or even to shake a single thread of the robe made of rags that the Exalted One was wearing. So great was the might of the Buddha.)

Ordination as Bhikkhu through Acceptance of Buddha's Advice

Having said: "Dear son Kassapa, be seated. I shall give you my inheritance," as has been mentioned before, the Buddha gave the Venerable three pieces of advice (according to the Cīvara Sutta of the **Kassapa Saṃyutta**):

"Kassapa, you must therefore practise thinking thus: 'I shall abide by *hirī* and *ottappa* in dealing with those monks of higher standing, lower standing, or equal standing.

"Kassapa, you must, therefore, practise thinking thus: 'I shall listen to all Teachings on wholesomeness. I shall listen attentively to all these Teachings respectfully, reflecting on them and bearing them well.

“Kassapa, you must therefore practise, thinking thus: ‘Mindfulness on the body (*kāyagatā-sati*) accompanied by happiness (*sukha*) shall never desert me!’”

The Buddha gave him these three pieces of advice. The Venerable Kassapa also received them respectfully. This three-piece advice amounted to the Venerable's ordination, lower as well as higher. The Venerable Mahā Kassapa was the only one to receive this kind of ordination in the Buddha's dispensation. And such is known as “*ovāda-paṭiggahana upasampadā* — ordination through acceptance of the Buddha's advice.”

(Herein the Buddha granted the Venerable Kassapa ordination as a *bhikkhu* by means of these three pieces of advice. Of these three, the first is: “Dear son Kassapa, you must develop first the two ‘effective’ virtues of *hirī* and *ottappa* as you encounter three classes of fellow *bhikkhus*, namely, those of higher standing, who are senior to you by age and ordination, those of lower standing, who are junior to you, and those of medium standing, who are equal to you.” By this first advice, Venerable Kassapa was taught to abandon pride in birth, for he was of the brahmin caste.

(The second advice is: “Dear son Kassapa, while you are listening to the faultless Teaching, you must be respectfully attentive by lending both your ears, the wisdom ear as well as the natural one, in all three phases of the Teaching, the beginning, in the middle and towards the end.” By this second advice the Venerable was taught to abandon arrogance springing from his wide knowledge, for he was highly intelligent

(The third advice is: “Dear son Kassapa, you must strive not to let the first *jhāna* get away from your mental process, the *jhāna* which is accompanied by feeling of happiness (*sukha-vedanā*) originated in mindfulness of the body (*kāyagatā-sati*) and the sense object of breathing-in and out (*ānāpāna ārammaṇa*).” By this third advice the Venerable was taught to abandon self-love and self-craving (*taṇhā-lobha*) developing from possession of strong personality (*upadhi*), for he was good looking.)

Having made Venerable Kassapa an advice-receiving monk at the foot of the Bahuputtaka banyan tree, the Buddha left and set out on a journey with the noble Venerable as His follower. While the Buddha had thirty-two marks of a great being on His body and was thus exquisitely splendored, Venerable Kassapa was graceful with seven marks. The latter closely followed the Buddha like a small golden boat trails a big golden one. After going some distance, the Buddha diverted from the main road and gave a hint that He would like to sit at the foot of a tree. Knowing that the Master was desirous of sitting, the Venerable made his (very soft) upper robe fourfold and spread it and said: “Exalted Buddha, may the glorious Buddha be seated here. The act of the Exalted Buddha's sitting will bring welfare and happiness to me for long.”

Exchange of Robes

Having sat on the outer robe in four folds, the Buddha felt the edge of the robe with His hand, which had the colour of a lotus blossom, and said: “Dear son Kassapa, this upper robe of yours made of an old piece of cloth is very soft indeed!”

(Herein, ‘why did the Buddha utter words of praise?’ The answer should be: because He wanted to make exchange of robes with Venerable Kassapa.

‘Why did the Buddha want to make exchange of robes?’ The answer should be: because He wanted to install the Venerable in His position.

(“For such installation were there not Venerables Sāriputta and Moggallāna?” one might argue. The answer is: Yes, they were there. But it occurred to the Buddha thus: “Both of them will not live long. They will attain *parinibbāna* before Me. Kassapa, however, will live for a hundred and twenty years, four months after my Parinibbāna, in the cave where a *sattapanni* tree grows, he will hold a Council at which a mass recital, in approval (*saṅgāyanā*) of the Dhamma and the Vinaya, will

be done. He will thus render service to My dispensation so that it may last for five thousand years.” The Buddha also was of the opinion that “if I install him in My monastery, monks will show obedience to him.” Hence the Buddha's desire to install the Venerable in His (the Buddha's) position. It was for this reason that the Buddha was desirous of exchanging of robes. It was because of this desire that the Buddha spoke in praise of the Venerable Kassapa.)

If somebody admirably spoke of the good quality of the bowl or that of the robe, it was a natural practice of the noble Venerable to say: “Please accept the bowl, Venerable Sir,” or “Please receive the robe, Venerable Sir.” Therefore, knowing by hint that “the Exalted Buddha would like to put on my outer robe, for he admired its softness,” the Venerable said: “Exalted Buddha, may the Glorious One please put on this outer robe.” “Dear son Kassapa, which robe will you don then?” asked the Buddha. “If I get the kind of robe you are wearing, I will don it,” replied the Venerable. Then the Buddha said: “Dear son Kassapa, can you do that? This robe made of rags have become very old because of my long use. Indeed, when I picked it up, that day saw the quake of this great earth down to the water limit. Those of less virtue are unable to wear this kind of robe that had been worn out. Only those who engage themselves in the Dhamma practice and who, by nature, are used to such attire deserve it.” So saying the Buddha gave His robe for the Venerable Kassapa's. After the exchange of robes was done in this way, the Buddha put on the Venerable's robe and the Venerable donned the Buddha's. At that moment, the great earth quaked violently down to the water limit as if it were saying, though it lacks mind and volition: “Exalted Buddha, you have done something difficult to do. There has never been in the past such an occasion on which a Buddha gives His robe to His disciple. I cannot bear up this virtue of Yours.”

(c) Achievement of Spirituality and An Etadagga Title

On the part of the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, no arrogance arose in him just by getting the Buddha's robe; he never thought: “Now I have obtained the robe previously used by the Exalted One: I have nothing to strive now, either for higher Paths and Fruitions.” Instead, he made a vow to practise the thirteen austere (*dhutaṅga*) practices most willingly as taught by the Buddha. Because he put great efforts in developing the ascetic Dhamma, he remained only for seven days as a worldling and on the eighth day, at early dawn, he attained arahatship with the fourfold Analytical Knowledge (*paṭisambhidā-magga-ñāṇa*).

Setting this Venerable as an example, the Buddha delivered many discourses as contained in the **Nidānavagga Kassapa Saṃyutta** (see the translation of the same Saṃyutta).

The Buddha admired the Venerable through many Suttas such as Cand'ūpama Sutta, in which the Buddha says: “*Kassapo bhikkhave cand'ūpamo kulāni upasankamati* — Monks, Kassapa Thera approached his donors of the four social classes by controlling his deed, word and thought like the moon, i.e. being absolutely free from physical, verbal and mental roughness does he approach his donors.” Later on the Buddha declared, by citing the noble Venerable as the foremost (*etadagga*) in *dhutaṅga* practices, as preserved in the **Kassapa Saṃyutta**:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ dhutavādānaṃ yadidaṃ Mahākassapo.”

Monks, among my disciples *bhikkhus*, who practise by themselves and who teach and exhort others to practise the excellent *dhutaṅga* practices which shake off moral impurities (*kilesa*), Mahā Kassapa Thera is the best.

(5) ANURUDDHA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

A hundred thousand aeons ago, in the lifetime of the Buddha Padumuttara, the future

Thera Anuruddha was an unknown householder. One afternoon, he went along with a crowd of people to the monastery to listen to the Dhamma. Having respectfully paid homage to the Buddha, he stood at the edge of the audience, paying attention to the Buddha's discourse. After delivering His discourses in serial order, the Buddha declared a monk foremost in achieving the psychic power of the Divine Eye (*dibbacakkhu-abhiññā*).

Then it occurred to the householder: "This monk was declared foremost in achieving the psychic power of the Divine Eye by the Buddha Himself. Therefore, he indeed is superior. What, if I were to become the best among the monks who achieved the Divine Eye in the dispensation of some future Buddha?" So thinking, he went through the audience and invited the Buddha and His Sangha. The next day, he performed a great alms-giving to the Sangha headed by the Buddha.

Thinking: "I have aspired for a very high post," he invited the Buddha as before, day after day, saying: "Please come today for my act of merit. Please come tomorrow for my act of merit." Having invited thus, he gave a great *dāna* for seven days. Offering excellent robes to the Buddha and His company of monks, he expressed his aspiration as follows:

"Exalted Buddha, I made these offerings not to obtain divine luxuries nor to enjoy human pleasure. Seven days ago you declared a monk as the best in the Divine Eye. I wish to be like him, as the foremost among those with similar power in the dispensation of a future Buddha."

Having expressed his aspiration thus, the householder fell at the feet of the Buddha. When the Buddha surveyed the future, He foresaw well that the fulfilment of the householder's wish and so He predicted: "Donor, at the end of a hundred thousand aeons in future, Buddha Gotama will evidently appear. In the dispensation of that Buddha, you will be Anuruddha by name, the foremost of those who acquire the psychic power of the Divine Eye." Having predicted thus the Buddha gave a discourse in appreciation of the meal-offering and returned to the monastery.

The householder did good works for as long as he lived and after the Buddha Padumuttara's attainment of Parinibbāna, he built a golden shrine which was seven *yojanas* high. He approached the Sangha and asked: "Venerable Sirs, what is the preparatory wholesome deed for acquiring the psychic power of the Divine Eye?" "Donor," replied the noble monks, "the gift of light should be given." He then had a thousand big trees made first, each bearing a thousand torches; just beyond these trees, he had a thousand illuminated trees of medium size made; just beyond them, a thousand illuminated small trees. In this way, thousands of trees and torches were offered. His other gifts of lights were innumerable.

Offering of Lights to Buddha Kassapa's Shrine

Having performed such meritorious deeds throughout his life, the householder, the future Anuruddha, was reborn either in the worlds of devas or humans. When a hundred thousand aeons had elapsed and in the lifetime of the Buddha Kassapa in this *bhadda-kappa*, he was reborn also as a householder in the city of Bārāṇasī. After the Buddha's Parinibbāna, he built a shrine of one *yojana* and had numerous gold cups made, each cup was filled with butter oil. In the middle of the cups, he placed a cake of solidified molasses and lighted it. He also lighted the gold cups around the shrine, the round brim of each cup touching that of the next. For himself, he had the biggest vessel made of gold and had it filled also with butter-oil. A thousand wicks placed around the brim were lighted. For the middle wick, however, he had a piece of cloth twisted and lighted it. Holding on his head the bowl of a thousand lights, he went round the shrine and honoured it for all three watches of the night. In that existence too, he performed wholesome acts as long as he lived, and upon his death he was reborn in the realm of devas.

Life As Annabhāra

Again, before the lifetime of our Buddha, he was reborn in a poor family, also in Bārāṇasī and lived, depending upon a wealthy merchant named Sumana. The poor man's

name was Annabhāra. The merchant Sumana gave lavish alms, at the gate of his house, to destitutes, travellers and beggars.

One day, a Paccekabuddha, by the name of Upariṭṭha, engaged in *nirodha-samāpatti* at Mount Gandhamādāna, and when He emerged from that *jhāna*, he pondered: “Whom should I help today?” Paccekabuddhas are very kind by nature to the poor. So, the Paccekabuddha Upariṭṭha decided to help poor Annabhāra for the day. Knowing that the man was about to come back from the forest, the Paccekabuddha, taking His alms-bowl and robe disappeared, from Mount Gandhamādāna and reappeared before Annabhāra at the village gate.

Seeing the Paccekabuddha carrying an empty bowl, he respectfully made obeisance to him and asked: “Venerable Sir, would you obtain food?” When the Paccekabuddha replied that he would, Annabhāra said: “Please wait here for a while,” and quickly went home and asked his wife: “O lady, is there a portion of food you set aside for me? Or is there not?” When the wife said yes, he returned to the Paccekabuddha and took the bowl from His hand. On returning home, he said to his wife: “Lady, because we did not perform acts of merit in the past, we are now living, always yearning for food. Though we have desire to give, we have nothing to give. And when we have something to give, there is no recipient for it. Today I encounter the Paccekabuddha Upariṭṭha. And there is also my portion of food. Put that food of mine into His bowl.”

The intelligent wife thought: “As my husband is giving his food to the Paccekabuddha, I should also do something for my share of merit.” So she too put her portion of food in the bowl and handed it to the Paccekabuddha. He also said, expressing his desire: “Venerable Sir, may we be liberated from such troublesome living.” The Paccekabuddha replied somewhat in prediction: “You, donor, of great merit! May your desire be realised!” Having spread out his over-cloth at one place, Annabhāra said further: “Please sit down here, Venerable Sir, and have your meal.” After sitting down on the seat made by Annabhāra, the Paccekabuddha had his meal, reflecting on the nine disgusting things (which are 1. *gamana* (going on alms-round); 2. *pariyesana* (searching for alms); 3. *paribhoga* (eating); 4. *āsaya* (excretions, such as phlegm, bile, blood and pus); 5. *nidhaha* (stomach into which comes newly eaten food); 6. *aparipakka* (food in undigested state); 7. *paripakka* (food in digested state); 8. *phala* and *nissanda*, outcome and flowing or trickling from here and there (on the body) and 9. *makkhana*, smearing (or soiling). (If *phala* and *nissanda* are taken separately, the number will be ten. Reflection on these nine or ten disgusting things is mentioned in the exposition of the **Āhārepaṭikūla-saṇṇā** of the **Visuddhi-magga** in general, and in the section on the same in the **Paramattha-sarūpabhedanī**, authored by Mahāvisuddhārama Sayadaw, in particular.) When the Paccekabuddha had taken the food, Annabhāra offered the water for washing the bowl. Having finished His meal, Paccekabuddha Upariṭṭha gave His blessing in appreciation of the food:

*Icchitaṃ patthitaṃ tuyhaṃ, sabbam eva samijjhātu.
Sabbe pūrentu saṅkappā, cando pannāraso yathā.*

May all your desires and longings be realized. Just as the bright, round moon of the waxing fortnight is full, even so may all your right plans be successful!

Having uttered thus, the Paccekabuddha proceeded his journey.

Applause of A Goddess

At that moment, the guardian goddess of the (ceremonial) umbrella belonging to Sumana the merchant gave her applause three times by uttering a solemn utterance of joy: “*Ahodānaṃ paramadānaṃ, Upariṭṭhe supaṭiṭṭhitaṃ* — Oh, an excellent gift has been well set up for Paccekabuddha Upariṭṭha!” The merchant asked: “Hey, goddess! Did you not see me performing alms-giving for such a long time?” “O merchant,” replied the goddess, “I am not applauding your alms-giving. I am doing it for Annabhāra the poor man’s, as I am so pleased with his.” It then occurred to the merchant thus: “This is something marvellous indeed! Though I have been giving alms for so long, I am not able to cause deities to

applaud. But the poor Annabhāra did, despite his dependence on me, by giving alms-food just once as he encountered a proper recipient. I should make his gift-food mine by giving him something suitable.” Accordingly, he summoned Annabhāra and asked: “Did you give somebody something today?” “Yes, I did, Sir,” answered Annabhāra, “I gave my share of food to the Paccekabuddha Upariṭṭha.” “Take this, dear Annabhāra, take a coin and hand over your gift-food to me,” demanded the merchant.

When Annabhāra refused, saying: “I cannot do so, Sir,” Sumana, the merchant, gradually raised his offer up to a thousand coins. Annabhāra remained firm in his rejection, saying: “Even for a thousand coins, I cannot give it away.” Then Sumana gave up his attempt to buy but demanded again: “Brother Annabhāra, if you cannot give it to me, let it be so. Accept the thousand coins and share your merit with me!” “I do not know clearly whether I should share my merit with you. In fact, I will consult the Paccekabuddha Upariṭṭha and I will share, provided He advises me to do so.” After saying thus, he rushed after the Paccekabuddha and when he reached Him, he asked: “Venerable Sir, the merchant Sumana, is offering me a thousand coins and seeking a share of the merit I have earned by giving you alms-food. Shall I give his share or shall I not?” Then the Paccekabuddha said:

“Wise man, I shall give you a simile. Suppose there is only one house, where the lamp is lighted, in a village of a hundred households. If the remaining ninety-nine householders came with their respective wicks soaked in oil and lighted their lamps by means of yours, will the light remain in that house as it was before or will it be reduced?”

“It will not be reduced, Venerable Sir. The light will shine even brighter than before,” answered the man. Then the Paccekabuddha explained clearly:

“In the same manner, wise man, if a man shares the merit accrued to him from his offering of alms-food, be it a spoonful or a ladleful, whether he shares it with a hundred persons or a thousand, his merit will only increase and become greater in accordance the number of persons who have their shares. Now you have given one meal. If you share your merit with him, there will be two acts of giving alms-food, one is yours (which is original) and the other is Sumana's (which is an augment).”

Freed from doubt but inspired and encouraged, Annabhāra respectfully made obeisance and went back to his master. He gladly shared his merit by saying: “Sir, take your share from the merit earned by me from my giving of alms-food.” Then followed a dialogue between the wealthy merchant Sumana and Annabhāra the poor man:

Merchant: Well, brother, take the thousand coins.

Annabhāra: Master, I am not selling my alms-food. In fact, with great pleasure I am sharing my merit with you.

Merchant: Brother, you share your merit with me with great pleasure. On my part, I give you the thousand coins as wish to do honour to your virtue. Do take it, brother.

When asked thus, Annabhāra accepted the money, saying: “All right, as you like it, Sir.” Thereafter Sumana said: “Brother from the time of your acceptance of the coins onwards, you have nothing to work with your hands. (You are no longer my wretched employee.) Build a house for yourself on the main road. I shall provide you with whatever material you need. Take it from my house.” Thus the merchant added his promise.

Annabhāra becoming A Man of Great Wealth

The alms-food offered to a Paccekabuddha who has just emerged from *nirodha-samāpatti* is *diṭṭhadhamma-vedaniya*, i.e. the gift resulting on the day of offering. Therefore, that very day, by virtue of his *diṭṭhadhamma-vedaniya* (gift of alms-food), the merchant took Annabhāra to the King's palace though he did not do so on previous days.

On arrival at the palace, because of Annabhāra's act of merit, the King overlooked the merchant but gazed upon Annabhāra. Then a conversation between the merchant and the

King took place as follows:

Merchant: Great King, why are you gazing at this man?

King: Because I did not see him on the other days, merchant.

Merchant: Great King, this man is worth-gazing on.

King: What are his virtues that make him worth-gazing on, merchant?

Merchant: Great King, he has won a thousand coins from me. He did not have his portion of food but sacrificed it to the Paccakabuddha Upariṭṭha today.

King: What is his name?

Merchant: Annabhāra, Great King.

King: As he has a thousand coins, he should win another thousand from me as well. I too would like to honour him.

So saying, the King also awarded Annabhāra a thousand coins.

Later on, the King ordered his men to build a house for Annabhāra. Obeying the King's order, the men cleared an old site and, at every spot they dug up with mattocks, they found jars of gold, the neck of one jar touching that of another, to their amazement. So they reported the matter to the King. The King ordered them to excavate but as they were digging, the jars sank further. The men told the King about it and he ordered them to continue their digging, saying: "Do it not in my name, but do it under Annabhāra's instructions." The men went back to the site and did the digging again while uttering: "We are doing under the instructions of Annabhāra." As a result, at every spot dug, the jars of gold rose together like huge mushrooms.

The King's men collected the treasure of gold and silver and brought them, all piled up near the King. The King held a meeting with his ministers and asked: "Leaving aside Annabhāra, who else does possess treasures of such proportions in this city of Bārāṇasī?" When the ministers answered that there was none, the King issued an order stating: "Ministers, in that case, let Annabhāra be the royal merchant bearing the title 'Dhanaseṭṭhi' in this Bārāṇasī City of mine." On that very day Annabhāra became royal merchant known as Mahādhanaseṭṭhi, and was entitled a white umbrella, a symbol of wealth, from the King.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

Since he became royal merchant, Dhanaseṭṭhi by name, he performed good works till the end of his life, and upon his death, he was reborn in the realm of devas. This virtuous man, who was the future Anuruddha, was reborn only in the divine and human abodes for a long time. When our Buddha was about to appear, he was born in the royal residence of Sukkodāna, a Sakyan prince. On his naming day, he was given the name of Anuruddha. Prince Anuruddha was the son of the Buddha's uncle Sukkodāna and the brother of Prince Mahānāma. He was very gentle and yet very powerful at the same time.

The Buddha visited the city of Kapilavatthu for the first time and while sojourning on his return in the grove of Anupiya, Prince Anuruddha visited Him together with Princes Bhaddiya, Ānanda, Bhagu, Kimila, Devadatta and the barber Upālī, and they became monks. (This event has been given in detail in the Chapter 26 -29. Readers may here be referred to this story.)

Attainment of Arahatsip

The six Sakyan Princes went together with Upālī the barber to the grove of Anupiya and they became monks in the presence of the Buddha. Of these seven monks, Bhaddiya attained arahatsip in that *vassa*. Anuruddha gained the psychic power of the Divine Eye (*dibbacakkhu*); Devadatta developed the eight mundane attainments; Ānanda was established in the *sotāpatti-phala*; the Venerable Bhagu and Kimila attained arahatsip later. Their resolutions made in the past by these monks will be described in their respective sections.

As for the Venerable Anuruddha, he acquired, in his first *vassa*, the eight attainments

after becoming a monk and developed the psychic power and higher knowledge of the Divine Eye which was able to see a thousand universes. One day, he went to Venerable Sāriputta and said:

“Friend Sāriputta, (1) I can see a thousand universes by means of the particularly pure Divine Eye, which surpasses the eye-sight of human beings. (2) I put effort unflinchingly. Not being unmindful, I possess mindfulness. There is no anxiety in my person and I am calm. My mind is one-pointed and well concentrated. (3) Even then, my mind is not unattached to craving (*taṇhā*) and wrong views (*diṭṭhi*) and not liberated yet from *āsavas*.”

Then Venerable Sāriputta preached to Venerable Anuruddha concerning meditation:

(1) “Friend Anuruddha, the very fact that you are conscious and thinking: ‘I can see a thousand universes by means of the particularly pure Divine-like Eye, which surpasses the clear eyesight of human beings’ reveals that you have conceit (*māna*).”

(2) “Friend Anuruddha, the very fact that you are conscious and thinking: ‘I put effort unflinchingly. Not being unmindful, I possess mindfulness. There is no anxiety in my person and I am calm. My mind is one-pointed and well concentrated,’ reveals that you have mental restlessness (*uddhacca*).

(3) “Friend Anuruddha, the very fact that you are conscious and thinking: ‘Even then my mind is not unattached to craving and wrong view and not liberated yet from *āsavas*’ reveals that you have doubt and worry (*saṁsaya-kukkucca*).

“Therefore I would like to give you words of advice as follows: ‘Discard these three things (conceit, restlessness and doubt) that are developing in your mind. Without being conscious of these things, direct your mind to Deathlessness (Nibbāna)!”

Having learnt meditation, Venerable Anuruddha went to the country of Ceti after seeking permission from the Buddha. Living in the eastern bamboo grove in that country, he practised asceticism. For fifteen days or half a month, he did not sleep but put efforts in his meditation by walking to-and-fro. He then became weary from his meditation so much so that he took rest by sitting under a bamboo thicket. While sitting, great thoughts of a great man (*mahāpurisa-vitakka*) arose in his mind as follows:

- (1) The nine supra-mundane *dharmas* can be realised only in one who is of few wants (i.e. one who has no desire (*icchā*) and craving (*taṇhā*)), but not in one who is greedy.
- (2) The nine supra-mundane *dharmas* can be realised only in one who is easily-contented, but not in one who is discontented.
- (3) The nine supra-mundane *dharmas* can be realised only in one who is quiet, but not in one who takes delight in company.
- (4) The nine supra-mundane *dharmas* can be realised only in one who is energetic, but not in one who is indolent.
- (5) The nine supra-mundane *dharmas* can be realised only in one who is evidently mindful, but not in one who is far from being mindful.
- (6) The nine supra-mundane *dharmas* can be realised only in one who is of concentrated mind, but not in one who is not of concentrated mind,
- (7) The nine supra-mundane *dharmas* can be realised only in one who is wise, but not in one who is foolish.

(N.B. With regard to (1) the individual who is of few wants; there are four kinds: (a) *paccaya-appiccha*, one who is of few wants concerning the four requisites; (b) *adhigama-appiccha*, one who does not let others know of one's attainment of *maggā* and *phala* spirituality but keeps it secret; (c) *pariyatti-appiccha*, one who does not let others know of one's learning but keeps it secret; (d) *dhutaṅga-appiccha* one who does not let others know of one's austere practice but keeps it secret.

- a) The *paccaya-appiccha* accepts only less, though offered much; when offered, he accepts less than what is offered; he never takes all.
- b) The *adhigama-appiccha*, like Thera Majjhantika, does not tell others of his spiritual attainment of *magga* and *phala* but remains quiet. The story of Thera Majjhantika in brief is as follows:

He was an *arahat*. But his alms-bowl and robe was worth only a quarter of a coin. On the day of King Asoka's dedication of a monastery, he was heading a community of monks. Seeing his bowl and robe too old and worn out, people thought he was an inferior aged monk; so they asked him to wait for a moment outside. Then only he thought: "If an *arahat* like me does not make a contribution to the King's welfare, who else will?" So thinking, he instantly sank into the earth and received the first portion of alms-food, which was meant for the head of monks, and was offered to him respectfully. Then he reappeared while others were unaware. In this way, the Thera did not want others know of his arahatship prior to his acceptance of food.

- c) The *pariyatti-appiccha* individual does not want to reveal to others his knowledge of the scriptures though he himself is highly learned in the three Piṭakas. He is like one Venerable Tissa, a resident of Saketa. The story of Venerable Tissa in brief is as follows:

The Venerable was requested by other monks to teach them the Texts and their Commentaries. But he rejected their request, saying that he had no time to do so. Then the monks asked him, somewhat reproachfully: "Have you got no time even to die?" So he deserted his followers and left his dwelling for the Kaṇikāraṇḍika-samudda monastery. He stayed there for the three *vassa*-months (like an unknown illiterate monk). He fulfilled his duties there towards all his co-residents, be they senior or junior to him or be they of mid-standing. On the full moon day of Assayaṇa (September-October), at the meeting on *Mahāpavāraṇā-Uposatha* occasion, he preached, causing gooseflesh to people. They shouted with cheers and threw up their head-dresses into the air. Thus he created wild acclaim among the audience. Lest the people should know: "This indeed was the one who preached last night." he secretly went back to his original dwelling, for he was of *pariyatti-appiccha* kind.

- d) The *dhutaṅga-appiccha* does not like to inform others of his practice of austerity. He is like the elder of the two brothers. A brief account of the two brothers goes as follows:

The two brother-monks were dwelling in the Cetīya hill. The younger brother went to his brother with a stalk of sugar cane which was offered by a donor to the elder one. "Please have it, Sir," said the younger brother. As the elder brother had already finished his eating and washed his mouth, he replied: "Enough, dear brother." "Why," asked the younger brother, "have you taken a vow to observe *ekasanika-dhutaṅga* (the austere practice of eating one meal a day)?" Then only did the elder brother ask his younger brother to bring the sugar-cane. Though he had observed this particular practice for fifty long years, he partook of the sugar-cane as he wished to keep his brother in the dark about his practice. After that, he washed his mouth and renewed his vow again.

(These descriptions of the four types of *appiccha* persons are given in the **Āṅguttara Nikāya Commentary** Vol.3 and their stories are reproduced from the **Majjhima Nikāya Commentary** Vol.2. In the latter, further details of three kinds of *icchā* (wishes), four *appicchātā* (few wants), twelve kind of *santosās* (contentment), three kinds of *pavivekas* (seclusion), five kind of *saṃsaggas* (contact), etc. are given. Learn them from the same Commentary if you so wish.)

At the time, while the Venerable Anuruddha was struggling with the seven thoughts of a great man (*mahāpurisa-vitakka*), the Buddha was still sojourning in a forest sanctuary, Bhesakala by name, near Susumāragira town in the Bhagga country. The forest was to the west of the bamboo grove where Venerable Anuruddha was. Therefore, this place was known as the eastern bamboo grove.

After working out with the seven thoughts, Anuruddha was too tired to take a further step to think about the eighth one. It was true that the disciples, who had thought of the previous seven, such as few wants, easy contentment, calm, energy, mindfulness, mental concentration, and wisdom, were reluctant to go higher and ponder still another Dhamma. For them, it is a rule that they should end up with wisdom. That was why the Venerable Anuruddha, having reflected on the seventh item of wisdom which is a *mahāpurisa-vitakka*, was too tired to go on reflecting on the eighth *vitakka*.

Then the Buddha, while remaining in the Bhesakala forest, knew that “Anuruddha is weary of reflecting on the eighth *vitakka*” and thought: “I shall cause Anuruddha’s wish to be satisfied.” Accordingly, He instantly appeared in the Venerable’s presence and sat down on the seat that had been already prepared. Then the Buddha presented the missing eighth *vitakka*, saying:

“Anuruddha, well done!, well done! (1) The nine supramundane *dharmas* can be fulfilled only in him who has few wants, but not in him who has many... (7) The nine supra-mundane Dhammas can be fulfilled in him who is wise, but not in him who is foolish. Anuruddha! Your reflections belong to the Noble Ones.

“Anuruddha, as it is the case with you, proceed to the eighth reflection. Which is ‘the nine supra-mundane Dhammas’ can be fulfilled in him who takes delight in Nibbāna that is free from the *samsāra* — expanding (*papañca*) factors, [namely, craving (*taṇhā*), conceit (*māna*) and wrong view (*diṭṭhi*)] but not in him who takes delight only in the *papañca* factors.”

Thus, did the Buddha provide the missing eighth *mahāpurisa* thought. The Buddha then continued to preach elaborately to Venerable Anuruddha that, while engaging in these eight reflections, he could easily be absorbed in the first, second, third and fourth mundane *jhānas*, and that while being absorbed in the four mundane *jhānas*, he could easily have the fourfold *ariyavaṃsa-patipadā* (Course of practice belonging to the lineage of the Noble Ones), namely, (1) contentment in robes (*cīvara-santosa*), (2) contentment in food (*pinḍapāta-santosa*), including that in medicine, (3) contentment in dwelling and (4) delight in meditation (*bhāvanā-rāmata*) (The elaborate preaching of the same may be read in the translation of the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Vol. III)

After preaching thus, the Buddha thought about the right dwelling for Venerable Anuruddha that would suit his meditation and came to know that the bamboo grove would be the right place. Accordingly he advised the Venerable, saying:

“Anuruddha, (as the bamboo grove is suitable for your dwelling) observe the *vassa* later on in this bamboo grove in the country of Ceti.”

Having advised thus, the Buddha disappeared and reappeared at Bhesakala forest where He expounded the eight Mahāpurisa Thoughts in detail to the monks there.

After the Buddha’s departure, the Venerable Anuruddha put great efforts in his ascetic practices and soon (during the next *vassa*) attained arahatship, the exhaustion of *āsavas*, the state endowed with the threefold knowledge of *pubbenivāsa-ñāṇa*, *dibbacakkhu-ñāṇa* and *savakkhaya-ñāṇa*. He then became elated and thought: “Oh, seeing my mental conditions, the Exalted Buddha came and provided me with the eighth *mahāpurisa-vitakka*. My heart’s desire also has now been fulfilled to the highest degree indeed!” Paying attention to the Buddha’s sermon and the supra-mundane dhamma, the Venerable uttered a solemn utterance as follows:

(a) *Mama saṅkappam aññāya,
Sattha loke anuttaro.*

THE GREAT CHRONICLE OF BUDDHAS

*Manomayena kāyena,
iddhiyā upasaṅkami.*

The Exalted One, who is the Teacher of devas and humans, who is peerless in the three worlds, knew my thoughts and, in His mind-made body, rushing by means of His psychic powers, and through His super-normal powers, came to my presence in a moment.

(b) *Yathā me ahu saṅkappo
tato uttari desayi
Nippapañca-rato Buddho
nippapañcam adesayi.*

To me occurred the thoughts of the top Noble One in the seven fold manner. The Exalted Buddha taught me, out of compassion, the eighth thought which is higher than the seven reflections of mine. (How?) The Buddha, who is named the Omniscient One, the best of the world, who delights in the unconditioned Nibbāna that is truly free from the three *saṁsāra* extending (*papañca*) factors, taught me, out of compassion, the unconditioned Nibbāna that is truly free from the three *saṁsāra*-expanding (*papañca*) factors.

(c) *Tassāhaṁ dhammam aññāya
vihāsim sāsane rato.
Tisso vijjā anuppattā
kataṁ Bhuddhassa sāsanaṁ.*

I, Anuruddha, having comprehended the Dhamma taught by that Buddha, named the Omniscient One, the best of the world, lived in bliss in this very existence always being delighted in the attainment of Fruition in the dispensation of the three trainings. The threefold knowledge of *pubbenivāsā-ñāna* by me, I have laboured and put into practice, reaching the goal of arahatship, the Teaching of the threefold training of the Omniscient Buddha, the head of the world

(c) *Etadagga* Title achieved

Thereafter, when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery, He convened a meeting, in which He declared a large number of monks as foremost (*etadagga*) in their respective attainments but He admired the Venerable Anuruddha, saying:

*“Etadaggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ dibbacakkhukānaṁ
yad idam Anuruddho.”*

“Monks among my disciples who are endowed with the divine eye (*dibbacakkhu*), Anuruddha is the best.”

Saying thus, the Buddha declared the Venerable Anuruddha as the foremost (*etadagga*) in acquiring the divine eye.

(Herein it may be asked: Why did the Buddha appoint Anuruddha only despite the presence of other *Tevijja arahats* and *Chalabhiññā arahats* who had attained ‘divine-eye’ too? The answer is: It was true that other *Tevijja* and *Chalabhiññā arahats* had attained ‘divine-eye’ too, but they did not make use of it as much as Anuruddha did. When Venerable Anuruddha went on alms-round, except in partaking of food, he, at all times, developed Light-Kasiṇa (*āloka-kasiṇa*) and surveyed beings by the psychic powers of his divine-eye. In this way, the Venerable gained the fivefold mastery of the divine eye and became more experienced (than the other *arahats*). This was the reason for the Buddha declaring him the foremost (*etadagga*) in this particular field of attainment.

(The alternative answer is this: The Venerable Anuruddha had done for a period of

a hundred thousand aeons meritorious deeds with the aim to acquire this particular declaration of being foremost in attaining ‘divine-eye’. Accordingly, in this existence too, which was his last, in which his Perfections and aspirations were fulfilled, he made use of the divine-eye more than any other *arahats* as he had inclination to do so which was derived from his past resolution. Hence the declaration by the Buddha.)

Picking up of Rag Robe offered by A Deva

(From the Dhammapada Commentary)

While the Buddha was sojourning at Jetavana, Rājagaha, Venerable Anuruddha was looking for rags, from which a robe was to be made, at dust heaps and other places. A deity, named Jālinī, who happened to be his wife three existences ago, was living in Tāvātimsa. Seeing that the Venerable was searching rags, she brought three pieces of divine cloth, each thirteen cubits long and four cubits broad. But she thought: “If I offer these pieces of divine cloth, in this shape, the Venerable may not accept them.” So she left them at a dust heap ahead of the Venerable who was seeking rag; she did so in such a way so that only the edges of the pieces could be seen.

When the Venerable went there in search of rags, he saw the edges of the pieces of divine cloth, he picked them up at that very place and departed thinking that they were the best quality.

On the day the Venerable was making robes, the Buddha, in the company of five hundred monks, visited the Venerable’s dwelling and took His seat. The senior Venerables, belonging to the community of Eighty Disciples, were also seated at the same place where the robe making was undertaken. The Venerables Kassapa, Sāriputta and Ānanda helped him in making the robes, taking their seats at the starting part, at the middle and at the far end respectively. Other monks also came to assist him by making sewing threads while the Buddha himself put the thread through the eye of the needle. The Venerable Moggallāna roamed about collecting other necessary things for the stitching.

The deity Jalini entered the city and announced: “Citizens, the Exalted Buddha, in the company of the eighty arahat-disciples, together with the five hundred monks, are staying at the monastery to stitch robes for our master the Venerable Anuruddha. Go to the monastery and offer rice gruel and other edible things.” Thus the deity urged the womenfolk to flock with food. The Venerable Moggallāna brought bunches of Jambu fruits during the rest period, just before the meal-time. The five hundred monks could not finish the fruit. Sakka, the King of Gods, levelled the ground at the stitching site. Therefore, the ground looked like a place spread with liquid of lac. The leftover food, such as gruel, things solid and rice, were plenty.

Then the monks blamed the Venerable Anuruddha saying: “What is the use of bringing these kinds of food in such large quantities. In fact, he should have noted the amount of food required and should have asked his relatives, male and female servants and donors, saying: ‘Bring only this much.’ Perhaps the Venerable wanted us to know that he has a large number of relatives, servants and donors.” Then the Buddha asked them what they were talking about and when they replied what they were talking about, the Buddha asked them: “Monks, do you think all these foods were caused to be brought by Anuruddha?” When the monks replied in the affirmative the Buddha said:

“Monks, never does my dear son Anuruddha beg the four requisites of this amount. As a matter of fact, *arahats* never speak with an emphasis on the requisites. This food occurred by the power of a deity!”

Having thus responded, the Buddha uttered the following verse in order to give a sermon:

*Yassāsavā parikkhīṇā
āhāre ca anissito
suññato animitto ca
vimokkho yassa gocarō;*

*ākāse va sakuntānaṃ
padam tassa durannayaṃ.*

(O monks, my dear sons!) An *arahat*, in whom the four *āsavas*, namely, sense desire (*kāma*), existence (*bhava*), wrong views (*diṭṭhi*) and ignorance (*avijjā*), are destroyed, even without leaving the slightest traces, is not attached to food with craving (*taṇhā*), and wrong views (*diṭṭhi*). In his attainment of fruition, he always resorts to Nibbāna, known as Freedom of Nothingness (*suññata-vimokkha*), as there is no passion (*rāga*), anger (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*) in it. Nibbāna, also known as Freedom of causelessness (*animitta-vimokkha*) as it is absolutely liberated from such causes as passion, anger and delusion. (And by virtue of the particle ‘*ca*’,) Nibbāna also known as Freedom of desirelessness (*appaṇihita-vimokkha*) as it is absolutely liberated from such desires as passion, anger and delusion. Just as what’s in the air, is trodden by the feet, touched by the breath, the head and the wings of the bird that flies in the air, is impossible to know, even so his attainment of the element of Nibbāna, after death, is impossible to know for ordinary individuals.

By the end of the sermon a large multitude attained *sotāpatti-phala* and so on.

(6) BHADDIYA MAHĀTHERA

This chapter on the Jewel of the Sangha contains two Venerable Bhaddiya: one being this (6) Bhaddiya, and the other (7) Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya, about whom will be narrated later on. The former Bhaddiya was one of the six Sakyan princes who became *bhikkhus* as has been told in the story of Venerable Anuruddha. The mother of Venerable Bhaddiya was Kāligodha, a Sakyan princess. So the Venerable was known as Kāligodhaputta Bhaddiya, “Bhaddiya the son of Sakyan princess Kāligodha.”

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

This Mahāthera Bhaddiya was a son of a wealthy family in the lifetime of the Buddha Padumuttara, a hundred thousand aeons ago. He went to the monastery (as has been told in the story of Anuruddha) to listen to the Dhamma.

That day he saw the Buddha declared a monk as the foremost (*etadagga*) among those belonging to high family (*uccakulika*). He became instantly inspired, thinking: “I should also become one like him in the dispensation of a future Buddha.” Accordingly, he invited the Sangha, headed by the Buddha, to a *mahā-dāna* performed for seven days. Thereafter, prostrating at the feet of the Buddha, he said: “Exalted Buddha, I do not long for a luxurious life as a result of my *dāna* but I do wish to become a monk who is foremost among those of high family.”

Surveying the future, the Buddha foresaw that his wish would be fulfilled and said: “This wish of yours will be fulfilled. A hundred thousand aeons from now, the Buddha Gotama will arise. Then will you become one declared foremost among the monks who come from a superior family.” Having thus predicted, the Buddha gave a sermon of appreciation concerning the meal and left for the monastery.

After receiving the prediction, he enquired good works conducive to that end and had seats for preachers made and donated, He had coverings for the seats made and donated. He donated fans for preachers' use while preaching, he gave offerings in honour of preachers, and lights outside the *sīmā*, the chapter house. In this way, he performed acts of merit till the end of his life. On passing away, he was reborn either in divine or human abodes. Some time between the Buddhas Kassapa and Gotama, he was reborn as a householder's son in the city of Bārāṇasī.

At that time, a large number of Paccekabuddhas came from Gandhamādāna mountain to Bārāṇasī and, having taken their seats on the bank of the Ganga, where water was plenty,

they partook their food. Knowing that the Paccekabuddhas always went to that site and had their meals, the householder, the future Bhaddiya, placed eight great stone slabs as his donation and treated the Paccekabuddhas to nourishment as long as he lived.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

During the interval between the two Buddhas, Kassapa and Gotama, lasting innumerable aeons (*buddhantara asaṅkhyeyya* period), he was reborn only in the realms of devas and human, and in the lifetime of this Buddha, his rebirth was that of a Sakyan prince in the city of Kapilavatthu. He was named Bhaddiya by his parents.

When he came of age, he became a leading prince of the six Sakyan princes (who adopted monkhood along with the barber Upāli). While the Buddha was sojourning in the mango grove near the town of Anupiya, he received ordination as a *bhikkhu* and attained arahatship in the *vassa* of the same year.

(After such attainment, as he lived in bliss of *phala-samāpatti*; he uttered with joy: “O, blissful I am! O, blissful I am!” Worldling *bhikkhus* did not know of his attainment and misunderstood that he uttered so from his recall of his previous princely luxury. They reported to the Buddha. This account may be read in the *Udāna*.)

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

At a later time, while the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery, He addressed the *bhikkhus* regarding Venerable Bhaddiya:

"Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakaṇaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ uccākulikānaṃ yad'idam Bhaddiyo Kāligodhāya putto,"

“Monks, among my *bhikkhus*-disciple belonging to a high family, Bhaddiya, son of Kāligodhā, is the foremost.”

Speaking thus in praise, the Buddha declared that Venerable Bhaddiya was the foremost (*etadagga*) among those of high birth.

(Herein the original name of the Venerable's mother was Godhā. As she was slightly dark, she was called Kāligodhā, the Sakyan Princess. Hence the Venerable's name Kāligodhaputta Bhaddiya, “Baddiya, the son of Kāligodhā.”

(Kāligodhā was the oldest of all Sakyan princesses. At the time the Bodhisatta attained Buddhahood, his father, King Suddhodāna, was over ninety. (This can be guessed by careful consideration.) He was not strong enough then to perform his duties as a leading monarch unlike when he was younger. Therefore, he must have been a nominal head of the Sakyan princes. So Bhaddiya was elected king, for the choice was made from senior to junior families and it fell upon him. But the prince gave up his kingship of the Sakyan and became a monk. Hence his appointment as “the foremost among the monks of high birth.”

Alternatively, Venerable Bhaddiya had been king for five hundred successive existences as a result of his resolution made in the past. Hence his *Uccakulika-etadagga* title.)

(7) LAKUṆDAKA BHADDIYA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

This Venerable Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya was a son of a wealthy householder in the city of Hamsavatī, in the lifetime of Buddha Padumuttara. In the way mentioned before (in the story of Venerable Anuruddha), he went to the monastery to listen to a sermon.

At that time, the Buddha declared a monk as the foremost (*etadagga*) in having very sweet voice. Seeing this, he became inspired to become like the monk in the lifetime of a future Buddha. So he invited the Sangha headed by the Buddha and gave them a grand *dāna*

for seven days. Thereafter, he supplicated: “Exalted Buddha, I do not wish for any other result on account of this *dāna* but to be declared a monk who is foremost (*etadagga*) among those who has sweet voice, in the dispensation of a future Buddha.” So saying, he remained prostrated at the Buddha's feet.

Surveying the householder's future, the Buddha saw that his wish would be fulfilled. He therefore said: “Your wish will come true. A hundred thousand aeons from now, Buddha Gotama will appear. Then you will become a monk in His dispensation and be declared foremost among those possessing sweet voice.” Having predicted thus, the Buddha returned to the monastery.

Life as Cittapatta Cuckoo

Having received the prediction, the son of the wealthy man performed good deeds till his death and was reborn only in the realms of devas and humans. When the Buddha Vipassī appeared, he was a cuckoo named Cittapatta and lived in the Khemā Deer Park. One day, he flew to the Himavanta and came back carrying a sweet mango in his beak. While seeing the Buddha surrounded by monks, it occurred to him: “On other days, I saw the Buddha but I had nothing to offer. However, I have brought this ripe mango today for my children to eat. I shall bring them some other fruit, but this mango I shall offer the Buddha.” Then he flew down and was hovering overhead (but not resting on the ground yet). Perceiving the cuckoo's thought, Buddha Vipassī looked at His attendant, Venerable Asoka, who took out the alms bowl from its bag and placed it in the hand of the Buddha. Then the Cuckoo put the mango, which he had brought in his beak, into the Buddha's bowl as his offering. At that very place, the Buddha ate it while sitting. Filled with *saddhā*, the cuckoo repeatedly reflected on the attributes of the Buddha as much as he had known and having paid respect to the Buddha, he returned to his nest where he remained for a week without searching for food; instead he spent the time feeling joyous and happy.

In his life as Cittapatta Cuckoo, this much of his good act was done. As a result of this, the Venerable Lakunḍaka Bhaddiya voice was very sweet and pleasant.

Life as A Master Carpenter

During the time of the Buddha Kassapa, the future Venerable Lakunḍaka Bhaddiya became a master carpenter. After the Buddha's Parinibbāna, His devotees discussed about building the only shrine for the only body relic. The main disagreement was the size of the shrine. Some said: “It should be seven *yojanas*.” Some said: “Seven *yojanas* is too big. (The construction could not be finished.) Let us make it six *yojanas*.” Some said: “Six *yojanas* is still too big. (It could not be done.) Let us make it five *yojanas*.” In this way, the size was reduced to four *yojanas*, three *yojanas*, two *yojanas*. Then the master carpenter, the future Mahāthera Lakunḍaka Bhaddiya, as he was chief at the meeting decided: “Friends, come. No matter who said what, let us built a *cetiya* which is easy to repair in future.” So saying, he took the measuring rope and went to the construction site. While measuring, he made the length of one *gāvuta* and said: “Let each side of the shrine be one *gāvuta* so that the four sides will make a *yojana*. As it will be a *yojana* at the base, so will be its height.” The carpenter thus brought the discussion to an end.

In agreement with him, the people built the *dhātucetiya*, the relic shrine, which was one *gāvuta* on each side and one *yojana* in total and the one *yojana* as its height. In this way, the master carpenter decided the size and the construction of the *cetiya* dedicated to the Buddha who possessed incomparable attributes.

(b) Ascetic Life and Attainment of Arahatsip in His Final Existence

As a result of his decision on the size of the shrine of the Buddha, the possessor of unique attributes, he was short-bodied, shorter than others, in all his subsequent existences, and in his last existence in the lifetime of our Buddha, he was born in a wealthy family in the city of Savatthi. His parents named him Bhaddiya.

When the wealthy son Bhaddiya came of age, the Buddha was residing at Jetavana, He went to the monastery and listened to the Dhamma. So great was his faith that he received

monkhood and learned the meditation subject from the Buddha. Putting effort in Vipassanā practice, he attained arahatship.

Teachings centring around Lakunḍaka Bhaddiya Mahāthera

(Herein, the worthy and inspiring discourses in connection with the Mahāthera will be reproduced in brief.)

Discourses leading to The Venerable's Arahatsip

After becoming a monk, he took the meditation subject from the Buddha and engaged himself in Vipassanā practice and attained *sotāpatti-phala* first. At that time, monk-learners (*sikkhās*), such as *sotāpannas*, *sakadāgāmins* and *anāgāmins*, approached Venerable Sāriputta to ask him for meditation subjects, or sermons or answers to their problems for the sake of higher attainments. In complying with their requests, the Venerable explained to them how to meditate; he gave them sermons and answered their questions. As the monks continued to strive, some attained *sakadāgāmī* stage, some *anāgāmī* stage, some acquired the threefold Knowledge, some the sixfold Psychic Power and some the four Analytical Knowledge.

Seeing these monks and poising himself to seize an opportunity for his own uplift, Venerable Lakunḍaka Bhaddiya reflected on his stoutness of heart and his being almost devoid of defilement; and reflecting thus, he approached the Venerable Sāriputta and exchanged greetings with him and made a request for a sermon. The Venerable on his part, gave a sermon that was in harmony with the young Venerable's inclination.

In accordance with the Venerable's sermon, the Venerable Lakunḍaka Bhaddiya developed his Vipassanā wisdom along the line set in the teaching. On account of the two factors, namely, the might of the Venerable Sāriputta's teaching and Venerable Lakunḍaka Bhaddiya's possession of acts of merit done in the past, the latter's Vipassanā wisdom improved, culminating in arahatsip.

Fully aware of this, the Buddha, at that time uttered a solemn utterance as follows:

*Uddh'am adho sabbadhi vippamutto
ayam hamasmī ti anānupassī.
Evaṃ vimutto udatāri oghaṃ
atiṇṇapubbam apunabbhavāya.*

An *arahat*, who has destroyed his *āsavas* is freed from above (*uddham*), i.e. the material elements (*rūpa-dhatu*) and the immaterial elements (*arūpa-dhatu*) as well as from below (*adho*), i.e. the elements of sensual pleasure (*kāma-dhātu*) and also with regard to all kinds of formations (*sabbadhi*), is freed in the manner of three kinds of deliverance, namely, deliverance by elimination (*vikkhambhana-vimutti*), deliverance by cutting off (*samuccheda-vimutti*) and deliverance by calming (*paṭipassaddhi-vimutti*). That *arahat*, who has destroyed his *āsavas*, no longer wrongly sees through conceit and false view (with regard to the five aggregates of *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāna*), taking "This really am I!" The *arahat*, who has thus been delivered in all manner from the ten fetters and all unwholesome things, has crossed the fourfold whirlpool or the whirlpool of *saṃsāra* which he had never dreamed to do so before the attainment of the noble Path. He had crossed over to the other shore through total extinction (*anupādisesa-nibbāna*) and stands blissfully there for taking no new birth.

(This is an extract from the Pathama-Lakunḍaka Bhaddiya Sutta, Cūḷavagga, **Udāna Pāli**.)

Further Sermons given by Venerable Sāriputta

As has been described in the first *Sutta*, while meditating based on the first advice received (from Venerable Sāriputta), Venerable Lakunḍaka Bhaddiya attained arahatsip. But the Venerable Sāriputta was unaware of this (for lack of reflection) and still thinking

that Bhaddiya was still a learner. (On a later day) the Venerable Sāriputta preached to him in detail, how to reach arahatship, by doubling the length of the sermon and touching upon many points, just as a very generous donor, when asked for a little, would lavishly give more than what was required. On his part, Lakunḍaka Bhaddiya did not react by thinking: “Now that I have done my duty as a monk, what is the use of this preaching of his,” instead he listened to the preaching as before with all reverence to the Dhamma (*dhamma-garava*).

Seeing the situation, the Buddha, staying at the Jetavana monastery of Savatthi, uttered a solemn utterance by means of His supernormal power so that Venerable Sāriputta might come to know of the destruction of moral defilements by the Venerable Lakundaka Bhaddiya:

*Acchecchi vaṭṭaṃ vyagā nirāsaṃ
visukkhā saritā'na sandati.
Chinnaṃ vaṭṭaṃ na yattati
eseva'nto dukkhassa.*

In an *arahat*, who has destroyed *āsavas*, the round of moral defilement (*kilesa-vaṭṭa*) is cut off. [Note that the cutting of the round of moral defilement leads to that of the round of actions (*kamma-vatta*).] An *arahat*, who has destroyed *āsavas*, reached the wonderful bliss of Nibbāna that is free from craving. In an *arahat* who has destroyed *āsavas*, the morally defiling river of craving that has flowed steadily has been dried up by the fourth sun of *arahatta-magga* in the way the five great rivers were, because of the rising of the fourth sun when the world was on the verge of devolution. (Craving (*taṇhā*), is the cause of suffering, *samudaya-sacca*. Therefore, the elimination of craving means the elimination of all kinds of passion. Hence craving (*taṇhā*), is emphasised here.) By no means does the river-like craving flow any longer. The round of action that has been cut, the way the tree is uprooted, never repeats its being. (Note that the cutting of the round of action gives rise to that of the round of results (*vipāka-vaṭṭa*) that might otherwise take place in future.) The absence of the round of result due to the cutting of the round of passion and actions, is the end of suffering.

(This is an extract from the second Lakunḍaka Bhaddiya Sutta, Cūla-vagga, Udāna Pāli.)

The Venerable Lakunḍaka Bhaddiya's Virtues preached by The Buddha

Once, while the Buddha was staying at Jetavana, Sāvattthi, a large number of *bhikkhu* visited Him. At that time, Venerable Lakunḍaka Bhaddiya, after going on alms-round with many other monks in a village, having finished his meal, washed his alms bowl, dried it, put it in its bag, carried it on his shoulder by means of a sling. He folded his outer garment and put it on his left shoulder. He had all forms of pleasant deportment, such as stepping forward, stepping backward, looking straightforward, looking sideward, bending, stretching, and casting down his eyes. He set out on foot to the Buddha with his mind well concentrated by both mindfulness (*sati*) and clear consciousness (*sampajañña*) treading on the fore footstep with the hind footstep.

When he went thus, he did not mix with others but followed behind them. **Reason:** he led a solitary life (*eka-cārī*). **Another explanation:** his ugly dwarfish body structure brought jeers and contempt from such worldly monks as Chabbaggiya-bhikkhus (the Band of Six). Remembering this, the considerate Venerable thought: “May these few worldly monks not develop unwholesomeness, on account of me!” Hence his following behind them. In this manner, these *bhikkhus* and the Venerable arrived in Sāvattthi and entered the Jetavana monastery and approached where the Buddha was.

Seeing from a distance the pleasant deportment of the Venerable who was following behind the monks, it occurred to the Buddha thus: “These monks do not know the greatness of might of my son. Therefore, some of these worldly monks have overwhelmed my son with contempt and jeers. Such actions would bring them no benefit but cause suffering for long. Now, the time has come for me to reveal the virtues of my son to them and thereby

setting him free from their domineering acts of contempt.” So the Buddha asked the monks: “Do you see, monks, that *bhikkhu* who came behind you and who was bullied by some worldly monks with their mocking remarks because of his ugly dwarfish frame?” “Yes, we do, Exalted Buddha,” answered the monks. Then the Buddha said:

“Monks, this *bhikkhu* is of great supernormal power. There is almost no *jhāna* in which he has not engaged. (That is to say the monk had experienced in all the *jhānas*, such as *rūpa-samāpatti*, *arūpa-samāpatti*, *brahmavihāra-samāpatti*, *nirodha-samāpatti*, and *phala-samāpatti*. By this statement, the Venerable's possession of supernormal powers is indicated.) The Venerable has personally accomplished arahatship, even in this present life, by realizing it through extraordinary intelligence — the arahatship that is the goal of peerless and noble practice sought after by those clansmen who tightly chose to leave household life for monkhood. (That is to say he is a monk who has continuously been absorbed in *arahatta-phala-samāpatti*. By this statement, the Venerable's possession of might was manifested.) *Arahatta-phala-samāpatti* was enjoyed by the noble Venerable; hence it was his relish (*āmubhāva*).”,

After saying thus, the Buddha also gave a solemn utterance in verse as follows:

*Nelaṅgo setapacchādo, ekāro vattati ratho.
anīghaṃ passa āyantam, chinnaśotam abandhanam.*

Behold carefully this chariot-like body frame of my son Lakundaka Bhaddiya. It consists of the wheel, the principal component part of the chariot equal to the flawless morality of arahatship; the coverings of the chariot equal to the white and clean emancipation of arahatship, the spokes of the wheel of the chariot equal to the incomparable mindfulness of arahatship; the chariot-like body frame of my bosom son Bhaddiya moves about in full swing even without lubrication. Following from behind a large number of monks, he has no suffering of defilement. All his trailing oil of craving has been eliminated. He had none of the ten fetters.

Here, the Buddha was so overjoyed because of the virtues of the Venerable that He urged others to have a look at the Venerable's body.

(This is an extract from the Aparā Lakundaka Bhaddiya Sutta, Cūḷavagga, **Udāna Pāli**.)

Besides, others accounts and preachings concerning the Venerable Lakundaka Bhaddiya may be noted from the **Dhammapada Pāli** and **Commentary**, the **Theragāthā Pāli** and **Commentary**, etc.

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

At a later time, while the Buddha was staying at Jetavana and holding a meeting, He declared, in respect of Thera Lakundaka Bhaddiya:

*“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ, bhikkhūnaṃ mañjussarānaṃ
yadidaṃ Lakundaka Bhaddiyo.”*

“Monks, Lakundaka Bhaddiya is the foremost (*etadagga*) among my disciples for having sweet voice.”

(8) PIṆḌOLA BHĀRADVĀJA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Piṇḍolabhāradvāja was reborn in a family of lions during the lifetime of Buddha Padumuttara and lived, moving about for food at the foot of a mountain. One morning, when the Buddha surveyed the world, He saw the lion having the potentials to attain the Path, the Fruition and Nibbāna. Accordingly, the Buddha made His alms-round in

the city of Hamsavati and in the afternoon, while the lion was in search of food, He entered the lion's den and was absorbed in *nirodha-samāpatti*, in sitting posture with his legs crossed, in midair

When the lion came back from his search for food and stood at the entrance of the den, he saw the Buddha's miraculous sitting in midair and it occurred to him thus: "The man, who has come to my place, is able to sit there. This noble personage must be great and worthy of honour indeed! As he is worth honouring, he is able to sit cross-legged in midair in the cave. His body light also spreads and flashes everywhere. I have never seen such a miracle. This noble individual must be the best of all who ought to be honoured. I too should do honour to Him to the best of my ability." So thinking, the lion bring all kinds of terrestrial and watery flowers from the forest and spread them on the ground up to the height where the Buddha was sitting. Then he stood right in front of the Buddha, worshipping him. The next day, he discarded the withered flowers and replaced with fresh one to make a similar seat and with it, honoured the Buddha.

In this way, the lion made floral seats for seven days and he took great delight in it. At the same time, he acted as a guard at the entrance of the cave honouring the Buddha thereby. On the seventh day, the Buddha emerged from His *nirodha-samāpatti* and stood at the cave's entrance. Then the lion circumambulated Him three times keeping Him to his right and paid homage to Him from the four cardinal points and stood still after stepping back.

The Buddha, having realized that such performance of meritorious acts was efficacious enough for his attainment of the Path and the Fruition, rose into the sky and returned to the monastery.

Life as Son of A Wealthy Merchant

As for the lion, because he was separated from the Buddha, he felt very unhappy and after his death took rebirth in the family of a wealthy (*mahā-sāla*) merchant in Hamsāvati City. On coming of age, he went along, one day, with other citizens and while listening to the Buddha's Teaching, he saw Him declaring a monk, the best among those who spoke boldly on the Path and the Fruition. As in the case of the pervious *mahā-theras*, the merchant's son performed *mahā-dāna* to the Buddha for seven days and aspired after a similar position in future.

Seeing that the man's wish would be fulfilled, the Buddha predicted to that effect. After receiving the prophecy, the merchant's son did good works till his death. When he passed away from that life, he was never reborn in the woeful states for a hundred thousand aeons but, instead, alternatively only in the realms of devas and human beings.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

Having reborn thus from the human realm to the deva and vice versa, Pindola was born into the family of a wealthy brahmin, in the city of Rājagaha, during the lifetime of the present Buddha and was named Bhāradvāja.

The Name Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja

When Bhāradvāja came of age, he studied the three Vedas and when he had accomplished his studies, he became a teacher, going from place to place and teaching five hundred brahmin youths. As he himself was a teacher, at every feeding-place he personally received the food rather aggressively. As he was somewhat greedy with regard to food, he emphatically looked for food together with his students, asking: "Where is gruel available? Where is rice obtained?" On account of his wandering and longing for food wherever he was, he came to be known as Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja, "Bhāradvāja the seeker of food."

Survival of The Name even in Monkhood

At a later time, Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja suffered economic misfortune and became poor. One day, the Buddha went to Rājagaha and gave a sermon. After listening to the sermon, the Brahmin developed faith and took ordination as a *bhikkhu*.

Those who had joined the Buddhist Sangha were generally known by their clan name. Therefore, the *bhikkhu* should have been known as Bhāradvāja. But he was not, instead he was called Venerable Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja. The reason for this was that he carried a pot-like bowl and ate a bowlful of gruel, or a bowlful of cakes and a bowlful of rice. Then other monks told the Buddha of the monk's gluttony.

The Buddha forbade his use of the bag for the bowl. So the poor monk had to keep it upside down under the couch. When he kept it, he pushed it under the couch causing a friction between the brim of the bowl and the rough ground. When he took it out he had to cause the same thing. As time went by, because of the repeated frictions, the bowl which originally was big like an enormous pot became a bowl with the capacity of cooked rice from an *ambāṇa* measure of uncooked rice. Then the monks reported the matter to the Buddha, who from that time onwards permitted the Venerable to use the bag. Thus the Venerable was like one who adopted monkhood for food, hence he was called *Pindola*. Because he belonged to the Bhāradvāja clan, he was named Bhāradvāja. Also after becoming a *bhikkhu* he continued to be called Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja, a two-word name.

At a later time, when he strove to engage in development of sense-faculties (*indriya-bhāvanā*), he attained *arahatta-phala* and became an *arahat*.

After his attainment of arahatship, he went from one dwelling place to another, from one monastic compound to another, carrying a curved iron rod (used) as a key and fearlessly roaring a lion's roar: "Those who have doubt as regards the Path and the Fruition, let them ask me!" (A detailed account of this should be taken from the translation of the Piṇḍolabbhāradvāja Sutta, Jarāvagga, Indriya-saṃyutta, in the Mahāvagga of the **Saṃyutta Nikāya**.)

One day, he brought down, by means of his supernatural power, the sandalwood bowl that was hanging in the air from the top bamboo pole which was supported by a series of other poles to the height of sixty cubits by a wealthy merchant of Rājagaha. Surrounded by applauding people, the Venerable went to the Veḷuvana monastery and placed the bowl in the hand of the Buddha. Although, knowing about it, the Buddha asked: "Dear son Bhāradvāja, from where did you get this bowl?" When the Venerable explained, the Master said: "You, dear son, have shown such a thing as *Uttarimanussa-dhamma*, i.e. the *jhāna*, *magga* and *phala*, that surpass the ten wholesome courses of action belonging to men (*kusala-kamma-patha*) [just for an unworthy gain]. You, dear son, have done something that should not be done!" Beginning with these words, the Buddha rebuked the Venerable in many ways and set up a rule that forbade performance of miracles. (A detailed account of this may be re-read in the Chapter 33.)

Afterwards, three kinds of talk occurred amidst the *bhikkhus* with regard to his virtues: (1) "The Venerable Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja, known as Satinādiya Mahāthera, as he was in the habit of making bold speeches, on the day of his attainment of arahatship, fearlessly announced: 'Those who have doubts about the Path and the Fruition, let them ask me!'" (2) "He reported his attainment of arahatship to the Buddha whereas other Venerable kept silent." (3) "The Venerable himself habitually makes daring speeches and causes pleasure in people. He flew up and brought the sandalwood bowl of the Rājagaha merchant." The *bhikkhus* told the Buddha of these three virtues put together.

As it was the nature of Buddhas to reproach what should be reproached and to admire what should be admired, the Buddha only selected what was worth admiring, said in praise:

"Monks, by developing his three faculties and by repeatedly reflecting on them, the monk Bhāradvāja declared his arahatship, saying: 'I know that there is no more rebirth for me, that I have practised the noble practice, that what is to be done has been done and I have nothing else to do concerning the Path!'

"What are the three faculties? The faculty of mindfulness (*satindriya*), the faculty of concentration (*samādhindriya*), the faculty of wisdom (*paññ'indriya*), by developing and by repeatedly reflecting on them, he declares his attainment of arahatship, saying: 'I know that there is no more rebirth for me, concerning the

Path! That I have practiced the noble practice, that what is to be done has been done and that I have nothing else to do in concerning the Path!”

“Monks, in what do these three faculties end? They end in bringing about destruction. Destruction of what? Destruction of rebirth, old age and death. Monks, as he knew full well that he had no more rebirth, old age and death, the monk Bharadvaja speaks of his arahatship: ‘I know that there is no more rebirth for me, that I have practised the noble practice, that what is to be done has been done, and that I have nothing else to do concerning the Path!’ ”

The Buddha said thus in praise of Venerable Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja.

It was this very Venerable Mahāthera who gave a sermon to King Udena of Kosambī and established him as a lay devotee in the Triple Gem. (Vide the translation of the Saḷāyatana Vagga of the **Saṃyutta Nikāya** for a detailed account of it.)

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

While holding a ceremony at a later time, the Buddha declared admiringly of Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja as follows:

“Monks, of my disciple bhikkhus, who fearlessly speak like a lion's roar, the monk Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja is the foremost (etadagga)!”

Thus the Buddha appointed the Venerable Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja as the foremost (*etadagga*) of being *Sīnhanādika*, “maker of a lion's roar.”

(9) MANTĀṆIPUTTA PUṆṆA MAHĀTHERA

(The Mahāthera's original name was Puṇṇa. Since he was the son of the Venerable Koṇḍañña's sister, Mantāṇī the brahmin lady and was thus known as Venerable Mantāṇi-putta Puṇṇa.)

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The clansman, who would become the Venerable Mantāṇi-putta, was born into the wealthy brahmin family, in the city of Hamsāvātī, before Buddha Padumuttara appeared a hundred thousand aeons ago. On his naming day, his parents and relatives gave him the name Gotama.

On coming of age, the brahmin youth Gotama, son of a wealthy brahmin, studied the three Vedas and also became skilful in all crafts. While going from place to place in the company of five hundred youths (who were his pupils), he reflected on the Vedas and on seeing in them no means for liberation from *samsāra*, it occurred to him thus: “Like the trunk of a banana plant, these Vedas are smooth outside but there is no substance inside. My wandering with adoring attachment to them resembles an act of grinding the chaff in the hope of getting rice. What is the use of these three Vedas? There is no use at all for me.” Again he pondered: “I shall adopt an ascetic life and develop *brahmā-vihāra-jhānas*. Being one who never falls off from such *jhānas*, I shall take rebirth in the abode of Brahmas” Pondering thus he went together with his five hundred pupils to the foot of a hill and lived there as an ascetic.

The followers of the hermit Gotama were matted-hair hermits numbering eighteen thousand. The Master Gotama himself was accomplished in the five mundane psychic powers and the eight mundane *jhānas* and taught his eighteen thousand disciples how to develop concentration of mind by means of certain devices. Following the teaching of their master, the eighteen thousand disciples also became accomplished in the five mundane psychic powers and the eight mundane *jhānas*.

In this way, as time went by, when the Master Gotama Hermit became old, the Buddha Padumuttara was still living amidst with a hundred thousand *bhikkhus* and having His native Hamsāvātī City as His resort for food. One day at daybreak, when the Buddha surveyed the world of sentient beings, He saw the potentials of the hermit disciples of

Gotama.

He also foresaw that “With my visit to Gotama Hermit, he would aspire to be foremost (*etadagga*) among those who could proclaim the Dhamma well in the dispensation of a Buddha to come.” Accordingly, He cleansed Himself, took His bowl and robe and went in the guise of an insignificant man and stood at the entrance of Gotama's hermitage, while the hermit's disciples were away in search of herbs and fruit.

Although he had not known beforehand that the Buddha Padumuttara had appeared, the ascetic teacher Gotama, on seeing the Buddha, guessed the great man from a distance: “Considering the physical perfection of this noble visitor, such a personality could become a universal monarch if He were to live a household life but if He were to live an ascetic life, He could become a genuine Omniscient Buddha, who burst opens the roof of *kilesa*. Therefore, the man coming, appears to me as one liberated from the three worlds.” As soon as he saw the Buddha, he bowed his head most respectfully and said: “Glorious Buddha, please come this way!” So saying, he prepared and offered a seat to the Buddha. Buddha Padumuttara then took the seat and preached to Gotama.

At that time, his pupils, the matted-hair ascetics, returned. They had the thought: “We shall offer choice fruit and roots to our master and, as for us, we shall only have the remainings,” but, they were surprised by the sight of the Buddha sitting in a high place and their master in a lower place.

“Look, we have been roaming about under the impression that there was nobody else who was nobler than our master in the world. Now we have clearly seen a great man who let our master take a lower seat and who Himself took a higher one. This noble person must be most honourable!” So thinking, they went, bringing their fruit baskets. The Master Gotama, fearing that the pupils might respect him in the presence of the Buddha, asked them from a distance: “Pupils, do not pay homage to me! The Supreme One in the world of sentient beings, together with devas and Brahmās, who deserves the homage of all, is seated here. Pay homage to Him!” Trusting their teacher that he would not have said without knowing, they bowed at the feet of the Buddha.

“Pupils, I have no other food to give to the Buddha. Let us offer Him these fruit and roots.” So saying, he put choice ones into the Buddha's bowl. Only when the Buddha had partaken the fruit and roots, then the hermit and his pupils ate their shares.

After partaking of fruit as His meal, the Buddha wished: “May the two Chief Disciples come to me with a hundred thousand *bhikkhus*.” At that moment the Chief Disciple, Venerable Mahādevala, considered: “Where has the Exalted One gone?” and knowing that “the Buddha wishes for our visit,” he appeared in front of the Buddha with his head bowed, together taking a hundred thousand *bhikkhus*.

Gotama addressed his pupils: “Pupils, we have nothing to offer to the assembly of monks. They have no choice but to stand miserably. Let us make seats of flowers for the *Sangha* headed by the Buddha. Bring aquatic flowers and terrestrial flowers quick!” The ascetic pupils instantly brought beautiful and fragrant flowers by their supernatural powers from the foot of the hill. And, in the way stated in the story of Mahāthera Sāriputta, they made floral seats. (The engagement in *nirodha-samāpatti-jhāna* by the Buddha and His monks, the holding of floral umbrellas over them by the hermits and all the other accounts should also be understood in the way as mentioned in the story of Mahāthera Sāriputta.)

On the seventh day, when the Buddha emerged from *nirodha-samāpatti-jhāna*, He saw the hermits, who were surrounding Him, and asked a *bhikkhu*-disciple, who was foremost (*etadagga*) in preaching: “Dear son, these hermits have done a great honour. You dear son, shall give them a sermon in appreciation of the floral seats.” The *arahat* took the command respectfully and gave an appreciative sermon after reflecting on the Teaching. At the end of the sermon, the Buddha Himself preached, in addition, the means leading to attainment of the Path and the Fruition in a voice that resembled the Brahmā's. When the preaching ended, the eighteen thousand matted-hair hermits attained arahatship, except their master, Gotama.

As the master, however, was unable to realize the Truth in that life, he asked the Buddha: “Exalted Buddha, who is the *bhikkhu* that gave a sermon earlier?” When the Buddha answered: “Hermit Gotama, the monk who preached first is the foremost (*etadagga*) among those who are able to preach well in My dispensation.” Gotama said: “Exalted Buddha, as the result of the merit of my service (*adhikāra*) given to You, may I, like the monk who preached to me first, become the foremost (*etadagga*) among excellent preachers in the dispensation of a future Buddha.” Having said thus, he prostrated at the feet of the Buddha.

The Buddha surveyed the future and saw that the wish of Hermit Gotama would be fulfilled without any hitch. Accordingly, He predicted: “In future, a hundred thousand aeons from now, Buddha Gotama will appear. Then you will become foremost among those who are excellent in preaching the Dhamma!” And He called the ascetic pupils who had now become *arahats*: “Come, monks.” (*“Etha bhikkhavo.”*) Then the hair and the beard of all the hermits disappeared immediately (without being shaved) They were instantly robed and readily equipped with alms-bowls and robes created by their miraculous power. Their ascetic appearance vanished and they fully attained monkhood like *mahātheras* who were of sixty years' standing or eighty years of age. Buddha Padumuttara returned to the monastery accompanied by the whole lot of monks.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

Having rendered his service to the Buddha till the end of his life and performed good works to the best of his ability, the Hermit Gotama took rebirth only in the realm of gods or that of humans for a hundred thousand aeons. At the time of our Buddha's appearance, he was reborn in the family of a wealthy brahmin in the brahmin village of Doṇavatthu. The child was named Puñña by the parents and relatives.

Having attained the Path, Wisdom of arahatship and Omniscience, the Buddha taught the First Sermon and in the course of His journey, He stayed somewhere, with Rājagaha as his resort for alms-food. While the Buddha was staying there, Venerable Annasi Koṇḍañña came to the brahmin village of Doṇavatthu, near Kapilavatthu, and ordained Puñña the youth, his nephew (son of his sister) and taught him how to practise as a monk. The next day, Venerable Koṇḍañña visited the Buddha and having venerated respectfully and sought permission, he went to the Chaddante forest, residing there till his death.

Venerable Puñña Mantāni-putta, however, did not go along with his uncle (brother of his mother) to the Buddha, for he thought: “I shall go to the Buddha only after my attainment of arahatship, the culmination of my duties as a monk.” So he stayed behind in the city of Kapilavatthu. And when he put great efforts in his endeavours, he soon attained arahatship.

From the Venerable Mantāni-putta, five hundred clansmen took ordination. As he himself followed and practised the ten forms of speech (*kathā-vatthu*)¹, to the five hundred monks he gave an exhortation involving the ten forms of speech. Being established in the exhortation of their teacher, all the five hundred monks worked to fulfil their ascetic duties and attained arahatship.

Knowing about the culmination (arahatship) of their performance of ascetic duties, the five hundred monks went to their preceptor (*upajjhāya*), Venerable Mantāni-putta, and waited upon him. And they said: “Venerable Sir, our ascetic works have culminated in their highest point of arahatship. We also practise the ten forms of speech quite easily. The time has come for us to visit the Exalted One.” On hearing the words of the monks, the

1. The ten forms of speech (*kathā-vatthu*) are: (1) *apiccha-kathā*, speech concerning few wants, (2) *santaṭṭhi-kathā*, speech concerning easy contentment, (3) *paviveka-kathā*, speech concerning seclusion, (4) *asamsagga-kathā*, speech concerning freedom from the five-fold contact, (5) *vīriya-kathā*, speech concerning industriousness, (6) *sīla-kathā*, speech concerning morality, (7) *samādhi-kathā*, speech concerning mental concentration, (8) *paññā-kathā*, speech concerning wisdom, (9) *vimitti-kathā*, speech concerning liberation and (10) *paccavekkhaṇā-kathā*, speech concerning reflective wisdom. (As he himself engaged in these ten forms of speech, so did he give these ten to his followers as his advice.)

Venerable thought: “The Exalted One knows my easy practice of the ten forms of speech. When I preach, I always make it a point to give such a speech. If I now go with them, surely they will surround me. It is not befitting for me to visit the Buddha by being surrounded by such a community of *bhikkhus*. Let them go earlier and visit the Exalted One first.” So thinking, he said to the monks: “Dear friends, you please go ahead and visit the Exalted One before me. Also, worship at the feet of the Exalted One in my name. I shall follow you by the way you take.”

The five hundred *bhikkhus*, who were all the natives of Kapilavatthu where the Buddha was born, who were all *arahats*, free from *āsavas*, and who had all made easy acquisition of the ten forms of speech, accepted the advice of their preceptor. They arrived at the Veļuvana monastery of Rājagaha after covering a distance of sixty *yojanas*. Having venerated at the feet of the Buddha they sat at a proper place.

Since it was a custom (*dhammatā-āciṇṇa*) of Buddhas to exchange greetings with visitors, the Buddha spoke sweet introductory words by asking: “How are you, monks? Are you fit and well?” and so on. He also put another question: “Where did you come from?” “We came from the region of Kapilavatthu, your birthplace.” replied the monks. Then the Buddha asked: “Among the monks of the region of Kapilavatthu, my birthplace, who is admired by his fellow *bhikkhus* that one of few wants, speaks words of Dhamma connected with few wants?” As a priority matter, the Buddha asked this question of *bhikkhu* who easily practised the ten forms of speech. The answer, given unanimously by the five hundred monks was: “The Venerable Mantāṇi-putta is in that way, Venerable Sir.” Overhearing the answer, the Venerable Sāriputta was very keen to meet the Venerable Mantāṇi-putta Puñña.

The Buddha, thereafter, went from Rājagaha to Sāvātthi. Learning of the Buddha's visit to Sāvātthi, Venerable Mantāṇi-putta Puñña went alone to Sāvātthi and met the Buddha personally (without any monks leading him). The Buddha gave him a sermon with reference to the ten forms of speech (*kathā-vatthu*). Having listened to the sermon, the Venerable paid respect to the Buddha, and went to Andhavana forest in order to stay in seclusion and spent the day at the foot of a tree. Hearing that the Venerable was on his way to Andhavana, the Venerable Sāriputta followed him, continuously watching the head of the foregoing Venerable from behind, lest he should lose sight of him. After waiting for a chance, Venerable Sāriputta, in the evening, approached the tree (where the Venerable Puñña was). Having exchanged greeting with him, Venerable Sāriputta asked him the series of seven purities (*visuddhi*). Venerable Puñña answered each and every question. Then one expressed to the other his appreciation of their mutual Dhamma-talks. (A detailed account of this may be taken from the Rathavinīta Sutta, Opamma Vagga, Mūlapaṇṇasa of the *Majjhima Nikāya*.)

(c) Etadagga Title achieved.

At a later time, in an assembly of monks, the Buddha spoke in praise of Venerable Mantāṇi-putta:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ dhammakathikānaṃ yad idaṃ Puṇṇo Mantāni-putto.”

“Monks, among my *bhikkhu*-disciple who preach the Dhamma, Mantāṇi-putta is the best.

Speaking thus, the Buddha placed the Mahāthera foremost (*etadagga*) among all excellent Dhamma-preachers.

(10) KACCĀYANA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The good man, the future Kaccāyana Mahāthera, was brought up in a family of

householders during the lifetime of the Buddha Padumuttara. One day, he went to the monastery and stood at the edge of the audience listening to a sermon. Seeing the Buddha declared someone as foremost (*etadagga*) among those who were good at elaborately and analytically preaching the Dhamma which had been spoken of in brief, it occurred to him thus: "This monk is supreme indeed! He was praised by the Exalted One as the best among those who can elaborate and teach in detail (what is briefly taught by the Buddha), I too should become a monk with such a title in the dispensation of a future Buddha." So thinking, he invited the Buddha and performed a grand *dāna* for seven days in the way mentioned above. "Exalted One," said the man, "as a result of seven days *mahā-dāna*, I do not wish for any other bliss but to be the foremost (*etadagga*) like the monk, who, seven days ago, being declared (as the best among those who can elaborately and analytically speak what has been briefly spoken)." Having said thus, he prostrated at the feet of the Buddha.

When the Buddha Padumuttara surveyed the future, He saw that the clansman's wish would be fulfilled. He therefore prophesied saying: "O friend clansman, at the end of a hundred aeons from now, there will appear Buddha Gotama. In His dispensation, you will become the foremost (*etadagga*) among those *bhikkhus* who are able to expound in detail the meaning of the doctrines taught briefly." After giving an appreciative sermon the Buddha left.

Donation of Gold Bricks

Having performed meritorious deeds till he died, the clansman was reborn either in the deva-world and the human world for a hundred thousand aeons and was born in a good family, in the city of Bārāṇasī during the lifetime of the Buddha Kassapa. When the Buddha entered Parinibbāna, the clansman went to the site where a gold *cetiya* was being built. There he donated bricks of gold worth a hundred thousand coins in honour of the Buddha and wished: "Glorious Buddha, in whichever plane of existence I am born may the colour of my body be gold!"

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

Having performed acts of merit, he was reborn either in the deva-world or the human world for one *asankheyya-kappa* during the interval between two Buddhas. In the lifetime of our Buddha, he was a son of the Purohita in the city of Ujjenī. On his naming day, his father remarked: "My son having a golden complexion brings his own name." He was, therefore, named Kañcans (gold) by his parents and relatives. On reaching adulthood, the golden boy was accomplished in the three Vedas. When his father, the Purohita, died he succeeded him in the same post. He, as the Purohita, was also known by the name of his clan, which was Kaccāna. (a contracted form of Kaccāyana).

King Caṇḍapajjota summoned his ministers and said: "Ministers, a Buddha has emerged in the world. Those of you who are able to bring Him to me may do so." When the ministers unanimously replied: "Great King, no one except the Purohita Kaccāna was able to do so. He may be sent to bring the Buddha." The King then summoned him and said: "Friend Kaccāna, go and bring the Buddha to me." "Noble King," replied Kaccāna, "I shall go, provided I have your permission to become a monk." "Friend Kaccāna, do whatever you want, but bring the Buddha." So saying, the King gave his permission.

Thinking: "Those who go to a Buddha should not do so in a large company," so he went to the Buddha with others, he being the eighth (i.e. he took only seven companions with him). The Buddha taught a sermon, at the end of the sermon, Purohita Kaccāna attained arahatship together with his seven companions, all being endowed with Analytical Knowledge (*Paṭisambhidā-patta*). Then the Buddha stretching out his right hand and called out: "Come, monks." The hair and the beard of all eight instantly disappeared; alms-bowl and robes created by miracle (*iddhimaya*) appeared on their bodies. They achieved ascetic life and their appearances became that of *mahātheras* of sixty or eighty years' standing.

Having reached the apex of his monkhood (which was arahatship), Venerable Kaccāna did not forget but requested the Buddha to visit the city of Ujjenī by reciting verses in

praise of the journey, as did the Venerable Kāḷudāyī. Hearing the words of the Venerable Kaccāna, the Buddha came to know: “Kaccāna wants me to go to Ujjenī. Buddhas do not set out to a place which is not worth visiting due to some reasons.” Therefore, He asked Venerable Kaccāna: “Dear son, you alone go to Ujjenī. If you go, King Caṇḍapajjota will be pleased.”

Being aware that “Buddhas speak no word of ambiguity,” the Venerable made obeisance most respectfully and left for Ujjenī City with the seven *bhikkhus* who were once his companions.

Two Daughters of Different Merchant

While on the way to Ujjenī, the Venerable went on an alms round in the township of Telapanāli, which was situated in the middle of his journey. In that township lived two ladies whose fathers were merchants. Of them one belonged to the family of the merchant whose business had failed. When her parents died, she had to live, depending upon her nurse. But she possessed a full and beautiful body; her hair was longer than that of others, softer and more pliant as well and in jet-black, resembling the colour of a bee. The other lady, living in the same township, had less hair. Prior to the Venerable Kaccāna’s visit, she tried to buy some hair from the lady with luxuriant hair through a messenger saying that she would pay her a hundred or a thousand coins or any price demanded. But the owner of the hair refused to sell.

On the day that Venerable Kaccāna came for alms-food, the lady with the beautiful hair saw him together with the seven *bhikkhus* but with empty alms-bowls. Then it occurred to her: “A golden complexion descendant of Brahmā has come with the bowl that has been washed empty but I have no other things to offer. This lady happen to have sent somebody to buy my hair. Now I shall get enough offerings for the noble Venerable with the money from the sale of my hair.” So she sent her nurse to invite the Venerables and gave them seats in her house.

When the Venerables began to sit down, the lady went into her chamber and asked her nurse to cut her hair and she sent her, saying: “Mother, go and sell my hair to the lady of such and such a name and bring back whatever amount of money paid by her. We shall offer food to the Venerable Ones.” The [sad] nurse wiped her tears with the back of the palm of her one hand and holding up her breast with the other hand, she went to the other lady, secretly carrying the hair so that the Venerables might not see it.

“It is a usual way of dealing on the part of the buyer to have no appreciation for the thing personally brought by the seller however much the merchandise is excellent and valuable.” (i.e. the buyer tries to get it at a very low price.)

Hence, the wealthy but poor haired lady thought: “Formerly I was unable to obtain the hair although I was willing to pay a lot of money for it. Now the hair has been cut off but she will not get the original price. She must accept any amount I am going to pay.” Accordingly she said to the nurse: “Nurse, I failed to get the hair despite my offer of much money to your mistress. The lifeless object such as this hair which might have fallen anywhere is worth only eight coins.” So she paid the nurse only eight coins, an unreasonably low price.

The nurse brought the money to her mistress who offered a portion of food worth a coin to each of the eight monks. When the Venerable Kaccāna reflected, he saw the lady’s act of merit was full of potentials. So he asked: “Where is the lady now?” “In her chamber, Sir,” answered the nurse. The Venerable then asked the nurse to bring the lady before him.

The lady, donor of the alms-food, came out at the Venerable’s request, made but once, for she had much respect for the monks and having bowed before them, she developed her strong faith repeatedly in them. (The seeds of food-gift sown in the Buddha’s dispensation which is likened to the fertile soil yield good results even in the present life.) Hence, as soon as the lady bowed down, her hair became luxuriant as before. The Venerables then received the food and rose to the sky even while she was seeing them; and they descended at King Caṇḍapajjota’s garden called Kañcana-vana.

Having seen the Venerable Kaccāna, the gardener went to the King and informed: “Great King, our master, the Purohita Kaccāna, became a monk and visited the royal garden.” King Caṇḍapajjota went to the garden and made obeisance to the Venerable, who had finished his meal, with five kinds of veneration and sat at a suitable place and asked: “Venerable Sir, where is the Exalted One?” When the Venerable answered: “Noble King, the Buddha Himself has not come yet. He has just sent me.” The King asked again: “Venerable Sir, from where did you get the meal today?” In replying to the King's question appropriately, Venerable Kaccāna told the King all about the hard-earned merit of the lady who was his alms-food giver.

Having provided the Venerable with accommodations, King Caṇḍapajjota invited him to the next day's meal and returned to the palace where he called up the lady, the food donor, by royal order and made her his Chief Queen. This was only the acquisition of wealth and happiness in the present life by the lady as the result of the first impulsive (*pathama-javana*) wholesome volition.

(Herein the meaning is: in performing *dāna* such as food-offering, there are seven impulsive moments concerning great wholesome volition (*mahā-kusala-cetanā*). Of them, the first impulsive volition results in the present life, if there are favourable circumstances. Hence, the first impulsive volition is called *diṭṭha-dhamma vedaniya-kamma*, “deed resulting in the present life.” The seventh impulsive volition result in the second life, if there are favourable circumstances. Hence it is called *upapajja-vedaniya-kama*, “deed resulting in the immediately following life.” The volition of the middle five impulsions results in successive lives from the third, if there are favourable circumstances. Hence, any volition of these middle five impulsion is called *aparāpariya-vedaniya-kamma*, “deed resulting in successive lives.” It means deed resulting in successive existences.

(“When a deed brings about its result”, the result is of two kinds: *bhava* and *bhava-samāpatti*. The resultant mental aggregates and the body formed by *kamma* that emerged at the time of conception (*paṭisandhi*) and at the time of growing (*pavatti*) are called *bhava* result. The mental aggregate and the body generated by *kamma* are called *patti-bhava*. Various forms of wealth enjoyed in life are called *bhava-samāpatti* result.

(Of the three kinds of resulting deeds, the *upapajja-vedaniya-kama* and *aparāpariya-vedaniya-kamma* bring fully their respective *bhava*-result and *bhava-samāpatti* result. As regards the first impulsive volition or the deed resulting in the present life, when it results presently, it brings only *bhava-samāpatti*, i.e., various forms of wealth to be enjoyed in that life, but not *bhava* because that result has already given by *janaka-kamma* that had created conception as its result in this life. Therefore, the first impulsive volition or the deed resulting in the present life of the lady in question brought her only the *bhava-samāpatti* result which was wealth and property in the same existence.)

From that time onwards, King Caṇḍapajjota did great honour to Venerable Kaccāna. Pleased with the teaching of the Venerable, many became monks in his presence. Since then, the whole city of Ujjeni had been overwhelmed with the colour of the robes and blown by the breeze caused by the movements of going and coming of the monks. The Queen conceived a son and when she gave birth to him after ten months, the prince was named Gopāla after his grandfather. Subsequently the Queen became well-known by the name of Gopālamātā in relation to her son. As Queen Gopāla-mātā was so impressed by the Venerable Kaccāna, she built a big monastery for him, in the garden of Kaccāna-vana and donated it to him with the King's permission. Having made the people of Ujjeni faithful in the Buddha's dispensation, the Venerable returned to the Buddha.

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

At a later time, while staying at Jetavana, in the assembly of monks, the Buddha spoke in praise of Venerable Kaccāna and declared him foremost (*etadagga*), in connection with the three discourses: (1) the *Madhupiṇḍika Sutta*, (2) the *Kaccāna-peyyāla* and (3) the *Pārāyana*

Sutta:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakaṇaṃ bhikkhunaṃ saṃkhittena bhāsitaṃ vitthārena atthaṃ vibhajantānaṃ yadidaṃ Mahākaccāno.”

“Monks, among my disciples who are able to analyse in elaboration what has been taught briefly, the monk Mahākaccāna is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

The sermons given by the Venerable may be taken from the **Apādāna Text** and its **Commentary**, the **Therā-gāthā Text** and its **Commentary**, etc.

(11 & 12) TWO PANTHAKA MAHĀTHERAS

(a) Aspirations expressed in The Past

A hundred thousand aeons ago, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara, the householder brothers, who were native of Hamsāvati City, having profound faith in the three Gems, constantly went to the Buddha to listen to His Dhamma. One day, the younger of the two saw a monk being declared foremost (*etadagga*) in two qualities: (1) among those who created mind-made images and (2) those who were clever in engaging in *rūpāvacara-jhāna*. It then occurred to him thus: “Great, indeed is this monk. Despite his such being, he roamed about practising two things. It would be nice if I too should roam about practising these two things in the dispensation of a future Buddha.”

The younger brother invited the Buddha and performed a grand alms-giving to Him for seven days. Then he expressed his wish to the Buddha, saying: “Venerable Sir, seven days ago, you declared a certain monk: ‘This monk is foremost (*etadagga*) in my dispensation by virtue of his two qualities, namely, ability of creating mind-made images of oneself and skill in engaging in *rūpāvacara-jhāna*. As a result of this specially performed act of merit, may I be foremost with those two qualities also.’”

When the Buddha surveyed the future, He saw that this householder's wish would be fulfilled and said: “In future, a hundred thousand aeons from now, there will arise Buddha Gotama. That Buddha will declare you as the foremost concerning these two qualities.” After giving an appreciative sermon, the Buddha departed. (This was the wish expressed by the younger brother.)

As for the older householder brother, one day he saw a certain monk being declared by the Buddha the foremost (*etadagga*) in the field of *saññā-vivaṭṭa-kusala* or having skill in *arūpāvacara-jhāna*, and like his younger brother, he too performed special act of merit and, thereafter, expressed his wish: “May I be the foremost (*etadagga*) in the field of *arūpāvacara-jhāna*!” “Your wish would be fulfilled,” predicted the Buddha.

Both householder brothers did good works during the lifetime of the Buddha and when the Buddha attained Parinibbāna, they did homage by offering gold at the shrine which was built for the Buddha's bodily relics. Upon their death, they were reborn in the abode of devas. While they were being reborn either in the divine or human worlds only, a hundred thousand aeons had elapsed.

(Of the two brothers, an account of the meritorious deed done by the elder brother, Mahāpanthaka, in that interval existence, was not given particularly in the **Mahā Aṭṭhakathā**). As for the younger brother, Cūḷapanthaka, he became a monk in the dispensation of Buddha Kassapa, and for twenty thousand years he practised *odāta-kasīna* meditation (meditation on a white device) and was reborn again in a deva-world. Later, our Buddha attained Enlightenment, after teaching the Dhammacakka sermon, He went to stay in the Bamboo Grove of Rājagaha.

(An account of the emergence of the two Panthaka brothers will be inserted herewith). The daughter of Dhanasetthi, a wealthy merchant in the city of Rājagaha, fell in love with her male servant, and fearing that others would come to know about their affair, she discussed with her lover: “We shall no longer live here. If my parents were to know of this affair of ours, they would kill me, and cut me into pieces. Let us go and live elsewhere!”

They agreed with each other. Secretly taking her jewellery, she went out through the door that was opened first. They then fled to live in another place which unknown to others.

While the two were living in this unknown place, the lady became pregnant owing to their intimacy. When her pregnancy reached maturity, she consulted her husband, saying: "Sir my pregnancy is now mature. It is too miserable for both of us, if I give birth at a place away from our relatives or friends. Let us return to our parents' house." Her husband delayed the decision by saying, just to please his wife: "We shall go today." or "We shall travel tomorrow." Then the lady thought: "This stupid man dared not go, for his guilt is so serious. Parents certainly desire, as a rule, the welfare of their children. Whether the stupid man follow me or not, I should go." So thinking, while her husband was out, the lady departed alone after storing up her belongings and leaving a message with her next-door neighbour that she was going to her parents.

When her husband returned later and finding out that his wife had left for her parents' residence, he followed her in haste and eventually caught up with her in midway. At the very spot of their meeting, the lady gave birth to a child. Asked by her husband: "What is this thing dear?" the lady answered: "Sir, a son has been born." "What shall we do now?" they discussed between themselves and decided, saying: "We are going to our parents' home to deliver the child. Now the delivery of the child has taken place in the middle of the journey. What is the use of going to our parents' place. Let us go home!" So the two agreed and went home. The baby was named Panthaka, "Master Road," (as he was born on the road).

Before long, the lady conceived again, when the second son was nearing his birth, he too was born on the way to the home of his mother's parents. Hence the first son was renamed Mahāpanthaka, "Master Big Road," and the second named Cūḷapanthaka, "Master Small Road."

The husband and the wife then returned home, each carrying a son. While they were living there, hearing such terms as 'younger uncle', 'older uncle', 'grand father', 'grandmother', etc. in the conversation of other children, the older son, Mahāpanthaka, asked her mother: "O mother, other children mentioned, 'grandfather', 'grandmother' and so forth. Do we have our relatives?" The mother said: "Well, you are right, dear son! You have no relatives here but in Rājagaha, however, your grandfather is a great merchant of wealth. Your relatives are many in that city too." "O mother, why do we not go to Rājagaha?" asked Mahāpanthaka.

The mother did not give her son the reason for not going to the city of Rājagaha. When she was repeatedly asked by her sons, she said to her husband: "Sir, the children are troubling my mind very much. On seeing us, our parents will not cut our flesh and eat. Let us go! Let us show the sons their grandparents' house? Let us send them there!"

"Madam, I dare not go to your parents' house," said the husband, "but I shall manage to send you, so that you will certainly get there." "All right Sir," said the wife, "the house of their grandparents should be shown to the children in one way or another." The couple then headed for Rājagaha, carrying their boys and in due course arrived in that city. At a rest-house, near the city-gate they lodged. The mother took the boys and informed through somebody of their visit.

When the parents received the information, they considered as follows: "For those who roamed in *samsāra* there is none who has not been their son, or their daughter. These two, however, have committed a great offence against us. Both cannot live in our presence. They do not deserve to be with us. But let them take this much of money and live in a comfortable place. Let them send the two boys to us." Then they sent a messenger. The lady took the money sent by her parents and handed over the two little sons to the messengers, to be taken to their grandparent. The two brothers, Mahāpanthaka and Cūḷapanthaka grew up in comfort in the house of their grandparents.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

Of the two brothers, Cūḷapanthaka was very young and tender, Mahāpanthaka, however,

always went along with his grandfather to the Buddha to listen to His discourses. As he had always been listening to the discourses in the presence of the Buddha, he was inclined to become a monk. Therefore, he sought permission from his grandfather, Dhanaseṭṭhi, saying: “Grandfather, if you will permit me, I would like to become a monk.” “What a wonderful thing you have said,” replied the wealthy merchant. “For me, your becoming a monk is far better than the whole world! Go ahead, as you wish, grandson!” Replying thus gladly, the merchant accepted Mahāpanthaka's request and took him to the Buddha. “Merchant,” addressed the Buddha, “how is it? Have you got a boy?” “Yes, Exalted Buddha,” answered the merchant, “this boy is my older grandson. He is asking me to make him a monk under You.”

Then the Buddha ordered a nearby monk who used to go on alms-round: “Have the boy initiated!” After explaining the meditation on the five component parts of the body ‘with skin as the fifth’ (*taca-pañcaka kammaṭṭhāna*) to the boy, the monk made him a novice. Since he became Sāmaṇera Mahāpanthaka, he had learnt the words of the Buddha, (the Canonical Texts), and having completed twenty years of age, he took monkhood upon himself. After becoming a monk, he engaged seriously in meditation that led him to mastery over the four *arūpāvacara jhānas*. Having emerged from the *jhānas*, he assiduously devoted himself to *vipassanā* meditation and finally attained arahatship. In this way the Arahāt Mahāpanthaka became foremost among those *bhikkhus* who were extremely skilful in engaging in that meditation.

Initiation of The Younger Brother

Venerable Mahāpanthaka spent the time by enjoying the bliss of Fruition. One day, after considering whether it would be possible for him to give his younger brother such wonderful bliss, he went to the wealthy merchant, his grandfather, and requested: “Dear donor, Sir, if you agree, I would like to make Cūḷapanthaka a novice.” When the grandfather gave his consent, saying: “Do as you wish! You may make him a novice!” Venerable Mahāpanthaka had him initiated and established in the ten precepts.

Sāmaṇera Cūḷapanthaka tried to learn from his older brother the following verse:

*Padumaṃ yathā kokanadaṃ sugandhaṃ
pāto siyā phullam avitagandhaṃ.
Aṅgīrasaṃ passa virocamaṇaṃ
tapantaṃ ādiccam ivantalikkhe.*

Just as the lotus flower named Kokanada, because of its many petals and beauty, and pervading sweet smell, is lovely with splendour and ever present fragrance as it opens at daybreak, even so, the Buddha's fragrance, by His body and His personal virtue, shining by His glory, splendored whenever one sees, emanates rays of light from His body, resembling the round sun that rises and appears in the sky during the season of Sarada (August-November).

Whatever words that he had been learnt previously disappeared from his memory whenever he proceeded to learn the next one. For four months, he was still trying to commit the verse to memory. (Although four months had passed, he still could not learn it by heart.)

(During the lifetime of Buddha Kassapa, Cūḷapanthaka was a learned monk. He jeered at a dull monk in his learning Pāli. As a result, the dullard gave up his pursue in learning, for he felt so shameful on account of the jeering and lost self confidence. Owing to that evil act, as Culapanthaka, he alarmingly became a dullard after his novitiation. Hence, he surprisingly forgot all that had been memorised as soon as he went on to the next portions.)

— Aṅguttara Nikāya —

Thereupon the elder brother, Mahāpanthaka, drove him out, saying: “Cūḷapanthaka! You are one in this dispensation who is not worthy of the Path and the Fruition (*adhabba*). You cannot learn even a single verse in four months. How are you, who cannot learn a verse in

four months, able to reach the apex (arahatship) of your monkhood? So get out of this dwelling!” As driven out by his elder brother, the novice Cūḷapanthaka dared not stay there and stood, weeping at the edge of the dwelling (where his brother would not see).

At that time, the Buddha was sojourning in the Mango-grove monastery, built and dedicated by the physician Jīvaka, with Rājagaha as His resort for alms-food. Then Jīvaka sent a man to the Buddha to invite him along with five hundred monks for the next day’s meal. At that moment Venerable Mahāpanthaka was the *bhatt’udesaka*, ‘in-charge of food distribution’. The man therefore referred the matter to him, saying: “Venerable Sir, please accept the food offerings for five hundred monks.” “I accept the food for the monks” he replied, “except Cūḷapanthaka.”

Meditation Subject given by The Buddha

Hearing the reply, Venerable Cūḷapanthaka was extremely dejected. Seeing the Venerable’s plight and knowing that he would achieve liberation ‘on my visit’, the Buddha went to him and, showing Himself from a distance neither too near nor too far, asked: “Dear son Cūḷapanthaka, why are you weeping?” “Because, Venerable Sir, my brother Thera expels me,” answered Cūḷapanthaka. “Dear son Panthaka,” addressed the Buddha, “your brother possesses no *asayānusaya-nāṇa*, the power of knowing intentions and inclinations of beings. But you are *buddhāveneyya-puggala*, ‘an individual to be led by a Buddha.’ ” With these encouraging words, the Buddha gave him a piece of clean but rough cloth created by his power. The Buddha added: “Dear son Panthaka, keep this in your fist, muttering ‘*Rajo haraṇaṃ, rajo haraṇaṃ* — This cloth is liable to take dirt! This cloth is liable to take dirt.’ Thus you meditate on it.”

(Herein, Cūḷapanthaka in a pervious birth was a king and while touring the city for inspection, his forehead sweated and he wiped the sweat with his clean waist-garment. The garment became dirty. The King then talked to himself: “Because of the impure body, such a clean cloth becomes impure, abandoning its own nature. Impermanent indeed are things conditioned!”

Thus he gained the perception of impermanence. Hence for Cūḷapanthaka, the meditation subject of ‘*rajo haraṇaṃ*’ was a forceful contribution to his attainment of arahatship. Therefore the Buddha gave him the clean rough cloth as he saw the Thera’s previous good act and as He wished to urge him to engage meditation on the subject that matched with that good act.)

Attainment of Arahatsip

Venerable Cūḷapanthaka sat down rubbing with his hand the cloth given by the Buddha and muttering “*Rajo haraṇaṃ, rajo haraṇaṃ* — It is liable to take dirt! It is liable to take dirt!” When he did the rubbing several times, the threads of the garment began to get dirty. When he repeated the rubbing, the cloth became dirtier like a kitchen-cloth. As the time came for his wisdom to ripen, the law of extinction and destruction manifested itself in his mind. And he reflected: “This piece of cloth was originally white and clean. But on account of its association with my body (*upādinnaka*), it is now full of dirt. My mind is also like this cloth. It happens like the cloth. The mind, originally pure and clean in its unperturbed state, tends to become soiled on account of its association with such unwholesome concomitant factors as greed, hate, delusion, etc. Having thus reflected on his person and heart, he proceeded to strive for mental concentration and gained the four *rūpāvacara-jhānas*. When he, on the basis of these *jhānas*, engaged in *vipassanā* meditation, he attained arahatship together with the fourfold Analytical Knowledge. As he had mastered the *manomaya-rūpāvacara-jhāna*, i.e. the *rūpāvacara-jhāna* involving mentally produced forms, he was able to create many bodies from one or one body from many and had other similar powers. Besides, he was accomplished in the Teaching (Three Piṭakas) and endowed with the six psychic powers. (Such happenings are called *maggasiddha-pariyatti* and *maggasiddha-abhiññā*, “without particularly learning and without particularly striving”, one becomes learned in the Teaching and possessed of psychic powers as soon as one attains *arahatta-magga*. Both learning and powers took place by the force of the *magga*, so may it be said.)

The following day, the Buddha visited the house of the physician Jīvaka together with 499 *bhikkhus* and sat there for meal offerings. Venerable Cūḷapanthaka could not go along as his brother Venerable Mahāpanthaka did not accept the invitation for him. The Physician Jīvaka managed first to make offerings of rice gruel. The Buddha did not take the gruel but covered His alms-bowl with His hand. When Jīvaka asked: “Exalted Buddha, why do you not receive the gruel?” “There is a monk still left behind at the monastery,” said the Buddha.

Thereupon Jīvaka sent a man saying: “Go, friend! Bring the monk who had been left behind at the monastery.” Prior to the arrival of the man, the Venerable Cūḷapanthaka had created, by his power, a thousand *bhikkhus*, one different from another in shape as well as in action, such as making a robe, etc.

Because the man sent by Jīvaka saw too many *bhikkhus* at the monastery, he did not invite them all, for he had been asked by Jīvaka to bring just one person. So he went back and said to the physician: “Master Jīvaka, the monks left behind at the monastery are more more than all these monks who are here in your house. I was at lost and could not think of the right one I should bring.” Jīvaka asked the Buddha: “What is the name of the *thera* who was left behind at the monastery, Exalted Buddha?” When the Buddha said that it was Cūḷapanthaka, Jīvaka sent the man again, saying: “Go again, friend! Ask: ‘Who is the noble Thera named Cūḷapanthaka?’ and bring him.”

The man returned to the monastery and asked: “Who is the noble *thera* named Cūḷapanthaka?” “Cūḷapanthaka am I! Cūḷapanthaka am I!” answered the whole thousand monks. The man returned again and said to Jīvaka: “Master, all the thousand monks replied: ‘Cūḷapanthaka am I! Cūḷapanthaka am I!’ I am puzzled as to whom I should invite, not knowing this one or that?” As the physician Jīvaka was an *ariya* donor who had realized the Four Truths, even by the way the man informed him, he came to know that the one left behind at the monastery was of supernormal power. “Go again, friend!” said Jīvaka, “Tell the one who answered first, tell him that he is summoned by the Buddha and bring him by taking the edge of his robe.” Saying thus Jīvaka sent the man back once more. The man went again to the monastery and did as his master had ordered. Instantly the thousand *bhikkhus* disappeared. Then only could the man bring Cūḷapanthaka. Then only did the Buddha accepted the gruel and partook of it.

Having gone back to the monastery after partaking of the food, a discussion took place at a meeting of the monks thus: “Supreme indeed are Buddhas. He could cause a monk, who failed to learn by heart a single verse in four months, to become such a powerful one!” Knowing the minds of the monks, the Buddha came to the meeting and sat on the Buddha's seat. Then He asked: “Monks, what are you talking about?” When the monks replied: “Exalted Buddha, we were talking about nothing but Your grace. We were talking that Cūḷapanthaka has received a big favour from You!” The Buddha said: “Monks, receiving supramundane inheritance now by following My advice is not wonderful enough. While he was of immature wisdom long long ago in the past, Cūḷapanthaka received mundane inheritance by taking My advice.” “When was it, Exalted Buddha?” asked the monks. And at their request the Buddha related the Cūlaseṭṭhi Jātaka to the monks in the following manner:

Cūlaseṭṭhi Jātaka

Monks, once upon a time, King Brahmadatta was ruling over the city of Bārāṇasī. At that time, a wise merchant, known as Cūlaseṭṭhi, was an expert in reading all omens. One day, on his way to the palace to wait upon the King, he saw a dead rat and, on observing and reflecting at that time on the planets in the sky, and read the omen thus: “Any intelligent man, who takes the dead rat, will be able to maintain his family and to do business.” An unknown poor man, hearing the wise merchant's reading of the omen and being aware that this wise merchant would not say so without knowing it, picked the dead rat, went to the market and sold it as cat's food and received a coin. With that coin, he bought some molasses and carried a pot of drinking water. Seeing some flower sellers, who had come back from the forest after collecting flowers, he gave a little portion of molasses and a cup

of clean water to each of them for their refreshment. Out of gratitude, each flower seller gave a handful of flowers to the poor man.

(From this point onwards, the poor man will be referred to as the 'talented pupil' partly because he was of talent mind and partly because he was a pupil receiving the instruction given by the wise merchant Cūlaseṭṭhi.) With the cost of those handfuls of flowers, he bought molasses as much as the flower money could buy and went to a park carrying the molasses and a pot of clean drinking water. On that day, the flowers-sellers equally shared their flowers with him and departed. In this way, the talented pupil had soon saved eight silver coins.

Again, on a stormy day, the talented pupil went to the big old deserted garden and while he was making piles of branches, which were broken and cut down by the strong winds, for firewood, he received sixteen coins from the royal potter. With the eight coins accrued from the flowers, he now had twenty-four coins, and thought to himself: "I have some good means of obtaining money, by making myself a water-donor to the grass-cutters. Having thought thus, he set up a water jar at a place neither too near nor too far from the city-gate. Then he gave the drinking water free to the five hundred grass-cutters who came from the outskirts of the city. The grass-cutters said to him: "Friend, you have done a great service to us. What can we do for you?" The talented pupil replied: "When some occasion arises, you may help me." After saying such words of acceptance, he wandered about and made friends with the official of highways and the official of waterways.

One day, the highway official brought him the good news that a horse merchant would visit Bārāṇasī City with five hundred horses. Getting the news, the talented pupil transmitted it to the grass-cutters and asked them each to bring an extra bundle of grass to what they had brought in the previous days. When the time for the entry of the horses came, the talented pupil piled up the thousand bundles of grass near the inner doors of the city so that the grass was visible to the horse-merchant, after which he sat down. The horse merchant could not get the fodder though he roamed about the whole city in search of it. So he gave a thousand coins to the talented pupil and took away the thousand bundles of grass.

Two or three days later, his [other] friend, the waterway official had the information sent to him that a big cargo boat had been moored inside the harbour. So he thought to himself: "Some means of earning money has come up again!" Then he hired a fully furnished chariot for eight coins of silver and went in it to the sea-port. He gave a ring to the captain of the boat as an advanced payment. At a place near the port, he had a curtain properly hung, as though it was a house of brokerage. Sitting there, he ordered his employees saying: "If other merchants come to me, tell me by way of three stages. (There should be three places which the information must pass through.)"

Hearing of the arrival of the cargo-boat, merchants numbering a hundred, rushed from the city of Bārāṇasī to the port with an idea to buy the merchandise. The employees of the talented pupil who were there before the other merchants came, readily said to them: "You will not get the goods, for the merchant sitting in such and such a place has made an advanced payment for the whole lot of goods." On hearing these words, the hundred merchants of Bārāṇasī came to the talented pupil (the so-called great merchant).

The servants of the talented pupils respectfully informed him of the visit of the merchants, passing through the three stages, as they had been told beforehand, just to aggrandize the matter. Each of the hundred merchants gave him a thousand coins as gift money to become shareholders in the business. Again each of them offered another thousand coins to him as a profit by which way they (made him resign as a shareholder and) managed to possess the whole lot of goods on the boat as their monopoly. The talented pupil earned two hundred thousand in one sitting and brought the money to Bārāṇasī and thinking: "I should do something out of gratitude." He took a hundred thousand coins and went to the wise merchant Cūlaseṭṭhi.

Then the wise merchant asked the talented pupil: "Dear son, how did you get such a lot of money?" The talented pupil related the whole story, saying: "Following the advice you

gave on seeing the dead rat, I have become rich by two hundred thousand and twenty-four coins.” The wise merchant then considered: “A young man of such a talent should not belong to others; he should be mine.” So he gave him his daughter, who had come of age, in marriage and helped him become head of the household. Upon the death of the wise merchant, he was given the rank of that merchant and lived according to his life span and was reborn as determined by his deeds.

Having related both the present story and the past, the Buddha spoke words regarding the two events and uttered the following verse for the present life:

*Appakenapi medhāvī pābhatena vicakkhaṇo,
Samuṭṭhāti attānaṃ, aṇuṃ aggim va sandhamam.*

O my dear sons, monks! As a wise man, by putting fuel into an inconsiderably small fire and making efforts to blow repeatedly and continuously, turns it into a big mass of fire, so the wise man, who is far-sighted as well as retrospective, who is prudent and reflective, can create a great wealth out of a small and insignificant investment and he can raise himself in that wealth to the state of a millionaire.

In this way the Buddha delivered this life-story to the monks in the Dhamma assembly.

(c) *Etadagga* Title achieved

At a late time, while the Buddha was sitting on the Dhamma-throne, surrounded by monks, He spoke in praise of Venerable Cūḷapanthaka as follows:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakaṇaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ mano-mayaṃ kāyaṃ abhinimminantānaṃ yadidaṃ Cūḷapanthako (1) cetovivaṭṭa kusalānaṃ yadidaṃ Cūḷapanthako (2).”

“Monks, (1) among my disciples who are able to create mind-made bodies through psychic powers, Cūḷapanthaka is foremost (*etadagga*); (2) among my disciples who are skilful in engaging *rūpāvacara-jhāna*, Cūḷapanthaka is the best (*etadagga*).”

Thus the Buddha declared Venerable Cūḷapanthaka the foremost (*etadagga*) in two qualities.

With regard to Venerable Mahāpanthaka, the Buddha said in praise of him as follows:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakaṇaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ saññāvivaṭṭa-kusātānaṃ yadidaṃ Mahāpanthako.”

“Monks, among my disciples who are skilful in engaging in *arūpāvacara-jhāna*, Mahāpanthaka is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

With these words of praise, the Buddha declared the Venerable Mahāpanthaka the foremost (*etadagga*) in the matter of *saññā vivaṭṭa-kusala*, “having skill on making oneself free from consciousness.”

(Herein, when other monks created mind-made bodies through psychic powers, they were able to create only a few, say, three or four, etc. They could not create a large number of such bodies. And when they did, they could bring about only the figures that resembled the creator and in the case of action, theirs was the one and the only kind. Cūḷapanthaka, however, created a thousand figures at one stroke of advertence in the process of consciousness. Such mentally created figures were different in shape from one another, and that was why he was declared the foremost (*etadagga*) in creating mind-made bodies. Though the words are explained in the Commentary in various ways, the explanations are omitted here lest the reader should get confused. The sermons connected with these two *bhikkhus* should be taken in detail from the Apadāna Theragāthā Dhammapada, **Udāna** and their respective Commentaries.)

(13) SUBHUTI MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

This Subhūti Mahāthera, a virtuous clansman, was born in the family of a brahmin householder before the appearance of Buddha Padumuttara, a hundred thousand aeons ago, his name was Nanda.

When the young Nanda came of age, he was educated in the three Vedas but since he could not find any beneficial substance in them, he became an ascetic with other youths, numbering forty-four thousand, at the foot of the mountain named Nisabha. He attained the five mundane psychic powers and reached the eight mundane attainments. He also help his companions, the forty-four thousand ascetics, attained the jhānic and psychic powers.

At that time, Buddha Padumuttara appeared in the world and while He was sojourning in the royal city of Hāṁsāvati, He surveyed the world of sentient beings one morning and saw the potentials of Nanda's pupils, the forty-four thousand matted-hair ascetics, for attainment of arahatship. As for Nanda himself, the Buddha also saw that he would aspire to be a great disciple endowed with two-fold honour. Hence, He cleansed himself early in the morning and set out for the hermitage of Nanda, taking His bowl and robe by Himself, in the way mentioned in the story of Venerable Sāriputta. The offering of various fruits, the spreading and offering of seats of flowers and the engagement in *nirodha-samāpatti* that took place at the hermitage was similar to that described in the account of Venerable Sāriputta.

What was different here was that when the Buddha rose from his *nirodha-samāpatti*, He instructed a disciple, who was endowed with the two-fold honour of (1) living free from mental defilements and blissfully, and (2) being worthy of receiving excellent offering, saying: “Dear son, deliver a sermon in appreciation of the offering of floral seats to Me by the whole lot of ascetics!” Remaining seated, the Venerable delivered the sermon, reflecting on the Teaching (Three Piṭakas). At the end of the Venerable's sermon, Buddha Padumuttara Himself preached. When this was over, all the forty-four thousand ascetics attained arahatship. As regards their teacher, the ascetic Nanda, he could not follow the Buddha's sermon attentively, as he was mentally admiring the preaching *bhikkhu*. (As he was taking interest in the preaching Venerable, he could not pay full attention to the teaching of the Buddha.) Stretching out His hand to the forty-four thousand pupils, the Buddha called out: “*Etha bhikkhavo* — Come, monks.” All of them instantly lost their hair and beard and became equipped with requisites made by His supernormal powers, and turned into solemn monks with their sense-faculties well controlled, like *mahātheras* of sixty years' standing and eighty years' living.

Having saluted the Buddha, the ascetic Nanda stood in His presence and asked: “Venerable Sir, who is the monk that gave the talk in appreciation of the offering of the floral seats.” “That monk,” answered the Buddha, “is the foremost (*etadagga*) in blissful living, free from moral defilements and in worthiness of accepting excellent offering in My dispensation.” “I do not wish for other human and divine pleasure as the result of this *adhikāra* act of mine, performed for seven days, but I do wish to become the foremost (*etadagga*) in the twofold virtue, in the dispensation of a future Buddha, like the Venerable who has just given the appreciative talk,” the ascetic Nanda aspired. Seeing that his dream would come true without any obstacles, the Buddha made a prophecy and departed. As Nanda always listened to the Dhamma discourses in the very presence of the Buddha and kept his *jhānas* in their undiminished state, he immediately took rebirth in the realm of Brahmas on his death. (This was the Venerable Subhuti's resolution and meritorious act performed in the past. His good works done during the interim period of a hundred thousand aeons are not mentioned in the Commentary.)

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Find Existence

When a hundred thousand aeons had elapsed and when the present dispensation came into existence, the clansman, who would become Subhūti Mahāthera, was reborn as a son of Sumana, the wealthy merchant (and brother of Anāthapiṇḍika) in the city of Sāvatthi and

was named Subhūti. When our Buddha appeared and while He was staying with Rājagaha as His resort for alms-food, Anāthapiṇḍika the merchant arrived at the house of his friend (and brother-in-law) the merchant of Rājagaha, bringing with him goods produced in Sāvattthi. On his arrival, he heard of the emergence of the Buddha. After going to the Buddha, who was staying now in Sātavana forest, he became established in *sotāpatti-phala* in this first meeting with Him. (After becoming a noble *sotāpanna*), he requested the Buddha to visit Sāvattthi and had lodgings built, one at every *yojana*, along the journey of forty-five *yojanas* between Sāvattthi and Rājagaha, at the expense of a hundred thousand coins. He also bought Prince Jeta's garden of eight royal *pai*, for which the payment was made by placing gold coins, touching each other, covering the garden area. Then on the whole garden site, he built the Jetavana Monastery for the Buddha and dedicated it to Him. (For a detailed account of this event please refer to Chapter 29 for the story of Anāthapiṇḍika.)

On the day of the dedication of the monastery, Subhūti went along with his older brother and listened to the Dhamma and so strong was his faith that he adopted a monk's life. Having become a monk, he studied and was accomplished in the Dye Mātikā, after which he had meditation taught to him and strove to practise ascetic practices. All this led him to arahatship via the development of Vipassanā based on *mettā-jhāna* (meditation on loving-kindness).

(c) Achievement of Double Etadagga Title

When he gave a sermon, Venerable Subhūti did so objectively (*dhamma-diṭṭhāna*) i.e. by concentrating on the Dhamma itself (but not by making any reference to an individual, *puggalā-diṭṭhāna*) the way the Buddha did. (This led him to be declared the foremost (*etadagga*) in living in bliss, free from mental defilements, *araṇa-vihārī*).

When the Venerable went on alms-round, thinking that “if I adopt this method, great benefits will accrue to the donors.” At every house, he habitually engaged in the *mettā-jhāna* before he received the alms-food. (This caused him to be the foremost (*etadagga*) in being worthy of excellent gift (*dakkhiṇya*)).

Later on, therefore, when the Buddha held a meeting with the assembly of monks, He said in praise of the Venerable Subhūti as follows and declared:

“*Etadaggaṃ. bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkūnaṃ araṇavihārīnaṃ yadidaṃ Subhūti (1), dakkhiṇeyyānaṃ yadidaṃ Subhūti (2).*”

“Monks, among my *bhikkhu*-disciple (1) who live blissfully, being detached from defilements, Subhūti stands foremost, and so does he stand out (2) among those who are worthy of best offerings.”

(Herein (1) with reference to *araṇa-vihārī etadagga*, moral defilements, such as *rāga* (passion), etc. are called *raṇa* (because they lead to lamentation). *Arahats*, who live enjoying bliss, as they are away from moral defilements, are said to be *araṇa-vihārī* individuals. Apart from Venerable Subhūti, there were other *arahats* who lived such a life too. But when they preached, they did so by employing the method which considered in making reference to a certain person (*puggalā-diṭṭhāna dhamma-desanā*) whom they either praised or censured. But Venerable Subhūti adopted the method which required him to speak of the Dhamma itself as his objective (*dhamma-diṭṭhāna*) — the Dhamma taught by the Buddha. That was why he was declared the *etadagga* among the *araṇa-vihārī bhikkhus*.

(The **Upaṇi-panṇāsa Pāli** contains the Araṇa-vibhaṅga Sutta which enumerates the six factors of *araṇa-vihāra*, ‘living in bliss,’ as follows: (a) Following the Middle Path (*Majjhima-Paṭipadā*) which avoids the two evil extremes. (b) Following the *dhamma-diṭṭhāna* method, one says: “This is the thing to be praised. This is the thing to be censured.” If following the *puggalā-diṭṭhāna* method, one says: “He is the person to be praised,” and this amounts to flattering; and if one says: “He is the person to be censured,” this amounts to humiliation. Hence avoidance of both flattering and humiliation. (c) Development of internal happiness (*ajjhata-sukha*) after distinguishing between the two

kinds of happiness; internal happiness derived from *samatha* (tranquillity) and *vipassanā* (insight) meditation and external happiness (*bahiddhā-sukha*) derived from the five senses. (d) Speaking of any person, either in his presence or in his absence only, if one's speech is truthful and profitable. (e) Speaking or preaching not in haste but smoothly, and (f) Arguing not in a foreign land about the foreign language (though it may be different from one's native language).

(With regard to (2) *dakkhineyya etadagga*, other *arahats* were also worthy of receiving excellent gifts. But, on receiving food at every house, Venerable Subhūti was aware that 'if I do in this way, special benefits will accrue to the donors'. Therefore, he first meditated on loving-kindness, then rose from his meditation and received the food. This, therefore, earned him the *etadagga* of *dakkhineyya*.

(In this connection, (it should be mentioned that) the Captain of the Dhamma, Venerable Sāriputta, did the cleansing of the objects. 'Cleansing of the object' means 'cleansing of one's ownself' that becomes worthy of the gift and enhancement of its result. In this connection, it may be stated that Venerable Sāriputta, the Captain of the Dhamma, used to purify the object, (and by 'the object' is meant the 'Venerable's own self' that became worthy of the gift and that enhanced result of the gift through his engagement in *nirodha-samāpatti*.) Venerable Subhūti, however, purified the act of giving (and by 'the act of giving' is meant this: when the Venerable engaged in meditation on *mettā*, the donors mentally reacted to his meditation; their hearts became softer and their adorations more enthusiastic before they made the offering. Hence the purification of the charitable act and the development of its result took place also through the donor as the donor is led by his mental tenderness and highly developed adoration.) **Elaboration:** When Venerable Sāriputta went on alms-round, he stood at the door and engaged in *mettā* meditation for sometime until the donor came out bringing the food. Only when the donor reached him, he emerged from his meditation and received the food. Venerable Subhūti, however, engaged in meditation on loving-kindness and only when the donor reached him, he emerged from his meditation and accepted the offering. Exposition of the Araṇavibhaṅga Sutta in the **Uparipannāsa Commentary** may be noticed in particularly.)

The sermons with reference to the Venerable Subhūti should be noted from the **Apādāna Text** and **Commentary**, etc.)

(14) KHADIRAVANIYA REVATA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

(The original name of this Mahāthera was Revata. He was a younger brother of Venerable Sāriputta. As he dwelt in an acacia forest which was uneven and full of stones, he was thus known as Khadiravaniya Revata, "Revata the dweller of acacia forest." In giving his account only the name Revata will be used for convenience sake.)

The Mahāthera was a citizen of Hamsāvātī and a virtuous person during the lifetime of the Buddha Padumuttara, a hundred aeons ago. He was operating a ferry at the port of Payāga, on the river Gaṅgā. Buddha Padumuttara, in the company of a hundred thousand monks, arrived at Payāga port (to cross over the river).

On seeing the Buddha, it occurred to the virtuous Revata thus: "It is impossible for me to see the Buddha always. Now that the Buddha has come, it is a good chance for me to do a meritorious deed." So he made a huge barge (composed of boats) with a white canopy and he hung fragrant flowers on it. On the barge floor were spread exquisite coverings made of fibre of excellent quality. Then he ferried the Buddha and His one hundred thousand *bhikkhus* to the other shore on that barge.

At that time, the Buddha declared a certain monk as the foremost (*etadagga*) *arañṇaka* (forest-dweller). Seeing this, the boatman thought: "I too should become one like this monk in the dispensation of a Buddha in future." So he invited the Buddha, performed a grand *dāna* to Him and, prostrating at the foot of the Buddha, expressed his aspiration thus:

“Exalted Buddha, like the *bhikkhu* on whom you have declared the foremost (*etadagga*) *araññaka* (forest-dweller), I too wish to become the foremost among those living in a forest in a Buddha's dispensation in future.” Seeing that his wish would be fulfilled without a hitch, the Buddha made the prophecy: “In future, during Buddha Gotama's dispensation, you will become the foremost forest-dweller!” and then He departed. (The Venerable's further good works done during the interval were not mentioned in the **Mahā-Aṭṭhakathā**.)

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

Due to his meritorious deeds, the good boat-man was reborn either in the divine or human worlds (and never in any woeful state) and was conceived in the womb of his mother, Rūpasari, the brahmin lady, in the brahmin village called Nālaka, in the country of Magadha. He was the youngest among the three brothers: Upatissa, Cunda and Upasena and three sisters: Cālā, Upacālā and Sīsūpacālā. He was named Revata.

Thereafter, Revata's parents discussed between themselves and agreed thus: “Our children, whenever they grew up, were taken away and turned into novices by monks, sons of the Buddha. Let us bind him with the fetters of household life while he is still young (before he was made a novice by monks).”

(Herein, after becoming an ascetic himself, Venerable Sāriputta had his three younger sisters: Cālā, Upacālā and Sīsūpacālā and two younger brothers: Cunda and Upasena, ordained. Only Revata, as a boy was left behind.)

Having discussed and agreed, the parents brought a bride from a family of equal birth, wealth, and distinction and made them pay homage to the aged grandmother and they gave their blessings, saying: “Dear daughter, may you live longer than your grandmother here!”

(The parents gave such a blessing because they wished for the longevity of the bride. At that time, their grandmother was 120 years of age with white hair, broken teeth, wrinkled skin, her whole body was covered with dark coloured spots (black moles) and her back was extremely bent like a rafter of a decaying house.)

Revata Mentally Stirred

On hearing that blessing given by the parents, it occurred to Revata thus: “This girl is young and in the first age-bracket. Such a youthful appearance of hers, it is said, would become sinewy and old like that of my grandmother! I shall first ask about the desire of my parents.” Then he asked: “With what in your mind did you say so?” The parents replied: “Dear son, we wish this girl, your spouse, attainment of longevity like your grandmother. That was what we uttered as a blessing.” “O mother and father!” asked Revata again, as he truly did not understand, “Will the youthful look of the girl become old like grandmother's appearance?” “What are you talking about, son? Only those who are of great merit, such as your grandmother, enjoy long life.” Thus the parents tried to reason with him.

Revata then reflected: “It is said that such a fair and tender look of the girl will decay, resembling my grandmother. She will become white-haired, toothless and wrinkly skin. What is the use of being infatuated with the physical beauty that has the nature of growing old and sinewy. Of course, there is none! I shall follow the footsteps of my older brothers. So he pretended to play games as boys would naturally do, he called his friends of his age, saying: “Come on friends, let us play runners-and-chasers.” The parents prohibited, saying: “Do not go outside the house on this day of your wedding!” Nevertheless, Revata pretended to play with his friends. When it was his turn to run, he ran only a little and delayed his return by pretending that he had to answer the call of nature. When a second time came for him to run, he ran and came back somewhat faster. On a third time, however, he considered that it was his best chance to run away for good and he ran as fast as he could in the direction he was facing. Arriving at a forest-dwelling of some monks who were observing *pāmsukūlika* form of asceticism (*dhutaṅga*). He paid respect to them and asked for novitiation.

When the monks rejected his request, saying: “O virtuous young man, we do not know

whose son you are. And you come here in full attire and ornaments as on usual occasion. Who would dare to ordain you as a novice. Nobody would.” Revata raised his two hands, crying: “I am being robbed! I am being robbed!”

Other monks then gathered from around him and said: “O virtuous young man, no one is robbing you of your garments or ornaments. But you are crying that you are being robbed! What do you mean by so saying?” The boy Revata then said:

“Venerable Sirs, I do not mean that I am being robbed off my garments or ornaments. In fact, I am being robbed of the threefold bliss of devas, humans and Nibbāna (as novitiation has been denied to me). (The expression such as the threefold bliss of devas, humans and Nibbāna was used through hearing from others). I am referring to the robbery of the threefold bliss. Let it be so, if you do not want to ordain me. However, do you know my eldest brother?” “What is the name of your eldest brother?” asked the monks. “My eldest brother’s name was Upatissa while a layman,” replied Revata, “Now he bears the name Sāriputta as a Thera, so they say, Venerable Sirs.”

Then the monks discussed among themselves: “Friends, in that case, this young clansman happens to be our little younger brother! Our elder brother, Sāriputta, the Captain of the Dhamma, has formerly left a message with us, saying: ‘My relatives are all heretics. If somebody comes and says that he is a relative of ours, let him be ordained in any possible manner.’ This boy is our elder brother, Sāriputta, the Dhamma Captain’s very own younger brother, his closest relation. Let us therefore ordain him!” So they gave him the *tacapañacaka* meditation subject and ordained him as a novice. Later on, when he completed twenty years of age, they ordained him as a *bhikkhu* and made him put efforts in meditation.

Having taken the meditation subject, Venerable Revata entered a forest of acacia trees, a rough and uneven place full of stones and pebbles, neither too near nor too far from his preceptors, and engaged in monkish practices. With a determination: “I will not see either the Exalted One or my elder brother Theras until I attain *arahatta-phala*.” Revata practised meditation assiduously and while he was so doing, three months had elapsed. For a tender clansman (son of a wealthy man) the food he ate was so coarse that his mind became perplexed like the wrinkled skin. (His mind could not become soft and splendid, according to the Sinhalese version.) He could not achieve his goal, i.e. attainment to *arahatta-phala*. But Revata was not discouraged, when the three months were over, he observed *pavāraṇā*; he did not move to another place at the end of *vassa* but remained in the same forest and continued to follow the ascetic practices. The more he kept on striving with energy and perseverance, the more his mind became concentrated. When the Venerable proceeded to deal with Vipassanā, he reached the state of an *arahat*.

The Buddha’s Visit

Even at the time when Sāriputta learnt the news about the ordination of his younger brother Revata, he said to the Buddha: “Exalted Buddha, it is learnt that my younger brother Revata has been ordained. He may or may not be happy in this dispensation of yours. Let me go and see him.” At that time, Revata was forcefully practising Vipassanā meditation and knowing this, the Buddha prohibited his going twice. When the third request came, knowing thoroughly that Revata had become an *arahat*, the Buddha said: “I too shall go along with you, dear son Sāriputta. Inform the monks!”

Having gathered the monks, Venerable Sāriputta intimated them all thus: “Friends, the Buddha is going on a journey. Those who wish to go along may do so!” Whenever the Buddha travelled, the monks who stayed behind were very few. “We shall get a chance to have a continuous look at the golden complexioned Buddha and also to listen to His sweet sermons!” As expected, those who wish to follow the Buddha was overwhelming. The Buddha therefore left the monastery in a great company of monks with an intention: “I shall see Revata.”

Supernatural Power of Sīvali Mahāthera

When they were setting out thus, Venerable Ānanda asked, while coming to the juncture

of two roads at one place: “Exalted Buddha, here is the juncture of two roads. By which road do you want the Sangha go?” “Dear son Ānanda, of the two roads which one is straight?” enquired the Buddha. “Exalted Buddha, the straight one (the short cut) is thirty *yojanas*. It is in the domain of demons, having scarce food and being rather dangerous. The curved road, (the beaten track of the majority), is sixty *yojanas*, safe with plenty of food,” replied Ānanda. Then the Buddha asked further whether the Venerable Sivali came along with them, Venerable Ānanda answered in the affirmative. “In that case, Ānanda,” said the Buddha, “let the Sangha take the straight road full of danger and with less food. We shall test his supernatural power founded on his past meritorious deeds.”

Having said thus, the Buddha took the dangerous road with food scarcity in the grove. From the time they took the road, devas had created a large city in advance at every *yojana*, as the lodgings for the Sangha headed by the Buddha. At every lodging occupied by the monks, devas in the disguise of workers sent by the king of the city, brought rice-gruel, hard and soft food, etc. and enquired: “Where is the Venerable Sīvali? Where is the Venerable Sivali?” The Venerable had all these offerings collected and went to the Buddha. Together with the monks, the Buddha partake the food of various kinds offered to the Venerable Sīvali by the devas.

Having the offerings in this way, the Buddha travelled a *yojana* each day and covered the difficult journey of thirty *yojanas* in one month, and eventually reached the agreeable dwelling which was prepared in advance by Revata, in the forest of acacia trees. As he knew beforehand of the Buddha's visit, Venerable Revata had created in his acacia forest, by his supernatural power, dwellings adequate for the monks headed by the Buddha. For the Buddha, he had made the Fragrant Chamber, places for day, as well as for night-resort, and so on. Then he welcomed the Buddha, who entered the dwelling through the decorated and orderly way. Thereafter, He went into the Fragrant Chamber. Then only did the remaining monks bed according to their seniority in monkhood. Knowing that “this is not a time to partake of food”, the devas offered eight kinds of juice to the monks. Half a month had passed since the arrival of the Buddha.

Misunderstanding by Restless Monks

At that time, some restless monks sat down at one place, gossiping among themselves. “The Exalted Buddha, the Teacher of devas and humans, came to see the one whom he refers to as ‘a younger brother of my Chief Disciple’ but who spends his time by doing odd jobs. What are the Jetavana, Veluvana and other monasteries near Revata's dwelling for? This monk Revata is only a chore-man busying himself with unimportant things of such nature. What kind of ascetic practice does such a busy man follow? Of course, nothing.”

Then the Buddha considered: “If I stay here long, the place will be crowded with visitors of four kinds. Forest-dwellers want to be in quietude, if I remain too long, uneasiness will occur to Revata.” So he went to Revata's day-resort. The Venerable Revata saw the Buddha coming from a distance where he was sitting alone on a stone slab and leaning against a wooden board at the end of the walk. Then he welcomed the Buddha and made obeisance to Him respectfully and adoringly.

The Buddha asked: “Dear son Revata, this is a place inhabited by wild animals, such as lions, leopards, and tigers. What do you do when you hear the sounds of wild elephants, wild horses, etc?” “Exalted Buddha,” answered Revata, “to me the sounds of wild elephants, wild horses, etc. repeatedly bring delight in forest (*arañña-rati*).” The Buddha taught Revata a sermon on the benefits of forest-dwelling in five hundred verses. Next day, he went on alms-round in the nearby area and (without returning to Revata's dwelling in the forest of acacia trees). The Buddha let Venerable Revata went back; besides, He managed His supernatural power in such a way that the restless monks, who had ill-spoken of Revata, forgetfully left behind their staffs, footwears, bottles of ointment, umbrellas.

These restless monks went back to Revata's dwelling to get back their belongings. Though they took the route by which they came, they could not remember their place. In

fact, the monk on the previous days travelled by the decorated road (created miraculously) and on the day of their return journey they had to take the (natural) uneven road and could not help taking rest here and there (as they were so weary). At some places, they were compelled to walk on their knees. With such trouble and difficulty, they were bound to tread on small plants, bushes and thorns. When they reached a place which resembled their residence, they saw their umbrellas, footwears, ointment bottles and staffs, some hanging on and others standing by acacia stumps everywhere. Then only did the restless monks realised that “the monk Revata is a man of supernatural power indeed!” Getting back their paraphernalia, they talked among themselves in great astonishment before they travelled to Savatthi: “Oh, what a wonder is the honour done to the Buddha.”

The monastery donor, Lady Visākhā, invited the monks, who arrived ahead in Sāvattthi, as they went ahead of others, and when they were seated, she asked them: “Venerable Sirs, is Venerable Revata’s residence pleasant?” The monks replied: “Yes, dear donor, Venerable Revata’s residence is pleasant and delightful. It is exactly like the celestial gardens of *Nandāna* and *Cittalatā*.” Later on, she asked the restless monks who were late-comers: “Venerable Sirs, is Venerable Revata’s residence pleasant?” The reply given by these monks was: “Do not ask us, dear lady donor. The residence of Revata is not worth talking about. Apart from being a barren high ground, his place is a great acacia forest with an extremely uneven surface full of pebbles, stone slabs and rocks. There lived Revata miserably.” Thus they recounted their experiences that they had very recently.

Noticing the difference between the two answers; one given by the earlier group monks and the other by the latter, and wanting to know clearly which answer was right, she paid a visit to the Buddha, bringing with her unguent and flowers. Having sat down in a suitable place, she asked the Buddha: “Exalted Buddha, some monks praise the Venerable Revata’s residence while others ill-speak of it. Why are the two speeches different from each other, Exalted Buddha?” Then the Buddha said: “Visākhā, a place in which the minds of the Noble Ones take delight is pleasant, whether it is pleasant or unpleasant in worldly terms.” Then the Buddha uttered the following verse:

*Gāme vā yadi vā raññe,
ninne vā yadi vā thale;
Yatthā Arahanto viharanti
tam bhumirāmaṇeyyakam.*

Visākhā, donor of Pubbārāma and mother of Migāra (Migāra-mātā)! Whether it is a village that is thickly surrounded by the five worldly pleasures, or a forest away from these pleasures, or a low valley, watered by streams and green with dwelling at ease, in harmony with the four physical postures, that dwelling site of noble *arahats* is a truly delightful place on the surface of the earth.

— Aṅguttara Commentary —

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

At a later time, in an assembly of monks, the Buddha declared the Venerable Revata the foremost (*etadagga*) ‘forest dwelling’, by praising him as follows:

*“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ ārañṇakānaṃ
yadidaṃ Revato Khadiravaniyo,”*

“Monks, among my disciples who dwell in forests, Revata the dweller of acacia forest is the most outstanding!”

(Herein, though other *theras* dwelt in the forest, they did so only after studying the suitability of the place, the suitability of the water and the suitability of the village as an alms-resort. But Venerable Revata ignored these conditions and dwelt in an acacia grove on a barren high ground with an uneven surface, full of pebbles, stone slabs and rocks. Hence it was he alone who was foremost in the practice of forest-

dwelling.)

The discourses connected with the Venerable Revata Khadiravaniya may be taken from the **Apādāna Text** and **Commentary**, the **Dhammapada Commentary**, etc.

(15) KAṆKHĀ REVATA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

A hundred thousand aeons ago, during the lifetime of Buddha Padumuttara, the future Kaṅkhā Revata Mahāthera went to the monastery along with many other people, like those virtuous future Mahātheras of old times. And while standing at the edge of the audience and listening to a sermon, he saw the Buddha declaring a certain monk the foremost (*etadagga*) among meditators. Thinking: “I too should become one like this monk,” he invited the Buddha for *dāna* on a grand scale for seven days. At the end of the sermon on the last day, in the wake of former aspirants, he wished: “Exalted Buddha, I do not wish for any other forms of bliss as a result of this wholesome *adhikāra* act but to be the foremost (*etadagga*) among those engaged in meditation in the dispensation of a Buddha in future, like the *bhikkhu* whom You declared seven days ago.”

When the Buddha Padumattara surveyed the future, He saw that the clansman's wish would be fulfilled and so He predicted before His departure: “At the end of a hundred thousand aeons, there will appear Buddha Gotama. In the dispensation of that Buddha, you will become the foremost (*etadagga*) among the monks engaged in meditation!”

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

Due to his acts of merit throughout his life, the clansman was reborn either in the worlds of devas or humans and, in the lifetime of our Buddha, he was reborn in the family of a wealthy household in Savatthi and was named Revata. One afternoon the rich man's son, Revata, went along with other people to Jetavana. While standing at the edge of the gathering and listening to the Buddha's sermon, there arose confidence in Him and he was ordained as a *bhikkhu* fulfilling monastic duties. After taking a meditation subject from the Buddha, while preparing himself for mental concentration, he became a man of mundane *jhāna*. Using those *jhānas* as a base, he engaged in Vipassanā meditation and attained arahatship.

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

The Venerable Revata was able to absorb most forms of meditation which the Buddha engaged in during day and night. Thereafter, in the meeting of monks, the Buddha declared Venerable Kaṅkhā Revata the foremost (*etadagga*) in meditation, praising him:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkūnaṃ jhāyīnaṃ yadidaṃ Kaṅkhā Revato.”

“Monks, among my disciples who habitually engage in meditation, the monk Kaṅkhā Revata is the best.”

Account for The Name Kaṅkhā Revata

Once, the Buddha was travelling from Sāvattthi to Rājagaha and on the way Revata entered a hut in which molasses were made. Seeing that the molasses were mixed with dough and bran (as part of the process which was necessary to solidify the molasses), he became doubtful as to the permissibility of the solidified molasses which had the two other ingredients, for the latter two were raw (*āmisa*). Saying: “The molasses with the raw (ingredients) is improper as it contains dough and bran, which are raw. It is indisciplinatory, it is unlawful to enjoy such molasses in the afternoon.” As such, he and his followers did not take the molasses that had been made thus into lumps.

Neither did the *bhikkhus*, who believed the Venerable's word and practised according to it. Other *bhikkhus* reported the matter to the Buddha who asked: “Monks, why did people

put dough and bran into the molasses?" "To harden it, Exalted Buddha," answered the monks. "Monks, if dough and bran are put into the molasses in order to harden it, then the dough and the bran thus put into the molasses are only to be held as molasses. Monks, I allow you to take molasses, whenever you like," the Buddha promulgated a rule (*anuññāta-sikkhāpada*).

On the journey, Revata saw mung (*mugga*) beans with sprouts in some human faeces and said: "Mung beans are unsuitable (for consumption), for cooked beans can sprout too." Thus, he doubted and, along with his followers, he did not have mung beans. The *bhikkhus*, who trusted him, avoid eating those beans too. The matter was reported to the Buddha who laid down another rule allowing the eating of such beans whenever one desired. (These accounts are given in the Bhesajjakkhandhaka of the **Vinaya Mahā-Vagga**.)

In this way, Revata doubted even things that were permitted. Because he had great doubts as far as the Vinaya was concerned, he was known as Kaṅkhā Revata, 'Revata the Doubter.'

The doctrines with reference to Kaṅkhā Revata may be taken from the **Apādāna Text** and **Commentary**, the **Theragāthā Commentary**, etc.

(16) SOṆA KOḶIVISA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration made in The Past

The virtuous man, who was to become Soṇa Koḷivisa Mahāthera, during the lifetime of Buddha Padumuttara, was reborn in the family of merchants in a remote past and was named Sirivaḍḍha. When Sirivaḍḍha came of age, as in the manner of former aspirant Mahātheras, he went to the monastery and listened to the Buddha's Teaching, standing at the end of the audience. Seeing the Buddha declaring a monk, who was the foremost (*etadagga*) among those putting strenuous effort (*āradḍha-vīriya*), he was inspired, saying to himself: "I too should become one like this monk in future!" When the teaching was over, he invited the Buddha and performed a *mahā-dāna* for a week. Thereafter, he made known to the Buddha his aspiration. Foreseeing the fulfilment of Sirivaḍḍha's wish, the Buddha prophesied as before and then left for the monastery.

Life as A Clansman of Bārāṇasī

Due to his meritorious deeds, Sirivaḍḍha was reborn only either in the realm of devas or that of humans. When a hundred thousand aeons had elapsed, i.e. when Buddha Kassapa had attained Parinibbāna in this *Bhadda* aeon and before our Buddha appeared, Sirivaḍḍha was reborn as a clansman in a virtuous family. One day, while the clansman was enjoying a water-sport with his friends in the river Gaṅgā, a Paccekabuddha appeared.

The Paccekabuddha, wearing old robe, thinking: "I shall spend the *vassa* with Bārāṇasī as food-resort, after building a dwelling on the bank of the Gaṅgā," went to collect sticks and cane stalks that were brought by the river-currents. Thereupon, Sirivaḍḍha with his friends went to the Paccekabuddha, paid homage to Him and while standing asked: "What are you doing, Venerable Sir?" "Dear young man," replied the Paccekabuddha, "as the *vassa* is drawing near, a dwelling is required for a monk."

Sirivaḍḍha then said: "Venerable Sir, please wait a day, today, by all means. Tomorrow we shall build a dwelling and offer it to you." Saying to Himself: "I should grant my favour to this virtuous clansman," which was the main purpose of His visit, the Paccekabuddha accepted his offer. Knowing the Paccekabuddha's acceptance, Sirivaḍḍha returned home. The next day, he prepared all kinds of offering and waited, while standing, for the coming of the Paccekabuddha. The latter thinking where He should collect food, came to know of Sirivaḍḍha's idea and went to the gate of his house.

On seeing the Paccekabuddha's coming, Sirivaḍḍha was very pleased and took the alms-bowl and offered food in it. He supplicated, saying: "Please come to the gate of my house [for food] for the three months of this *vassa*." Getting the promise and when the Paccekabuddha had left, he completed, with his friends, the construction of the dwelling

with a walk-way, day-and-night resorts for the Paccekabuddha and offered them to Him.

What was peculiar about Sirivaḍḍha was this: When the Paccekabuddha entered the dwelling, Sirivaḍḍha, with the idea not to let the former's feet touched by the mud on the ground, smeared on the ground wet cow dung and then spread over it his red cloak, which he had put on and which was valued at a hundred thousand coins. On seeing the colour of the red cloak and that of the Paccekabuddha's body were one and the same, he was very pleased, so he said: "Just as my cloak has become more beautiful since You stepped on it, even so may the colour of my hands and feet be red and beautiful like the colour of Hibiscus flowers! May the touch of my body be like the cotton wool that has been dressed a hundred times!"

Sirivaḍḍha served the Paccekabuddha for the three months of the *vassa*. When the Paccekabuddha held the *pavarana* ceremony at the end of the *vassa*, he offered Him a three-piece robe. Equipped completely with bowl and robe, the Paccekabuddha returned to the Gandhamādana mountain.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

Without being reborn in the four woeful states, Sirivaḍḍha was reborn in the realms of devas or humans, and was finally conceived in the house of the merchant Usabha, in the city of Kālacampā, during the lifetime of our Buddha. Since the time of his conception, thousands of gifts had come to the merchant's house. On the day of his birth too, the whole of Kālacampā City was overwhelmed by gifts and offerings too. On his naming day, the two parents said: "Our son has brought his own name. His complexion is like something bathed in the liquid of red gold," and called him Soṇa Boy or Soṇa, the merchant's son. (The name given was just Soṇa.) But as he belonged to the clan of Koḷivisa, he was better known as Soṇa Koḷivisa.) Then sixty nurses were appointed for him who was brought up blissfully like a celestial being.

Food prepared for Soṇa

The following was the way the food for Soṇa was prepared:

First, the field, extending to 60 royal *pai*, was ploughed and *sāli* paddy was grown by (1) cow-milk, (2) scented water and (3) ordinary water.

Into the drain in the field, cow milk and scented water were poured from a large number of jars. When the stalks had absorbed the milk, in order to protect them against the danger of being eaten by birds and insects, and in order to make the crops tender, posts were erected in the field, leaving space between one pole and another. On the poles, on the paly, were rafters, which were covered by mats. Screens were then erected for shelter and guards were placed at the corners.

When the crops ripened, granaries were renovated by smearing them with four kinds of unguent (namely, saffron, cloves, rhododendron and *kakkū* or *kamyin* powder). The air was made laden with fragrance by applying precious unguent above the previous kind. Then only did farm workers went down to the farms and collected the crops carefully, tying with strings and drying them. A layer of unguent was spread on the floor of the granaries; the dried bundles of stems were spread on the layer of unguents. In this way, the layers of unguent and the layers of crops were made alternately until the granaries became full. The doors were then closed and the crops kept for three years.

On completion of three years, the doors of the granaries were opened. The whole city of Campā was then diffused by the fragrance.

When the *sāli* paddy was pounded, drunkards rushed to buy the paddy husks and bran. The broken rice was, however, taken by the servants and workers. Only whole grains were collected for Soṇa.

The way of cooking rice was as follows: whole grains were put in the washing-basket made of gold threads. After filtering a hundred times, the rice was immersed in the boiling water and (without letting it remains long) it was taken out. (As the rice was cooked as

soon as it was taken out from the water) the cooked rice resembled jasmine flowers.

The rice was then put in a gold bowl which was then put on the silver cup which was full of boiled sweet rice-milk, free of water and boiled thoroughly (so that the cooked rice remained hot). The food was then placed before Sona.

Soṇa Koliṇisa had the *sāli* food moderately. He washed his mouth and hands and feet with scented water. He was then given quids of betel of all kinds and other things to make his mouth smell sweet.

Wherever he went, fine and exquisite carpets were spread out. The palms of his hands and the soles of his feet were red like the colour of Hibiscus. His touch was very soft like that of the cotton wool that has been dressed a hundred times. The soles were covered with soft hair having the colour of the lotus threads in a spiral shape and existing in a ruby ear-plug. Whenever he was angry with somebody, he would threaten, saying: “You think about it carefully! Or I shall put down my feet on the ground.” On coming of age, three palaces were built for him (as in the case of Yasa the merchant's son), each for a particular season. He was also caused (by the parents) to enjoy the entertainment of female dancers. Taking pleasure in great luxury, the wealthy son was living a deva-like life blissfully.

At that time, our Buddha had attained Enlightenment and taught the Dhammacakka Sutta and was staying with Rājagaha as His resort for alms-food. Meanwhile, the righteous King Bimbisāra summoned Soṇa and sent him, in the company of eighty thousand village-headmen, to the Buddha. Having listened to the Buddha's sermon, and developing immense faith, Sona asked the Buddha for ordination.

The Buddha then asked him as to whether he had obtained his parent's permission. When the answer was negative, the Buddha advised him saying: “Dear son Soṇa, Buddhas do not ordain those who are not permitted by their parents.” “Very well, Exalted Buddha,” said Soṇa and in obedience he went back to his parents and obtained their permission before he approached the Buddha again. Under the instruction of the Buddha, he was ordained by a *bhikkhu*. (This is a brief account. A detailed account may be read in the translation of the Cammakhandhaka of the **Vinaya Mahāvagga**.)

While living in Rājagaha, after gaining monkhood, his relatives and friends adoringly made offerings in his honour. They spoke a lot in praise of his handsome personality. So it occurred to Soṇa: “Many people came to me. If they keep on coming to me, how could I engage in tranquillity and insight meditation? I would not be able to do so any longer. What if I, after hearing the meditation sermon from the Buddha, go to the cemetery at Sītavana (Sīta grove) and put effort to practise asceticism! People would not go there for they abhor the cemetery. Then will my ascetic performance reach its apex, which is arahatship.” Accordingly, after hearing the meditation discourse from the Buddha, he went to Sītavana where he was inspired to begin his ascetic engagement.

Strenuous Engagement

“My body is so tender,” thought Venerable Sona, “As a matter of fact, I am not in a position to attain the bliss of the Path and the Fruition easily. Therefore, I should apply energy by tiring myself.” So thinking, he did his meditation by indulging only in the two postures of standing and walking (and rejecting entirely the other two postures of lying down and sitting). Then boils appeared at the edges of his very soft foot-soles and the whole terraced walk became deep red as the boils burst. When he was unable to walk, he practised by crawling on his elbows and knees which also were cut and the entire walk became doubly red. In spite of his such strenuous effort, he could not see any sign of positive result of his meditation. As a result, he conceived the following idea:

“If somebody else were to put strenuous effort, he too would do like me but not more than what I have done. Despite my effort, I was unable to make to the Path and the Fruition. Perhaps I am not a true *ugghaṭitaññū*, *vipaṇcitaññū* or *neyya*. Perhaps, I am only a *padaparama* individual. As such, what is the use of monkhood. There's probably none. I shall revert to laymen's society. I shall enjoy worldly pleasures and (while doing so) shall do good works.”

Buddha's Admonition: The Parable of A Harp

Knowing of the Venerable's thought, the Buddha went in the evening in the company of *bhikkhus* to Sona's dwelling, and on seeing the walkway in red asked: "Monks whose walkway is this that is red like a slaughter house?" (though He knew about it but He did so with an intention to deliver a sermon). The *bhikkhus* replied: "Exalted Buddha, the soles of the Venerable Sona, who had put so much effort by walking in his practice of meditation, have been injured. The walkway now deep red like a slaughter house belongs to that *bhikkhu*, Sona." The Buddha proceeded to Venerable Sona's meditation place and sat down on the seat readily prepared.

Venerable Sona came and made obeisance to the Buddha and took his seat at a suitable place. When the Buddha asked him whether it was true that he had conceived the idea of returning to lay-life, Venerable Sona admitted that it was true. Thereafter, the Buddha gave a sermon, the parable of a harp (*vīnovāda*), the harp's strings should be set neither too loose nor too tight.

Buddha: Dear son, how do you think of the question that I am now going to ask? You may answer as you like. You are clever, are you not, in playing a harp formerly while a lay man.

Sona: Yes, Exalted Buddha.

(Herein, when the Venerable Sona was young, his parents thought: "If Sona, would learn any other form of art, he would be weary. But harping is something that can be learnt while sitting comfortably at a place." So they made him learn the art of harping and he became an accomplished harpist.

(The Buddha knew that "other forms of meditation cannot benefit this monk Sona. While a layman, he was accomplished in harping. He will quickly gain spiritual knowledge, if I teach him with reference to that art." Accordingly, after asking Venerable Sona, as has been stated above, the Buddha began His sermon.)

Buddha: Dear son Sona, how do you think of the question I am now going to ask? Suppose your harp-strings are too tight, will your harp make a pleasant sound? Will it last long?

Sona: Exalted Buddha, that is impossible. It will neither make a pleasant sound nor will it last long.

Buddha: Dear son Sona, how do you think of the question I am now going to ask? Suppose the strings are too loose, will your harp make a pleasant sound? Will it last long?

Sona: It is impossible, Exalted Buddha. It will neither make a pleasant sound nor will it last long.

Buddha: Dear son Sona, how do you think of the question I am now going to ask. Suppose the strings are neither too tight nor too loose but set in perfect balance, will your harp make a pleasant sound? Will it last long?

Sona: It is possible, Exalted Buddha, that the harp will make a pleasant sound and it will last long.

Buddha: In the same way, dear son Sona, if the effort put forth is too much, it causes restlessness (*uddhacca*). (Excess energy brings about restlessness.) If the effort put forth is too little, it causes indolence (*kosajja*). (Inadequate energy brings about indolence.) Therefore, dear son Sona, set up energy (*vīriya*) and concentration (*samādhi*) in equal amount. (Try to keep the balance of your energy and concentration.) Know that your faculties such as faith (*saddhā*) must also be in equal degree. (Make the five faculties, such as, faith (*saddhā*), energy (*vīriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*), are of equal proportion.) When they are well balanced, try to have signs of tranquillity, etc.)

Soṇa: Very well, Exalted Buddha.

Having admonished the Venerable Soṇa by setting the art of harp-playing as an example and having taught him the meditation practice involving the perfect balance of energy and concentration, the Buddha returned to the monastery on the Gijjhakūṭa hill.

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

Considering in retrospect, the way of the Venerable Soṇa Koḷivisa's meditation practice, the fact manifests itself that while others' energy had to be increased (as it was so deficient), his was to be decreased (as it was too much). Therefore, at a later time, the Buddha praised him and declared him the foremost (*etadagga*) in having strenuous energy (*āraddha-vīriya*):

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ āraddha-vīriyānaṃ yadidaṃ Soṇa Koḷivso.”

“Monks, among my disciples who possessed of strenuous energy, Soṇa of Koḷivisa clan is the best.”

(17) SOṆA KUṬIKANṆA MAHĀTHERA

(By the name given to him by his parents the Venerable One was Soṇa. As a lay man, he used to wear the earrings worth a crore, as such the name Kuṭikaṇṇa was added. Hence he was known as Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa Mahāthera.)

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The virtuous man, the future Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa Mahāthera, during the lifetime of the Buddha Padumuttara, also went along with people to the monastery in the aforesaid manner. While standing at the edge of the audience and listening to the Buddha's sermon, he saw a monk being declared the foremost (*etadagga*) among those who taught in a sweet voice. Soṇa then thought: “I, too, should become the foremost (*etadagga*) among those who teach in sweet voice in the dispensation of a future Buddha.” So he invited the Buddha and performed a great *dāna* for seven days and at the end of which, he said: “Exalted Buddha, seven days ago you declared a monk as the foremost (*etadagga*) among those who teach in sweet voice (*kalyāṇavakkaraṇa*), I too wish to be like that monk in the dispensation of a future Buddha as a result of this act of merit of mine.” Seeing that the man's wish would be fulfilled without any hitch, the Buddha predicted: “Later, in the dispensation of Buddha Gotama, your wish will be fulfilled.” After saying thus the Buddha departed.

(b) Monkhood in His Final Existence

Having performed meritorious deeds until his death, Soṇa was reborn only in the worlds of devas and humans (without any rebirth in the four woeful states) and finally took conception in the womb of a devotee, named Kālī, the wife of a merchant, in the town of Kuraraghara, in the country of Avanti, before the appearance of our Buddha. When the pregnancy was in advanced stage, Kālī went back to her parents in Rājagaha.

At that time, our Buddha had attained Omniscient Buddhahood and taught the Dhammacakka Sutta in the Deer Park at Isipatana. (The date then was the full moon day of Āsāḷhā, 103 Mahā Era.) On the occasion of the teaching of the sermon, devas and Brahmās from the hundred thousand universes gathered in unison in the Deer Park. Present at the gathering were twenty-eight *yakkha* generals, and one of them was Sātāgira, were listening to the Buddha's sermon.

(Herein a detailed account of the two demon generals may be looked up in the Chapter 10)

(The account given in Chapter 10 is based on the exposition of the Hemavata Sutta of the **Suttanipāta Commentary**. According to that exposition, while Sātāgira was listening to the Dhammacakka Sermon, he remembered his friend Hemavata. He, therefore, was inattentive and failed to realize the Path and the Fruition. Only when

he returned with Hemavata to listen to the sermon, that both of them became noble *sotāpunnas*, eventually.

(What is based on the Ekaka-nipāta of the **Aṅguttara Commentary** begins from his attainment of *sotāpatti* after hearing the Dhammacakka Sermon. Thereafter, he went to fetch Hemavata and met him on the way in the sky above the house of Kālī (of Kuraraghara), near Rājagaha, who was the daughter of a merchant. On meeting with Hemavata, he was asked by the latter about the physical practices (*kāyasamācāra*), livelihood (*ājīva*) and mental practices (*manosamācāra*) of the Buddha, and he answered each and every question. In this way, when the questions and answers on the Buddha's virtues and attributes as contained in the Hemavata Sutta came to an end, Hemavata reflected on his friend's pious words step by step and became established in *sotāpatti-phala*. The difference of the two accounts is due to the different reciters *bhāṇaka*).

Not seeing his friend Hemavata on the occasion of the Buddha's teaching of the Dhammacakka Sermon, Sātāgira went to look for him and met him on the way, in the sky above Kālī's house. And the questions and answers on the Buddha's physical conduct, etc. took place.

While Sātāgira was talking about the Dhamma in his explanation of the Buddha's conduct, Kālī overheard all and began to have faith in the Buddha without having personally seen him and became established in *sotāpatti-phala*, just as somebody who has enjoyed the meal prepared and meant for another person. She was the first noble *sotāpanna* and female lay devotee among women and the eldest 'sister' to them all.

Having become a *sotāpanna*, Kālī gave birth to a son that very night. The son was given the name Soṇa. After living with her parents for as long as she wanted, Kālī returned to Kuraraghara. Since the son was one wearing the earrings worth a crore, he was also known as Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa.

Saṁvega and His Monkhood

At that time, the Venerable Mahā Kaccāyana was staying in the hill known as Papata (or Pavatta or Upavatta), depending upon Kuraraghara as his alms resort. The lay devotee, Kālī, was serving the Venerable who constantly visited her house. Her son, Soṇa, also moved about the Venerable constantly and became friendly with him.

Whenever he had an opportunity, Soṇa would go to the Venerable to wait upon him. The Venerable also continuously taught him the Dhamma in return. The boy, therefore, felt a good deal of *saṁvega* and became ardent to practise the Dhamma. At one time, he travelled with a caravan to Ujjeni for commercial purpose and while camping at night, he became afraid to stay with the stuffy crowd. So, he went to another place and slept. The caravan moved on in the morning without him, as nobody remembered to wake him up before they proceeded.

When Soṇa awoke and not seeing anybody, he hurried to follow the caravan along the caravan road and reached a banyan tree. At the tree, he saw a male *peta*, who was disgusting ugly and big-bodied, picking up and eating pieces of his own flesh that were falling off from his bones. So Soṇa asked him what he was and the *peta* answered his identity. Soṇa asked again why he was doing that and he answered that he was doing so because of his past *kamma*. Soṇa then asked him to explain and his explanation was as follows: "O Master, in the past, I was a wicked merchant of Bharukaccha, earning my living by deceiving others. Besides, I abused monks who came for alms and said to them: 'Eat your own flesh!' As a result of these evil deeds, I am now undergoing the kinds of suffering you are now witnessing." On hearing the incident, Soṇa was startled a great deal.

Thenceforth, he continued his journey and came across two *peta* boys, from whose mouth black blood was trickling. So he asked about them, as he had done before. To Soṇa, the young petas then related their evil deed done in the past: While being human, they traded in perfumes to earn their living as youngsters. And while doing so, their mother invited and offered meals to certain *arahats*. On coming home, they abused and cursed: "O mother,

why did you give our things to the monks? May bubbles of black blood ooze from the mouths of those who consumed the food given by our mother!” On account of their evil deed, they suffered in hell and as a residual result of that very evil deed, they were reborn in the world of *petas*, suffering in that manner when they were encountered by Soṇa. On hearing their story too, Soṇa was very startled. In fact, the startling effect was even greater than on the previous occasion. (The stories of such *saṃvega* are told in the **Udāna Aṭṭhakathā** and the **Sāratthadīpanī Tīkā**.)

Soṇa arrived in Ujjenī and returned to Kuraraghara after doing his business. He then approached the Venerable Mahā Kaccāyana and told him of his business. The Venerable gave Sona a religious talk on the disadvantages of birth in woeful cycles of *saṃsāra* and its round of suffering and as well as on the advantages of unbecoming and discontinuation of birth in these cycles of *saṃsāra* and its round of suffering. Having paid his respect to the Venerable, Soṇa went home. He had his evening meal, and fell asleep for a while. Later, he woke up and began to reflect on the sermon of the Venerable. This reflection and his recollection of the states of the *petas* whom he had met, he felt great fear of *saṃsāra* and its woeful cycles. Thus, he was inclined very much to become a *bhikkhu*.

At daybreak, he cleansed himself and went to the Venerable Kaccāyana and reported to him what he had thought: “Venerable Sir, when I reflected in various ways on the sermon given by you, I found that it was not easy to undergo this noble (threefold) training, which resembled a newly polished conch shell, perfect and pure.” He went on: “I would like to shave my hair and beard, put on the dyed robe and leave lay life, to enter bhikkhuhood.” Having thus spoken of his wish to become a *bhikkhu*, he made a request: “Therefore, Sir, I would like you to ordain me.”

Venerable Kaccāyana then investigated mentally whether Soṇa's wisdom was ripe or not, he came to know that it was not. Wishing to wait for the time when Sona's wisdom would ripen, the Venerable said: “It is difficult, Sona, to take up for life the noble practice of sleeping alone and eating alone. Therefore, Soṇa, what I would like to ask you is this: practise first occasionally, while still a lay man, the noble practice of solitary sleeping and solitary eating, (as on Uposatha days, etc.) which is taught by the Exalted Buddha.”

Then Soṇa's eagerness to become a *bhikkhu* subsided as his faculties were not mature yet and his *saṃvega* consciousness was not serious enough. Though his eagerness had subsided, he did not stay carelessly but remained in the teaching of the Venerable and constantly approached him to listen to his Dhamma. As time went by, he became inclined for a second time to become a *bhikkhu*, so he renewed his request. This time too the Venerable gave him the same advice.

When Soṇa requested for a third time, the Venerable Mahā Kaccāyana knew it was time to ordain him because of the maturity of his wisdom and the Venerable could only ordain him as a *sāmaṇera*. Though he was to ordain Soṇa as a *bhikkhu*, such ordination could not take place because only two or three *bhikkhus* lived in Kuraraghara, whereas there were many in the Middle Country. And these *bhikkhus* were staying very far separately, one in a village or two in a market town. From there, the Venerable brought two or three *bhikkhus* for Sona, his co-resident pupil. But while he was away to bring other *bhikkhus*, the previous ones would leave for another place to attend to other matters. After waiting for some time for their return, he went out to bring back those who had left but the others who had remained there, departed on some other matters.

As he had to repeat his attempt to organise in this way, it took him more than three years to group ten monks together. An *upasampadā* ordination could only be performed at that time when ten monks were present. The Venerable was staying alone then. It was only after three long and troublesome years that the Venerable managed to have the required number of monks to give his pupil, Sāmaṇera Soṇa, higher ordination. (This is reproduced from the **Sārattha Tīkā**.)

Having received ordination, Sāmaṇera Soṇa Kuṭikappa [now a monk] learnt and took a meditation subject, and when he assiduously engaged in Vipassanā meditation, he attained arahatship even during that *vassa* and studied Sutta-nipāta also under the Venerable. After

performing *pavāraṇā* at the end of *vassa*, he wanted to pay homage to the Buddha very much and he asked his preceptor, Venerable Mahā Kaccāyana, for permission to do so. (His request in detail may be seen in the **Vinaya Mahāvagga** translation.)

The preceptor Venerable then said: “Soṇa, when you arrived there, the Buddha will let you stay in His Perfumed Chamber and ask you to give a sermon. Accordingly, you are bound to do that. Being pleased with your sermon, the Buddha will give you a reward. Take such and such a reward. Please pay homage to the the Exalted Buddha in my name!” Saying thus, the Venerable gave his permission whole-heartedly.

Having obtained his preceptor's permission, Venerable Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa went to the residence of his mother, Kālī, wife of a merchant, and told her of his plan. His mother consented and requested: “Very well, dear son! When you go to meet the Buddha, please take this rug, as my donation, and spread it on the ground in the Perfumed Chamber!” With these words the mother handed him the rug.

Taking the rug with him, Venerable Soṇa packed his bedding and set out for Jetavana, Sāvaththi. The Buddha was then seated on the Dhamma throne, a seat meant for the Buddha. Venerable Soṇa stood at a suitable place and showed his respect to the Buddha. Having exchanged words of greeting with Venerable Soṇa, the Buddha emphatically asked the Venerable Ānanda: “For this *bhikkhu*, dear son Ānanda, arrange lodging!”

(Herein, if the Buddha wished to stay with a visiting *bhikkhu* in the same Perfumed Chamber, He would specially ask to provide lodging for him. But for a visitor with whom he has no reason for staying together, he would say nothing. For such a person, the Venerable Ānanda or somebody else on duty would make an accommodation at another suitable place.)

Knowing the wish of the Buddha, Venerable Ānanda provided accommodation for Venerable Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa in the Perfumed Chamber.

Then the Buddha spent the time by being absorbed in *jhāna* for several hours of the night and then He entered the Perfumed Chamber. Venerable Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa too spent a long time sitting, during the night, in absorption of *jhāna* and then he too entered the Perfumed Chamber. Wishing to talk with Venerable Soṇa through engagement of *jhāna*, the Buddha let the time pass by sitting and engaging in all *jhānas*, that were common to disciples, in the open space. Having done so, He washed His feet and got into the dwelling. Sensing the wish of the Master, Venerable Soṇa followed, after engaging in the *jhāna* befitting the hours in hand in the open space.

Having entered into the Perfumed Chamber, as permitted by the Buddha, he made a robe-screen and passed the time sitting at the feet of the Buddha. In the last watch of the night, having lain down on the right side, which is *sīhaseyya* (lying style of a lion), with mindfulness, the Buddha rose when it was near daybreak. He then sat down and, thinking that Soṇa's physical weariness must have subsided by this time, He asked him: “Dear son *bhikkhu*, remember something to recite!” The Venerable recited the sixteen discourses beginning with the Kāma Sutta, all of which forming the whole section known as the Aṭṭhaka Vagga of the **Sutta Nipāta** in very sweet voice without making error in even a single letter.

When the recitation ended, the Buddha gave him blessing and asked: “Dear son *bhikkhu*, all sixteen discourses of the Aṭṭhaka Vagga you have learnt wonderfully, you have got them well by heart! (As they contained correct articulation) they were of pleasant sounds. They are clean, flawless, full of words leading to the understanding of meaning that is free from any impairment. Dear son *bhikkhu*, how long have you been a *bhikkhu*?” “Just one *vassa*, Exalted Buddha,” answered Venerable Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa.

Again the Buddha asked: “Dear son *bhikkhu*, why did your bhikkhuhood start so late?” “Exalted Buddha,” replied Venerable Soṇa, “I have long seen the disadvantages of sensual pleasures. But household life is so narrow, full of duties and things to attend to. Knowing that, i.e. the mind of one who has seen the defects of sensual pleasures as they really are, remained unsinkable into household life for long, but like drops of water falling from the

lotus leaf, it was this defiled thoughts that finally slip away from my heart.” So the Buddha uttered a solemn utterance as follows:

*Disvā ādinavaṃ loke, ñatvā dhammaṃ nirūpadhiṃ
Ariyo na ramatī pāpe, pāpe na ramatī suci.*

Because he has clearly seen through the eye of Vipassanā the defects of impermanence, suffering and changeability everywhere in the world of formations (*saṅkhāra*) and also because he has penetrated through the fourfold Path wisdom, Nibbāna, which is the cessation of the fourfold substratum of existence (*upadhi*), the Noble One, who is away from defilements, does not take pleasure in evil deeds. (Why? Because for one, a *haṃsa*-like individual whose deeds, physical, etc. are pure, there is no precedent that such a person should find happiness in the aggregate of dirty old unwholesome things that resemble a place full of excrement.)

Venerable Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa then thought: “The Exalted One gave a joyous speech to me. Now is the time for me to transmit what my teacher has asked.” So thinking, he adjusted his upper robe on his left shoulder and bowed his head at the feet of the Master, saying:

“Exalted One, my preceptor, the Venerable Mahā Kaccāyana made obeisance to you with his head. He also sent a message as follows:

- (1) ‘Exalted Buddha, the southern region of the country of Avanti has few *bhikkhus*. I acquired bhikkhuhood only after having ten *bhikkhus* gathered from various places with great difficulty, which took me three years. I wonder if you, Exalted Buddha, would allow higher ordination performed by less than ten *bhikkhus* in that region.
- (2) ‘Exalted Buddha, in that southern region of Avanti, the uneven ground rising from its surface, and resembling the black hoof-print of a cow, is so rough. I wonder if you, Exalted Buddha, would allow the sandal with layers of sole in that region. (At that time, the sandal with only one layer of sole was allowed. Hence the request.)
- (3) ‘Exalted Buddha, the people in the southern region of Avanti are fond of bathing. They regard water as a cleansing factor. I wonder if you, Exalted Buddha, would allow daily bath. (At that time, monks, as a rule, were to bathe once in a fortnight. Hence the request.)
- (4) ‘Exalted Buddha, in that region of Avanti, sheep-skin, goat-skin and deer-skin are used as spreads. Just as, Exalted One, in the Middle Country (Majjhima-desā), mats made of eragu grass, soragu grass, majjaru grass and jantu grass, are used, so are sheep-skin, goat-skin and deer-skin used in South-Avanti. I wonder if you, Exalted Buddha, would allow these skins for spreads. (At that time no animal skin or hide was allowed for such use in that region. Hence the request.)
- (5) ‘Exalted Buddha, people nowadays entrust *bhikkhus* outside the *sīmā* with robes, saying: “This robe is given to such and such a *bhikkhu*.” The entrusted co-resident *bhikkhus* went to the *bhikkhu* concerned and said: ‘Such and such a man, friend, gives a robe to you.’ But the *bhikkhu* does not accept the robe as he thinks that his acceptance would require him to perform an act of forfeiting and is therefore against the Vinaya. Because of such doubt, there is no such acceptance. Perhaps the Buddha might tell as the correct way of accepting the robe.” So does the Venerable Mahā Kaccāyana ask you through me”

Because of what had been reported by Venerable Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa, the Buddha then gave a Dhamma-talk to him and addressed the monks as follows:

“Monks, rare are *bhikkhus* in the southern region of Avanti. In such bordering areas, I allow performance of ordination by a group of five monks, the fifth being an expert in the Vinaya.”

The phrase ‘bordering areas’ in that injunction means the areas outside the Middle Country, to the east of which being the market town of Gajāṅgala, beyond which being a great *sāla* tree; beyond that *sāla* tree exist bordering areas.

It means the area lying outside the Middle Country and beyond the river Salalavati in the south-east.

It means the area lying outside the Middle Country and beyond the market town of Setakaṇṇika in the south.

It means the area outside the Middle Country and beyond the brahmin village of Thūna in the west.

It means the area outside the Middle Country and beyond the mountain called Usīraddhaja in the north.

- (1) “Monks, in those bordering areas, in such situation, I allow performance of ordination by a group of five *bhikkhus*, the fifth one being an expert in the Vinaya.
- (2) “Monks, in that southern region of Avanti, the uneven ground, swollen and full of black hoof-prints of cattle, is so rough. I allow you monks (to wear) sandals with layers of sole in all those bordering areas.
- (3) “Monks, in that southern region of Avanti, people attach importance to bathing. They regard water as a cleansing factor. I allow monks daily bath in all those bordering areas.
- (4) “Monks, in that southern region of Avanti, sheep-skins, goat-skins and deer-skins are used as spreads. As, monks, in the Middle Country, mats made of eragu grass, soragu grass, majjaru grass and jantu grass, are used, so are those animal skins used as spreads in that region of Avanti. I allow monks to use sheep-skin, goat-skin and deer-skin for spreads in all those bordering areas.
- (5) “Monks, if people entrust *bhikkhus*, who happen to be outside the *sīmā*, with a robe, saying: ‘This robe we give to such and such a *bhikkhu*.’ As long as the robe does not go into the hand of the monk concerned, the robe cannot be reckoned as something recognized by the would-be recipient for use. I allow you monks to accept that robe.”

Again, as had been asked by his mother, Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa paid obeisance, in her name, to the Buddha and said: “Exalted Buddha, your donor, Kālī, the female lay devotee, has offered this rug for use as a mat on the floor in your Fragrant Chamber.” With these words, he handed the rug to the Buddha, and then he rose from his seat, made obeisance and returned to his monastery on Papata Hill, near Kuraraghara town, in Avanti.

On returning to his preceptor, Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa reported all about the mission. Next day, he went to the house of his mother, Kālī, and stood at the entrance for alms-food. Hearing that her son was at the door, she came out quickly, showed her respect, took the alms-bowl from the Venerable's hand, prepared a seat and offered food.

Then followed a conversation between the mother and the Venerable:

Mother: Son, have you seen the Exalted One?

Venerable: Yes, I have, donor.

Mother: Have you also paid obeisance to the Exalted One in my name?

Venerable: Yes, I have. The rug given by you to the Exalted One, I personally spread it as a mat, as you had asked, in the Fragrant Chamber which He occupies.

Mother: How about your visit to the Exalted One? Was it true that you spoke something about the Dhamma? Was it true that the Exalted One also gave you blessings?

Venerable: How did you come to know about these things?

Mother: The guardian spirit of this house, son, told me that the day the Exalted One gave blessings to you, devas and Brahmas of the ten thousand world-spheres did the same. I want you to relate to me, son, the Dhamma in the same words as you have addressed to the Exalted One.

The Venerable accepted the mother's request by being silent. Knowing of the Venerable's acceptance, the mother had a great pavilion built at the house-gate and let the Venerable

repeat exactly as he had said to the Buddha; the mother thereby held a grand Dhamma-meeting.

(c) *Etadagga* Title achieved

At a later time, sitting in the midst of His noble disciples, the Buddha spoke in praise of Venerable Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa as follows:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakaṇaṃ bhikkhūaṃ kalyāṇa-vakkaraṇaṃ yadidaṃ Soṇo Kuṭikaṇṇo.”

“Monks, among my disciples who give pious talks in a sweet and pleasant voice, Kuṭikaṇṇa Soṇa is the best.”

Thus the Buddha named the Mahāthera the foremost in *kalyāṇavakkaraṇa*, ‘giving pious talks in a sweet and pleasant voice’.

(18) SĪVALI MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

This clansman, who would become Sivali Mahāthera, also went to the monastery during the lifetime of Buddha Padumuttara like many other former would-be Mahātheras and stood at the edge of the audience, listening to the Buddha's sermon. While he was doing so, he saw the Buddha declared a certain monk the foremost (*etadagga*) among those who received abundant gifts. Thinking that he too should become one like that monk, he invited the Buddha to his house and offered a grand *dāna* for seven days, in the same manner as that done by the future Mahātheras. Thereafter, he declared his aspiration, saying to the Buddha: “Exalted Buddha, as a result of this great act of merit, I do not want any other form of welfare but I want to be the foremost (*etadagga*) among those who receive many material gains, in the dispensation of a future Buddha, like the monk who was declared seven days ago.”

Foreseeing that the clansman's wish would be fulfilled without any hitch, the Buddha predicted: “Your wish will be fulfilled later in the dispensation of Buddha Gotama.” and then He returned to the monastery.

Life as A Countryman

Having performed meritorious deeds till his death, future Sivali took rebirth only in the realms of devas and humans (without being reborn in the four woeful states). During the lifetime of the Buddha Vipassī (who appeared ninety-one *kappas* ago), he became a clansman in a certain village not far away from the city of Bandhumatī.

At that time, the citizens of Bandhumatī, in friendly competition with the King, discussed among themselves and gave a big *dāna* to the Buddha.

One day, when they gave a collective *dāna*, they inspected their offerings to see what was missing and discovered that there were no honey and milk curds. So they agreed to bring them from any possible place by all means and placed a man to watch the road leading to the city from the countryside.

Then came a villager, the future Sivali, carrying a pot of milk curds from his village and thinking that he would exchange them for something he needed. But, before he entered the city, he wished to wash his face and hands and was looking for water everywhere but saw a beehive which was as big as the head of a plough but without bees. Believing that the beehive appeared because of his past act of merit, he took it and entered the city.

When the townsman, who was assigned to the road, saw the villager, he asked: “For whom, friend, are you carrying this honey and these curds?” “Sir, they are not for any particular person. In fact, I am carrying them to sell,” the villager answered. “In that case, friend, take a coin from my hand and give me that honey and those curds,” said the townsman.

Then the villager thought: “These things, which I have brought now, is not much valuable, yet this man is buying them from me at a high price, even in his first offering. I do not know why?” So he said: “I cannot sell them at this price, Sir.” When the townsman increased the price, saying: “If you cannot sell them for one coin, please take two coins and sell the honey and the curds to me.” The villager replied: “I cannot give them to you for two coins either,” in order to raise the price. In this way the price became higher and higher until it reached a thousand coins.

Realizing: “It is not fair to prolong the deal on my part. However, I shall ask him about his purpose,” the villager said: “The honey and the curds are not so valuable, yet, you unduly make such an immense payment. Why do you want to have these things by offering so much?” The townsman told him the purpose: “In this royal city of Bandhumati, friend, the citizens in competition with their King, gave a grand *dāna* to Buddha Vipassī. While they are doing so, they do not have honey and curds among the items of their offering. So they are trying desperately to get them by any means. If they fail to get them, they will lose in their competition with the King. Therefore, I would like to have them by giving you a thousand coins.” The villager then asked: “Sir, is such a charitable deed to be performed only by the people of the city and not by any village folk?”

The townsman then answered: “No man's gift, friend, is prohibited, (everybody whether he belongs to town or village is entitled to give in charity).” The villager then asked further: “O master, now that the citizens are performing acts of giving, is there anyone who gives away a thousand coins in one day?” “No, friend, there is none.” “O master, you know that the honey and the curds that I have brought now are worth a thousand coins, do you not?” the villager put still another question firmly. “Yes, I do, friend.” “O master,” said the villager, “in that case, go and tell the townsfolk that a rustic man is offering these two things, namely, honey and milk curds but not for money, instead he would like to make the offering by his own hands. Please also tell them that they should not be restless for wanting them and that they should now be happy as far as these two things are concerned. As for you, you should bear witness in person to the fact that in this magnificent *dāna*, it is I who is the donor of the most expensive item.”

Offering of Honey mixed with Curd-water

Having said thus, the villager bought five perfumery ingredients with his money which were meant for his food. He made them into powder. Then he squeezed the curds to extract water from them. Into that water, he put honey by squeezing the beehive and then seasoned the mixture of honey and curd-water with the perfumery powder. Finally, he put the mixed liquid food in a lotus leaf (container). Having prepared the food properly, he brought it and sat down at a place that was not far from the Buddha, waiting for his turn to offer it.

Amidst all the offerings that were brought by the citizens, the villager, knowing that it was his turn to make his offering, approached the Buddha and requested, saying: “Glorious Buddha, this offering is a gift from a poor man like me. Venerable Sir, kindly accept this humble gift of mine.” Out of compassion for the villager, the Buddha received the offering with the marble bowl given by the four Divine Kings and resolved that the food should prove inexhaustible even after distributing it to sixty-eight hundred thousand *bhikkhus*.

When the Buddha had partaken His food, the villager respectfully made obeisance to Him and remaining at a suitable place, said: “Glorious Buddha, all the people of the royal city of Bandhumati saw and knew that today I brought and made the offering to you. As a result of this act of merit, may I truly become, throughout *samsāra*, a great recipient of gifts, possessing a large retinue and fame. After saying: “*Evaṃ hotu kulaputta* — May you do as you wish, clansman,” the Buddha gave an appreciative talk to the villager and citizens and then He returned to the monastery.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

The villager, having done meritorious deeds till his death, was reborn only in celestial and terrestrial worlds, and finally, during the lifetime of our Buddha, he took conception in the womb of a Koliya Sakyan Princess named Suppavāsā.

Strange Happenings during Conception

Since his conception, hundreds of gifts arrived continuously, day and night, to his mother, Princess Suppavāsā. The princess became wealthier than before. (According to the Sinhalese version, five hundred gifts came by day and five hundred by night.)

Then one day, in order to investigate the fortunate past deed of the Princess, her royal relatives had the baskets of seeds touched by her hand. When these seeds were scattered, thousands of sprouts appeared from each seed. A plot of land, measuring a royal *pai*, yielded fifty or sixty cartloads of paddy.

Also, at a time when the crop was put into the storehouse, they let the door of the storehouse touched by the hand of the princess. When removing the crop, the place from where it was taken out became full as before. This was because of the glorious act done in the past by the Princess. Besides, when ladling the cooked rice from the full pot and uttering: "This is the fortune of the Princess," and distributing the food to all visitors, their supplies never ran short. While these strange events were happening and the child was remaining in the mother's womb, seven years had passed.

When the foetus became mature on the completion of seven years, the Princess suffered severely from *gabbhamūlha-dukkha*, a fainting fit from pregnancy. That serious agony the princess forbear with no moaning but by reflecting on the attributes of the Buddha, the attributes of the Dhamma and the attributes of the Sangha as follows:

"Sammāsambuddho vato so Bhagavā yo imassa evarūpassa dukkhassa pahānāya dhammaṃ deseti — He, that Master of ours, the Exalted One, taught us abandoning all kinds of such suffering; that Master of ours has been perfectly Self-Enlightened indeed by attaining Omniscience and knowing the truths and all that is to be known!"

"Suppaṭipanno vata tassa Bhagavato sāvakaṣaṃgho: yo imassa evarūpassa dukkhassa pahānāya patippanno — The Order of Bhikkhus, who are the disciples of the Exalted One, work hard for abandoning all kinds of such suffering; these disciples of the Exalted Buddha underwent (the threefold training) very well indeed!"

"Susukhaṃ vata taṃ nibbānaṃ, yatth'idaṃ evrūpaṃ dukkhaṃ na saṃvijjati — The Dhamma in which the slightest tinge of such suffering is absent, that Nibbāna-Dhamma is indeed extremely happy!"

Reflecting on the attributes of the three entities, namely, the attributes of the Buddha, the attributes of the Sangha, and the attributes of the peaceful happiness of Nibbāna, the Princess bore the pains. (She controlled herself and desisted from experiencing the misery other pregnancy and making moans by repeatedly meditating on the qualities of the Buddha, the Sangha and Nibbāna.)

On the seventh day, the Koliya Princess Suppavāsā called her husband the Koliya Prince and thinking she would like to give alms while living, said: "Go my lord! Tell the Exalted One about my happenings and give my invitation to the Master. Please note carefully all that had to say and transmit it to me!" The Prince went and told the Buddha on what happened to Princess Suppavāsā. The Buddha then uttered: "May the Koliya Princess Suppavāsā be sound and healthy. Being healthy herself, may she give birth to a healthy son!" No sooner had the Buddha made the utterance, the Princess gave birth to a healthy son without any pain. Those, who were surrounding the Princess, changed their teary mood into a happy one and went to the Prince to give him the information about the baby. The Prince, having listened to what the Buddha had said, paid respect to Him and returned to the village. When he saw the way the servants approaching him jubilantly, he became certain, thinking: "The word of the Exalted One seems to have come true." He went to the Princess and transmitted the Buddha's speech. The Princess said: "My Lord, the life-saving

alms-food to which you have invited, will be the meal of auspiciousness. Go again! Request the Buddha to come (and have a meal) for seven days.” The Prince did as he had been told. They offered a grand *dāna* to the Buddha and His monks for seven days.

The boy was born and the anxiety of all kinsfolk was removed thereby. Accordingly, he was given the name “Sīvali”. Since he had stayed in the mother's womb for seven years, from the time of his birth onwards, he was able to do all that was to be done by the seven year old. For instance, he purified the water by means of a filter (*dhamakarana*) and gave it to the monks during the *mahā-dāna* all week long.

On the seventh day, Venerable Sāriputta, the Captain of the Dhamma, had a conversation with the boy. While doing so the Venerable asked: “Sīvali, is it not befitting for you to become a monk after suffering all the trouble of such nature?” “Venerable Sir, if only I get permission from my parents, I would like to become a monk,” the boy answered. Seeing her son conversing with the Venerable, Sealy's mother thought: “How is it? My son was speaking with the Venerable who is the Dhamma Captain?” So she joyfully approached the Venerable and asked him what they were talking about. The Venerable said: “He talked to me about the misery caused by his stay in the mother's womb and promised me that he would live an ascetic life provided he gets permission from both parents.” The Princess then gave her permission replying: “Very well, Venerable Sir, kindly make him a *sāmaṇera*.”

The Venerable then took the boy Sīvali to the monastery and when he was making him a *sāmaṇera* after giving him the meditation subject of *taca-paṇcaka* (the five fold material aggregate with the skin as the fifth), he said: “You do not need any other exhortation to follow. Just remember your pains that you had suffered for seven years.” “Giving ordination to me is your duty, Venerable Sir. Let the reflection on the Dhamma be mine. I shall meditate on whatever I could recollect.”

The moment the shaving of hair for the first round was done, Sāmaṇera Sīvali was established in *sotāpatti-phala*, the moment the shaving for the second round of hair was done, he was established in *sakadāgāmi-phala*, the moment the shaving for the third round was done, he was established in *anāgāmi-phala* and as soon as the shaving was completed, he attained arahatship. (The completion of the hair-shaving and the relation of arahatship took place almost simultaneously.)

Since the day Sīvali was ordained a *sāmaṇera*, the four requisites, namely, clothing, food, dwelling and medicine became increasingly available to the Sangha whenever needed. The story of such happenings to Sāmaṇera Sīvali started in the town of Kundikā.

(Herein the present story of the Venerable Sīvali may be taken from the **Udāna Text**. The story, in detail, of his evil deed that caused his seven years long misery of lying in his mother's womb (*gabbhavāsa-dukkha*) and that of his mother's miserable fainting (*gabbhamūlha*) may be taken from the **Udāna Commentary**.)

(What is to be noted in brief is: the mother and the son, in one of the past existences were the Chief Queen and the son respectively to the King of Bārāṇasī. Once, the King of Kosala attacked Bārāṇasī King and took his Chief Queen and placed her in the same position. When the Bārāṇasī King was defeated and died, his son, the prince of Bārāṇasī, escaped through a drain. After organizing an army, he went back to the city of Bārāṇasī and gave an ultimatum asking the new King to return the city to him or he would wage a war. The mother, who was inside the city, advised her son to besiege the city lest there should occur trouble to many people. In accordance with the mother's advice, the Prince did so by blocking the four main gates so that there could be no exit or entrance. Though he did so for seven years, the citizens went out from smaller gates to collect grass, wood, etc. the blockage proved useless. Hearing that, the mother gave her son further advice to block the smaller gates as well.

(When the Prince did, following his mother's advice, the citizens found their movement about badly limited. Seven days later they beheaded King Kosala and

offered it to the Prince. The Prince entered the city and crowned himself King.

(As a result of these aforesaid evil deeds, the son and the mother had to face their respective miseries.)

Self-investigation of Own Good Kamma

At a later time, when the Buddha arrived in Sāvatti, Venerable Sīvali made obeisance respectfully to Him and sought permission, saying: “Exalted Buddha, I would like to investigate my own good kamma. Kindly give me five hundred monks as my companions.” The Buddha permitted, saying: “Take them along, dear son Sīvali.”

The Venerable headed for the Himavanta by following a forest route with five hundred companions. Then he came across

- (1) first, a great banyan tree on the way. The spirit of the tree gave him alms for seven days.
- (2) secondly, the Pandava Hill
- (3) thirdly, the river Aciravatī;
- (4) fourthly, the ocean known as Vara-sāgara;
- (5) fifthly, the Himavanta;
- (6) sixthly, the Lake in the Chanddanta forest,
- (7) seventhly, Mount Gandhamādāna,
- (8) eighthly, Venerable Revata's dwelling.

At all these place, devas gave a great *dāna* to Venerable Sīvali for seven days.

Particularly, when they arrived on Mount Gandhamādāna, a deva, named Nāgadatta, offered him milk-rice and butter-rice alternately for seven days. Then the monks said among themselves: “Friends, we do not see cows being milked by deva nor we see the milk-curds being stirred to make butter.” So they asked the deva for an explanation of what good deed he did to obtain so much milk-rice and butter-rice. Nāgadatta Deva answered: “Venerable Sirs, I am able to give you milk-rice and butter-rice without having milch cows because I performed meritorious *dāna* of the milk-rice by lot during the lifetime of Buddha Kassapa.”

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

At a later time, when the Buddha visited Venerable Khadiravaniya Revata (as has been told in the story of this Venerable), devas provided supplies, day after day, which were mainly intended for the Venerable Sīvali on the deserted and dangerous journey. With reference to that episode, the Buddha placed the Venerable the foremost among those who received plenty of gifts. The Buddha spoke in praise of the Venerable by saying:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ lābhīnaṃ yad'idam Sīvali.”

“Monks, among my *bhikkhu*-disciple who receive the four requisites in abundance, Bhikkhu Sīvali is the foremost.”

(The doctrinal passages in connection with the Venerable Sīvali may be extracted from the **Apādāna Text** and translation, the **Dhammapada Commentary** etc. Similarly the Dhamma-words involving later Mahātheras should be noted in like manner. In this Chronicle of Buddhas, only three points will be mainly discussed, namely, each Mahāthera's (a) aspiration expressed in the past, (b) ascetic life adopted in final existence, and (c) *Etadagga* title achieved.)

(19) VAKKALI MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

Vakkali Mahāthera was a clansman during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. Like all

other Mahātheras, he went to the Buddha's monastery, sat at the edge of the audience and while listening to the His sermon, he saw a *bhikkhu* being honoured by Him as the foremost (*etadagga*) among the *bhikkhus* who were devoted to Him. He felt a keen desire to be honoured likewise by some future Buddhas. As was with other aspirants, he invited the Buddha to his home and made great offerings for seven days. Thereafter, he expressed his wish before the Buddha: "For this good deed, may I, Venerable Sir, be declared by some future Buddha as the foremost among the *bhikkhus* who is very devoted to the Buddha." The Buddha saw that the aspiration of the clansman would be fulfilled and assured him of it, after which, He returned to the monastery.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

The worthy man devoted himself to deeds of merit till his death. When he passed away from that existence, he was reborn only in the fortunate destinations, and during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn in a brahmin family in Sāvattī. He was named by his parents Vakkali.

When he grew up, he was educated in the three Vedas. One day, he saw the Buddha, accompanied by many *bhikkhus*, going (on the alms-round) in the city of Sāvattī. He was captivated by the majesty of the Buddha's physical appearance so much so that he followed the Buddha's route and entered the Buddha's monastery along with the line of *bhikkhus*. There he kept gazing at the splendour of the Buddha. At the time of the Buddha's delivering the sermon, he sat right in front of the Buddha.

Vakkali's devotion became so deep that he could not stay away from the presence of the Buddha for any length of time. He, therefore, decided that he would not remain in household life because as a householder he would not be able to see the Buddha all day long but as a *bhikkhu* he could get that opportunity. So he went to the Buddha and pleaded with Him that he be admitted into the Order. He was then admitted.

As a *bhikkhu*, Venerable Vakkali never missed a chance of looking at the Buddha except at the meal time. He did nothing in the conduct of a *bhikkhu* either in learning or in meditation, but spent all of his time gazing at the Buddha. The Buddha knew that the time for Vakkali's enlightenment was not due and therefore did not say anything about his negligence of duty. When the right time was due, the Buddha said to Venerable Vakkali:

"Vakkali, what is the use of your gazing at this putrid body of Mine? Vakkali, he who sees the Dhamma, indeed sees Me. He who sees Me, sees the Dhamma. Vakkali, only one who looks at the Dhamma, actually looks at Me. He that really wishes to look at Me, must be one who looks at the Dhamma."

Although the Buddha exhorted Venerable Vakkali with these words, Vakkali could not tear himself away from the Buddha. The Buddha saw that the *bhikkhu* needed to be emotionally awakened for enlightenment. So, on the eve of the *vassa* period, the Buddha went to Rājagaha and there he said to the Vakkali on the day the *vassa* began: "Vakkali, go away! Leave my presence!"

It is impossible to disobey an order given by the Buddha. Vakkali had to obey for (at least) three months during the *vassa* period. There was nothing he could do about it. He felt desperate and forlorn. "Better die than be denied the presence of the Buddha" thus he pondered and left for the Gijjhakūṭa mountain which had steep cliffs.

The Buddha saw in His mind the despondency that had overtaken Venerable Vakkali. "Without getting mental succour from Me, Bhikkhu Vakkali would have wasted his great merit which is now sufficient for him to gain enlightenment," thought the Buddha. Accordingly, He emitted the Buddha rays towards Vakkali so that he could see His person. That vision brought immediate relief to Venerable Vakkali's burning heart, as though the dart of sorrow that had pierced it, had suddenly been removed.

Then to fill Vakkali's heart with delightful satisfaction and gladness, the Buddha uttered the following stanza;

*Pāmojjabahulo bhikkhu, pasanno Buddhasāsane;
adhigacche padam, santam, saṅkharūpasamam sukham.*

Being overjoyed and full of confidence in the Buddha's Teaching consisting of the threefold Training, the *bhikkhu* will attain Nibbāna the tranquil, the cessation of conditioning, the blissful.

— *Dhammapada*, IV 381 —

(According to the Commentary of the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**) the Buddha extended His hand to Venerable Vakkali and said: “Come, *bhikkhu*.”

The Commentary on the **Dhammapada** adds; after saying the above stanza, the Buddha, extending His hand to Venerable Vakkali, uttered these stanzas:

*Ehi Vakkali mā bhāyi, olokehi Tathāgataṃ;
Ahaṃ taṃ uddharissāmi, paṅke sanhaṃ va kuñjaraṃ.*

Come, Vakkali, do not be afraid, look at (Me) the Tathāgata, I will lift you (to Nibbāna) from the depths of the beginningless *saṃsāra*, just as one lifts a tusker from the mire.

*Ehi Vakkali mā bhāyi, olokehi Tathāgataṃ;
Ahaṃ taṃ mocayissāmi, Rāhugahaṃ va sūriyaṃ.*

Come, Vakkali, do not be afraid, look at the Tathāgata. I will free you from the captivity of defilements, just as I would free the sun from the captivity of Rāhu.

*Ehi Vakkali mā bhāyi, olokehi Tathāgataṃ;
Ahaṃ taṃ mocayissāmi Rāhugahaṃ va candimā.*

Come, Vakkali, do not be afraid, look at the Tathāgata. I will free you from the captivity of defilements, just as I would free the moon from the captivity of Rāhu.

Then the Venerable Vakkali said to himself: “I am now seeing the Buddha in person, and He has extended His hand to me. Oh, how glad I am! Where should I go now?” And not being able to decide in which direction he should proceed, he moved up skyward in the direction of the Buddha, and just as his first foot was resting on the mountain, he reflected on the stanzas uttered by the Buddha, and overcoming delightful satisfaction through Insight (into the three characteristics of conditioned phenomena), he attained arahatship, together with Analytical Knowledge. Then he descended to the ground and stood worshipping the Buddha.

(c) **Etadagga Title achieved**

On one occasion, in the midst of a congregation, the Buddha declared:

*“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ saddhādhi
muttānaṃ yadidaṃ Vakkali.”*

“*Bhikkhus*, among the *bhikkhu*-disciples who are very devoted to the Buddha, Bhikkhu Vakkali is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

(Note: In the case of other *bhikkhus*, their devotion to the Buddha had to be bolstered up. With Vakkali, his convicted devotion was too strong so that the Buddha had to temper it down by expelling him from His presence. Hence he was the foremost *bhikkhu* in the degree of devotion to the Buddha.)

(20-21) RĀHULA AND RAṬṬHAPĀLA MAHĀTHERAS

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

During the early part of the aeon of Buddha Padumuttara, the future Rāhula and the future Ratthapāla were born into well-to-do families of Hamsāvati. (Their names and clans as youths are not mentioned in the old Commentaries.)

When they came of age, they married and at the death of their fathers, they became heads of their respective households. In taking over the family properties from the custodians of their family estates, they came to know the immense wealth they had inherited. They pondered: “Our forebears have amassed these vast fortunes but have not been able to take them along when they leave the present existence. As for us, we would take them along into the hereafter in whatever way we can. So they started to practise charity. They erected distribution stations at the four quarters (at the four gates of the city, as the Sri Lanka version says,) where all the needs of destitutes and travellers were provided liberally.

Of the two friends, one was in the habit of inquiring into the needs of the donees who came to receive his charity and would give according to their needs, and he was therefore known as Āgatapāka, ‘the Discriminative Giver’. The other never asked about the need of the recipient but let them take however much they wanted, and hence he was known as Anaggapāka, ‘the Liberal Giver’.

One early morning, the two friends went out from their village to wash their faces. At that time, two recluses, using their supernormal powers, disappeared from the Himavanta mountains and reappeared at a place not far away from the two friends. They made themselves invisible and stood by the roadside and visible only when they were heading for the village with their alms-bowls and other vessels in seeking for alms. The two friends went near and paid their homage to the recluses, who asked them: “O men of great merit, when did you come here?” And the two friends replied: “Venerable Sirs, we have just arrived.” Then they each invited a recluse to their respective homes, offered them alms-food, after which they asked and received the promise from the recluses to receive their offerings every day thenceforth.

(One of them, the recluse who had agreed to be the regular donee to the future Rāhula) was phlegmatic, and to cool his heated body, he used to spend the daytime in the abode of a Nāga Lord, named Pathavindhara, which lay beneath the ocean. The recluse went there by making the ocean water cleft into a dry passage-way. On returning from his watery sojourn, where he had enjoyed the favourable weather, to the human abode, he, on the occasion, gave appreciative talk about the daily food offerings. After hearing the repeated reference to ‘the abode of Pathavindhara Nāga Lord’, the donor became curious to know what that expression denoted. This recluse explained to him: “Ah, that is our wish that you be as great as the Lord of Nāgas named Pathavindhara” and told him the grandeur of the Nāga Lord undersea. From that day onwards, the future Rāhula’s mind was inclined to the Nāga existence, as he visualized from the recluse’s description of it.

The other recluse used to spend his daytime at a deva mansion, named Serisaka, after the big celestial tree that stood in front of it in Tāvātimsa. And this recluse, who saw the palace of Sakka, King of Devas, mentioned it in his word of appreciation and felicitation about the daily food-offering he received at the future Ratthapāla’s house. When the Ratthapāla asked him to explain what he was referring to, he explained the greatness of Sakka and his good wish that his donor will be as great as Sakka. Thence forward the future Ratthapāla’s mind was inclined to the celestial state of Sakka.

When the two rich friends passed away from their existence, future Rāhula, whose mind was inclined to the Nāga Lord’s existence, was reborn as the Nāga Lord Pathavindhara and future Ratthapāla, whose mind was inclined to Sakka’s existence, was reborn as Sakka in the Tāvātimsa Deva realm.

Past Aspiration of Future Rāhula

At the moment of his rebirth as a *nāga*, Pathavindhara looked at his own body and felt sorry that he had indeed become a reptile. He thought of the limited vision of his benefactor, the recluse in his previous existence: “Ah, my teacher would seem to know no

higher ideal for me than the reptilian existence.” Just then he was attended on by a troupe of *nāga* dancers and musicians, all in celestial garb, who were there to entertain him wherever he remained. He himself then took on the appearance of a celestial youth, his reptilian form having been discarded.

A significant activity in *nāga* existence was that Pathavindhara had to attend, as part of his Nāga King Virūpakka's entourage, the half monthly meetings presided over by Sakka, where the four Celestial Kings paid their homage to the King of Devas. Sakka saw his old friend, Pathavindhara, even from a distance and recognized him. He asked him: “Friend, in which realm were you reborn?”

“O Lord, unfortunate is my destination. I was reborn as a reptile in the realm of *nāgas*. But you were fortunate to have a good teacher (in the past) to be reborn in the deva realm.”

“Do not be disappointed for your unfortunate destination. There has arisen in the world, Buddha Padumuttara. Go to him, perform great deeds of merit, and wish for the state of Sakka, so that we would live together in this Tāvātimsa realm.”

“Very well my Lord,” said Pathavindhara, “I will follow your advice.”

Then he went to see Buddha Padumuttara, invited Him to his undersea realm. He made preparations for a great offering the whole night together with his followers.

Early in the next morning, at dawn, the Buddha said to his personal attendant, the Venerable Sumana: “Sumana, the Tathāgata is going to a far-off land to collect alms-food. Let only *arahats* who have memorised the Dhamma-Vinaya (the three Piṭakas) and have attained the Fourfold Analytical Knowledge and the Six Supernormal Powers, accompany Me, and not the other worldling *bhikkhus*.” The attendant announced this order among the *bhikkhus*.

Then the Buddha, accompanied by *arahats*, who had memorised the Dhamma-Vinaya (Three Piṭakas) and had attained the Four-fold Analytical Knowledge and the Six Supernormal Powers, rose to the sky and went to the abode of Pathavindhara, the Lord of Nāgas. As Pathavindhara waited to welcome the Buddha, he saw Him and His company of *arahats* walking above the wavy waters of emerald green colour of the great ocean. There was the procession of majestic *arahats* with the Buddha at the head and a young novice, named Uparevata, who was the son of the Buddha. Pathavindhara was particularly overawed by the young *sāmaṇera* for having such supernormal powers just like the elder *bhikkhus*. He felt thrilled with joy at the magnificent sight.

When the Buddha took the seat prepared for Him and the *arahats* took their respective seats according to seniority, the seat assigned for Sāmaṇera Uparevata was high in front of the Buddha. As the young novice was sitting there, Pathavindhara, while serving the food to the Buddha and the Sangha, looked keenly at the Buddha and the young novice in turn. He noticed that the novice had the thirty-two distinct marks of a great man just like those on the body of the Buddha. That was the reason for his keen inspection of the Buddha and the novice in turn.

Pathavindhara was wondering why the young novice had so much resemblance as the Buddha, how both were related to each other. He asked one of the *arahats*: “Venerable Sir, how is this young novice related to the Bhagavā?” The *arahat* replied: “Lord of Nāgas, he is the son of the Bhagavā.” Pathavindhara was deeply impressed by the novice. “What a superb status this *sāmaṇera* occupies! The son of the greatest man in all the world, unrivalled in personal glory! His body is partly just like that of the Bhagavā himself. Oh, how I would like to be the son of a Buddha in some future time.”

Having been moved by this aspiration, the Lord of Nāgas invited the Buddha to his residence for seven days and made great offerings to Him. Thereafter, he made his aspiration before the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, for this great deed of merit, may I become the son of some future Buddha, just like Sāmaṇera Uparevata.” The Buddha saw that the Nāga Lord's aspiration would be fulfilled and made the prognostication: “You will become the son of Buddha Gotama in the future,” then He departed.

Past Aspiration of Future Raṭṭhapāla

At the next half-monthly deva meeting to pay homage to Sakka as a member of the Nāga King Virūpakkha's retinue, Sakka asked his old-time friend Pathavindhara: "Well, friend, have you made your aspiration for the Tāvātimsa realm?" Pathavindhara answered: "No, my Lord." "But why didn't you do that? What disadvantage do you see in deva existence?" "My Lord, it is not for any disadvantage I see in deva existence. The fact is I have seen Sāmaṇera Uparevata, the son of the Buddha who was just wonderful. Since I had cast my eyes on him, I have no aspiration other than to become the son of a future Buddha, exactly like Sāmaṇera Uparevata. So I had made my aspiration before the Buddha to become the son of some future Buddha. My Lord, I would ask you to make some aspiration before the Buddha. Let us live together in future existences in *samsāra*."

Sakka accepted Pathavindhara's suggestion and as he was thinking about his ideal aspiration, he saw a *bhikkhu* endowed with great powers. He reviewed the lineage of that *bhikkhu* and saw that the *bhikkhu* was the son of a noble family that had the ability to unite a country that had been divided, and that the *bhikkhu* had to obtain parental consent to join the Order, only after starving himself in protest for seven days. He decided to emulate that *bhikkhu*. He asked the Buddha about the *bhikkhu*, even though he had known it by his own divine powers. Then he made great offerings to the Buddha for seven days, at the end of which he expressed his great wish thus: "Venerable Sir, for this great deed of merit may I be declared by some future Buddha as the foremost *bhikkhu* among those who took up *bhikkhuhood* through their conviction just like that *bhikkhu* who the Bhagavā declared as such." The Buddha saw that Sakka's aspiration would be fulfilled and said: "Sakka, you will be declared as the foremost among *bhikkhus* who joined the Order, through sheer conviction under Buddha Gotama in the future." After pronouncing that prediction the Buddha departed. And Sakka also returned to his celestial abode.

Raṭṭhapāla's Life as Manager of Offerings to The Buddha

The future Raṭṭhapāla and the future Rāhula passed away from their existences as Sakka and Pathavindhara respectively, faring in the deva-world and the human world for thousands of world-cycles. Ninety-two world-cycles prior to the present world-cycles was the time of Buddha Phussa. The father of Buddha Phussa was King Mahinda. The Buddha had three half brothers from different mothers. The King monopolised the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha because he did not share the meritorious deeds of attending to the needs of the Buddha with anyone.

One day, rebellion broke out in a remote area of King Mahinda's country. The King said to his three sons: "Sons, there is rebellion in a far-away region. Either I myself or the three of you must go and put the region in order. If I am to go, you must see that the attendance on the Buddha be kept up in the usual manner." The three sons unanimously said: "Dear father, it is not for you to go. We will go and put that region in order." They made obeisance to their father and went to the disturbed area, quelled the rebels and returned in triumph.

On the way home, the three princes sought counsel of their trusted lieutenants: "O men, back in the capital, our father will bestow some boon on us. What sort of boon should we name?" The lieutenants said: "My Lords, at the death of your royal father, nothing will be unattainable to you. The right to attend on your eldest brother, the Buddha, is indeed the boon you should ask for." "Very well, my men, your advice is plausible." And they went before their royal father.

The King was very pleased with them and said they would be rewarded with whatever they wished for. The princes asked for the privilege of attending on the Buddha as their boon. "That, I cannot give, sons," the King said, "name any other." "We want no other boon. That is the only thing we yearn for." After some refusals by the King and the affirmations on the part of the three princes, the King at last felt obliged to concede, lest he would be going back on his word. He warned his sons, though, in these words: "I will now comply with your request. But I wish to warn you, the Buddha is in the habit of staying in seclusion, just like the lion in his own den. So you have to be fully attentive in waiting on Him. Do not ever be amiss about your duties."

The three princes, on being permitted the task of waiting on the Buddha for three months, discussed among themselves: “Since we are going to wait on the Buddha, we ought to don robes and take upon bhikkhuhood as novices.” They decided to be absolutely free from the stench of demerit². Accordingly, they did so and took part in the daily offering of food to the Buddha and the Sangha but entrusted the job to a committee of three trusted men to supervise the task.

Among these three supervisors, one was in charge of procuring rice and cereals, the second in charge of issuing groceries to meet the daily needs of the meals, and the third in charge of cooking and other preparations for the offering. The three men were reborn during the time of Buddha Gotama as King Bimbisāra, Visākhā, the merchant and the Venerable Raṭṭhapāla, respectively.

Rāhula's Life as Prince Pāthavindhara

The future Rāhula was reborn as the eldest son of King Kikī of the Kāsi country during the time of Buddha Vipassī. He was named by his parents as Prince Pathavindhara. He had seven sisters, namely:

1. Princess Samañī	= the future Therī Khemā
2. Princess Samanaguttā	= the future Therī Uppalavaṇṇā
3. Princess Bhikkhunī	= the future Therī Patācārā
4. Princess Bhikkhudāyikā	= the future Therī Kuṇḍalakesī
5. Princess Dhammā	= the future Therī Kisāgotamī
6. Princess Sudhammā	= the future Therī Dhammadinnā
7. Princess Sanghadāyikā	= the future Visākhā

Prince Pathavindhara became the heir-apparent after his seven sisters had donated seven monastic complexes to Buddha Kassapa. The heir-apparent requested his sisters to let him donate the cost of one of the seven monastic complexes, but his seven sisters pointed out to their eldest brother that he had means to donate another monastic complex. So Prince Pathavindhara built five hundred monastic complexes on an appropriate scale according to his status. He spent all his life in deeds of merit. On his death, he was reborn in the deva realm.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in The Final Existence

During the time of Buddha Gotama, Prince Pathavindhara was reborn as Prince Rāhula, son of Prince Siddhattha and his Chief Queen Yasodharā. Rāhula's boyhood friend was Raṭṭhapāla, the son of Raṭṭhapāla, the wealthy merchant of the market town of Thullakoṭṭhika in the kingdom of Kuru.

(The admission of Rāhula into the Order, an interesting episode, can be read in Chapter 18. Many discourses that are connected with Rāhula, such as Mahārāhulovāda Sutta and others, can be found in Chapter 31 & 32.)

Rāhula's Desire to be admonished

After the Buddha had admitted His son, He used to admonish the young novice every day as follows:

“Rāhula, seek the company of a good friend. Dwell in the forest abode. Be

2. *Nirāmagandha*, ‘the stench of demerit’ according to the Commentary. The Sub-Commentary elaborates on this term thus: ‘stench’ is to be interpreted as demerit and also as defilement. Stench is inseparable from defilement: whenever defilement arises, it produces a bad smell. Stench means a mind where defilement arises continuously. The metaphor ‘stench’ is used to denote something obnoxious, impure (as though polluted by a trace of excreta), frowned upon by the wise and virtuous, and an agent that stinks everything. This last quality of defilement is also manifested by evil persons whose body stinks literally, whereas the dead body of a purified one has no bad smell.

moderate in eating.

Do not be attached to any of the four *bhikkhu* requisites.

Be flawless with regard to observance of the Bhikkhu Restraint. Guard the six faculties well.

Be constantly mindful about the mind-and-body so as to become thoroughly tired of the body (i.e. sentient existence).

Cultivate the mind to give up any idea of attractiveness in the body; gain concentration of mind.

Once the signs of permanence are given up, reflect on the falsity of an ego.

If you train yourself thus, the three rounds of the vicious circle of woeful existences will fall away.”

(Free rendering of Myanmar rhymes by the author, contained in Chapter 18). The above Sutta entitled Abhiñña-Rāhulovāda Sutta appears in the **Sutta Nipāta** and the **Khuddakapāṭha**.

It was the custom of Sāmañera Rāhula to pick up a handful of sand early in the morning and say to himself: “May I get admonitions from the Bhagava or from my preceptor in number comparable to the grains of sand in my hand.” This habit of him gained him the reputation as a novice so inclined to good advice as befitting the son of the Bhagavā and as such a worthy son of a worthy father.

This recognition of Rāhula's noble trait of character became the current topic of discussion among the *bhikkhus*. The Buddha knew that. And thinking that that would very well make a ready subject for another discourse and would also highlight Rāhula's qualities even better, He taught a sermon at the audience hall. Having seated Himself on the throne of the Buddha, He asked the *bhikkhus* what they had been talking about before He went in. The *bhikkhus* replied: “Venerable Sir, we were discussing on the noble trait in Sāmañera Rāhula's readiness to receive admonition.” The Buddha then related a past existence of Rāhula where he had displayed the same noble trait, as mentioned in the Jātaka story of *Tipallattha-miga*. (Refer to the **Jātaka**, Ekaka Nipāta, 2. Sila Vagga, the sixth story in that Vagga.)

The Buddha taught young novice Rāhula at his tender age of seven to be truthful at all times, to refrain from untruth even by way of jesting. The discourse on this subject goes by the title of Ambalaṭṭhika Rāhulovāda Sutta (Ref: Chapter 20.)

When Rāhula was eighteen, the Buddha taught him a discourse entitled, Mahā Rāhulovāda Sutta. (Ref: Chapter 31)

To give practical lessons in Insight-meditation, twenty-two *suttas* were directed at Rāhula, compiled in the **Saṃyutta Nikāya**, forming chapter entitled Rāhula Saṃyutta; and there is also another discourse entitled Rāhula Sutta in the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Catukka Nipāta)

As Rāhula became spiritually more mature, when he had just been admitted into the Order as a full-fledged *bhikkhu*, the Buddha taught him another discourse entitled Cūḷa Rāhulovāda Sutta. (See the details of this discourse in Chapter 32.)

(c) Etadagga Title achieved by Rāhula

On one occasion, in the congregation of *bhikkhus* where the Buddha named outstanding *bhikkhus*, He declared:

“*Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānam bhikkhūnam sikkhākāmānam yadidaṃ Rāhulo.*”

“*Bhikkhus*, among the *bhikkhus* who welcome admonition concerning the Threefold Training, Rāhula is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

Raṭṭhapāla's Bhikkhuhood

In His tour of the Kingdom of Kuru, the Buddha arrived at the market town of

Thullakoṭṭhika (which means the town where all households have their granaries full of paddy). On hearing the Buddha's discourse, Raṭṭhapāla, the merchant's son, was overwhelmed by religious conviction and had an intense desire to renounce the world. After much persuasion and protestation with his parents, he finally obtained their consent to become a *bhikkhu* (like in the case of the Venerable Sudinna which has been described earlier on), and he went to the Buddha. Under the Buddha's order, he was admitted into the Sangha.

Although they had permitted their son to leave household life, Raṭṭhapāla's parents were still unhappy about it. Whenever *bhikkhus* arrived at their door on the alms-round, the father would say to them: "What business do you have here? You have taken away my only son. What more do you want to do with us?"

The Buddha stayed at Thullakoṭṭhika for fifteen days only and returned to Sāvatti. There, at Sāvatti, Raṭṭhapāla meditated on Insight and attained arahatship.

The Venerable Raṭṭhapāla then asked permission from the Buddha to visit his parents. Hence, he went to Thullakoṭṭhika. While going for alms-collection in the town, he stood at the door of his father where (like in the case of the Venerable Sudinna), he received stale cakes but he ate them as if they were the food of devas. His father felt guilty about the alms-food he had offered and invited the *bhikkhu*-son to his house to take a (wholesome) meal but the Venerable Raṭṭhapāla said that since he had finished the day's meal, he would come the next day. On the following day, after finishing his meal at his father's house, he gave a discourse to the womenfolk of the household who were fully garbed, and enabled them to perceive loathsomeness of the body. Then all of a sudden, like an arrow, he flew up to the sky and descended in the royal gardens of King Korabya where he sat on a rock platform. He sent word to the King through the gardener about his presence there. King Korabya went to pay homage to him. Venerable Raṭṭhapāla gave a discourse, in detail, on the four principles of loss or delay (*pārijuṇṇa*). After which, he returned to Sāvatti, travelling by stages, and arrived at the Buddha's monastery. (This is a brief account of the Venerable Raṭṭhapāla. Full details may be gleaned from the Majjhima Paṇṇāsa of the *Majjhima Nikāya*.)

(c) Etadagga Title achieved by Raṭṭhapāla

On one occasion, in a *bhikkhu* congregation where the Buddha named foremost *bhikkhus*, He declared:

"Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ saddhāpabbajitānaṃ yadidaṃ Raṭṭhapālo."

"*Bhikkhus*, among my *bhikkhu*-disciples who take up *bhikkhu*hood through sheer religious conviction, Raṭṭhapāla is the foremost (*etadagga*)."

(Note: The Venerable Rāhula was designated as the foremost among those *bhikkhus* who welcomed admonition concerning the threefold training because, from the day he became a novice, he always had a most keen desire to be instructed. Every morning, he awaited admonition and advice from the Buddha or from his preceptor. He wanted as many words of advices as they would give, even as many as the grains of sand he used to hold in his hand every morning)

The Venerable Raṭṭhapāla had to stay away from food for seven days as token of his strong desire to renounce the household life. That was why he was declared the foremost *bhikkhu* who took up *bhikkhu*hood.)

(22) KUṆḌA DHĀNA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Kuṇḍa Dhāna Mahāthera was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. Like all other future Mahātheras, he went to the Buddha's monastery to listen to His discourse where he saw a *bhikkhu* being

named by the Buddha as the foremost *bhikkhu* among those who were first to be selected for invitation to offerings of alms-food by the donor. The worthy man's heart was bent on receiving similar honour under some future Buddha and so he made great offering to the Buddha (for seven days) and on the seventh day, he expressed his aspiration for that honour in future. Buddha Padumuttara saw that the aspiration of his would be fulfilled and made the prognostication accordingly. After which, He returned to the monastery.

Evil Action committed in The Past

The future Kuṇḍa Dhāna passed away from the human existence in which he received the Buddha's prognostication, after spending a life performing meritorious deeds. He was reborn either in the deva realm or the human realm for a great many world-cycles. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, he became a terrestrial deva.

Buddha Kassapa appeared during the time when the human life span was twenty thousand years, and unlike Buddha Gotama's time when the human life span was a hundred years and the Pātimokkha was recited in bi-monthly *uposatha* congregation. The *uposatha* congregations to recite the Pātimokkha took place only once in six months during the time of Buddha Kassapa.

Two *bhikkhu* friends, living at different places, went to the *uposatha* congregation where the Pātimokkha was recited. The terrestrial deva, who was the future Kuṇḍa Dhāna, knew the strong tie of friendship that existed between these two *bhikkhus*. He wondered if anybody could ruin this friendship and kept waiting for a chance to do so by following the two *bhikkhus* for some distance.

Misunderstanding caused

Then one of the *bhikkhus*, leaving his alms-bowl and robe with the other, went off to a place, where water was available, to answer the call of nature. After finishing the personal ablutions, he came out of the bush.

The deva, in the guise of a very beautiful woman, followed close to the *bhikkhus*, tidying up her dishevelled hair and rearranging her skirt, appearing to have come out of the same bush.

Kuṇḍa Dhāna misunderstood

The *bhikkhu* companion saw this strange scene from a distance where he was left awaiting, and was very upset. He thought to himself: "I never knew him to be so vile. My affection for him that has lasted so long is now ended. If I had known him to be such a rogue, I would not have extended my friendship to him." As soon as the former *bhikkhu* came back to him, he handed back to him his properties, saying: "Now, here are your alms-bowl and robe. You know, I will never go the same way with you."

(From now on we shall refer to the two *bhikkhus* as the complainant or accuser (*codaka*) and the accused (*cuditaka*).)

The accused, who was actually a well-disciplined *bhikkhu* and had no fault whatsoever, was taken aback by his friend's harsh words which seemed to smite his heart as if someone were to deal a vicious thrust at it with a sharp spear. He said: "Friend, what do you mean? Never have I committed any breach of the *bhikkhu* discipline, not even the trivial ones. Yet, you call me a knave. What have you seen me doing?" "If I had seen anything else, I would have ignored it. But this is serious, you came out of the same bush, having spent the time together there with a very attractive woman dressed in fine clothes and decorated." "No, no, friend! That is not true. Nothing of that sort happened. I have never seen that woman you mention." But the complainant was quite sure of himself. The accused denied thrice any misdoing. But the complainant had believed in what he had seen. He parted company with the accused there. Each went his own way to the Buddha's monastery.

The Deity's Repent

At the congregation hall for the *uposatha* ceremony, the accused was seen inside it and so

the complainant said: "This *sīmā* is profaned by the presence of a fallen *bhikkhu*. I cannot join the *uposatha* ceremony with that wicked *bhikkhu*." And he remained outside.

On seeing this, the terrestrial deva was remorseful: "Oh me! I have done a grave mistake." He must atone for it. So he assumed the form of an elderly lay-disciple and, going near the complainant, said: "Why, Venerable Sir, do you remain outside the *sīmā*?" The *bhikkhu* replied, "This *sīmā* contains a vile *bhikkhu*. I cannot join the *uposatha* ceremony together with him. So I keep myself away." The deva then said: "Do not think so, Venerable Sir. That *bhikkhu* is of pure morality. The woman you saw was none other than myself. I wanted to test the strength of your mutual affection and to see whether you are moral or not. I accompanied the accused in a woman's guise for that purpose."

The *bhikkhu* said: "O virtuous man, who are you?" "I am a terrestrial deva, Venerable Sir," and so saying, he prostrated at the *bhikkhu*'s feet. "Kindly excuse me, Venerable Sir. The accused knows nothing about what had happened. So, may the Venerable One go ahead with the *uposatha* ceremony with a clear conscience." Then he led the *bhikkhus* into the *uposatha* hall. The two *bhikkhus* performed the *uposatha* ceremony at the same place, but the complainant did not remain together with the accused in cordial relationship. (The Commentary is silent about the meditation work undertaken by the complainant.) The accused practised meditation for Insight and gradually attained arahatship.

The terrestrial deva suffered the evil consequences of that evil deed during the whole of the *buddhantara* interval between the arising of Buddha Kassapa and Buddha Gotama through infinite world-cycles. He was reborn in the miserable states of *apāya* most of the time. When he regained the human existence, he was subjected to all blame for the misdeeds others perpetuated.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

The terrestrial deva (having paid dearly for his misdeed) was reborn as a brahmin in Savatthi during the time of Buddha Gotama. His parents named him Dhāna. He learned the three Vedas as a youth but later in life, he became devoted to the Buddha after listening to the Buddha's discourses and took up bhikkhuhood.

The Result for His Misdeed

From the very day Dhana became a *bhikkhu*, a fully adorned woman (i.e. an apparition of a woman created as the resultant of his past misdeed) always followed him wherever he went. When he went, the woman went; when he stopped, she stopped. This woman, though not seen by him, was seen by everybody else. (So dreadful is the work of evil-doing.)

When Venerable Dhana went on the daily alms-round, his female lay supporters would say jestingly: "This spoonful is for you, Sir, and this other spoonful is for your female friend who accompanies you, Sir. This made him miserable. Back at the monastery, too, he was an object of ridicule. *Sāmaṇeras* and young *bhikkhus* would surround him and jeer at him, saying: "The Venerable Dhāna is a lecher!" From such jeering, he came to be called Kuṇḍa Dhāna or 'Dhāna the Lecher.'

As these jeerings became more and more frequent, the Venerable Kuṇḍa Dhāna could not bear it any longer and retorted: "You only are lechers, (not me); your preceptors only are lechers, your teachers only are lechers." Other *bhikkhus* who heard him say these harsh words reported the matter to the Buddha, who sent for the Venerable and asked him whether the report was true or nor. "That was true, Venerable Sir," Kuṇḍa Dhāna admitted. "Why did you use such abusive language?"

"I could not bear their jeerings any longer, Venerable Sir," Venerable Kunda Dhāna explained and he related his story. "*Bhikkhu*, your past evil deed still needs retribution. (But) do not use such harsh words in future." And on that occasion, the Buddha uttered the following two stanzas:

*Mā 'voca pharusam kañci,
vuttā paṭivadeyyu tam;
Dukkhā hi sārambhakathā,*

(Bhikkhu Dhāna,) do not use harsh words on anyone; those who are thus spoken to will retort. Painful to hear is severe talk, and retribution will come to you (from those co-residents to whom you have used harsh words, just as ashes thrown against the wind will fly back.)

*Sace neresi attānaṃ,
kaṃso upahato yathā;
Esa Nibbānapatto 'si,
sārumbho te na vijjati.*

(Bhikkhu Dhāna,) if you can keep your calm and quiet like a gong whose rim has been broken, you will have attained Nibbāna. Then there will be no vindictiveness in you.

— **Dhammapada**, Verses 133 & 134 —

By the end of the discourse many listeners attained various levels of the Path-Knowledge.

Investigation made by King Pasenadi Kosala

The news of Venerable Kuṇḍa Dhāna's regular association with a woman was brought to the attention of King Pasenadi of Kosala by the *bhikkhus*. The King ordered an investigation while he personally kept watch on the Venerable's monastery together with a small group of his men.

He saw Venerable Kuṇḍa. Dhāna was stitching a robe and the reputed woman also was seen standing near him. The King was enthralled by this sight. He drew near her. Then that woman was seen going into the monastic dwelling. The King followed her into the dwelling and searched for her everywhere but he could find no one inside. Then he made the correct conclusion that the woman that he saw earlier was not a real human being but only an apparition that appeared due to some kammic effect that belonged to the Venerable.

When the King first entered the monastery, he did not pay respect to Venerable Kuṇḍa Dhāna. Only after discovering the true fact of the Venerable's innocence did he make obeisance to him and said: "Venerable Sir, are you well provided by way of daily alms-food?" "Not too bad, Great King," replied Venerable Kuṇḍa Dhāna. "Venerable Sir, I know what you mean. Since you have been seen always accompanied by a woman, who would be kindly disposed towards you? But from now on, you need not go on alms-round. I will remain a lay supporter to you and see to the provision of the four requisites. May you uphold the religious practice diligently and well." From that time onwards, the King made offering of daily alms-food to the Venerable Kuṇḍa Dhāna.

After being free of anxiety about livelihood, being regularly enjoying the support of the King, Venerable Kuṇḍa Dhāna gained concentration and developing Insight, he attained arahatship. From the time of attaining arahatship the apparition of the woman disappeared.

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

Mahā Subhaddā, the daughter of Anāthapiṇḍika the householder (of Sāvatti), was obliged to live in the house of a man, in the town of Ugga, who had no confidence in the Buddha. One day, intending that the Buddha show compassion on her, she observed the *uposatha* precepts and kept her mind free from defilements. Standing at the upper storey of her mansion, she threw out eight handfuls of Jasmine into the air and wished: "May these flowers go straight to the Bhagavā and form themselves into a canopy above Him. May the Bhagavā, out of consideration for this floral tribute, come to my residence tomorrow to receive my offering of alms-food." The flowers flew straight to the Buddha and formed themselves into a canopy above Him even while He was delivering a sermon.

The Buddha, on seeing the flower canopy offered by Mahā Subhaddā, perceived her wish and decided to receive her food offering. Early the next morning, the Buddha called

Venerable Ānanda and said: “Ānanda, we shall go to a distant place to receive alms-food. Include only *arahats-bhikkhu*, and not worldling in the list of invitees.” Then Venerable Ānanda announced to the *bhikkhus*: “Friends, the Bhagavā is going to a distant place to receive alms-food today. Let no worldling *bhikkhu* draw lots to be included as an invitee; only *arahats* may do so.”

Then the Venerable Kuṇḍa Dhāna said: “Friend, bring me the lots,” and stretched out his hand to make a draw. The Venerable Ānanda thought the Venerable Kuṇḍa Dhāna was still a worldling and informed the matter to the Buddha who said: “Ānanda, let him draw the lots if he wishes.”

Then Ānanda thought: “If the Venerable Kuṇḍa Dhāna were unfit to draw the lots, the Bhagavā would disallow the draw. Now that he has been allowed there must be some reason. I should let him draw.” And as he was retracing his steps to the Venerable Kuṇḍa Dhāna, the latter entered into the fourth *jhāna*, the basic mental state for supernormal powers and stood in mid-air and then he said to the Venerable Ānanda: “Friend Ānanda, bring me the lots. The Bhagavā knows me. The Bhagavā does not say anything against my drawing the lot first (before other *bhikkhus*).” (This is a remarkable event concerning the Venerable Kuṇḍa Dhāna.)

When on another occasion, Cūla Subhaddā, the younger daughter of Anāthapiṇḍika, invited the Buddha to Sāketa to receive alms-food offering too, the Venerable Kuṇḍa Dhāna made the first draw among the five hundred *bhikkhus*.

Then again, when the Buddha went to a market town in the country of Sunāparanta, by way of the sky by using His psychic power, the Venerable Kuṇḍa Dhāna was also the first to draw the lots for receiving alms-food offering.

In another occasion, in the assembly of *bhikkhus*, the Buddha spoke of the Venerable:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānam bhikkhūnaṃ paṭhamam salākam gaṇhantānam yadidaṃ Kuṇḍa Dhāno.”

“*Bhikkhus*, among those of my *bhikkhu*-disciples who successfully draw lots ahead of all others for alms-food offering, Bhikkhu Kunda Dhāna is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

(23) VAṄĪSA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Vaṅḡsa was born into a wealthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. Like all other future Great Disciples, he went to the Buddha's monastery and in the course of listening to a sermon, he witnessed a *bhikkhu* being named by the Buddha as the foremost among those *bhikkhus* who were endowed with quick wit. The son, the future Vaṅḡsa, emulated that *bhikkhu* and after making a great offering to the Buddha, he expressed his aspiration to Him: “May I, for this good deed, become the foremost *bhikkhu* among those endowed with quick wit, at some time in the future.” The Buddha saw that the aspiration of the donor would be fulfilled and therefore, made the prognostication before returning to the monastery.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

After a life of good deeds, the man passed away and was either reborn as a deva or a human being. At the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn in a brahmin family in Sāvatti, by the name of Vaṅḡsa. When he came of age, he learnt the three Vedas. He served the teacher to the latter's satisfaction so that he also received a secret formula or chant called *Chavasīsa manta*, by intoning which he could tell the destination of a departed one by gentle rapping the skull of that dead person.

The Brahmins knew well how to capitalize Vaṅḡsa's art. So they put him in an enclosed carriage, and would encamp at the gate to a town or village, and when a crowd had formed,

they advertised Vaṅḡsa's greatness saying: "He, who sees Vaṅḡsa, comes upon wealth and fame and goes to the heavens at death." Many people were taken in by such propaganda and they would go to the visiting Brahmins: "O sirs, what is Master Vaṅḡsa's special knowledge?" Then the Brahmins would say "O men, you do not know that there is no wise one equal to Master Vaṅḡsa because he can tell you the destination of a departed person. Just by rapping the skull of a dead person with his finger nails, he will tell you in what clan or in what realm he is reborn." And Vaṅḡsa was actually able to make good the claim of his men. He called upon the spirit of the dead person, make it possess someone near him, and tell from that person's mouth where the subject was, i.e. where dead person was reborn. For this miraculous feat, he reaped big sums of fees from his clients.

Vaṅḡsa's Time for Liberation

After a tour of the land covering cities, towns and villages, Vaṅḡsa's men carried him to the city of Sāvatti. Vaṅḡsa stopped near the Jetavana monastery and thought: "Samaṇa Gotama is reputed to be wise. It would not be to my advantage just touring the Jambudīpa. I might as well go and see someone who is said to be wise." So he sent his men away saying: "You go ahead. I do not want company when visiting the Buddha. So let me go alone." "But sir," the attendants of Vaṅḡsa protested, "by using His trickery, Samaṇa Gotama has a way of winning over people who go to see Him." But, Vaṅḡsa paid no attention to those words. Going before the Buddha, and after saying courteous words of greeting, he sat at a suitable place.

The Buddha asked Vaṅḡsa, the youth: "Vaṅḡsa, are you skilled in some art?" "Reverend Gotama," said Vaṅḡsa, "I know a certain *manta* called *Chavasīsa manta*." "What use do you make of that *Chavasīsa manta*?" "Venerable Gotama, chanting that *manta*, I rap with my finger-nails the skull of a dead person who had died more than three years ago and I can tell in which existence he is now reborn."

Thereupon, the Buddha, by his powers, procured four human skulls: (1) one belonged to somebody in the *niraya* realm; (2) one belonged to somebody in the human realm; (3) one belonged to somebody in the deva realm; (4) one belonged to an *arahat*. Vaṅḡsa, rapping the first skull, said: "Reverend Gotama, the person, whose skull it once was, is now reborn in the *niraya* realm." "Good, good, Vaṅḡsa," said the Buddha, "you see rightly. Where is the person now whose skull it once was?" asked the Buddha, pointing to the second skull. "Reverend Gotama, that person is now reborn in the human realm." The Buddha made another test about the third skull, and Vaṅḡsa said: "Reverend Gotama, that person is now reborn in the deva realm." All three revelations were correct.

When, however, the Buddha pointed out to the fourth skull and tested Vaṅḡsa's skill, the brahmin youth was in a quandary. Although he repeatedly rapped the skull and reflected on it, he could make neither head nor tail of the present existence of the person whose skull it was.

The Buddha asked: "Vaṅḡsa, are you at your wit's end? "Wait on, Reverend Gotama," said Vaṅḡsa, "Let me try again." He made further clumsy attempts, with more recitals of his famous *manta* and more vain rappings on the skull. He found that the matter was clearly beyond his capability. Beads of sweat flowed down from his forehead. Looking a complete fool, the great Vaṅḡsa remained silent.

"Do you find it tiring, Vaṅḡsa?" asked the Buddha. "Verily, Reverend Gotama, I find it most tiring. I cannot say the designation of the person whose skull it was. If Your Reverence knows it, kindly tell me." "Vaṅḡsa," said the Buddha, "I know this being, and much more, too." Then the Buddha uttered the following two verses, (rendered in prose):

*Cutiṃ yo vedi sattānaṃ, upapattiṃ ca sabbaso;
Asattaṃ Sugataṃ Buddhaṃ, tam ahaṃ brūmi Brāhmaṇaṃ.*

"(Vaṅḡsa) he who knows clearly the death and rebirth of beings in all respects, who is free from attachment, who has walked the Right Path and realized Nibbāna, who knows the Four Ariya Truths, him I call a Brāhmaṇa."

*Yassa gatiṃ na jānanti, Devā gandhabba mānūsā;
Khīṇāsavaṃ Arahantaṃ, tam ahaṃ brūmi Brāhmaṇaṃ.*

“(Vaṅgīsa) he whose destination, the devas of the celestial abodes or the musician-devas of the terrestrial abodes, or men know, who has destroyed the four kinds of moral intoxicants, and is an *arahat*, him I call a Brāhmaṇa.”

— Ibid v.420 —

(Note: The Buddha said these verses, which are from the **Dhammapada**, to let the *bhikkhus* know that the Venerable Vaṅgīsa was an *arahat*. In the present situation, they were uttered for the benefit of Vaṅgīsa that the fourth skull belonged to an *arahat* whose destination after death is not found in any of the five kinds of destination.)

Then Vaṅgīsa, the youth, said to the Buddha: “O Reverend Gotama, there is no loss to him who exchanges a *manta* for a *manta*. I will give you my *chavasīsa manta* in exchange for your Buddha-*manta* which you have first uttered.” The Buddha replied: “Vangisa, we Buddhas do not make any exchange of *mantas*. We give it free, out of good will, to those who want it.” “Very well, Reverend Gotama,” said Vaṅgīsa, “may the Reverend Gotama give the *manta* to me,” and he made an unmistakable gesture of reverence to the Buddha, with his two palms together which resembled a young tortoise.

Then the Buddha said: “Vaṅgīsa, is there, in your Brahmanic custom, a period of probation as a comprehensive way of fulfilling an obligation by someone who asks for and receives a favour?” “There is, Reverend Gotama.” “Vaṅgīsa, do you think there is no probationary period for one who wishes to learn a *manta* in our Teaching?” It was in the Brahmanic tradition not to be satisfied in learning *mantas*. Vangisa felt he must get the Buddha-*manta* at any cost. So he said: “O Reverend Gotama, I will abide by your rules.” “Vaṅgīsa, when we teach the Buddha-*manta* we do so only to one who takes on the appearance like that of ourselves.”

Vaṅgīsa had set his mind on learning the Buddha-*manta* after fulfilling the condition required by the Buddha, so he said to his followers: “Now, do not take it amiss about my becoming a *bhikkhu*. I must learn the Buddha-*manta*. Having learnt it, I will become the greatest master in this Jambudīpa, and that will be a good thing for you too.” After consoling his associates thus, Vaṅgīsa became a *bhikkhu* for the purpose of learning the Buddha-*manta*.

(Note: The preceptor who sponsored Vaṅgīsa in the formal ceremony of admission was the Venerable Nigrodhakappa, an *arahat*, who happened to be near the Buddha at that time. The Buddha said to the Venerable Nigrodhakappa: “Nigrodhakappa, Vaṅgīsa wishes to become a *bhikkhu*. See to his admission into the Order.” Nigrodhakappa taught the meditation practice on the five aspects of the loathsome body to Vangisa and led him into bhikkhuhood.)

— Sutta Nipāta Commentary —

Then the Buddha said to the Venerable Vaṅgīsa: “Vaṅgīsa, now observe the probationer’s practice as a learner of the *manta*,” and taught him how to reflect on the thirty-two parts of the body. Vangisa, being a man of keen intellect uttering the thirty-two parts and meditating on the arising and dissolution of (physical phenomena comprising) the thirty-two parts, gained insight into physical phenomena and attained arahatship.

After Vaṅgīsa had attained arahatship, his brahmin friends visited him to find out how he was progressing. They said to him: “Vaṅgīsa, how now? Have you learnt the *manta* from Samaṇa Gotama?” “Ah, yes, I have,” replied Venerable Vaṅgīsa. “Then let us go,” they said. “You go yourselves. I have no more business to be in your company.” On hearing this plain answer, the Brahmins said: “We had forewarned you that Samaṇa Gotama had a way of winning over his visitors by trickery. Now you have fallen under the spell of Samaṇa Gotama, What business is there for us with you?” Vituperating, their erstwhile friend thus,

they returned by the way they had come.

(The Venerable Vaṅṅīsa was a most prominent *bhikkhu*-disciple of the Buddha. For his wonderful verses, refer to Vaṅṅīsa Saṃyutta, **Sagāthāvagga Saṃyutta**.)

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

Venerable Vaṅṅīsa was a born poet. Whenever he went before the Buddha, he always uttered verses in praise of the Buddha, comparing Him in poetic similes to the moon, the sun, the sky, the great ocean, the noble tusker, the lion, etc. These verses which he sang extempore at the moment of casting his eyes on the Buddha, ran into thousands. Therefore, in an occasion when the Buddha mentioned the names of outstanding (*etadagga*) *bhikkhus* to the congregation, He declared:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ paṭibhānavantānaṃ yadidaṃ Vaṅṅīsa.”

“Bhikkhus, among my bhikkhu-disciples endowed with quick wit, Bhikkhu Vaṅṅīsa is the foremost (etadagga).”

(24) UPASENA VANGANTAPUTTA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

In the past, the Venerable Upasena Vāṅgantaputta was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsavati during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When he came of age, he went to the Buddha's monastery, like all the great future Venerables, to listen to the Buddha's sermon. There, he witnessed a *bhikkhu* being declared by the Buddha as the foremost (*etadagga*) among those who gained the esteem of a wide following. The worthy man emulated that *bhikkhu* and made his aspiration to that honour in some future existence. The Buddha saw that the aspiration of the man would be fulfilled and made the prognostication as in the cases of other similar aspirants. Then He returned to the monastery.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

That worthy man, after leading a life filled with good deeds, passed away into the fortunate destinations. At the time of Buddha Gotama, he was born into a brahmin family in the brahmin village of Nālaka, in the country of Magadha. His mother was Rūpanāri, the wife of a brahmin rich man. He was named Upasena in his boyhood. He grew up and learned the three Vedas, but, after hearing the Dhamma from the Buddha, he was deeply devoted to the Buddha and became His disciple.

Venerable Upasena, who had one *vassa* in bhikkhuhood, had a desire to increase the number of *bhikkhus*. He admitted a man into the state of a novice and then raised him to full bhikkhuhood. The Venerable Upasena, at the end of the *vassa*, after attending the usual congregation of *bhikkhus*, went to see the Buddha together with his own close disciple who was then of one *vassa* as a *bhikkhu* and, himself, as preceptor to that *bhikkhu*, of two *vassas* as a *bhikkhu*, thinking that the Buddha would be pleased with him for his well intended act (of admitting a new comer into the Order).

As the Venerable Upasena was sitting in a suitable place before the Buddha, the Buddha said to him: *“Bhikkhu, how many vassas have you spent as bhikkhu?”* “Two *vassas*, Venerable Sir,” Upasena replied. *“How many vassas have that bhikkhu who accompanies you?”* “One *vassa*, Venerable Sir.” *“How are you two related?”* “He is my close disciple, Venerable Sir.” *“You vain man, you are bent on gaining the four requisites very quickly.”* The Buddha then denounced the Venerable Upasena on many grounds. Then the Buddha pronounced a rule thus:

“Bhikkhus, let no bhikkhu, who has not completed ten vassas in the Order, admit a person into bhikkhuhood. He who infringes this rule incurs a minor breach of the

Discipline.

“*Bhikkhus*, I allow a *bhikkhu* with ten *vassas* or more to act as preceptor to a new *bhikkhu* in the admission of that person into *bhikkhuhood*.”

These two Vinaya rules came about concerning the Venerable Upasena. (Ref: **Vinaya Mahāvagga**)

Upasena, on being reprimanded by the Buddha, thought of receiving praise from the Buddha on account of following. “I will make the words of praise, with reference to this very question of following, come out of this same mouth of the Bhagava, which is splended like the full moon,” he encouraged himself. On that same day, he went into seclusion, meditated with diligence, cultivated Insight and in a few days attained *arahatta-phala*.

Pupils exhorted

Upasena was a *bhikkhu* with a celebrated family background. With his reputation throughout the land as an able expounder of the Doctrine; he earned the confidence and good will of many boys of worthy families who were his blood relations or friends. These young boys became novices under his guidance. But he made an understanding with them at the outset: “Boys, I am a vowed dweller of the forest. If you can live in the forest like me, you may become novices,” and he told them the elements of the thirteen kinds of austere practice. Only those boys who could take up the austere practice were admitted as novices by him, but only to such an extent as their tender ages could take. When the Venerable Upasena himself had completed ten *vassas* as a *bhikkhu* he mastered the Vinaya and admitted the novices into full *bhikkhuhood*, acting as their preceptor. The number of those *bhikkhus* under his preceptorship grew into as many as five hundred.

During those days, the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatti. At one time, the Buddha said to the *bhikkhus*: “*Bhikkhus*, I wish to remain alone for half a month,” and was staying in seclusion. Then the Sangha made a mutual agreement among themselves that any *bhikkhu* who went near the Buddha alone would be liable to making a formal confession of his guilt for doing so.

The Venerable Upasena, accompanied by his disciples, went to the Jetavana monastery to pay homage to the Buddha, and after making obeisance to the Buddha, they sat in a suitable place. Then the Buddha, intending to start a conversation, asked a young *bhikkhu* who was a close disciple of the Venerable Upasena: “*Bhikkhu*, do you like wearing dirt-rag robes?” The young *bhikkhu* made a preliminary statement: “I do not like it, Venerable Sir,” but went on to explain that although he did not personally like it, out of his high regard for his Preceptor, he observed the austere practice of wearing dirt-rag robes.

The Buddha praised Upasena for that, and also said many words in praise of Upasena on various other counts. (This is only a brief account of Upasena's earning the Buddha's approbation. For details refer to the **Vinaya, Pārājikakaṇḍa Pāli**; 2 Kosiya vagga, 5 Nisīdāna Santata Sikkhāpada. It may be noted that in that text, the Buddha is recorded as to have said: “I wish to go into seclusion for three months” whereas the Commentary on the **Āṅguttara Nikāya** says the Buddha wished to have “half a month of seclusion.” We would recommend the “three months” version of the text as authoritative.)

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

In one occasion, sitting in the congregation to declared outstanding *bhikkhus*, the Buddha declared:

“*Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakanāṃ bhikkhūnaṃ samantapāsādikānaṃ yadidaṃ Upaseno Vaṅgantaputto.*”

“*Bhikkhus*, among my *bhikkhu*-disciples who win the high esteem of their following, *Bhikkhu Upasena Vaṅgantaputta* is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

Upasena's Tragic Demise

At one time the Venerables Sāriputta and Upasena were dwelling near Rājagaha at the Sappasonḍika Cave (Cave resembling a snake's hood) in the ebony forest. At that time, a poisonous snake fell onto the body of the Venerable Upasena.

(Here, the Venerable Upasena was stitching a great robe near the entrance of the cave where a light breeze was blowing. At that moment, one of the two poisonous snakes that were mating on the roof of the cave fell down onto his shoulder. It was a highly poisonous snake whose venom was so potent that mere contact with it was lethal. So the body of Venerable Upasena burnt like a wick in a lamp, spreading its heat all over the body. He knew that his body would be burnt away in no time but he made a wish that his body should remain intact inside the cave, and thereby prolonging the decay.)

Then the Venerable Upasena called the *bhikkhus*, saying: “Friends, come! Put this body of mine on the cot and carry it outside before this body disintegrates here like a ball of chaff.”

Thereupon Venerable Sāriputta said to Venerable Upasena: “We do not see any change in the body and any change in the faculties of the Venerable Upasena. Yet the Venerable Upasena said: “Friend, come! Put this body of mine on the cot and carry it outside before this body disintegrates like a ball of chaff.” (This was said by the Venerable Sāriputta because there was no change in the bodily gesture and the facial expression of the Venerable Upasena, as is usual with ordinary people at the hour of death.)

Then the Venerable Upasena said:

“Friend Sāriputta, as a matter of fact, only in one who views through wrong view and craving, such as: ‘I am the eye, the eye is mine’; ‘I am the ear, the ear is mine’; ‘I am the nose, the nose is mine’; ‘I am the tongue, the tongue is mine’; ‘I am the body the body is mine’; ‘I am the mind, the mind is mine’, changes in the body and changes in the faculties occur.

“Friend Sāriputta, I do not have any view either through wrong view or through craving, such as: ‘I am the eye, the eye is mine’; ‘I am the mind, the mind is mine.’ Friend Sāriputta, how should there be any change in the body or any change in the faculties in me who hold no such views?”

The Venerable Sāriputta said:

“It is indeed so, friend Upasena. Since you, friend Upasena, have long ago removed the wrong view of ‘my self’, the craving to ‘mine’, and the conceit ‘I’, it is not possible for such views to arise, either through wrong view or through craving, such as: ‘I am the eye, the eye is mine’...; ‘I am the mind, the mine is mine’.

Then the *bhikkhus* put the body of the Venerable Upasena on a cot and carried it outside. There and then Venerable Upasena's body disintegrated like a ball of chaff and he passed away realizing the exhaustion of rebirth.

(This account is also on record in **Salāyatana Saṃyutta**, **Upasena-asivisa Sutta** and the **Commentary** thereon.)

(25) DABBA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Dabba Mahāthera was born as a worthy man in the city of Hamsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On coming of age, he visited the Buddha's monastery and while listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he witnessed a *bhikkhu* being declared by Him as the foremost among those *bhikkhus* who prepared living place for the *bhikkhu*-Sangha. He emulated that *bhikkhu* and after making great offerings to the Buddha, he expressed his aspiration for the similar distinguished recognition during the time of some

future Buddhas. The Buddha saw that the donor's aspiration would be fulfilled and made the prognostication before returning to the monastery.

Meditating Atop A Mountain

The future Dabba Mahāthera, having received the prognostication from the Buddha, lived a full life filled with good deeds. On his death, he was reborn in the deva realm and subsequently either in the deva realm or the human realm. During the waning years of the Teaching of Buddha Kassapa, he was reborn as a worthy man and took up bhikkhuhood. He found six other *bhikkhus* who shared the view that living among people was not the correct way for gaining enlightenment and that a real *bhikkhu* must live in seclusion. And so they went up a high steep mountain by means of a ladder. Once up at the top, they discussed among themselves: "He who has self-confidence, let him push away the ladder. He who clings to his life, let him go down by the ladder before it has been pushed away." All the seven *bhikkhus* chose to remain on the mountain top until they attained enlightenment and so they pushed away the ladder. "Now, friends, be diligent in your *bhikkhu* practice," they exhorted one another before choosing a place of their own on the mountain to strive, ignoring death, for the Path-Knowledge.

Of these seven *bhikkhus*, the eldest attained arahatship on the fifth day. He knew he had finished what was required of the Noble Practice and went to Uttarakuru, the Northern Island Continent, by means of his powers to collect alms-food. Having collected the alms-food, he came back and offered it to his six *bhikkhu* companions with these encouraging words: "Friends, have this meal. Let me be responsible for alms-food collection. You just devote yourselves to your meditation." Then the remaining six replied: "Friend, have we made an agreement among us that he who first realize the Supramundane Dhamma would be responsible to feed those who still have to reach that same goal?" The *arahat* said: "No, friends, there was no such agreement." Then the six *bhikkhus* said: "Venerable Sir, you have attained *arahatta-phala* according to your past merit. We too would make an end of the woeful round of *samsāra* if we could. May the Venerable go wherever he pleases."

The eldest *bhikkhu*, being unable to persuade the six *bhikkhus* into accepting the alms-food, took the meal at a suitable place and left them. On the seventh day, the second eldest *bhikkhu*, attained *anāgāmi-phala*. He too went to the Northern Island continent by means of his powers and offered the alms-food to the remaining colleagues. Being refused by his friends, he ate his meal at some suitable place and left. After the death and dissolution of his body, he was reborn in the Pure Abode of the (*anāgāmi*) Brahmās.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

The remaining five *bhikkhus* did not achieve the Path-Knowledge during that existence. After passing away from that existence, they were reborn in the deva realm and the human realm throughout the infinite world-cycle of the interval period between Buddha Kassapa and Buddha Gotama. During the time of Buddha Gotama, they were reborn in various countries: (1) one was born in Gandhāra, in the city of Takkaṣilā, as a member of the royal family (and later became King Pukkusāti); (2) another in Pabbateyya (also called Majjhantika) region, as the son of a female wandering ascetic (and later became Sabhiya, the wandering ascetic); (3) the third one, in Bāhiya Country, in a household (and later became Bāhiya Thera); (4) the fourth, in Rājagaha household (and later known as Kumāra Kassapa); and (5) the last (who later became the Venerable Dabba) in Malla Country, in the city of Anupiya, in the royal family of a Malla prince.

The mother of the future Dabba Mahāthera died when she was about to deliver the child. When her dead body was being cremated on a pyre, the womb burst open due to heat but, thanks to his past merit, he was shot up into the air and fell safely on a heap of *dabba* grass, and was thus named (by his grandmother) Dabba.

(Note: The term 'dabba' has two meanings; 'a kind of grass' and 'a pile of faggots.' In the *Apādāna* (Book Two) in the explanation of verse no. 143 it is mentioned as: "*paṭito dabbapuñjamhi taro dabboti vissuto*". In the Commentary on the *Anguttara*, *Sāratthadīpanī Tika*, and the Commentary on the *Theragāthā*, he is

said to have fallen on the faggots. The present author prefers the meaning ‘grass’ here.)

When young Dabba was seven years of age, the Buddha, in the company of many *bhikkhus*, arrived in Anupiya during a tour of the Malla Country, where He took up temporary abode in the Anupiya mango grove. Young Dabba was enthralled at seeing the Buddha and asked his grandmother for permission to enter the Order. The grandmother consented and she took the boy to the Buddha and asked for the boy's admission into the Order.

The Buddha gave a *bhikkhu* near Him the task of admitting the boy into the Order, saying: “See to this boy's admission as a novice.” The *bhikkhu*-elder then taught him how to reflect on the loathsomeness of the body, which was represented by its five parts (i.e. hair, body hair, nails, teeth, skin). (As shaving the head in a first step in ordaining a boy into a novice, this reflection is a most appropriate thing which the preceptor invariably enjoins this boy for novitiation to say the five words aloud and reflect.) Young Dabba reflected on them while his head was being shaved.

Young Dabba had sufficing conditions for enlightenment; moreover, he had aspired to a distinguished *bhikkhu*hood a hundred thousand world-cycles ago before Buddha Padumuttara. Hence, as soon as the first circle of hair on his head was shaved, he attained *sotāpatti-phala*; by the time the second circle of hair was shaved, he attained *anāgāmi-phala*; by the time the third circle of hair was shaved, he attained the *sakadāgāmi-phala*; and when the head was clean-shaven, he attained arahatship. In short, the completion of the shaving his head and the attainment of his arahatship took place simultaneously.

After spending such time as was needed for bringing enlightenment to those deserving release from *saṃsāra*, the Buddha returned to Rājagaha to dwell at the Veḷuvana monastery. Novice Dabba, now an *arahat*, also accompanied the Buddha there. Once settled in Rājagaha, the Venerable Dabba, going into seclusion, thought to himself: “I have nothing more to do for arahatship. It were well, if I served the Sangha by arranging for their living places and directing them to their respective donors of alms-food.” He disclosed his idea to the Buddha. The Buddha lauded him for it and assigned him the double task: (1) preparation of living places for the members of the Sangha, for which the Sangha was to recognize him as such (*Senāsana-paññāpaka sammuti*) and (2) directing members of the Sangha to their respective donors of alms-food, for which the Sangha was to recognize him as such (*Bhatt'uddesaka sammuti*).

The Buddha was pleased to see the seven-year-old Dabba having attained such eminence in His Teaching as being endowed with the Four Analyticals, the Six Supernormal Powers and the three Knowledges. Therefore, although very young, the Buddha raised the novice, Arahāt Dabba, to *bhikkhu*hood. (Incidentally, there were also other novice *arahats*, such as Sāmaṇera Pandita, Sāmaṇera Saṃkicca, Sāmaṇera Sopāka, Sāmaṇera Khadiravaniya (the youngest brother of the Venerable Sāriputta), who were raised to full *bhikkhu*hood although under twenty because they had attained arahatship. Although young in age, these *bhikkhus* had attained the acme of *bhikkhu*hood, and hence deserved to be called Elders, *Theras*.)

From the time of becoming a full *bhikkhu*, the Venerable Dabba arranged living places and allocated alms-food (among the various donors to the Sangha) for all the *bhikkhus* residing at Rājagaha. This, he did with competence, not allowing a slip in the alms-lot distribution which had to be done by seniority.

The good name of the young *arahat-bhikkhu*, who came of the Malla royal family, who was very caring to *bhikkhus*, who was very considerate in finding places where like-minded *bhikkhus* could stay together, who was able to get living places at far-off locations for visiting *bhikkhus* according to their instructions, helping disabled or sick *bhikkhus* by his own supernormal power, spread to all directions.

Many visiting *bhikkhus* would ask for normally impossible living places at odd hours, at far-off locations, such as the mango grove monastery of Jīvaka, the sanctuary at

Maddakucchi monastery, etc., and to their astonishment, they got them through the supernatural powers of the Venerable Dabba. The Venerable, by his powers, created as many mind-made replicas of himself, as his tasks demanded. Then, with his fingers emitting light in the darkness of night, serving as bright lamps, he, i.e. the replica of himself, could lead his guests to the places of their choice, show them their living place and sleeping place. (This is a brief description. For details see the **Vinaya Pārājikakaṇḍa** in the sections on Duṭṭhadosa Sikkhāpada.)

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

In consideration of the Venerable Dabba's noble services to the Sangha with experience competence, the Buddha, on one occasion, declared to the congregation of *bhikkhus*:

*“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakanaṃ bhikkhunaṃ senāsanpaññāpaka-
naṃ yadidaṃ Dabbo Mallaputto.”*

“Bhikkhus, among my bhikkhu-disciples who make arrangements for living places for the Bhikkhu Sangha, the Venerable Dabba of the Malla royal family is the foremost (etadagga).”

(Note: Since the Buddha assigned the Venerable Dabba the duties of seeing to the accommodation of *bhikkhus*, the Venerable kept all the eighteen big monastic compounds around Rājagaha clean, both inside the dwelling places and around them. He never missed cleaning a sitting place or a sleeping place or placing water for drinking and washing for the *bhikkhus*.)

Dabba as Victim of Slander

Even though the Venerable Dabba was a truly virtuous *bhikkhu*, he was a victim of slander perpetrated by a group of evil *bhikkhus* led by Bhikkhu Mettiya and Bhikkhu Bhumajaka who accused him of complicity with a *bhikkhuni* named Mettiya. (For details refer to **Vinaya Pārājikakaṇḍa**, in the Chapter on Samghādisesa, in the section on Duṭṭhadosa Sikkhāpada; and **Cūlavagga**, 4-Smathakkhandhaka, 2-Sati vinaya.) This unhappy event was the consequence of his own past misdeed. Ninety-one world-cycles previously, during the time of Buddha Vipassī, he had slandered an *arahat* knowing him as a pure one.

Mahāthera's Parinibbāna

On the day the Venerable Dabba was to pass away, he returned to the Veḷuvana monastery from his alms-round, having taken his meal, and after making obeisance to the Buddha, washed his feet to cool them; then he sat on the small mat at a secluded spot, and entered into the attainment of Cessation for a specified period.

After rising from the *jhāna* absorption at the pre-determined time, he reviewed his life-faculty and knew that he was going to live just for a couple of hours or so (lit., two or three *muhuttas*). He thought it improper for him to pass away in seclusion without saying farewell to the Buddha and the co-residents. He felt obliged to say farewell to the Buddha and to display miracles before he died, in the future interest of those who had wrong opinions of him (due to the slanderous attack of Bhikkhu Mettiya and Bhikkhu Bhūmajaka), who would thereby be enabled to see his true worth. So he went before the Buddha, made obeisance, and sitting in a suitable place, said: “O Sugata, my time to die has arrived.”

The Buddha reviewed the life-faculty of the Venerable Dabba, knew that he was just about to die and said: “Dabba, you know the time for your death.” The Venerable Dabba then made obeisance to the Buddha, walked around Him thrice, with Him on his right, and then he stood at a suitable place and said: “Venerable Sir, we had fared in the world together in various existences for a period of a hundred thousand world-cycles. My performance of good deeds had been aimed at arahatship. The goal is now achieved. This is the last time I am seeing the Bhagava.” It was a touching moment. From among the *bhikkhus*, those who were worldlings, *sotāpannas*, or *sakadāgāmins*, felt very miserable, while some wept.

The Buddha knew what was in the mind of the Venerable Dabba and said: “Dabba, that

being so, display miracles for us and the Sangha to witness.” No sooner had the Buddha said these words than all members of the community of *bhikkhus* were present on the scene. Then the Venerable Dabba displayed the miracles pertaining to the disciples of the Buddha, such as “from being one, he became many; from being many, he became one; now he was visible; and now he was invisible, etc.” Then he made obeisance to the Buddha again.

Then the Venerable rose to the air and created mind-made earth in mid-air, on which he sat (cross-legged) and meditated on the devise of heat (*tejo-kasiṇa*) as the preliminary step. After emerging from the *jhāna*, concentrating on the element of heat, he made his solemn wish that his body rise in flames. Then he entered into the *jhāna* of the element of heat (*tejo-dhātu*) which is the basis of attaining supernatural powers. On emerging from that *jhāna*, the thought-process pertaining to supernatural power arose in him. At the first impulse thought-moment of that thought process, his body became ablaze which consumed the entire corporeality, comparable in power to the world-destroying fires, so that not a trace of the body, the conditioned physical phenomenon, remained. No ash of whatever was to be seen. Then the blaze was completely extinguished as desired by the Venerable. At the end of the supernatural thought-process, the mind reverted to life-continuum, which, in this moment, was identifiable with death. Thus ended the life of the Venerable Dabba, who passed away and realized Nibbāna, making an end of *dukkha*. (For details of the passing away refer to the Commentary on the *Udāna*.)

(26) PILINDAVACCHA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Venerable Pilindavaccha was born into a rich family in the city of Hamsāvātī during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. As with the other future great *theras*, he went to the Buddha's monastery, where, in the course of a sermon, he witnessed a *bhikkhu* being proclaimed by the Buddha as the foremost among the *bhikkhus* who were adored by devas. As such, he had a strong desire to become such a great *bhikkhu* in future and made his aspiration before the Buddha. The Buddha saw that his aspiration would be fulfilled in future and made the prediction to that effect.

Homage paid to The Shrine and The Sangha

The future Venerable Pilindavaccha, after a life of good deeds, passed away and was reborn in the deva realm and subsequently, either in the deva realm or human realm. During the time of Buddha Sumedha, he was reborn as a human being. He made great offerings at the great shrine, which was erected in honour of the Buddha who had passed away. He also made great offerings to the Sangha.

Life as A Universal Monarch

During a certain period, before the advent of the Buddha, the future Venerable Pilindavaccha was reborn as the Universal Monarch, who profitably used his great opportunity and power in making the people established in the five moral precepts.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

When Buddha Gotama was about to appear, the future Venerable Pilindavaccha was reborn as a brahmin in Sāvātthī. His name was Pilinda; his clan name being Vaccha, thus he was called Pilindavaccha. Since young Pilindavaccha had a natural disenchantment with the world, he became an ascetic and studied the magical art known as *Cūḷagandhāra*, which consisted some powerful *mantas*. Having gained mastery of these *mantas*, he became an adept at reading the mind of other people and was able to travel in the air. He became the greatest sage in Rājagaha, commanding a big following and amassing much wealth.

Then Buddha Gotama appeared in the world, and after a tour of the country, He reached Rājagaha. From the time the Buddha arrived in Rājagaha, the powers of Pilindavaccha were visibly impaired. However much he chanted his proven *manta*, he could not travel in

the air and he could not read other people's minds. He had heard that although a master in his own way, his art belonged to the lower grade, and that when someone, who had mastered the art of a higher grade, happened to come near him or within his range, he would meet with a waning of his own powers. He bethought himself: "That statement I had heard from the teacher's teachers must be true, for, since Samana Gotama came to Rājagaha, my art has been visibly impaired. Samana Gotama certainly must be a master of the higher art. It were well if I approached Samana Gotama and learn his art." He then went to the Buddha and said: "O Venerable Bhikkhu, I wish to learn a certain art from You. May the Venerable One agree."

The Buddha said: "If you wish to learn the art, you are to become a *bhikkhu*." Pilindavaccha thought that becoming a *bhikkhu* was the preliminary step in the learning the art that he had in mind, and he agreed to become a *bhikkhu*. The Buddha gave Pilindavaccha the meditation subject which suited his temperament and he, being endowed with the sufficing condition for enlightenment, gained Insight and soon attained arahatship. (The Commentary to the *Udāna*).

Pilindavaccha's Habit of using Harsh Words

The Venerable Pilindavaccha had a unique habit of calling other persons 'rascal' (*vasala-samudācara*), in such manners as: 'Come, you rascal', or 'Go, you rascal', or 'Bring it, rascal' or 'Take it, rascal', etc.

The *bhikkhus* referred this strange habit of the Venerable Pilindavaccha to the Buddha. They asked: "Venerable Sir, do *ariyas* use harsh language?" And the Buddha said: "*Bhikkhus*, *ariyas* do not use harsh words in derision. Yet, due to ingrained habit that had been acquired in successive past existence, harsh words may come to be used quite inadvertently." The *bhikkhus* said: "Venerable Sir, the Venerable Pilindavaccha, when speaking to other persons, whether with lay persons or *bhikkhus*, would always call the other person 'rascal.' What is the reason for this?"

"*Bhikkhus*, Pilindavaccha, in his previous five hundred successive existence, was born a high class brahmin who was used to calling every other person 'rascal' (*vasala*). That habit has become ingrained in him. He does not mean what he says in using the word 'rascal'. He has no evil intent. His word, though harsh to hear, is harmless. An *ariya*, being without a trace of malice, incurs no blame for using such habituated harsh language." Further, the Buddha, on that occasion, spoke the following stanza:

*Akakkasaṃ viññāpaniṃ,
giraṃ saccam udīraye;
Yāya nābhisaje kañ ci,
tam aham brūmi Brāhmaṇaṃ.*

He who speaks gently, informative and true words and who does not offend anyone by speech, him I call a Brāhmaṇa (*arahat*).

— Dhammapada, v. 408 —

At the end of uttering this stanza by the Buddha, many hearers gained enlightenment at various levels, such as *soṭāpatti-phala*, etc. (It should be remembered that the word 'rascal' is harsh for someone to be used against him, but since Venerable Pilindavaccha had no malice in using it, it is not called a form of demeritorious speech.)

The Changing of Cube into Rat's Droppings

One day, in the course of collecting alms-food in Rājagaha, the Venerable Pilindavaccha met a man entering the city with a bowl full of the cube, and asked him: "What is that in your bowl, you rascal?" The man was offended. He thought: "How inauspicious, early in the morning to be called a 'rascal'. This *bhikkhu* deserves rude language to match his rudeness." So thinking, he replied: "It is rat's droppings, Venerable Sir."

(Herein, Venerable Pilindavaccha used a harsh word without malice but in a friendly attitude, spoken out of sheer habit only; hence his word 'rascal' does not

amount to use of harsh language. However, the man's reply is full of anger and his intended harsh language used against an *arahat* has dire consequences that take immediate effect.)

The Venerable Pilindavaccha said: “So be it, rascal.” When that man went out of sight of the Venerable, he found to his astonishment that his bowl in which he had put the cubeb, was filled with rat's droppings! Since the cubeb had a rough resemblance to rat's droppings, to make sure he placed a few of the contents in his hands and crushed it, and surely it proved to be rat's droppings only. He felt very unhappy. He was carrying his merchandise of the cubeb in a cart. He wondered whether all the cubeb in the cart had also turned into rat's droppings. He went back to the cart and found that the cartload of cubeb had also turned into rat's droppings. His spirits sank. With his hand pressed against his pained heart, he reflected: “This is the mishap befallen on me after mine meeting that *bhikkhu*. I am sure there must be some way to redeem this misfortune. (According to the Sinhalese reading:) ‘That *bhikkhu* certainly knows some magic. I should follow the *bhikkhu*, find out about him and see what it is all about.’”

Someone then noticed the cubeb merchant in a deeply agitated state and said to him: “Hey, man, you look so cross. What's the matter with you?” The merchant related what had passed between him and Venerable Pilindavaccha. The man then said: “Friend, do not worry. You must have met our teacher the Venerable Pilindavaccha. Go with your bowl of rat's droppings and stand in front of him. He will ask you: ‘What is that in your bowl, you rascal?’ Then you say to him: ‘That's cubeb, Venerable Sir.’ The Venerable will say: ‘So be it, rascal,’ and you will find your bowl full of cubeb, and so is the whole cartload.” The merchant did as instructed and all his cubeb returned to its original state.

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

The Venerable Pilindavaccha, during the period before the Buddha appeared in the world, had been a Universal Monarch. He then made people established in the five moral precepts and thereby leading them the way to the *deva-loka*. Most of the devas, in the six deva realms pertaining to the Sensual Sphere, were indebted to him as the Universal Monarch who had brought them to those fortunate destinations. They paid homage to him day and night. That was why when the occasion arose for the Buddha to announced distinguished disciples, He declared:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakanāṃ bhikkhūnaṃ Devatānaṃ piyamanāpānaṃ yadidaṃ Pilinda-vaccho.”

“*Bhikkhus*, among my *bhikkhu*-disciples who are adored by devas, *Bhikkhu* Pilindavaccha is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

(27) BĀHIYA DĀRUCĪRIYA MAHĀTHERA

(The original name of this *bhikkhu*-elder was Bāhiya which indicated the country he was born. Later, he was known as Bahiya Dārucīriya, ‘Bāhiya-clad-in-fibres’ because he wore wood fibre as his garment, the circumstances for which will be related here.)

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Bāhiya Dārucīriya was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. As with other future great *theras*, he visited the Buddha's monastery and while listening to a sermon, he witnessed a *bhikkhu* being declared by the Buddha as the foremost among the *bhikkhus* who attained enlightenment quickly. He was inspired to emulate that *bhikkhu*. So after making a great offering, he expressed his aspiration before the Buddha to that distinction in future. The Buddha saw that the aspiration would be fulfilled and made the prognostication.

Meditating Atop A Mountain

The future Bāhiya Dārūcīriya spent all his life in doing deeds of merit and after his death, he was reborn in the deva-world and subsequently, either in the human world or the deva-world. At the time of the waning period of Buddha Kassapa's Teaching, he and a group of like-minded *bhikkhus* chose a steep mountain where they went to the top and devoted their lives to meditation. (Refer to the story of the Venerable Dabba above.) Due to his pure and perfect morality, he was reborn in the deva realm.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

During the interval between the two Buddhas (i.e. Buddha Kassapa and Buddha Gotama) he remained in his deva existence. When Buddha Gotama was about to appear, he was reborn into a worthy family in the country of Bāhiya. When he grew up, he married and went on a sea voyage to Suvannabhumi on a trading venture. The ship wrecked on the high seas and all but he perished and became the food of fishes and turtles.

As for him, being destined to fare in *samsāra* for the last existence, he survived holding on to a piece of the wrecked ship for seven days. He was driven awash on the sands of Suppāraka seaport town. Before meeting anyone, he had to cover up his naked body. So he wrapped himself with shroud of water plant from a reservoir. Then he picked a used old vessel for his alms-bowl.

His austere appearance attracted the attention of the people. "If there is an *arahat* in the world, this must be him!" So they remarked about him. They wondered whether the man (holy man in their judgment) was observing austere practice of the extreme type, and therefore was denying himself proper clothing. To verify their perception, they offered fine clothing to him. But Bāhiya thought to himself: "These people receive me for my austere clothing only. It were well if I remain ill-clad so that their esteem for me would sustain." So he refused the fine clothes. As a result, the people had greater respect for him and honoured him lavishly.

After having his meal, collected as alms from the people, Bāhiya retired to a traditional shrine. The people followed him there. They cleaned up the place for him to stay. Bāhiya then thought: "Just by my external appearance these people show so much reverence to me. It behoves me to live up to their perception. I must remain an ascetic, well and true." He collected fibres from wood and, stringing then up with twine, clothed himself after his own mode of clothing. (From that time, he got the name 'Bāhiya-Dārūcīriya', Bāhiya-in-wood-fibres.)

Brahmā's Admonition

Of the seven *bhikkhus* who went atop a mountain to meditate for Insight during the later part of Buddha Kassapa's time, the second *bhikkhu* attained *anāgāmi-phala* and was reborn in the Suddhāvāsa. As soon as he was reborn in that Brahmā realm, he reviewed his previous life and saw that he was one of the seven *bhikkhus* who had went to the top of a steep mountain to meditate and that one had attained arahatship in that existence. Of the remaining five, he took an interest in their present existence and saw that all of them were reborn in the deva-world.

Now that one of them had become a bogus *arahat* at Suppāraka, living on the credulity of the people, he felt it was his duty to put his former friend on the righteous course. He felt sorry for Bāhiya Dārūcīriya because, in his former life, this *bhikkhu* was of a very high moral principle, even refusing the alms-food collected by his colleague, the *arahat*. He also wished to draw Bāhiya's attention to the appearance of Buddha Gotama in the world. He thought of causing an emotional awakening in his old friend and in that instant he descended from the Brahmā realm and appeared before Bāhiya Dārūcīriya in all his personal splendour.

Bāhiya Dārūcīriya was suddenly attracted by the strange luminosity and came out of his dwelling. He saw the Brahmā and, raising his joined palms together, asked: "Who are you, Sir?" "I am an old friend of yours. During the later part of Buddha Kassapa's time, I was one of the seven *bhikkhus*, including yourself, who went up a steep mountain and practised

meditation for Insight. (I attained *anāgāmi-phala*, and have been reborn in the Brahmā-world. The eldest of us became an *arahat* then and had passed away from that existence. The remaining five of you, after passing away from that existence, were reborn in the deva realm. I have come to you to admonish you against making a living on the credulity of people.

O Bahiya, (1) you have not become an *arahat*; (2) you have not attained *arahatta-magga*; (3) you have not even started training yourself for arahatship. (You have not got an iota of the Right Practice to gain arahatship.) The Buddha has now appeared in the world, and is residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvātthi. I urge you to go and see Him.”

After admonishing him thus, the Brahmā returned to his abode.

Attainment of Arahatsip

Bahiya Daruciriya was emotionally awakened by the words of the Brahmā and decided to seek the Path that leads to Nibbāna. He went straight to Savatthi. Covering the 120-*yojana* distance in just one night, he reached Savatthi in the morning.

The Buddha knew that Bāhiya Dārūcīriya was coming to see Him but seeing that his faculties, such as faith, were not ripe enough to receive (understand) the truth and in order to let them ripen, He delayed receiving Bāhiya Dārūcīriya and went into the city for collecting alms-food, accompanied by many *bhikkhus*.

After the Buddha had left the Jetavana monastery, Bāhiya Dārūcīriya entered the monastery and found some *bhikkhus* strolling in the open after having had their breakfast, so as to prevent drowsiness. He asked them where the Buddha had gone, and was told that He had gone on alms-round in the city. The *bhikkhus* inquired him from which place he had come. “I come from Suppāraka port, Venerable Sirs.” “You have come from quite afar. Wash your feet, apply some oil to smooth your legs, and rest a while. The Bhagavā will not be long to return and you will see Him.”

Although the *bhikkhus* very kindly extended their hospitality, Bāhiya Dārūcīriya was impatient. He said: “Venerable Sirs, I cannot know if I am to meet with some danger to my life. I have come post-haste, covering the 120-*yojana* distance in just one night, not allowing myself any rest on the way. I must see the Bhagava before thinking of any rest.” So saying, he proceeded into the city and got into full view of the Buddha who commanded an unrivalled personality. As he viewed the Buddha proceeding along the road, he reflected thus: “Ah, what a long time had passed before I have the opportunity of seeing the Bhagavā!” He stood rooted on the spot from where he was watching the Buddha, his heart filled with delightful satisfaction, his eyes never so much as winking, and riveted on the person of the Buddha. With his body bent down in salutation to the Buddha, and himself immersed in the glorious aura of the Buddha, he drew himself towards Him, prostrating on the ground with the fivefold contact in worshipping and caressing the Buddha’s feet reverentially, kissed them enthusiastically. He said:

“Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā give me a discourse. The discourse of the Well-Spoken One will be of benefit to me for a long time.”

The Buddha said: “Bāhiya, this is not the time for giving a discourse. We are in the city on alms-round.”

(Herein it might be asked: “Has the Buddha any inappropriate time for doing for the welfare of the sentient world?” The answer: “The inappropriate time” here refers not to the Buddha but only to the recipient of the Buddha’s message. It is beyond the ordinary person (even for an ordinary *arahat* for that matter) to know the ripeness of a person’s faculties to be able to receive the Buddha’s message. Bāhiya’s faculties were not yet ripe to receive it. But it would be futile to say so to him, for he would not make any head or tail out of it. That was why the Buddha only gave the reason, “We are on alms-round” for not giving a discourse and did not mention the faculties. The point is that although the Buddha is ever ready to give a discourse to a person who is ready to understand it. The Buddha knows

when that person is ready and when he is not. He does not make a discourse until the hearer's faculties are ripe because by doing so, the discourse would not bring enlightenment to him.)

When this was said by the Buddha, Bāhiya Dārucīriya said for a second time: “Venerable Sir, it is not possible for me to know if the Bhagavā were to meet with some danger to His life, or if I were to meet with some danger to my life. Therefore, may the Bhagavā give me a discourse. The discourse of the Well-Spoken One will be of benefit to me for a long time.”

And for the second time the Buddha said: “Bāhiya, this is not the time for giving a discourse. We are in the city on the alms-round.” (The same answer was so given because the faculties of Bahiya were still not ripe yet.)

(Herein Bāhiya had such great concern for his safety because he was destined to live this life as his last existence and his past merit prompted him to mention the extreme urgency about his safety. The reason is that for one destined to live his last life in *saṃsāra*, it is not possible that he dies without becoming an *arahat*. The Buddha wanted to give a discourse to Bahiya and yet had to refuse for a second time for these reasons: He knew that Bahiya was overwhelmed by delightful satisfaction on seeing Him which was not conducive to gaining Insight and Bahiya's mind needed to be calmed down into a state of equanimity. Besides, Bāhiya's arduous journey of 120 *yojanas* that was made in a single night had rendered him very weak physically. He needed some rest before being able to listen to the discourse profitably.)

For a third time, Bāhiya Dārucīriya made his ardent request to the Buddha. And the Buddha, seeing:

- (1) that Bāhiya's mind has been calmed down into a state of equanimity;
- (2) that he had enjoyed some physical rest and had overcome his fatigue;
- (3) that his faculties had ripened; and
- (4) that danger to his life was imminent,

decided that the time had arrived to give him a discourse. Accordingly, the Buddha made His discourse briefly as follows:

- (1) “That being so, Bāhiya, you should train yourself thus: in seeing visible objects (any visible object), be aware of the seeing as just seeing; in hearing sounds, be aware of the hearing as just hearing; likewise in experiencing odours, tastes and tangible objects be aware of the experiencing of smelling, tasting, and touching, as just smelling, tasting and touching respectively; and in cognizant mind objects, i.e. thoughts and ideas, be aware of just as cognizant.
- (2) “Bāhiya, if you are able to remain aware of the seeing, the hearing, the experiencing, and the cognition of the (four categories of) sense objects, you will then be one who is not associated with attachment, hatred or bewilderment on account of the visible object that is seen, the sound that is heard, the palpable object that is experienced, or the mind-object that is cognized. In other words, certainly you will not be one who is attached, who hates, or who is bewildered.
- (3) “Bāhiya, if on account of the visible object that is seen, the sound that is heard, the palpable object that is experienced, the mind-object that is cognized, you should have become not associated with attachment, hatred or bewilderment, i.e. if you should indeed have become not one who has attachment, who hates, or who is bewildered, then Bahiya, you will indeed become one who is not subject to craving, conceit or wrong view on account of the sense object that is seen, heard, experienced, or cognized. You will then have no thought of ‘This is mine’ (due to craving), no concept of ‘I’ (due to conceit), or no lingering idea or concept of ‘my self’ (due to wrong view).
- (4) “Bāhiya, if you should indeed become one not subjected to craving, conceit or wrong view on account of the visible object that is seen, the sound that is heard, the palpable

object that is experienced, the mind-object that is cognized, then Bahiya, (due to the absence of craving, conceit and wrong view in you) you will no more be reborn here in the human world, nor will you be reborn in the four remaining destinations (i.e. deva-world, the *niraya* world, the world of animals and the world of hungry spirits or *petas*). Apart from the present existence (of the human world) and the four remaining destinations, there is no other destination for you. The non-arising of fresh mind-and-matter virtually is the end of the defilements that are *dukkha* and the resultant round of existences that is *dukkha*.”

The Buddha thus discoursed on the Doctrine culminating in the ultimate Cessation or Nibbāna where no substrata of existence (the *khandhas*) remain.

(Herein, Bāhiya Dārucīriya was one who liked a brief exposition (*saṅkhattaruci-puggala*). Therefore, the Buddha in expounding the six sense objects did not go into all the six in detail, but combined odour, taste and tangible object as ‘palpable objects’. Thus the sense objects are grouped here under four headings only: what is seen (*diṭṭha*), what is heard (*suta*), what is experienced (*muta*), and what is cognized (*viññāta*).

(1) Regarding the four steps in the above exposition, in the Buddha's admonition to be just aware of the seeing as mere seeing, the hearing as mere hearing, the experiencing as mere experiencing, the cognition as mere cognition in respect of the four classes of respective sense objects which are conditioned phenomena, connotes that as eye-consciousness arises in seeing a visible object, as ear-consciousness arises in hearing a sound, as nose-consciousness arises in smelling an odour, as tongue-consciousness arises in tasting a flavour, or as mind-consciousness arises in cognizing a mind-object, there is just consciousness and there is no attachment, hatred or bewilderment there. (The reader should acquaint himself with the nature of the five-door cognition process and the mind-door-process.)

(Eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness and body-consciousness, these five kinds of consciousness are called the Five Kinds of Sense-consciousness.) The Buddha enjoined Bāhiya that he should strive diligently, not to let craving, hatred and bewilderment creep in the impulsion thought-moments that follow the five-door cognition process and the mind-door-process that arise at the instant of the arising of those five kinds of sense-consciousness, at which stage, there is no craving, hatred or bewilderment, but pure sense-cognition alone. For at the impulsion moment, the appreciation of these sense objects naturally tend to let in greed, hatred and bewilderment.

(The Buddha enjoined Bāhiya to strive diligently and not to allow greed, hatred and bewilderment to arise at the moment of impulsion in the thought-process because he wanted Bāhiya to understand that erroneous concept, such as, ‘This is permanent’, ‘This is happy’, ‘This is beautiful’, or ‘This is substantial’, tends to creep in (to an unguarded mind), in respect of these four categories (groups) of sense objects. Only if one considers them as impermanent, miserable, ugly, and insubstantial, can there arise no erroneous impulsions to conceive them as permanent, happy, beautiful and substantial. Then only can Insight arise, whereby great meritorious impulsions follow (the neutral thought-process at the sense-cognition stage). The Buddha warned Bahiya to guard against thinking wrongly the conditioned phenomena which represent the four categories of sense objects as being permanent, happy, beautiful and substantial, and to view them, as they truly were, as being impermanent, miserable, ugly and insubstantial, and thus cultivate Insight so as to let the great meritorious impulsions follow (the sense-cognition).

(By showing the right view to regard the four kinds of sense objects which are conditioned phenomena, as being impermanent, miserable, ugly and insubstantial, the Buddha (in 1 above) teaches Bāhiya Dārucīriya the six lower stages of Purity and the ten stages of insight.

(In (2): “Bāhiya, if you are able to remain aware of the seeing, the hearing, the experiencing, and the cognition of the four categories of sense objects, which are conditioned phenomena, through the ten stages of Insight and attain the Path-knowledge, then you will have eradicated greed, hatred and bewilderment; you will not be one who craves, who hates, or who is bewildered. In other words, you will be free from greed, hatred and bewilderment.” This indicates the four *maggas*.

(In (3): *Ariyas* on attaining *ariya-phala* are totally un-influenced by craving, conceit and wrong view, so that they never conceive any conditioned phenomena represented by the four categories of sense objects as ‘I’, ‘mine’ or ‘myself’. This indicates the *ariya-phala*.

(In (4): An *arahat*, after the death-conscious moment, ceases to be reborn either in this the world of human beings or in any of the four other destinations. This is the total cessation of the aggregates of mind and matter, and is called Nibbāna, without leaving any trace of the aggregates. This step indicates this Ultimate Nibbāna, the Remainderless Cessation.)

Bāhiya Dārucīriya even while listening to the Buddha’s discourse, had the four kinds of *bhikkhu* morality purified, and had the mind purified through concentration and his Insight, having cultivated during that short moment, he gained *arahatta-phala* with the fourfold Analytical Knowledge (*patisambhidā-ñāṇa*). He was able to destroy all the *āsavas*, the moral intoxicants, because he was of a rare type of person (through past merit) destined to gain enlightenment quickly, being endowed with inherent knowledge.

After attaining *arahatta-phala*, Bāhiya Dārucīriya, on reviewing himself with the Reviewing Knowledge (*Paccavekkhaṇāñāṇa*) of 19 factors, felt the necessity, as in the usual way of an *arahat*, to become a *bhikkhu* and requested the Buddha to admit him into the Order. The Buddha asked him: “Have you got the *bhikkhu*’s alms-bowl and robes?” “Not yet, Venerable Sir,” he replied. “In that case,” said the Buddha, “go and find them first.” After saying so the Buddha continued His alms-round in the city of Sāvattī.

(Bāhiya had been a *bhikkhu* during the time of Buddha Kassapa’s Teaching. He remained a *bhikkhu* and strove for enlightenment for twenty-thousand years. During that time, whenever he received *bhikkhu* requisites, he thought that these gains he made were due to his own past merit of alms-giving and did not consider it necessary to share them with fellow *bhikkhus*. For that lack of charity in giving away robes or alms bowl to other *bhikkhus*, he lacked the necessary merit to be called up by the Buddha as, “Come, *bhikkhu*.” There are other teachers who explain differently about why the Buddha did not call up Bāhiya with the words, “Come, *bhikkhu*.” According to them, Bāhiya was reborn as a robber in a world-system where no Buddha arose. He robbed a Paccekabuddha of his robes and alms-bowl by killing Him with bow and arrow. The Buddha knew, that on account of that evil deed, Bāhiya Dārucīriya could not enjoy the benefit of mind-made robes and bowl (even if the Buddha called him up, saying: “Come, *bhikkhu*.”) (Commentary on the *Udāna*). However, the evil consequence of that evil deed is more relevant with the fact of Bāhiya’s fate in having no proper clothing but fibres of wood.)

Bāhiya’s Tragic Demise

Bāhiya left the Buddha and roamed the city looking for alms-bowl and piece of rags for making robes, etc. While doing so, he was gored to death by a cow which had a suckling calf.

(In some past existences, four sons of rich men hired a prostitute and enjoyed themselves in a park. When the day was out, one of them suggested that they should rob the girl of her possessions in the form of jewellery and a thousand silver coins in the darkness where nobody was around. The three friends agreed. They attacked her brutally. The girl had angry thoughts while being hit by them: “These wicked and shameless men have used me under passionate impulse and now try to kill me out of greed. I have done no wrong to them. I am helpless now. Let them kill me this time. May I become an Ogress in my future lives and be able

to kill these men many times over!” She died making this curse.

(In later existence, one of those four wicked men was reborn as Pukkusāti in a worthy family; another was reborn as Bāhiya Dārucīriya; another one was reborn as Tambadāhika, a robber; another one was reborn as a leper named Suppabuddha. The prostitute had been reborn as an ogress in hundreds of various forms of existences of the four murderers whom she gored to death assuming the form of a cow. Bāhiya thus met untimely death; he was killed on the spot.)

— Commentary on the **Udāna** —

When the Buddha had finished the alms-round and left the city in the company of many *bhikkhus*, He found the dead body of Bāhiya in a refuse dump, and He said to the *bhikkhus*: “Go now, *bhikkhus*, get a cot from some house and carry the body of Bahiya, give a proper funeral by cremation, and enshrine the relics.” The *bhikkhus* carried out the Buddha's instructions.

Back at the monastery, the *bhikkhus* reported to the Buddha the completion of their tasks and asked the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, what is the destination of Bāhiya?” By this question they were inquiring whether Bāhiya died a worldlyling, or an *ariya* who had not done away with rebirth, or an *arahat* who had lived his last life, The Buddha explained: “*Bhikkhus*, Bahiya is wise. He trains himself in accordance with the gaining of the supramundane. He has caused me no trouble on account the Doctrine. *Bhikkhus*, Bāhiya has made the end of *dukkha*.”

(Herein the Buddha's instructions to the *bhikkhus* to enshrine the relics of Bahiya was a plain indication of the fact that Bāhiya died an *arahat*. But some of the *bhikkhus* failed to understand the implication of the instructions or it is possible that they asked the Buddha in order to make the fact even clearer.)

The Buddha's Stanza on The Occasion

On hearing that (the Venerable) Bāhiya Dārucīriya had died an *arahat*, the *bhikkhus* were full of wonder. They said to the Buddha: “When did Bahiya Darucīriya attain arahatship, Venerable Sir?” “From the moment he heard My discourse,” replied the Buddha. “When did the Bhagavā give him a discourse?” “Today, on my alms-round.” “But, Venerable Sir, then the discourse must have been rather insignificant. How could such a brief discourse make him enlightened?”

“*Bhikkhus*, how can you judge the effect of My discourse whether long or short? A thousand verses of unprofitable words are not worth a single verse that is replete with benefit to the hearer.” And the Buddha on that occasion uttered the following stanza:

*Sahassam api ce gāthā, anattapadasaṇhitā;
Ekam gāthtā padam seyyo, yaṁ sutvā upasammati.*

(*Bhikkhus*) better than a thousand verses that are not conducive to knowledge is a single verse (such as ‘Mindfulness is the way to Deathlessness’) by hearing which the hearer is pacified.

By the end of the discourse many beings gained the various levels of Path-Knowledge, such as *sotāpatti-phala*, etc.

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

In one occasion, when the Buddha was amidst the congregation, He declared:

*“Etadaggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānam bhikkhu-nam khippābhiññanam
yadidaṁ Bāhiyo Dārucīriyo.”*

“*Bhikkhus*, among my *bhikkhu*-disciples who gain the Path-Knowledge quickly, Bāhiya Dārucīriya (who is now no more) is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

THE GREAT CHRONICLE OF BUDDHAS
(28) KUMĀRA KASSAPA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Kumara Kassapa was born into a wealthy family in the city of Hamsāvati during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. As with future Mahātheras, he went to the Buddha and listened to His sermon, in the course of which he saw a *bhikkhu* being declared by Him as the foremost among the *bhikkhus* who employ energy in expounding the Doctrine. He was fired by a desire to become such a distinguished *bhikkhu*, and after making a great offering, he made his aspiration known to the Buddha, and that was, he would like to be honoured by some future Buddha as the foremost *bhikkhu* who employed energy in expounding the Doctrine. The Buddha saw that his aspiration would be fulfilled, and made the prognostication.

Meditating Atop A Mountain

The future Kumara Kassapa devoted himself to deeds of merit for the whole of his life and after that existence, he was reborn either in the deva-world or the human world. At the time of the waning period of Buddha Kassapa's Teaching, he went to the top of a steep mountain together with a group of six other *bhikkhus* and strove for enlightenment. (Refer to the story of the Venerable Dabba.) Due to his pure and perfect morality, he was reborn in the deva realm upon his death.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

That worthy man (future Kumara Kassapa) was never reborn in the *apāyas* throughout the interval of an infinite world-cycle between the two Buddhas, but in the deva realm and human realm. About the time of the appearance of Buddha Gotama, he was conceived in the womb of the daughter of a merchant. This young woman had always been inclined on becoming a recluse but her parents gave her in marriage (to a son of another wealthy man) and had to live in her husband's house. She became pregnant but did not know it. She pleaded with her husband to allow her to become a *bhikkhunī*. With her husband's consent, she went to the nunnery of *bhikkhunīs* who were disciples of the Venerable Devadatta.

As the pregnancy became visible, the *bhikkhunīs* reported the matter to the Venerable Devadatta and sought his advice. Devadatta said: "She is no more a *bhikkhunī*," and expelled her from his community. The young *bhikkhunī* then went to stay in the nunnery of *bhikkhunīs* who were the disciples of the Buddha. There, the *bhikkhunīs* reported her case to the Buddha who authorized Venerable Upāli to investigate and give a decision.

The Venerable Upāli called up a group of respectable ladies of Sāvatti, including Visākhā, and let them investigated into the case, to find out whether the pregnancy took place before or after becoming a *bhikkhunī*. With sufficient evidence, the ladies reported to the Venerable Upāli that the pregnancy took place during lay life. The Venerable Upāli then gave the unequivocal ruling that since the pregnancy took place before entering the Order, she stood as a clean *bhikkhunī*. The Buddha praised the Venerable Upāli for his competent judgment in the controversy.

This young *bhikkhunī* gave birth to a bonny baby boy who looked like a golden statuette. King Pasenadi of Kosala took care of the child and brought him up in his palace like a princeling. The boy was named Kassapa, and at the age of seven, he was dressed finely and sent to the Buddha's monastery for novitiation. (For details see the *Jātaka*, Ekaka Nipāta, Nigrodhamiga Jātaka).

The Name Kumāra Kassapa

As the young boy entered the Order at the age of seven, he was referred to by the Buddha as Kumāra Kassapa, 'Boy Kassapa', in distinction to other novices by the name of Kassapa. In another sense, 'Kumara' also means 'prince'. Since Kassapa was fostered by King Pasenadi, Kumāra Kassapa may also be taken to mean 'Prince Kassapa'.

The Background Story of The Vammika Sutta

Kumāra Kassapa started Insight-meditation since he was novitiated into the Order, and

also learned the Teaching of the Buddha. Thus, he diligently pursued both the learning and the practice of the Doctrine. When the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvattthi, Kumāra Kassapa was dwelling in the Andhavana forest which was not far from the Jetavana monastery. At that time, the Mahā Brahmā of Suddhāvāsa, who had been a colleague in pursuit of knowledge, who had went up a steep mountain to meditate, reviewed the lot of his erstwhile friends. And seeing Kumāra Kassapa striving for enlightenment, he decided to give some practical guidance to him in his meditation for Insight. Even before leaving his Brahmā abode for the human world, he planned a fifteen-point puzzle. In the middle of the night, he appeared in all his splendour before Kumāra Kassapa in the Andhavana forest.

Kumāra Kassapa asked the Brahmā: “Who has appeared here before me?” “Venerable Sir, I am a colleague of yours who previously (during the time of Buddha Kassapa) went into meditation in pursuit of knowledge, and have been reborn in Suddhāvāsa, after having attained *anāgāmi-phala*.” “What is your purpose of coming to me?” The Brahmā then made his purpose plain in the following words:

“*Bhikkhu*, (1) This ant-hill (2) emits smoke by night; (3) by day it rises up in flames.

“(4) The brahmin teacher says (5) to the wise pupil: (6) ‘Get hold of the sword and (7) dig diligently.’ The wise pupil does as is asked by the teacher and (8) discovers a door-bolt. And he reports to the teacher: ‘Sir, this is a door-bolt.’

“The brahmin teacher then says to the pupil: ‘Wise pupil, cast away the door-bolt. Get hold of the sword and dig on diligently.’ The wise pupil does as asked by the teacher and (9) discovers a toad. He reports to the teacher: ‘Sir, this is a blown-up (*uddhumāyika*) toad.’

“The brahmin teacher says again: ‘Wise pupil, cast away the blown-up toad. Get hold of the sword and dig on diligently.’ The wise pupil does as is asked by the teacher, and (10) discovers a forked road. He reports to the teacher: ‘Sir, this is a forked road.’

“The brahmin teacher says again: ‘Wise pupil, abandon the forked road. Take hold of the sword and dig on diligently.’ The wise pupil does as is asked by the teacher, and (11) discovers a water-strainer for sifting off soapy sand. He reports to the teacher: ‘Sir, this is a water strainer for sifting off soapy sand.’

“The brahmin teacher says again: ‘Wise pupil, cast away the water strainer. Get hold of the sword and dig on diligently.’ The wise pupil does as is asked by the teacher, and (12) discovers a tortoise. ‘Sir, this is a tortoise,’ he reports to the teacher.

“The brahmin teacher says again: ‘Wise pupil, cast away the tortoise. Get hold of the sword and dig on diligently.’ The wise pupil does as asked by the teacher, and (13) discovers a knife and a mincing-board. He reports to the teacher: ‘Sir, these are a knife and a mincing-board.’

“The brahmin teacher says again: ‘Wise pupil, cast away the knife and the mincing-board. Get hold of the sword and dig on diligently.’ The wise pupil does as asked by the teacher and (14) discovers a lump of meat. He reports to the teacher: ‘Sir, this is a lump of meat.’

“The brahmin teacher says again: ‘Wise pupil, cast away the lump of meat. Get hold of the sword and dig on diligently.’ The wise pupil does as asked and (15) discovers a *nāga*. He reports to the teacher: ‘Sir, this is a *nāga*.’ The brahmin teacher then says to the wise pupil: ‘Let the *nāga* remain. Do not intrude upon him. Worship him.’

“*Bhikkhu*, ask the Buddha for the answers to these questions. Note the answers as given by the Buddha. With the exception of the Buddha, His disciples, and someone who has heard the answers from me, I do not see anyone in the world of the various abodes with devas, *māras* and Brahmās, and the sentient world of

recluses, brahmins, kings and other human beings, who can answer them satisfactorily.”

After saying so, the Brahmā vanished. Early the next morning, Kumāra Kassapa went to the Buddha, made obeisance to Him, and related the meeting with the Brahmā the previous night. Then he asked:

- (1) Venerable Sir, what is meant by the ‘ant-hill’?
- (2) What is meant by ‘emitting smoke by night’?
- (3) What is meant by ‘rising up in flames by day’?
- (4) What is meant by the ‘brahmin teacher’?
- (5) What is meant by the ‘wise pupil’?
- (6) What is meant by the ‘sword’?
- (7) What is meant by ‘digging diligently’?
- (8) What is meant by the ‘door-bolt’?
- (9) What is meant by the ‘blown-up toad’?
- (10) What is meant by the ‘forked road’?
- (11) What is meant by the ‘water-strainer for sifting off soapy sand’?
- (12) What is meant by the ‘tortoise’?
- (13) What is meant by the ‘knife’ and the ‘mincing-board’?
- (14) What is meant by the ‘lump of meat’?
- (15) What is meant by the ‘*nāga*’?

To those fifteen questions that were puzzles to the Venerable Kumāra Kassapa, the Buddha gave the answers as follows:

- (1) *Bhikkhu*, ‘ant-hill’ is the name for this body.
- (2) *Bhikkhu*, one ruminates at night what one has done in the day; this is ‘emitting smoke by night’.
- (3) *Bhikkhu*, one does physically, verbal, mentally, deeds by day as one has thought out at night; this is the ‘rising of flames by day’.
- (4) *Bhikkhu*, ‘brahmin teacher’ is the name for the Tathāgata (Buddha).
- (5) *Bhikkhu*, the ‘wise pupil’ is a *bhikkhu* who is still training himself for arahatship according to the threefold training.
- (6) *Bhikkhu*, ‘sword’ is the name for knowledge, both mundane (*lokiya*) and supramundane (*lokuttara*).
- (7) *Bhikkhu*, ‘digging diligently’ means ‘persistent effort’.
- (8) *Bhikkhu*, ‘door-bolt’ is the name for ignorance (bewilderment). ‘*Cast away the door-bolt*’ means ‘get rid of ignorance’. ‘*Wise pupil, take hold of the sword and dig diligently*’ means ‘strive well with knowledge to get rid of ignorance.’
- (9) *Bhikkhu*, ‘blown-up’ toad is the name of wrath. ‘*Cast away the blown-up toad*’ means ‘Get rid of deep anger’. ‘*Wise pupil, take hold of the sword and dig diligently*’ means ‘strive well with knowledge to overcome deep resentment.’
- (10) *Bhikkhu*, ‘forked road’ is the name for uncertainty (*vicikicchā*). ‘*Abandon the forked road*’ means ‘strive well with knowledge to overcome uncertainty’.
- (11) *Bhikkhu*, ‘water-strainer’ for sifting off soapy sand is the name for the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) that stand in the way of *jhāna* and Path-Knowledge, namely: (i) Sensual desire (*kāmacchanda*) (ii) ill will (*vyāpāda*) (iii) sloth and torpor (*thīna-middha*) (iv) distractedness (*uddhacca-kukkucca*) (v) uncertainty (*vicikicchā*). ‘*Cast away the water-strainer*’ means ‘Strive well with Knowledge to overcome the five hindrances’.
- (12) *Bhikkhu*, ‘tortoise’ is the name for the five objects of clinging (*upādāna*), namely:

(i) the aggregate of corporeality (*rūpakkhandha*) that is subject to change (ii) the aggregate of sensation (*vedānakkhandha*) that is capable of feeling, (iii) the aggregate of perception (*saññākkhandha*) that has the nature of perceiving, (iv) the aggregate of volitional activities (*saṅkhārakkhandha*) that help in the formation of all actions, (v) the aggregate of consciousness (*viññāṇakkhandha*) that has the nature to knowing things. ‘Cast away the tortoise’ means ‘strive well with knowledge to get rid of the five aggregates which are the objects of clinging’.

- (13) *Bhikkhu*, ‘knife’ and ‘mincing-board’ are the names for the five kinds of sense-pleasure that appear desirable, agreeable, attractive and lovely and that cause the arising of sensual attachment to them, namely: (i) visual objects (*rūpā-rammaṇa*) cognizable by eye-consciousness (*cakkhu-viññāṇa*), (ii) sounds (*saddā-rammaṇa*) cognizable by ear-consciousness (*sota-viññāṇa*), (iii) odours (*gandhā-rammaṇa*) cognizable by nose-consciousness (*ghāna-viññāṇa*), (iv) tastes (*rasā-rammaṇa*) cognizable by tongue consciousness (*jivhā-viññāṇa*), (v) tangible objects (*phoṭṭhabbā-rammaṇa*) cognizable by body-consciousness (*kāya-viññāṇa*). ‘Cast away the knife and the mincing-board’ means ‘strive well with knowledge to get rid of the five kinds of sense-pleasure’.
- (14) *Bhikkhu*, ‘lump of meat’ is the name for sensual attachment or craving (*nandīrāga-taṇhā*). ‘Cast away the lump of meat’ means ‘strive well with knowledge to get rid of sensual attachment or craving.’
- (15) *Bhikkhu*, ‘Nāga’ is the name for the arahat. You are enjoined to let alone an arahat without intruding upon him. You are also enjoined to revere the arahat

[Myanmar rhymes here are left untranslated because they are of the same substance as the foregoing Translator]

Some more elaboration:

- (1) The body is likened to an ‘ant-hill’ because just as an ant-hill lets out snakes, mongoose, rodents, lizards and ants, the body discharges all kinds of loathsome matter through its nine holes. (There are also other reasons that explain the simile. Refer to the Commentary on the **Mahāvagga**.)
- (2) ‘Emitting smoke by night’ signifies the things thought out in the night for the next day’s activities.
- (3) ‘Flames rising up by day’ signifies physical, verbal, and mental actions that are performed in the day as thought out in the night.
- (4), (5), (6) & (7): These similes do not need elaboration.
- (8) The ‘door-bolt’ at the city gate shuts up the passage of people. So also ignorance shuts the arising of knowledge that leads to Nibbāna.
- (9) The ‘blown-up toad’ exemplifies wrath: A toad gets angry and puffing itself whenever something strikes against it. It may get overblown with anger and become flat on its back, unable to move about, and falls a prey to crows or other enemies. Likewise, when anger begins to arise, one becomes muddled. If one is careful, one may curb it by wise reflection. If not checked in this way, the resentment shows in one’s expression, and if left unchecked, it leads one to evil verbalisation, i.e. cursing or using harsh speech. If anger is allowed to grow, one starts thinking of some dreadful physical action. At that, one is apt to look around to see if there is anyone to join the other side. Then one would pick up a fight, and unless one would restrain oneself, one is apt to find some weapons to strike the other party. If there is no effective checking of oneself, one is apt to commit assault. In extreme cases death may result, either of the adversary or of oneself, or both.

Just as the blown-up toad renders itself immobile, lying on its back, and becomes a ready victim of crows and other enemies, so also a person, under the influence of deep anger, cannot concentrate in meditation and knowledge is thus hampered. Lacking knowledge, he is liable to be the ready victim of all kinds of *māra* (evil) and

become the docile slave of baser instincts.

- (10) When a traveller, carrying valuable possessions, comes to a forked road and wastes much time there, being unable to choose which way he should proceed, he is inviting highway robbers who would cause him ruin. Similarly, if a *bhikkhu*, who has taken instruction from his teacher on the basic method of meditation and has started practicing, entertains doubts about the truth of the Triple Gem, he is incapable of meditating. As he sits alone with a mind troubled by uncertainty, he succumbs to defilements and *māra* and other evil forces.
- (11) When a washer-man pours water into a water-strainer to sift soapy sand, the water flows down the strainer freely. Not a cupful of water that is poured into it, be it a hundred potfulls, remains in it; likewise, in the mind of a meditator which has the five hindrances, no merit can remain.
- (12) Just as a tortoise has five protrusions, i.e. the head and four limbs, so also all the conditioned phenomena, under the eye of knowledge, resolves into five aggregates which are objects of clinging.
- (13) Meat is minced with a knife on a mincing-board. Sensual enjoyment, the defilements, seek the sense objects. The defilements are likened to the 'knife' and sense objects to the 'mincing-board'.
- (14) A lump of meat is sought after by everyone, high or low, kings or commoners, liking it also are birds and beasts. All sorts of trouble originate from pursuit of a lump of meat. Similarly, sensual attachment or craving is the source of all woes. But this truth is shrouded by ignorance. Craving or sensual attachment lures all beings into the cycle of rebirth which turns on relentlessly. Taken in another sense, a lump of meat becomes attached to anywhere it is placed. So also sensual attachment tends to bind beings to the cycle of rebirth which is cherished by them, not realizing its woeful nature.
- (15) An *arahat* is called '*nāga*' because an *arahat* is not led astray by four misleading factors, namely, fondness or liking, hatred, fear and bewilderment. (*Chandādihi na gacchantīti nāga*. — **Mahāvagga Commentary**.) In another sense, an *arahat* never reverts to those defilements that have been got rid of at the (four) levels of purification. (*Tena tena maggena pahīne kilese na āgacchantī ti nāga*. — *Ibid*) Yet in another sense, an *arahat* is incapable of committing any kind of evil (*Nānappakāraṃ āgum na karontī nāga*. — **Ibid**.)

In paying homage to the Buddha, the *nāga*, the *arahat*, who is free from the moral intoxicants, the Commentary recommends this mode of veneration:

*Buddho bodhāya deseti, danto yo damathāya ca;
sathamāya santo dhammaṃ, tiṇṇo'va taraṇāya ca,
nibbuto nibbānatthāya, taṃ lokasaraṇaṃ name.*

The Buddha, the Enlightened One, the refuge of the three worlds, the *arahat* (*Nāga*), having known the Four Ariya Truths by Himself and wishing to enlighten others that deserve to be enlightened like Himself; having tamed Himself in respect of the six faculties and wishing to tame others that are fit to be tamed like Himself; having attained peace Himself and wishing others that are worthy to attain peace like Himself; having crossed over the other side of the ocean of *samsāra* and wishing others that are worthy to cross over to the other shore like Himself; having extinguished the fires of defilement at the four stages and wishing others that are worthy to extinguish the fires of defilement like Himself; out of compassion, expounded the glorious Dhamma to devas and humans for forty-five years. To Him, the Buddha, the *Nāga*, the Refuge of the three worlds, I pay homage physically, verbally and mentally in all humility with joined palms raised.

Attainment of Arahatship

The Ant-hill Discourse or Vammika Sutta, the Commentary notes, is the meditation lesson for the Venerable Kumāra Kassapa. (*Iti idam suttaṃ Therassa kammaṭṭhānaṃ ahoṣi.*)

The Venerable Kumāra Kassapa learnt the Buddha's answer to the fifteen point puzzle, retired into seclusion in the Andhavana (forest), meditated with diligence and not long after he attained arahatship.

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

From the time of his becoming a *bhikkhu*, the Venerable Kumāra Kassapa in his discourses to the four classes of disciples, viz., *bhikkhus*, *bhikkhunīs*, male lay devotees and female lay devotees, used a variety of similes and allegories.

When the Venerable Kumāra Kassapa discoursed to *pāyāsi* (holder of wrong views) by employing fifteen similes, the Buddha, referring to that discourse known as Pāyāsirājaṇṇa Sutta, declared:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ cittakathikānaṃ yadidaṃ Kumāra Kassapo.”

“Bhikkhus, among my bhikkhu-disciples who employ imagery in their discourses, Bhikkhu Kumāra Kassapa is the foremost (etadagga).”

(Read this Sutta in the **Dīgha Nikāya Mahā Vagga**, the tenth Sutta therein.)

(29) MAHĀ KOṬṬHITA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Venerable Koṭṭhita was born into a wealthy family in the royal city of Hamsāvati during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While he was listening to the Buddha's discourse, he witnessed a *bhikkhu* being named by the Buddha as the foremost *bhikkhu* among those who attained the fourfold Analytical Knowledge. He was very enthusiastic to become such a great *bhikkhu* in future. As with all future great *theras*, he made a great offering and, after which, he expressed his aspiration before the Buddha. The Buddha made the prognostication that his aspiration would be fulfilled in future, before leaving for His monastery.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

The future Venerable Koṭṭhita lived a life filled with good deeds, passed away and was reborn in the deva realm and subsequently, either in the human realm or the deva realm. At the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn into a brahmin family in Sāvatti, and was named Koṭṭhita. When he came of age, he mastered the three Vedas. One day, on hearing the Buddha's discourse, he became so devoted to the Buddha that he joined the Order of Bhikkhus. Since then, he meditated for Insight and attained arahatship and was endowed with the fourfold Analytical Knowledge.

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

After attainment of arahatship, the Venerable Koṭṭhita, as an adept at the fourfold Analytical Knowledge, usually posed his question on these forms of Knowledge. Thus, with reference to the Mahāvedalla Sutta (**Majjhima Nikāya**, Mūlapaṇṇāsa) the Buddha declared:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ paṭisambhidāpattānaṃ yadidaṃ Mahā Koṭṭhito.”

“Bhikkhus, among my bhikkhu-disciples who attain the fourfold Analytical Knowledge, Bhikkhu Koṭṭhita is the foremost (etadagga).”

(30) ĀNANDA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

Over a hundred thousand world-cycles ago, from the present world-cycle, there appeared in the world, Buddha Padumuttara, who was born in the city of Hamsavati as the son of King Ānanda and Queen Sujātā. The two Chief Disciples of the Buddha were Venerable Devala and Venerable Sujātā. His two female Disciples were Therī Amitā and Therī Asamā. The personal attendant to the Buddha was Venerable Sumana. The Buddha had a hundred thousand *bhikkhu*-disciples and the privilege of attending to His needs was extended to His royal father. He and the Order of Bhikkhus stayed near the city, from which they collected their daily alms-food.

Before renouncing the world, Buddha Padumuttara had a younger half-brother by the name of Prince Sumana (who was the future Venerable Ānanda). King Ānanda appointed Prince Sumana, Lord of a district, which was a hundred and twenty *yojanas* from the capital. The Prince visited his father and his elder brother Buddha Padumuttara occasionally.

Once, there broke out a rebellion in the border region. The Prince reported the matter to the King, who said: "Were you not placed there to keep law and order?" The Prince, on receiving the King's reply, took upon himself in quelling the uprising and restored peace. The King was pleased and summoned his son to his presence.

Prince Sumana left for the capital accompanied by a thousand officers. On the way, he discussed with them what reward he should ask, if his royal father were to grant him a boon. Some of the officers suggested elephants, horses, towns, gems, etc. but a few wise ones among them said:

"O Prince, you are the King's son. Material prizes are of no consequence to you. You may get them but you must leave them behind at death. You should ask for a boon that is meritorious. Your deed of merit alone will be your real possession when you leave this existence. So, if the King were to grant you a boon, ask for the privilege of attending on the Buddha (your own elder brother) for one *vassa*."

The Prince was pleased with the idea. "You are friends indeed to me. I had never thought about such a noble ideal. I accept your advice." Once in the capital, he was received with great love and esteem by his royal father who embraced him, kissed him on the forehead, and said: "Dear son, name any boon and I will grant it." The son replied: "Great King, I wish to make my present life highly productive in the future, instead of going barren. To that end, I wish to attend on my elder brother, the Buddha, for one *vassa*. May dear father grant this privilege to me!" The King replied: "Dear son, I cannot grant this wish. Name any other." "Dear father," Prince Sumana said, "a sovereign's word is steadfast as a rock. I do not want any other thing. I stand to my wish."

The King then said: "Dear son, no one can know what the Buddha has in mind. If the Buddha does not accept your invitation what good is my concession to you?" "In that case, dear father, I will go and ask the Buddha myself and find out what he thinks of my request," replied Prince Sumana. Having thus made the King committed to his obligation, Prince Sumana went to the Buddha's monastery.

When he arrived there, the Buddha had just gone into His Private Chamber after having had His meal. Prince Sumana went to the congregation hall and met the *bhikkhus* who asked him the purpose of his visit. "I have come, Venerable Sirs," he said, "to see the Bhagavā. Would anyone of you show me where the Buddha is now?" "Prince," the *bhikkhus* said, "we have no right to see the Buddha as and when we want to see Him." "Who, then, has that right?" the Prince inquired. "Bhikkhu Sumana has, Prince," they said. "Where is the Venerable Sumana now?" And having been directed to where the *bhikkhu* was, the Prince went to him, made obeisance, and said: "Venerable Sir, I would like to see the Bhagavā. Would you present me to the Bhagavā?"

Bhikkhu Sumana then entered upon *āpo-kasiṇa-jhāna* in front of the Prince, and making

his wish that the earth turn into water, he dived into the (mind-made) water and appeared inside the Buddha's Perfumed Chamber. The Buddha asked the *bhikkhu* for his purpose. Bhikkhu Sumana answered: "Venerable Sir, Prince Sumana is here to see the Bhagavā." "If so, prepare a seat for me," said the Buddha. Bhikkhu Sumana then disappeared into the water from the Buddha's Chamber and emerged from the water right in front of the Prince, in the monastery compound, and prepared the seat for the Buddha. Prince Sumana was very much impressed by the supernormal powers of the *bhikkhu*.

Buddha Padumuttara came out of His Perfumed Chamber and sat on the seat prepared for Him. Prince Sumana made obeisance to the Buddha and exchanged cordial greetings with Him. "When did you come, Prince?" asked the Buddha. "Venerable Sir, I arrived here just when the Bhagavā retired into the Perfumed Chamber," replied the Prince, "The *bhikkhus* told me that they had no right to see the Bhagavā as and when they wished, and directed me to the Venerable Sumana. As for the Venerable Sumana, by saying just one word, he announced my presence to the Bhagavā and also arranged for mine seeing the Bhagavā. I presume, Venerable Sir, that the Venerable Sumana is intimate to the Bhagavā in this Teaching."

"Prince, what you say is true. This Bhikkhu Sumana is intimate to the Tathāgata in this Teaching." "Venerable Sir, what kind of meritorious action leads one to become an intimate *bhikkhu*-disciple to the Buddha?" "Prince, by giving in charity, by keeping morality and by observing the precepts, one may aspire to become an intimate *bhikkhu*-disciple to the Buddha." Prince Sumana now had the right opportunity to invite the Buddha to his place to receive offering. He said: "Venerable Sir, I wish to become an intimate *bhikkhu*-disciple to some future Buddhas, just like the Venerable Sumana. May the Bhagavā accept my offering of food tomorrow." The Buddha signified the acceptance of the invitation by remaining silent. The Prince returned to his temporary quarters in the city and made preparations for a great offering which lasted for seven days at his temporary quarters.

On the seventh day, Prince Sumana paid homage to the Buddha and said: "Venerable Sir, I have obtained consent from my father, the King, to have the privilege of attending to the Bhagavā during the three-month *vassa* period. May the Bhagavā accept my attendance on Him for the *vassa* period." The Buddha reviewed the benefit that would accrue to the Prince if the request be allowed, and seeing that it was going to be beneficial for him, said: "Prince, the Exalted One likes to stay in a quiet place."

"Exalted Buddha, I understand! Speaker of good language, I understand!" said the Prince. "I shall now build a monastery for the Bhagavā. When completed, I shall send messengers to the Bhagava, Then may the Bhagavā and a hundred thousand *bhikkhus* come to our monastery." The Prince left after obtaining consent from the Buddha. He then went to see his royal father and said: "Dear father, the Buddha has agreed to come to my town. When I send messengers to inform the time for the Buddha to come, may you see to the escorting of the Buddha on the journey." He made obeisance to his father and left the city. Then he built a resting place for the Buddha and his company at intervals of one *yojana* along the 120 *yojanas* stretch of the road from the city to his town. Back at his own town, he chose a suitable site to build a monastery for the Buddha. He bought the site, a garden owned by a rich householder Sobhaṇa, for a hundred thousand. And he spent another hundred thousand for the building.

He built a Perfumed Chamber for the Buddha, sleeping places for (a hundred thousand) *bhikkhus*, latrines, huts, small caves and sheds, some for use by day and other by night and the enclosure to the monastic compound with gates. When everything was completed, he sent messengers to the King to escort the Buddha to start the journey.

King Ānanda made food offerings to the Buddha and a hundred thousand *bhikkhus*. Then he said to the Buddha: "My Son, Exalted Buddha, the Venerable One's younger brother, has made all the necessary preparations to receive the Bhagavā, and is eagerly expecting your arrival." The Buddha then made the journey accompanied by a hundred thousand *bhikkhus*, and resting for the nights at the rest-houses put up along the route at intervals of one

yojana. The 120 *yojanas* distance was made without hardship.

Prince Sumana welcomed the Buddha from a *yojana*'s distance along the way from his residence. Giving a ceremonial welcoming with flowers and scents, he escorted the Buddha and the company of *bhikkhus* to the monastery. Then he offered the monastery to the Buddha, saying this stanza:

*Satasahassena me kītaṃ, satasahassena māpitaṃ
Sobhaṇaṃ nāma uyyānaṃ, paṭiggaṇha Mahāmuni.*

O Great Sage of sages, I, Sumana, have bought the Sobhaṇa Park for a hundred thousand, and built this monastery at the cost of a hundred thousand. May the Great Sage accept my gift of this monastery.

Prince Sumana donated the monastery on the day of the beginning of the *vassa*. After the offering was completed, he called his family and followers and said: "The Bhagavā has come from a distance of one hundred and twenty *yojanas*. Buddhas attach importance to the Dhamma and not to material gifts. That being so, I will stay, during these three months, in this monastery, using only two sets of clothing and observe the ten precepts. You will attend to the Buddha and a hundred thousand *bhikkhus* for the three months as you have done today." And so he spent the retreat at the monastery.

Prince Sumana ensured that the Buddha stayed not far away from his personal attendant, the Venerable Sumana, who attended to all His needs. He emulated the *bhikkhu* and set his mind on becoming such an intimate *bhikkhu*-disciple some time in future. So, about a week before the end of the retreat, he gave a great offering to the Buddha and the Sangha. On the seventh day of this great offering, he placed a set of three robes before every one of the hundred thousand *bhikkhus* and making obeisance said to the Buddha: "All my meritorious deeds that began in the city of Hamsāvātī, at my temporary quarters, are not aimed at future worldly glory as Sakka or deva or *māra*. My aspiration in doing these deeds is to become the personal attendant to a Buddha of some future period."

The Buddha reviewed and seeing that the Prince's aspiration would be fulfilled, made the prognostication and then departed. On hearing the prognostication of Buddha Padumuttara, the Prince was so convinced of the certainty of the Buddha's pronouncement as if he were to become the personal attendant of Buddha Gotama immediately (as predicted by Buddha Padumuttara), carrying the Buddha's alms-bowl and robe.

Further Deeds of Merit in The Interim Period

Prince Sumana spent a hundred thousand years during the time of Buddha Padumuttara doing deeds of merit. At his death, he was reborn in the deva-world. During Buddha Kassapa's time, he donated his cloak to a *bhikkhu*, who was on alms-round, to be used as the base for the alms-bowl to nest on.

Upon his death in that existence, he was reborn in the deva-world. After his deva existence, he was reborn in the human world in Bārāṇasī as its King. When he saw, from the upper storey of his palace, eight Paccekabuddhas travelling in the air coming from the Gandhamādāna Mountain, he invited them to his palace and offered food. He also built eight monastic dwellings in the royal gardens as residence of these eight Paccekabuddhas. Moreover, he made eight bejewelled seats for them, to be used on their visits to the palace as well as the same number of ruby stands for placing their alms-bowls. He attended upon the eight Paccekabuddhas for ten thousand years. These are some outstanding deeds of merit during the intervening period of a hundred thousand world-cycles; many other meritorious deeds also were done by him in that period.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

After performing various good deeds and thereby sowing seeds of merit during the intervening period of a hundred thousand world-cycles, the future Venerable Ānanda was reborn in Tusiṭā Deva realm along with the future Buddha Gotama. After passing away from that existence, he was reborn as the son of Prince Amitodāna of Kapilavathu. He was named Ānanda, signifying the pleasure he caused by his birth to the family. On the first

visit of Buddha Gotama to Kapilavatthu, a number of Sakyan princes headed by Prince Bhaddiya renounced worldly life and became *bhikkhus* as the Buddha's disciples when the Buddha was sojourning at Anupiya Grove near the town of the same name. (Read Chapter 16 - 27).

Ānanda established in Sotāpatti-phala

Not long after becoming a *bhikkhu*, the Venerable Ānanda listened to a discourse by the Venerable Mantāniputta Puṇṇa and attained *sotāpatti-phala*. This is on record in the **Saṃyutta Nikāya**, Khandhavagga Saṃyutta, 4. Thera Vagga, 1. Ānanda Sutta. The gist of that Sutta is as follows:

During the time when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthi, the Venerable Ānanda addressed the *bhikkhus*: “Friend *bhikkhus*”, and the *bhikkhus* responded, saying: “Friend.” The Venerable Ānanda then said:

“Friends, the Venerable Mantāniputta Puṇṇa was very helpful to us when we were new *bhikkhus*. He admonished us with this instruction: ‘Friend Ānanda, it is through having a cause that the conceit ‘I am’ arises through craving and wrong view (thus the *papañca* trio of craving, conceit and wrong view perpetuating the round of rebirth). It does not arise without a cause. Through what cause does the conceit ‘I am’ arise? Because of corporeality (*rūpa*), the conceit ‘I am’, along with its associates craving and wrong view arises; without such cause, the conceit ‘I am’ does not arise. Because of sensation (*vedanā*) ... perception (*saññā*) ... volitional activities (*saṅkhāra*)... Because of consciousness (*viññāṇa*), the conceit ‘I am’, along with its associates craving and wrong view arises; without such cause the conceit ‘I am’ does not arise.

“Friend Ānanda, let me give an example. If a young woman or man, who is fond of adorning herself or himself, looks at the image of her or his face in a clean and bright mirror or a bowl of clear water, she or he will see it depending on a cause (i.e. her or his own image and the reflecting surface of the mirror or the water), and not otherwise. Friend Ānanda, even so, because of corporeality, the conceit (*mānā*), ‘I am’, along with its associates craving (*taṇhā*) and wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) arises; without such cause, it does not arise. Because of sensation ... perception ... volitional activities ... Because of consciousness, the conceit, ‘I am’, along with its associates, craving and wrong view, arises; without such cause, it does not arise.

“Friend Ānanda, what do you think of what I am going to ask you: ‘Is corporeality permanent or impermanent?’ ‘Impermanent, friend.’

(This dialogue continues as in the Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta) ... there is nothing more to do for the realization of the *magga*.”

“Friends, the Venerable Mantāniputta Puṇṇa was very helpful to us when we were new *bhikkhus*. He admonished us with the above instruction. By hearing the exposition of the Venerable Mantāniputta Puṇṇa, I gained knowledge of the Four Ariya Truths (i.e., attained *sotāpatti-phala*).”

With reference to the above discourse, it is clear that the Venerable Ānanda became *sotāpanna* after listening to the Venerable Mantāniputta Puṇṇa's discourse on the simile of mirror.

Appointment of Ānanda as Personal Attendant to The Buddha.

There was no permanent personal attendant to the Buddha during His first twenty years of Buddhahood, called the First Bodhi Period. During that period, a number of *bhikkhus* acted as personal attendant, carrying the Buddha's alms-bowl and robe; they were: the Venerables Nāgasamāla, Nāgita, Upavāna, Sunakkhatta (formerly a Licchavi prince), Cunda (a younger brother of the Venerable Sāriputta), Sāgata, Rādhā, and Meghiya.

On a certain occasion, the Buddha, attended by the Venerable Nāgasamāla, was making a

long journey when they reached a forked road. The Venerable Nāgasamāla, departing from the main route, said to the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, I am taking this road (out of the forked road).” The Buddha said: “*Bhikkhu*, come, let us take the other road.” The Venerable Nāgasamāla then, saying impatiently: “Venerable Sir, take these, I am going that way,” made a move to put the Buddha's alms bowl and robe on the ground. Thereupon, the Buddha said to him: “*Bhikkhu*, bring them to me,” and had to carry them Himself, and then went by the way He chose while the Venerable Nāgasamāla took the other way, leaving the Buddha. When he had gone a short distance, the Venerable Nāgasamāla was robbed by a gang of robbers who took away his alms-bowl and robe and also hit him on the head. With blood streaming down from his head, he remembered the Buddha as his only refuge and went back to Him. The Buddha asked him: “*Bhikkhu*, what has befallen you?” The Venerable Nāgasamāla related his story to the Buddha and He said to him: “*Bhikkhu*, take heart. Foreseeing this danger, I had asked you not to take that road.” (This is one of the incidents that led to the appointment of a permanent personal attendant.)

On another occasion (during the 13th *vassa* when the Buddha was staying on the mountain abode at Cālīka hill), after the alms-round in Jantu village, the Buddha, with the temporary attendant Venerable Meghiya, was going by the side of the river Timikālā when, on seeing a mango grove, the Venerable Meghiya said to the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, take the alms-bowl and the great robe yourself, I want to meditate in that mango grove.” The Buddha dissuaded him thrice not to do so, but he would not listen. Then, no sooner had the Venerable Meghiya sat on a rocky platform to start meditating, three demeritorious thoughts oppressed him. He returned to the Buddha and related what had occurred in his mind when he tried to meditate. The Buddha solaced him saying: “Seeing that was to happen to you, I had told you not to resort to that place.” (For details about this event, read Chapter 32) (This is another instance that led to the appointment of a permanent attendant.)

On account of such mishaps, the Buddha, on another occasion, sitting on the Buddha's seat at the congregation hall in the precincts of His Private Chamber at the Jetavana monastery, said to the *bhikkhus*:

“*Bhikkhus*, I have grown old now (He was then past fifty-five). Some of the *bhikkhus* attending upon Me would take a different route from what I chose (tacitly referring to the Venerable Meghiya); some *bhikkhu* would even think of putting down my alms-bowl and robe on the ground (tacitly referring to the Venerable Nāgasamāla). Now think of a *bhikkhu* who will attend upon me on a permanent basis.”

On hearing these words, much emotional awakening occurred to the *bhikkhus*.

Then the Venerable Sāriputta rose from his seat, paid homage to the Buddha, and said: “Venerable Sir, for one incalculable and a hundred thousand world-cycles, I had fulfilled the perfections simply to become a disciple of the Bhagavā. A person of great knowledge like myself must be deemed as one fit to be the permanent personal attendant to the Bhagavā. May I be allowed to attend on the Bhagavā.” The Buddha said: “That will not do, Sāriputta, wherever you are, there is the Doctrine. For you, expound the Doctrine in the same way as the Tathāgata does. Therefore you ought not to attend upon the Tathāgata.” After the Buddha had extolled the virtues of the Venerable Sāriputta, He repeated the offer to attend on Him. The Venerable Moggallāna offered himself for the post but was likewise rejected. Then the eighty great *bhikkhu*-disciples offered themselves, all sharing the same result.

Ānanda's Eightfold Boon

The Venerable Ānanda remained silent without offering himself for the post. The *bhikkhus* then urged him: “Friend Ānanda, each member of the Sangha is offering himself for the privilege of attending on the Bhagavā, you should also offer yourself.” The Venerable Ānanda said to them: “Friends, a position (relating to the Bhagavā) is not something to be asked for. Does the Bhagavā not notice me? If the Bhagavā so wishes, He will say: ‘Ānanda, be my personal attendant.’”

Then the Buddha said to the *bhikkhus*: “*Bhikkhus*, Ānanda does not need anybody's advice to attend upon the Tathāgata. He will do so on his free will.” Thereupon the *bhikkhus*

pleaded with the Venerable Ānanda, saying: “Friend Ānanda, now rise up, and offer yourself to be the personal attendant.” Then the Venerable Ānanda rose from his seat and asked the Buddha to grant him these eight boons: “Venerable Sir, if the Bhagavā would agree to these four refraining conditions, I would become personal attendant to the Bhagavā:

- (1) That the Bhagavā refrain from giving me fine robes that He has received.
- (2) That the Bhagavā refrain from giving me fine food.
- (3) That the Bhagavā refrain from letting me stay in the same dwelling place reserved for him.

That the Bhagavā refrain from taking me to lay supporters' houses when they invite him.”

The Buddha said to the Venerable Ānanda: “Ānanda, what disadvantages do you see in these four matters?” And the Venerable Ānanda explained thus: “Venerable Sir, if I were given the four requisites enjoyed by the Buddha, then there is bound to arise the criticism that Ānanda has the privilege of (1) receiving the fine robes received by the Bhagavā, (2) receiving the fine food received by the Bhagavā, (3) having to stay together in the Buddha's Perfumed Chamber, and (4) having the privilege of accompanying the Buddha who visits to the houses of lay supporters. I see those criticisms as disadvantages.”

Further, the Venerable Ānanda requested from the Buddha these four special privileges:

“Venerable Sir, if the Bhagavā would grant me these four special privileges, I would become personal attendant to the Bhagavā:

- (1) That the Bhagavā would agree to go to the places I would invite.
- (2) That the Bhagavā would give audience to alien visitors immediately on their arrival.
- (3) That the Bhagavā explain to me any points on the Doctrine that need elucidation for me.
- (4) That the Bhagavā recount to me all the discourses He makes not in my presence.”

The Buddha asked the Venerable Ānanda again: “Ānanda, what benefits do you see in these four favours?” The Venerable Ānanda explained thus: “Venerable Sir, in this Teaching which has eight marvellous quantities, (1) certain lay supporters, who have great devotion to the Buddha, do not have direct access to invite Him personally to their houses. They would ask me, as the Buddha's personal attendant, to make their invitations and if I will accept their invitations on Your behalf; (2) those devotees, who come from afar to pay homage to the Bhagavā, should be allowed to see Him without much waiting; (3) whenever I am not satisfied with a certain saying of the Bhagavā, I, as his personal attendant, ought to be allowed to ask the Bhagavā to have those unclear points of the Doctrine elucidated. Venerable Sir, if the Bhagavā were (i) not to comply with my requests to accept the invitations that are made by lay supporters through me; or (ii) not to comply with my request on behalf of alien pilgrims to give early audience; (iii) not to comply with my request to have the right to ask for elucidation on doctrinal problems, then people would say: ‘What is the purpose of Ānanda's personal attendance to the Bhagava, if he is devoid of even these things?’ These are the reasons in my asking for the first three boons. (4) As regards the fourth one, if other *bhikkhus* were to ask me: ‘Friend Ānanda, where was this stanza, or this discourse or this Birth-Story given by the Bhagavā?’ and if I should be unable to answer their query, they would say: ‘Friend, you have been so close to the Bhagavā as his very shadow, and yet you do not know even this much.’ Venerable Sir, to avoid such criticism, I am asking the Bhagavā this fourth favour, i.e. to relate to me all the discourses made by the Bhagavā not in my presence.

“Venerable Sir, these are the advantages I see in four boons I am asking.” The Buddha granted Venerable Ānanda all these eight which comprised the four restraints and the four favours.

Ānanda's Duties towards The Buddha

Thus Ānanda, after being granted the eight boons by the Buddha, became His permanent

attendant. Hence the realization of his aspiration, for which he had fulfilled the perfections over a hundred thousand world-cycles.

His daily routine consisted of getting cold and hot water for the Buddha, making ready the three sizes of woodbine tooth-brushes to suit the occasion, massaging the arms and legs of the Buddha, scrubbing the Buddha's back when He took a bath, cleaning up the precincts of the Buddha's Perfumed Chamber, etc. Moreover, he was always by the Buddha's side, seeing to the Buddha's needs at all times and charting out an appropriate activity to be performed by the Buddha.

Not only did he keep a close loving supervision on the Buddha's activities by day, at night, he also would keep himself awake by holding up a lamp and going round the precincts of the Buddha's Chamber. Every night, he made nine rounds with the lamp in hand, his intention being to be ever ready when called by the Buddha at any hour. These are the reasons that lay behind his being designated as a foremost *bhikkhu*.

(c) Etadagga Titles achieved

In one occasion, when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery, he extolled the virtues of Ānanda, the Custodian of the Doctrine, in many ways:

(1) “*Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ bahusutānaṃ.*”

“*Bhikkhus, among My bhikkhu-disciples who have wide learning, (Ānanda is the foremost).*”

(2) “*Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ satimantānaṃ.*”

“*Bhikkhus, among My bhikkhu-disciples who have mindfulness in retaining (remembering) My discourses.*”

(3) “*Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ gatimantānaṃ.*”

“*Bhikkhus, among My bhikkhu-disciples who comprehend My Teaching.*”

(4) “*Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ dhitimantānaṃ.*”

“*Bhikkhus, among My bhikkhu-disciples who are diligent (in learning, remembering and reciting My Teaching as well as in attending on Me).*”

(5) “*Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ upaṭṭhākānaṃ yadidaṃ Anando.*”

“*Bhikkhus, among My bhikkhu-disciples who render personal service to Me, Ānanda is the foremost (etadagga).*”

Thus in Buddha Gotama's Teaching, the Venerable Ānanda was named by the Buddha as the foremost (*etadagga*) *bhikkhu*-disciple in five areas, namely, wide learning, mindfulness in retaining the Doctrine, comprehending the Teaching, diligence in bearing the Teaching and in caring the teacher, by giving personal service to the Buddha.

Attainment of Arahatsip

Since the attainment of arahatsip, the Venerable Ānanda was commuted with the first Buddhist Council. We shall relate the event with reference to the Commentary on *Silakkhandha vagga* (**Dīgha Nikāya**) on this subject.

After carrying out His untiring mission of bringing emancipation to the deserving, beginning from the First Sermon, the Dhammacakka, to the last discourse to the ascetic Subhadda, the Buddha passed away under the twin *sāla* trees at the Mallas' pleasure park, near Kusinagara, in the year 148 of the Great Era. The utter cessation of the Buddha, leaving no remainder of the aggregates, took place on the full moon of May, early in the morning. The Malla princes held the funeral ceremony for seven days by placing flowers and perfumes around and about the remains of the Buddha in honour of Him. The week was called the 'Funeral Festivities Week'.

After these festivities, the body of the Buddha was placed on the funeral pyre but it

would not catch fire in spite of the utmost efforts made by the Malla princes. Only on the seventh day, after the arrival and paying homage by the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, the remains of the Buddha burnt by itself, as previously willed by the Buddha Himself. That second week was called the 'Funeral-pyre Week'.

After that, the relics of the Buddha were honoured by the Mallas for seven days with unprecedented festivities, by placing rows and rows of mounted spear-men as guards of the huge festive grounds. That third week was called the 'Relics-Honouring Week'.

After the three weeks had passed, on the fifth waxing day of Jeṭṭha (May-June), the distribution of the Buddha's relics (presided over by Vassakāra, the great *brahmin* teacher) took place. On that memorable day, there was an assembly of seven hundred thousand *bhikkhus* (at Kusinagara). At the assembly, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa recalled the impertinent remarks made by Subhadda, an old *bhikkhu* who joined the Order after having been married, on the journey from Pāvā to Kusinagara, on the seventh day after the demise of the Buddha. The old *bhikkhu* said to the other *bhikkhus* who were bewailing the death of the Buddha: "Friends, do not lament, do not shed tears unnecessarily. For now only we are free from the tyranny of that Bhikkhu Gotama who would say to us: 'Yes, this is proper for a *bhikkhu*', or 'No, this is not proper for a *bhikkhu*.' Now we are at liberty to do what we like to do, and to ignore what we do not like to do."

Further, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa saw that the Buddha's Teaching, consisting of the Threefold Good Doctrine, would easily fall away after the demise of its originator, because wicked *bhikkhus* would not honour the Buddha's words when the Buddha was no more, and their number could grow. "It were well if we *bhikkhus* congregate and recite in unison all the Doctrine and the Discipline left by the Buddha. In this way the Threefold Good Doctrine would survive for long," thus reflected the Venerable Mahā Kassapa.

Then he also remembered the special recognition shown by the Buddha to him.

"The Bhagavā had exchanged His great robe with mine. He had declared to the *bhikkhus*: '*Bhikkhus*, in abiding in the first *jhāna*, Kassapa is my equal; etc.' thus extolling my power of *jhāna* attainments with reference to the successively higher *jhāna*, which embraced the nine *jhāna* attainments that require abiding at each of the progressive levels, as well as the five supernormal powers. Again, the Bhagavā had remained in mid-air, and waving his hand, declared, that 'in the matter of detachment to the four types of followers, Kassapa is unequalled,' and that 'in the attitude of equanimity, Kassapa conducts himself like the moon.' These words of praise are truly unparalleled. I must live up to these attributes in no other way but undertake to convene a Sangha Council for reciting the Doctrine and the Discipline for their preservation."

"Inasmuch as a king appoints his eldest son, Heir-Apparent, conferring all his own regal paraphernalia and authority on the son with a view to perpetuating his sovereignty, so also the Bhagava had indeed praised me so lavishly, in such extraordinary ways, seeing that I, Kassapa, would be able to perpetuate His Teaching."

After pondering deeply thus, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa related to the *bhikkhu* congregation the sacrilegious words of Subhadda, the old *bhikkhu* (stated above) and made this proposal:

"Now, friends, before immorality has gained ground and becomes an obstruction to the Dhamma, before infamy has gained ground and becomes an obstruction to the Discipline, before upholders of immorality have gained strength, before upholders of the Good Doctrine have become weak, before upholders of infamy have gained strength, and before upholders of the Discipline have become weak, let us recite in unison the Doctrine and the Discipline and preserve them."

On hearing his animated appeal, the congregation said to him: "Venerable Kassapa, may the Venerable One select the *bhikkhus* to carry out the reciting of the Doctrine and the Discipline." Venerable Mahā Kassapa then selected four hundred and ninety-nine *arahats*

who had memorized the Dhamma-Vinaya (the three Piṭakas), and most of whom were also endowed with the fourfold Analytical Knowledge, the three Vijjās, and the Six Supernormal Powers, and were designated as the foremost *bhikkhu*-disciples by the Buddha.

(In this connection, the selection of 499 *bhikkhus* indicates that one seat was reserved by the Venerable One for Ānanda. The reason is that, at that moment, the Venerable Ānanda had not attained arahatship, and was still training himself to become an *arahat*. Without Ānanda, it would not be possible to hold the Council because he had heard all the discourses of the Buddha which comprise the five *Nikāyas* or Collections, the Nine *Aṅgas* or Parts, and the doctrinal terms numbering, a total of eighty-four thousand.

Why, then, should Ānanda be put on the list of the reciters by Venerable Mahā Kassapa? The reason was that Venerable Mahā Kassapa wanted to avoid criticism that he was partial to Ānanda because there were other *arahats* endowed with the Fourfold Analytical Knowledge like Ānanda while Ānanda was still a *sekkha*, one still training for arahatship.

This criticism was probable, considering the fact that the Venerables Mahā Kassapa and Ānanda were very intimate. The former would address the latter in such intimate terms as 'This young lad' even when the latter was about eighty years old with gray hair. (Refer to **Kassapa Saṃyutta**, Cīvara Sutta, Nidāna Vagga). Further, the Venerable Ānanda was a Sākyan Prince and a first cousin of the Buddha. For that reason, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, although knowing well that Ānanda was indispensable to the project of the recitations, awaited the general consent of the congregation in selecting him.)

When Venerable Mahā Kassapa informed the congregation about his having chosen 499 *arahats* for the purpose, the congregation unanimously proposed the Venerable Ānanda to be selected on the Council in spite of his still being a *sekkha*. They said: "Venerable Mahā Kassapa, although the Venerable Ānanda is still a *sekkha*, he is not one who is likely to be misled into wrong judgment on any of the four unjust ways. Moreover, he is the *bhikkhu* with the greatest learning imparted by the Buddha both on the Doctrine and the Discipline." Then the Venerable Mahā Kassapa put Ānanda on the list of the reciters. Thus there were five hundred reciters selected with the approval of the congregation.

Then the avenue for the holding of the recitals was considered by the congregation. They chose Rājagaha because it was a big city, big enough to provide daily alms-food to the big gathering of *bhikkhus*, and because it had many big monasteries where the *bhikkhus* could stay. They also thought about the need to disallow all other *bhikkhus* outside of the Council to spend the *vassa* in Rājagaha, where they, the Council, would reside during that period. (The reason for disallowing non-participating *bhikkhus* was because as the proceedings of the Council was to be conducted every day for a number of days, unless non-participating *bhikkhus* were officially disallowed from residence during the *vassa*, dissenters might interfere in the proceedings.)

Then the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, by making his formal proposal as an act-in-congregation, and getting the formal approval of the congregation, passed the Sangha resolution in the following terms:

*Suntātu me āvuso Sangho yadi Sanghassa pattakallam
Saṅgho imāni pañcabhikkhusatāni sammanneyya rāja-
gahe vassam vassantāni dhammañ ca vinayañ ca
sangā yitum na aññehi bhikkhūhi rājagahe vassam
vasitabbantī, esā ñitti.*

The gist of this is: (1) only five hundred *bhikkhus*, who were to recite the Doctrine and the Discipline, were to stay in Rājagaha during the *vassa* and (2) that no other *bhikkhus* were to stay in Rājagaha during the same period.

The above *kammavācā* or act of the Sangha-in-council took place twenty-one days after

the passing away of the Buddha. After the act was performed, Venerable Mahā Kassapa made a proclamation to all the members of the congregation:

“Friends, I allow you forty days to enable you to attend to any of your personal obligations. After these forty days, on no account will any excuses be accepted for failure to attend to the task of the recitations, whether for sickness, business concerning the preceptor, or parents or *bhikkhu*-requisites, such as alms-bowls or robes. Everyone of you is expected to be ready to begin the proceedings at the end of forty days.”

After giving these strict instructions to the Sangha, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, accompanied by five hundred *bhikkhu*-pupils, went to Rājagaha. The other members of the Council also went to various places, accompanied by their *bhikkhu*-disciples, to assuage the sorrow of the people by means of discourses on the Good Doctrine. The Venerable Puṇṇa and his seven hundred *bhikkhu*-pupils remained at Kusinagara giving solace with their discourses to the devotees who mourned the demise of the Buddha.

The Venerable Ānanda carried, as usual, the alms-bowl and robe of the Buddha, and went to Savatthi accompanied by five hundred *bhikkhu*-disciples. His following of *bhikkhus* increased day by day. Wherever he went, devotees lamented and wailed.

When, going by stages, the Venerable Ānanda reached Sāvattthi, news of his arrival spread through the city and people came out with flowers and perfumes to welcome him. They wailed, saying: “O Venerable Ānanda, you used to come in the Buddha's company, but where have you left the Buddha now and come alone?” The people's lamentation in seeing the Venerable Ānanda alone was as pitiable as the day of the Buddha's passing away.

The Venerable Ānanda solaced them with discourses on the impermanence, woefulness and insubstantiality of conditioned existence. Then he entered the Jetavana monastery, paid homage before the Buddha's Perfumed Chamber, opened the door, took out the cot and the seat, cleaned them, swept the precincts of the Chamber, and removed the withered flowers. Then he replaced the cot and the seat and performed the routine acts at the Buddha's residence, as in the days when the Buddha was living.

Whenever he carried out these routine tasks, he would say, weeping: “O Bhagavā, is this not the time for your taking a bath?” “Is this not the time for your delivering a discourse?” “Is this not the time to give admonition to *bhikkhus*?” “Is this not the time to lie on the right side in all the Buddha's grace (like the lion)?” “Is this not the time to wash your face?” He could not help weeping in the hourly routine activities in the usual service of the Buddha because, knowing well the benefit of the pacifying quality of the Bhagavā, he had a deep love for the Buddha, out of devotion as well as out of affection. He had not purged all the moral intoxicants; he had a soft heart towards the Buddha owing to the mutual deeds of kindness that had taken place between him and the Buddha over millions of former existences.

Advice given by A Forest-deity

While himself was suffering intense grief and lamentation over the loss of the Buddha, the Venerable Ānanda was also giving much time to offering solace to the devotees who went to see him in sorrow on account of the Buddha's passing away. As he was then staying at a forest in the Kingdom of Kosala, the guardian spirit of the forest felt sorry for him; and to remind him of the need to check his sorrow, the spirit sang the following verse to him:

*Rukkhamūlagahanam pasakkiya
Nibbānam hadayasmiṃ opiya.
Jhāya Gotama mā pamādo
Kim te biḷibiḷikā karissati.*

O Venerable One of the Gotama clan, resort to seclusion at the foot of a tree, immerse your mind in Nibbāna³ and abide in the *jhāna* characterized by concentration on the object (of meditation) and on its characteristics (of impermanence, woefulness, insubstantiality). What good is there in your tittle-tattling with your visitors in your effort to solace them?

That admonition caused *samvega* in the Venerable Ānanda. Since the passing away of the Buddha, he had been standing and sitting too much so that he was feeling out of sorts, and to get relief, he took a laxative prepared from milk on the next day, and did not go out of the monastery.

On that day, Subha, son of Todeyya the brahmin (then deceased) went to invite Venerable Ānanda to an offering of a meal. The Venerable said to the youth that he could not accept the invitation that day because he had taken a laxative made from milk, but that he might be able to do so the next day. On the next day, Venerable Ānanda went to Subha's residence where he asked him a question about the Doctrine. Venerable Ānanda's discourse, in reply to that question, can be found in Subha Sutta, the tenth discourse in the Silakkhandha Vagga of the **Dīgha Nikāya**.

Then Venerable Ānanda supervised the repairs to the Jetavana monastery. When the *vassa* was approaching, he left his *bhikkhu*-pupils at the monastery and went to Rājagaha. Other members who were selected for the Council to recite the Doctrine-Discipline (*Piṭaka*) also went Rājagaha, at about the same time. All these members performed the *uposatha* on the full moon of Āsāḷhā (June-July) and on the first waning day of the month they vowed themselves to remain in Rājagaha for the three-month *vassa*.

Rājagaha had eighteen monasteries around the city at that time. As they had been unoccupied for some period, the buildings and the precincts were in a state of despair and neglect. On the occasion of the Buddha's passing away, all the *bhikkhus* had left Rājagaha for Kusinārā and the monasteries remained unused and untended so that the building became mouldy and dusty, while there were broken panes and gaping wallings.

The *bhikkhus* held a meeting and decided that as according to the Vinaya laid down by the Buddha, more particularly on living places, the monastic buildings and compound should be repaired and maintained to proper condition. So they assigned the first month of the *vassa* period to the repairing and maintenance of the monasteries, and the middle month to the recitals. They attended to the repair work to honour the Buddha's instructions found in the Vinaya rules and also to avoid criticism by the religious sects outside the Buddha's Teaching, who would say: "The disciples of Samāṇa Gotama took care of the monasteries only when their Teacher was living, but when He is dead and gone, they neglect them and let the valuable assets donated by the four categories of followers go to waste."

After coming to the decision, the *bhikkhus* went to the King Ajātasattu's palace. They were paid homage by the King who asked them the purpose of their visit. They told him that they needed men to carry out repair work to the eighteen monasteries. The King provided men to repair the monasteries, under the supervision of the *bhikkhus*. In the first month the job was completed. The *bhikkhus* then went to King Ajātasattu and said: "Great King, the repair work at the monasteries is completed. Now we shall convene the Council by reciting the Doctrine and the Discipline in unison." The King said: "Venerable Sirs, carry out your task freely. Let there be the joint operation of our regal authority with your doctrinal authority. Mention your needs and I will see to them." The *bhikkhus* said: "We need a congregation hall for the Sangha to carry out the task." The King asked them the place of their choice, and they mentioned the mountain-side on Mount Vebhāra where the great Sattapaṇṇi (*Alstonia scholaris*) tree stood.

A Grand Pavilion donated by King Ajātasattu

"Very well, Venerable Sirs," said King Ajātasattu and he built a grand pavilion for the Council, as splendid as one that might have been created by Visukamma, the deva architect. It had compartments for the efficient working of the Council, each with stairways and

3. "immerse your mind in Nibbāna" means "direct your mind to Nibbāna" — The Commentary.

approaches, all the walls, pillars (and balustrades) beautifully painted with artistic designs. The whole pavilion would seem to outshine the royal palace and its gorgeousness would seem to put a deva mansion to ridicule. It presented itself as a magnificent mansion which attracted the eyes of its beholders, devas and humans alike, as a pleasant river bank attracts all sorts of birds. In fact, it had the impression of an object of delight which was the sum total of all delightful things put up together.

The Council Hall had a canopy laid with gems. Clusters of flowers of various sizes, shapes and hues hang from it. The flooring was inlaid with jewels which looked like a huge platform of solid ruby. On it were floral festoons of variegated hues forming a wondrous carpet as would decorate a Brahmā's mansion. The five hundred seats for the five hundred *bhikkhu*-reciters were made of priceless material, yet suitable for *bhikkhu* use. The throne, i.e. the raised dais, for the *bhikkhu*-elder in charge of posing questions, had its back leaning on the southern wall, facing north. In the middle, stood the throne or raised dais of the *bhikkhu*-elder in charge of answering the question, facing east, which was suitable for use by the Buddha. On it was placed a ceremonial circular fan, made of ivory. Having made all these detailed arrangements, the King informed the Sangha that all was ready.

It was the fourth waning day in the month of Savana (July-August). On that day, some of the *bhikkhus* went about saying among themselves: "In this gathering of *bhikkhus*, one still stand with defilements" which was plainly an allusion to the Venerable Ānanda. When these words of ridicule reached the Venerable Ānanda's ear, he knew that no one else but himself was going about spreading the stink of defilements. He felt *saṃvega* from those words. There were other *bhikkhus* who said to him: "Friend Ānanda, the Council will begin tomorrow. You still have to gain the higher stages of the Path. It would not be proper for you to participate in the proceedings as a *sekha* (an *ariya* who is still training himself for arahatship). We would like you to be mindful in striving for arahatship in this good time."

Arahatship Exclusive of The Four Postures

Then the Venerable Ānanda thought to himself: "Tomorrow, the Council begins. It would not be proper for me to participate in the proceedings as a *sekha* (as a mere *sotāpanna*)."
He meditated on the body the whole night. Early in the morning, he thought of getting some sleep. Going into the monastery, he mindfully reclined on the cot. As his two feet lifted off the ground and his head had not touched the pillow, he attained arahatship in a split second, outside of any of the four bodily postures.

To explain this further: The Venerable Ānanda had been meditating while walking up and down along the walk outside the monastery. Despite this, *magga-phala* (at the three higher levels) was still not attained. Then he remembered the Buddha's words when the latter was about to pass away: "Ānanda, you have done much meritorious actions. Meditate diligently. You will soon attain arahatship." He knew that the Buddha's word never went amiss. He reviewed his meditation effort: "I have been overzealous; this makes my mind distracted. I must strike a balance between energy and concentration." Reflecting thus, he washed his feet and entering his meditation cell, he thought of taking a short rest. With mindfulness, he reclined on the cot. As his two feet lifted off the ground and his head had not touched the pillow, during that fleeting moment he attained *arahatta-phala*, purified of all moral intoxicants.

Therefore, if someone were to pose a question: "Which *bhikkhu* in this Teaching gained arahatship while outside of the four bodily postures?" the answer definitely is "The Venerable Ānanda."

Ānanda praised by Mahā Kassapa

It was on the fifth waning day, in the month of Savana (July-August), the day after the Venerable Ānanda had attained Arahantship, after finishing their meal, the reciters selected for the Council kept their alms-bowls and other requisites and congregated at the great pavilion to begin the recitation. (By the custom of the Indian Subcontinent, the period from the full-moon day of the month in Āsāḷhā (June-July) to the full-moon day of the month in Savana is reckoned as one month. During that period of one month, the Sangha had

attended to the repairing and maintenance of the monasteries. On the first day of the waning moon in Savana, they requested King Ajātasattu to build a pavilion. The construction took three days. On the fourth day, the Venerable Ānanda attained arahatship. On the fifth day, the proceedings of the Council commenced.)

Venerable Ānanda attended The Council as An Arahāt

He entered the pavilion when everybody was present. Donning his upper robe in the manner prescribed for *bhikkhus* when appearing before a meeting (or for going into the village), he stepped into the hall with a beaming face which looked as fresh as a toddy palm fruit just plucked, or a ruby placed on a white piece of velvet, or a full moon in a clear sky, or a paduma lotus blooming forth on being radiated with dawn's sunshine. It seemed to radiate with the inner purity of the *arahāt*. Its splendour proclaimed the arahatship of the possessor.

(In this connection, it might be asked: "Why did Ānanda enter the hall as if proclaiming his arahatship?" "An *arahāt* does not declare his attainment of *arahatta-phala* in words but he may let the fact known to others, and this is extolled by the Buddha," thus reflected the Venerable Ānanda. He knew that the Council was prepared to let him participate in the proceedings because of his vast knowledge, even though he was still a *sekka*. And now that he had attained arahatship, those other *bhikkhus* would be very happy to know about it. Further, he wanted to demonstrate to everyone that the Buddha's last words: "Work with diligence, the attainment of your set task", had proved most beneficial.)

On seeing the Venerable Ānanda, Venerable Mahā Kassapa thought: "Ah, Ānanda as an *arahāt* looks glorious. If the Bhagavā were living, he would surely laud Ānanda today. Now I must say words of praise on behalf of the Bhagavā." And he said: "Friend, Ānanda, glorious it is indeed that you have attained *arahatta-phala*, etc." He said these congratulatory words thrice aloud.

Proceedings of The Council

With the arrival of the Venerable Ānanda, the Council was complete with the five hundred selected reciters. The Venerable Mahā Kassapa asked the Council where to begin their recitals, whether the Doctrine including the *Suttanta* and the **Abhidhamma** should be recited first, or whether the Discipline (the *Vinaya*), should be recited first. The Sangha unanimously proposed: "Venerable Mahā Kassapa, the Vinaya is the lifeblood of the Buddha's Teaching. For, if the Vinaya lasts long, the Buddha's Teaching will last long. Therefore let us begin our recitals with the reciting of the Vinaya." Venerable Mahā Kassapa then asked: "Whom shall we make the leading *bhikkhu* in reciting the Vinaya?" "We will make the Venerable Upāli the leading *bhikkhu*." "Would Ānanda be incapable for it?" "Ānanda would be quite capable for it. However, when the Bhagavā was living He had declared the Venerable Upāli as the foremost among the *bhikkhu*-disciples who have mastered the Vinaya. Therefore, we would make the Venerable Upāli, after getting his consent, the leading *bhikkhu* in reciting the Vinaya."

The Venerable Mahā Kassapa was the presiding *bhikkhu* at the First Council. He also took the responsibility of the questionings. The Venerable Upāli took the responsibility of answering the questions on the Vinaya. Both took the special seats made for them and conducted the proceedings. Each of the rules of the Vinaya was put as a question consisting of the subject, the background story, the person that was the cause of the Buddha's prescribing the rule, the original rule, the amendment thereto (if any), whether a breach of that rule amounts to an offence or not; and each question was answered fully under those headings. The Council then put them on record by reciting in unison, clothing the subject-matter with such formal expressions as: 'At that time', 'It was then that', 'Then', 'When it was said', etc. to give cohesion to the matter. The recitals were made in unison: "At that time the Bhagavā was staying at Vērañja, etc." (This reciting of the words of the Buddha by the Sangha in a special assembly is called the holding of a Council, *Sangāyanā*.)

When the reciting of the First Pārājika was completed, the great earth trembled

vehemently down to the sheet of water, that supports it as if applauding the noble historic event.

The three remaining *Pārājika* rules were recited in the same manner, as also were the rest of the 227 rules, each framed as a question and followed by its answer. The whole of the text was entitled *Pārājikakaṇḍa Pāli*, and was also known as *Bhikkhu Vibhaṅga*, popularly referred to as “*Mahā Vibhaṅga*”. It was prescribed as the official text that has since been taught (at the monasteries) from generation to generation. At the conclusion of reciting the *Mahā Vibhaṅga*, the great earth also shook violently as before.

Then followed the 304 rules of the *Bhikkhūṇī Vibhaṅga*, recited in the form of questions and answers as before. This *Bhikkhūṇī Vibhaṅga* and the *Mahā Vibhaṅga* together was known as ‘the *Ubhato Vibhaṅga* of 64 recitals or *bhāṇavāras*.’ This was prescribed as the official text that has since been taught from generation to generation. At the conclusion of reciting, the *Ubhato Vibhaṅga* the great earth also shook violently as before.

Upāli entrusted with The Vinaya Piṭaka

The Council of five hundred reciters entrusted the approved version of the Vinaya Piṭaka to the Venerable Upāli with the mandate: “Friend, teach this Vinaya Piṭaka to the disciples who come to you for instruction.” When the reciting of the Vinaya Piṭaka was completed, the Venerable Upāli, having done his task, laid down the ceremonial circular ivory fan on the throne of the *bhikkhu* in-charge of answering the questions, descended from it, paid his respect to the *bhikkhu*-elders, and sat in the place marked for him.

After the reciting of the Vinaya, the Dhamma (i.e. the Suttanta and the **Abhidhamma**) was to be recited. So Venerable Mahā Kassapa asked the Council of reciters: “Which *bhikkhu* shall we make the leader in reciting the Dhamma?” The Council unanimously named the Venerable Ānanda for the post.

Then Venerable Mahā Kassapa named himself as the Questioner, and the Venerable Ānanda as the Answerer (Responding *bhikkhu*). Rising from his seat, rearranging his upper robe, and making his obeisance to the *bhikkhu*-elders, Venerable Ānanda held the ceremonial circular ivory fan and sat on the throne prepared for the purpose. Then the plan of reciting the Dhamma was discussed thus by Venerable Mahā Kassapa and the participating *mahā-theras* (*bhikkhu*-elders):

Kassapa: Friends, as there are two divisions of the Dhamma, the Suttanta Piṭaka and the **Abhidhamma** Piṭaka, which shall we take up first?

Mahātheras: Venerable Sir, let us start with the Suttanta Piṭaka. (The Vinaya is mainly concerned with Higher Morality (*adhi-sīla*); the Suttanta is mainly concerned with Higher Consciousness i.e. concentration (*adhi-citta*); and the **Abhidhamma** is mainly with Higher Wisdom (*adhi-paññā*). Therefore, the Council recited the Threefold Training of Mortality, Concentration and Wisdom in that order, it should be noted.)

Kassapa: Friends, there are four Collections (*Nikāyas*) of the Suttas in the Suttanta Piṭaka; which of them shall we take up first?

Mahāthera: Venerable Sir, let us start with the Longer Discourses (*Dīgha Nikāya*).

Kassapa: Friends, the *Dīgha Nikāya* contains 34 discourses (*Suttas*) in three divisions (*vaggas*), which divisions shall we take up first?

Mahāthera: Venerable Sir, we shall start with the *Sīlakkhandha Vagga*.

Kassapa: Friends, the *Sīlakkhandha Vagga* contains 13 discourses, which discourse shall we take up first?

Mahāthera: Venerable Sir, the Brahmajāla Sutta portrays the three grades of morality. It is useful for the abandonment of deceitful talk or hypocrisy on the part of *bhikkhus* which are detrimental to the Teaching. It also explains the 62 kinds of wrong views. It had caused 62 times of the shaking of the great earth when it was delivered by the Bhagavā. Therefore, let us start with the

Brahmajāla Sutta.

Having thus agreed upon the plan of verification, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa posed appropriate questions on the Brahmajāla Sutta to Venerable Ānanda regarding the background story, the person connected with the discourse, the subject matter, etc. Venerable Ānanda answered every question completely, at the end of which the five hundred reciters recited in unison the Brahmajāla Sutta. When the reciting of the Suttas was completed, the great earth quaked violently as before.

Then followed the questioning and answering and the recital of the twelve other *Suttas* of the *Sīlakkhandha Vagga*, which was recognized as the title of the division and prescribed as the course of Pīṭaka studies in respect of the Suttanta.

Then the *Mahāvagga*, which consisted of ten *suttas*, was next and followed by the *Pāthika Vagga*, which consisted eleven *suttas*, each with the questioning and answering. Hence the thirty-four *suttas* in three divisions (*Vaggas*), whose recitals numbered twenty-four, were recorded as the Buddha's words under the title of *Dīgha Nikāya*, the Collection of Longer Discourses. This approved version of the text was then entrusted to the Venerable Ānanda with the following instruction from the *bhikkhu*-elders: "Friend Ānanda, teach this *Dīgha Nikāya* to the pupils that come to you for instruction."

After that the Council approved the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the Collection of Middle Length Discourses, after the usual questioning and answering, which took 80 recitals in all. Then they entrusted the approved version of the text to the pupils of the Venerable Sāriputta, saying: "Friends, preserve this *Majjhima Nikāya* well."

Then the Council approved the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, the Collection of Related Discourses, after the usual questioning, and answering, which took 100 recitals. Then they entrusted the approved version of the text to the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, saying: "Venerable Sir, teach this *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, the sayings of the Bhagavā, to the pupils who come to you for instruction."

Then the Council approved the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, the Collection of Graduated Discourses, after the usual questioning, and answering, which took 120 recitals. Then they entrusted the approved version of the text to the Venerable Anuruddha, saying: "Venerable Sir, teach this *Aṅguttara Nikāya* to the pupils who come to you for instruction."

Then the Council approved the seven books of Abhidhamma, namely, the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, the *Vibhaṅga*, the *Dhātukathā*, the *Puggala paññatti*, the *Kathāvatthu*, the *Yamaka* and the *Paṭṭhāna*, after the usual questionings, answerings, and recitals. At the end of the recital of these Abhidhamma texts the great earth quaked violently as before.

Then the Council recited: the *Jātaka*, the *Niddesa*, the *Paṭisambhidā Magga*, the *Apādāna*, the *Sutta Nipāta*, the *Khuddakapāṭha*, the *Dhammapada*, the *Udāna*, the *Itivuttaka*, the *Vimānavatthu*, the *Petavatthu*, the *Theragāthā*, and the *Therīgāthā*, after the usual questioning and answering. These thirteen Books collectively were called the *Khuddaka Nikāya*, the Collection of assorted compilations.

According to the *bhikkhu*-elders who had memorized the *Dīgha Nikāya*, it was said: "The *Khuddaka Nikāya* was recited and approved along with the *Abhidhamma Pīṭaka*." But according to the *bhikkhu*-elders who had memorized the *Majjhima Nikāya*, these 13 books, together with the *Buddhavaṃsa* and the *Cariya Pīṭaka*, making 15 books altogether, were named as the *Khuddaka Nikāya* and are classified as the *Suttanta Pīṭaka*, (These statements are based on the Commentary on the *Sīlakkhandha*. A *Bhāṇavāra* or a 'recital' is the length of time that took to recite a piece of the text, which by our modern clock time, would be about half an hour. The naming of the principal *bhikkhu*-elders, namely, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, the Venerable Upāli and the Venerable Ānanda, in their respective offices, are on record in the *Vinaya Cūlavagga Pañcasatikakkhandhaka*.)

Thus the Venerable Ānanda was a principal *bhikkhu* in the First Council, in answering most competently all the questions concerning the Dhamma which comprised the *Suttanta Pīṭaka* and the *Abhidhamma Pīṭaka*.

(This is the account of important role played by the Venerable Ānanda at the First

Council.)

Ānanda Mahāthera's Parinibbāna

At the time of the First Council, in 148 Great Era, the Venerable Ānanda being born on the same day as the Buddha, was already eighty years of age. On the fortieth year after the First Council, when he was 120 years old then, he reviewed his life-maintaining faculty and saw that he had only seven more days to live. He told this to his pupils.

When people learned this news, those living on one side of the River Rohiṇī (the bone of contention between the Sakyans and the Koliyans concerning distribution of its waters that led to the Buddha's discourse known as *Mahāsamaya Sutta*) said that the Venerable Ānanda had benefited much from them and so he would pass away on their side of the river. And those living on the other side of the river also said so.

On hearing these words from both sides, Venerable Ānanda thought: "Both groups have done much benefit to me. None can dispute this fact. If I were to pass away on one side of the river, those living on the other side would fight for possession of my relics. Then I would become the cause of strife between them. If there be peace I would have to be the cause of peace. It now depends on how I handle the matter." After reflecting thus, he said to both the groups:

"O male and female supporters, those of you who live on this side of the river have done me much benefit. Likewise, those of you who live on the other side of the river have done me much benefit. There is none among you who have not benefited me. Let those who live on this side gather together on this side, and let those who live on the other side gather together on that side."

Then on the seventh day, he remained aloft in the sky at about seven palm trees' height, sitting cross-legged above the middle of the river Rohiṇī and delivered a sermon to the people.

At the end of the discourse, he made the will that his body should split into two, with each portion falling onto each side of the river. He then entered into the *jhāna* of *tejo-dhātu* which is the basis of attaining supernormal powers. On emerging from that *jhāna*, the thought process pertaining to supernormal power arose in him. At the impulsion moment of that thought process, his body became ablaze and immediately after the end of that thought process, the death-consciousness arose and he passed away, realizing Nibbāna and making an end of all traces of existence.

His body split into two, as he had wished, one portion falling on one side of the river and the other portion falling on the other side. People on both sides wailed wildly. The outburst of their emotion sounded as if the earth itself were crumbling. The lamentation on this occasion would seem even more pitiable and desperate than it was on the death of the Buddha. They wailed for four whole months, muttering: "So long as we see the Buddha's personal assistant who went about holding the Buddha's alms-bowl and robe, we got some solace about the absence of the Buddha, but now that holder himself is dead and no more, we have no means to solace ourselves. The Buddha's passing away is now complete for us."

Saṁvega gāthā

Hā saṁyogā viyogantā,

Dreadful indeed - being waited upon by grief, lamentation, etc. are all forms of association between spouses, kinsmen, friends, teacher and pupil, etc. because there inevitably comes the parting between those dear ones either through death or through severance.

Hā aniccā'va sankhatā;

Dreadful indeed - being waited upon by grief, lamentation, etc. are all conditioned things, being products of *kamma*, mind, temperature and nutriment, due to their impermanence.

Hā uppaññā ca bhaṅgantā

Dreadful indeed - being waited upon by grief, lamentation, etc. are all conditioned phenomena that have the nature of arising because they are subject to decay and dissolution.

Hā hā saṅkhāradhammatā

Dreadful indeed - being liable to sink in the turbulent ocean of woes - is the unalterable course of mind and matter, were conditioned phenomena, which have the characteristic of impermanence, the characteristic of woefulness and the characteristic of insubstantiality.

(31) URUVELA KASSAPA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Uruvelā Kassapa was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsavati during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When he came of age, he listened to a discourse by the Buddha. While doing so, he witnessed a *bhikkhu* being named by the Buddha as the foremost *bhikkhu* in having a large following. He was inspired by that *bhikkhu* to become another of his kind in future. He made great offerings to the Buddha and His Sangha for seven days, at the end of which, he made offering of a set of three robes to the Buddha and each of the members of the Sangha and, thereafter, he expressed his aspiration to become a foremost *bhikkhu* at some future time, having a big following. The Buddha reviewed his aspiration and saw that it would be fulfilled and thus made the prediction: "You will be named by Buddha Gotama as the foremost *bhikkhu* in His Teaching with a big following." After making the august pronouncement Buddha Padumuttara returned to His monastery.

Life as Royal Brother to Buddha Phussa

In that existence of receiving Buddha Padumuttara's prognostication, the future Uruvelā Kassapa lived a meritorious life until he died and was reborn in the deva-world and subsequently either in the human world or the deva-world. Then ninety-two world-cycles prior to the present world-cycle, when Buddha Phussa appeared in the world, the future Uruvelā Kassapa was reborn as the half brother of the Buddha. The Buddha had three younger half-brothers and this prince (future Uruvelā Kassapa) was the eldest of the three. (The three brothers attended upon the Buddha with the four *bhikkhu* requisites for one *vassa*, the details of which will be described. Also refer to Chapter 14.)

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

The three royal brothers gave a great offering of valuable articles to the Buddha and His Sangha at the end of the *vassa*. They also spent their whole lives in doing meritorious deeds, and were reborn in the fortunate destinations only. During the present world-cycle, before the advent of Buddha Gotama, they were reborn into a brahmin family whose clan name was Kassapa. On coming of age, they become masters of the three Vedas and the eldest brother had five hundred pupils; the second brother had three hundred pupils; and the youngest brother had two hundred pupils who became their disciples.

When they reviewed their learning they realised that the Vedas offered just for the present life but lacked knowledge that was of benefit in the hereafter. The eldest Kassapa brother, together with his five hundred disciples, renounced the world and led the life of a recluse. They retired into the Uruvelā forest and he became known by the name of their

place as Uruvelā Kassapa. The second brother and his three hundred disciples likewise became recluses and lived at the river bend of the Gaṅgā and he came to be known as Nadi Kassapa. The youngest brother also became a recluse together with his two hundred disciples and they dwelled at a place called Gayāsīsa, and hence he became known as Gayā Kassapa. The three Kassapa brothers became famous as teachers of their own religious sects. During the time when the three Kassapa brothers were giving guidance to their respective groups, the Buddha (Gotama) had appeared in the world. The Buddha passed the first *vassa* at the Migadāya forest, also known as Isipatana, where he caused the enlightenment of the Group of Five Ascetics and the fifty-five youths led by Yasa, son of a merchant. All these sixty disciples become the first *arahats* in this world. At the end of the *vassa*, the Buddha enjoined the sixty *arahat-bhikkhus* to spread the Good Doctrine while He headed toward the Uruvelā forest alone. On his way, he met the thirty princes, all brothers, at Kappāsika forest, whom he called up as *bhikkhus* (using the word, “Come, *bhikkhu*”) and caused their enlightenment as *ariyas* of various grades, training themselves for arahatship. The Buddha then proceed alone to the Uruvelā forest because He saw the ripeness of Uruvelā Kassapa for enlightenment and also saw that all the three Kassapa brothers and their followers would gain arahatship. When the Buddha met Uruvelā Kassapa, He had to display 3500 kinds of miracles, the most remarkable of which being the taming of the powerful *nāga*. Finally, Uruvelā Kassapa and his five hundred disciples were called up by the Buddha into bhikkhuhood. On learning the news of the eldest brother becoming a *bhikkhu*, the younger brothers and their followers likewise became *bhikkhus*. All of them were called up by the Buddha into bhikkhuhood. (For details refer to Chapter 14.)

The Buddha took the one thousand newly admitted *bhikkhus* to Gayāsīsa. He sat on the rock platform there and considered the appropriate discourse for them. He remembered that these recluses of brahmin origin had all along been indulging in fire-worship, and accordingly delivered them a discourse giving the simile of the fire that relentlessly burns the three forms of existence: the sensuous, the fine material and the non-material spheres. The Discourse entitled *Ādittapariyāya* had the desired effect of turning all the *bhikkhus* into *arahats*.

Then the Buddha saw that the time was opportune for Him to visit Rājagaha, where He had, before His attainment of Buddhahood, promised King Bimbisāra that He would visit his city after attaining Buddhahood. He journeyed to Rājagaha accompanied by a thousand *arahats* and rested in the toddy palm grove. King Bimbisāra, on being reported about the arrival of the Buddha, went to meet Him, in the company of one hundred and twenty thousand brahmin householders. After making obeisance to the Buddha, he sat in a suitable place. On that occasion, the fame of Uruvelā Kassapa had become so well established that the brahmin retinue of the King paid their homage to Uruvelā Kassapa. The Buddha knew that the audience were unable to decide which of the two, Himself or Uruvelā Kassapa, was superior. He was also aware that the people, having doubt, could not pay attention to the Dhamma. So He said to Uruvelā Kassapa: “Kassapa, your followers are in a quandary. Clear up their mental confusion.” Thus, the Buddha indicated to the Venerable to display miracles.

The Venerable Uruvelā Kassapa respectfully responded: rising from his seat, he made obeisance to the Buddha in fivefold contact, and rose up to the sky about a palm-tree's height. There, remaining in mid-air, he took on various forms as he wished and said to the Buddha: “Venerable Bhagavā, the Bhagavā is my Teacher; I am your pupil, your disciple. Venerable Bhagavā, the Bhagavā is my Teacher; I am your pupil, your disciple.” Then he descended to the ground and paid homage to the Buddha at His feet. Then he rose up again to twice the height of a palm tree, created a variety of forms himself, came down and paid homage at the Buddha's feet. On the seventh time of repeating this miraculous feat, he rose to a height of seven palm-trees, and after descending to the ground, and making obeisance to the Buddha, he sat in a suitable place.

The big audience were now in no doubt about the supremacy of the Buddha and acclaimed Him as the great Samana. Then only the Buddha gave a discourse to them, at the

end of which, King Bimbisāra and eleven hundred thousand brahmin householders attained *sotāpatti-phala* and the remaining ten thousand brahmins took the Triple Gem as their refuge; the fact they acknowledged to the Buddha.

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

The one thousand pupils who had served the Venerable Uruvelā Kassapa, after attaining arahatship, thought that since they had reached the acme of *bhikkhu* practice, they did not need to go anywhere for their religious advancement and so remained in the company of their erstwhile leader.

On one occasion, the Buddha, in a *bhikkhu* congregation at the Jetavana monastery, declared:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānam bhikkhūnam mahā-parisānam yadidam Uruvela Kassapa.”

“Bhikkhus, among My bhikkhu-disciples who have a big following, Uruvelā Kassapa is the foremost (etadagga).”

(In this matter, the Venerable Uruvelā Kassapa had the unique position of having a constant following of one thousand *bhikkhus*, taking into account the followers of his two younger brothers. If each of the one thousand *bhikkhus* were to act as preceptor and admit one *bhikkhu*, Uruvelā Kassapa's following would become two thousand, and if the original one thousand were to admit two new *bhikkhus* each into the Order, the his following could become three thousand. Hence he was in an unrivalled position in the number of following.

— Commentary on the *Aṅguttara* —

(32) KĀḶUDĀYĪ MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Kāḷudāyī was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsavati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While he was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he happened to witness the Buddha acknowledged a *bhikkhu* as ‘being the foremost disciple who could arouse devotion in the Buddha's kinsmen, even before they had met the Buddha’. The worthy man (future Kāḷudāyī) aspired to such an honour during the time of some future Buddhas. After making the great offerings, he expressed his aspiration before the Buddha. Later, the Buddha uttered words predicting the fulfilment of the his aspiration.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

Future Kāḷudāyī devoted himself to meritorious deeds till the end of his life. He was reborn in the fortunate destinations only. Finally, he was conceived in the womb of the mother who was of a high official family in Kapilavatthu. This took place simultaneously with the conception of the Buddha-to-be (Prince Siddhattha,). And the two boys were born on the same day. His parents placed him on a white cloth and presented him to King Suddhodāna to become an attendant to Prince Siddhattha.

The Name Kāḷudāyī

On the day of naming the boy, they named him Udāyī because he was born on the same day the Buddha-to-be was born, and the whole city was filled with joy and excitement on that. Since the boy had a slightly dark skin, the word ‘*kāla*’ (dark), was prefixed to the original name of Udāyī and he was therefore called Kāḷudāyī. As a boy, Kāḷudāyī lived in the royal palace and he played games privately with Prince Siddhattha in the place of Kapilavatthu.

Later on, Prince Siddhattha renounced the world and spent six harrowing years in pursuit of the Truth. He eventually attained Enlightenment and delivered His First Sermon, the Dhammacakka. He was then residing at Rājagaha which was His place for collecting alms-food. (This happened on the dark fortnight of the cold month of Phussa, in the year 103 of the Great Era.) When King Suddhodāna heard the good news that his son, the Buddha, was

residing at the Veļuvana monastery in Rājagaha, he sent a courtier with an entourage of one thousand men, whose order was to request the Buddha to pay a visit to Kapilavattu. The royal messenger made the sixty *yojana* journey to Rājagaha and entered the Veļuvana monastery. At that time, the Buddha was teaching a discourse to the audience which consisted of four types of listeners. The royal messenger sat at the edge of the audience and paid attention to the Buddha's discourse, thinking that the king's message would be communicated to the Buddha after the discourse. But, even while he was listening attentively to the sermon, he, as well as his entourage of one thousand men, gained arahatship. Then the Buddha, extending His hand and said to them: "Come, *bhikkhus*", and all the men instantly became *ehi-bhikkhus* with the grave appearance of sixty-year of *bhikkhu* standing (i.e. at eighty years of age) and fully equipped with requisites created magically (*Iddhimayaparikkhāra*).

As it is in the nature of *ariyas* to become indifferent to worldly matters, the thousand *bhikkhus* did not impart King Suddhodāna's message to the Buddha. They dwelt in the bliss of the attainment of *arahatta-phala*.

King Suddhodāna felt annoyed to hear nothing from his messenger and sent another courtier with a thousand men on the same mission.

This messenger also went before the Buddha, became absorbed in the His discourse, and attained arahatship together with his one thousand men. In this way, King Suddhodāna sent a total of nine missions, one after another, each headed by a courtier with an entourage of one thousand men to the Buddha and all the nine messengers and their nine thousand men neglected their mission because they attained arahatship before they could extend the King's invitation to the Buddha.

Kāḷudāyī's Mission to Kapilavattu

King Suddhodāna then reflected on the situation: "The nine courtiers had entirely no affection for me and so they said nothing to my son, the Buddha, about His visit to this city of Kapilavattu of ours. Others would also fail to do so. But Kāḷudāyī, born on the same day as the Buddha, was His playmate in their childhood. This young man is also affectionate to me." And so he summoned and said to Kaludayi, now an official at his court: "Son, go to the Buddha with a thousand men, and invite Him to Kapilavattu."

Courtier Kāḷudāyī said to the King: "Great King, if you would give me permission to become a *bhikkhu*, like the previous royal messengers, I will see to the Buddha's visit to Kapilavattu." To which the King readily responded: "Son, do as you wish. Only see that my son, the Buddha, visits me."

"Very well, Great King," said Kāḷudāyī, "I shall do so," when the King gave his permission. He left the city accompanied by a thousand men and eventually reached Rājagaha. Sitting at the edge of the audience, he listened to the Buddha who was teaching a discourse. After hearing it, he and his thousand men became *arahats* and were called up by the Buddha into *bhikkhuhood*.

Bhikkhu Kāḷudāyī did not forget his mission. He thought that the cold season was not suitable for the Buddha to make the long journey to Kapilavattu. But, when spring had appeared, with the forest flowers blooming forth and the grass and foliage putting on fresh greenness, then only should the Buddha travel to Kapilavattu. So he waited till the full moon of Phaguna (February-March) when he sang sixty stanzas giving a picturesque portrayal of the pleasantness of the season, indicating to the Buddha that the time was right for Him to visit Kapilavattu.

The Buddha knew the Venerable Kāḷudāyī's mind and decided that it was time that He visited Kapilavattu. Then, accompanied by twenty thousand *arahats*, He took the journey (of sixty *yojanas*) at a leisurely pace (*aturita-desacārika*).

The Venerable Kāḷudāyī, noting the Buddha's departure from Rājagaha, appeared at King Suddhodāna's palace. The King was delighted on seeing him standing mid-air above the palace, and offered his throne for the *bhikkhu's* seat. Then he filled the alms-bowl of the

Venerable with cooked rice and dishes prepared for himself. Venerable Kāḷudāyī then moved as if to depart. The King said to him: “Son, take the meal here.” To which the Venerable said: “I shall take it when I get back to the Bhagavā.” “Where is the Buddha now?” asked the King. “The Buddha is now on His way, with twenty thousand *arahats*, to visit you.” “Then, son, take your meal here. Then carry the food prepared in my palace to the Buddha daily, till He arrives.”

Henceforth, the Venerable Kāḷudāyī took his meal at the palace and then received the alms-food on behalf of the Buddha. In doing so, he gave a discourse to the King and the royal household on the noble qualities of the Buddha, thereby giving them a foretaste of the unparalleled pleasure they were to experience on meeting with the Buddha. Then, just as the people were watching him, he threw up into the air his alms-bowl filled with the food for the Buddha. He also rose into the air, took the alms-bowl and offered it to the Buddha en route. The Buddha received it in His hands and took His meal for the day.

The Venerable Kāḷudāyī took upon himself the task of receiving alms-food for the Buddha (and making the appropriate discourse to warm up the feelings of King Suddhodāna and the royal household towards the Buddha) for the entire journey of His memorable journey to Kapilavabthu which was sixty *yojanas* long, taken leisurely at the rate of one *yojana* a day. (This remarkable routine that the Venerable Kāḷudāyī set for himself, to bring food to the Buddha, was the basis of his receiving the special mention from the Buddha.)

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

On a later occasion, in a congregation of *bhikkhus*, the Buddha reflected on the role that the Venerable Kāḷudāyī had played in warming up the feelings of King Suddhodāna and the kinsmen of the Buddha, declared:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ kulappasādakānaṃ yadidaṃ Kāḷudāyī.”

“Bhikkhus, among My bhikkhu-disciples who are able to kindle devotion to Me in the hearts of My kinsmen, Bhikkhu Kāḷudāyī is the foremost (etadagga).”

(33) BĀKULA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Bākula was born in a brahmin family on the eve of the advent of Buddha Anomadassī, one incalculable period and one hundred thousand world-cycles before the present world-cycle. When he came of age, he learned the three Vedas and gained mastery in them. But he found that this learning lacked the essence of what he was looking for. “I will seek welfare in the hereafter,” he decided, and so he renounced the world, became a hermit and resorted to a remote mountain. After due diligence, he gained the five kinds of special apperception and the eight jhānic attainments. He spent his time in dwelling in the bliss of *jhāna*.

Then the Buddha Anomadassī appeared in the world and went from place to place in the company of a big number of *ariya* disciples. The hermit, who was to become the Venerable Bākula world-cycles later, was thrilled by the news of the appearance in the world of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. He went to Buddha Anomadassī and on hearing His discourse, became established in the Three Refuges. He did not want to leave his mountain abode and remained a hermit, but often visited the Buddha to hear His Dhamma.

One day, the Buddha suffered from an attack of colic. On his visit to Him, the hermit (future Bākula) was told by the Buddha of His ailment. The hermit went back to his mountain gladly, grasping the opportunity of earning merit by collecting herbs to cure the Buddha. He delivered the medicine to the attendant-*bhikkhu* who then administered it to the Buddha. A single dose of the medicine completely cured the colic.

When the Buddha had recovered, the hermit approached Him and made his solemn wish:

“Venerable Sir, I have brought the cure for the Bhagavā’s disease. For this deed of merit, may I, in my farings in *saṃsāra*, be free of disease at all times, never subject to the slightest ailment even for the duration of the milking of a cow.” This was the remarkable merit done by the future Bākula in that past existence.

Aspiring to be Foremost in having Perfect Health

After passing away from that existence, the hermit was reborn in the Brahmā-world, and after this Brahmā existence, he was reborn only in the deva-world and the human world over the entire length of one *asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*. During the time of Buddha Padumuttara, he was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvātī. On one occasion, he saw the Buddha named a *bhikkhu* as the foremost *bhikkhu* in perfect health or freedom from disease, and so he aspired to that honour at some future time. He made great offerings to the Buddha and the Sangha (as was usual with aspirants to such unique status), and later expressed his aspiration. The Buddha made the prediction that his aspiration would be realized.

Healing as A Hermit

The future Bākula spent the whole of his life doing deeds of merit and passed away to good destinations only. Then ninety-one world-cycles prior to the present world-cycle, he was born into a brahmin family, in the city of Bandhumati, on the eve of the appearance of Buddha Vipassī. As in his former existence during Buddha Anomadassī, he became a hermit and took up his dwelling at the foot of a mountain, enjoying the bliss of jhānic attainment.

Then Buddha Vipassī appeared in the world and went about in the company of sixty-eight hundred thousand *bhikkhus* (*arahats*), with Bandhumati as the resort for collecting daily alms-food, where He benefited His father, King Bandhuma, with discourses on the Doctrine. Later He resided in the Deer Park known as Khemā, 'the Sanctuary'.

The hermit, the future Bākula, heard the news of the appearance of the Buddha in the world. He approached Buddha Vipassī, and on hearing the His discourse, became a disciple of His. Although he took refuge in the Three Refuges, he did not want to leave his mountain abode and remained there as a recluse, but frequenting the monastery of the Buddha to attend on Him.

One day, the Sangha, with the exception of the two Chief Disciples and the Buddha Himself, caught an infectious headache, which was due to contact with poisonous pollen wafted in the air from a certain poisonous kind of plant growing in the Himavanta. When the hermit visited the Buddha and saw the infected *bhikkhus* lying down with their heads covered, he inquired a *bhikkhu* about the cause of the ailment. On being told the cause, he thought that an opportunity presented itself for him to tend to the sick *bhikkhus* and earn merit. He gathered the necessary herbs, prepared a medicine, and administered it to the sick *bhikkhus* who were immediately cured.

Repairing an Old Monastery

After living the full life span as a hermit, he passed away and was reborn in the Brahmā realm. After that existence, he was reborn only in the fortunate destinations for a period of ninety-one *kappas* only, when Buddha Kassapa appeared. He was born a householder in Bārāṇasī then. One day, he went to a remote country together with a team of carpenters to fetch timber for repairing his house. On the way, he came across an old monastery in a state of disrepair. He considered that repairing his own house had no particular merit to his hereafter life but by repairing the monastery, he could earn much merit. Therefore, he sent his team of carpenters to find timber from the countryside and had the old monastery renovated fully, adding a new kitchen, a new eating place, a new fire-place for the cold season, a new walk, a new hot bath-room, a new larder, a new latrine, a new clinic, a store of medicines and medicinal requisites comprising drugs, ointments, snuffs, inhalants. All these he dedicated to the Sangha.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

The worthy man (future Bākula) devoted himself to good deeds till the end of his life. And for the whole of the interim period between the two Buddhas, lasting infinite world-cycles, he was reborn in the deva-world and the human world only. During the era of Buddha Gotama, just before He attained Perfect Enlightenment, future Bākula was conceived in the womb of the wife of a merchant of Kosambī. His parents reached the height of fortune and fame from the time of his conception. His mother believed that her child was endowed with great past merit, and on the day she gave birth to him, she had the infant bathed in the Yamunā river for the sake of his health and long life. This was done with ceremony. (The Reciters of the **Majjhima Nikāya** claimed that the infant was sent to bathe in the river on the fifth day after his birth.)

The nurse, who took the baby to the Yamunā, amused herself by dipping the baby in and out of the water. As she was doing so, a big fish drew near it, mistaking the baby for food. The nurse was frightened and ran away, leaving the baby to be swallowed by the fish.

But, as the baby was endowed with great past merit, he suffered no pains in being swallowed by the fish, but felt quite comfortable in the stomach of the fish, as though he were lying in bed. (If it were any other child it would die instantly. But since this baby was destined to be an *arahat*, the power of the *arahatta-magga-ñāṇa* dormant in him, saved his life. This is the kind of *iddhi* (super-natural power) called *Ñānavipphāra-iddhi*. The fish suffered great pain due to the power of the supposed victim inside it. It felt as if it had swallowed an iron ball and swam downstream for thirty *yojanas* where, at Bārāṇasī, it was caught in a fisherman's net. Big fish usually do not die in the net but were beaten to death. In this case, due to the power of the baby inside it, it died on its own accord so that no beating was necessary. The usual practice of fishermen was to cut up such a big fish to pieces for sales. But, in this case, the child inside it had great power to prevent it from being cut. Therefore, the fisherman carried it on his shoulder by means of a yoke and went about calling for prospective buyers, declaring the price as a thousand coins. This was an unusually high price and the citizens of Bārāṇasī would not buy it.

In Bārāṇasī, there was a merchant, worth eighty crores, who had no child born to his family. His household servants purchased the fish for a thousand coins. Normally, preparing of food such as cutting a fish was left to her servants by the merchant's wife. But, in this case, she went into the kitchen and cut open the big fish, not at the stomach as was usually done, but at the back. This too was due to the great power of the baby inside. She was pleasantly surprised to find a bonny baby inside the fish. She took him, who was golden hued, and carrying it in her arms cried: "I've got a baby here! I have got him from inside the fish!" She showed him gleefully to her husband, who had the strange find (of the living baby) announced with the beat of the drum in the city. Then he reported the matter to the King who said: "The baby, who had survived in the stomach of a fish, must surely be of a person of great past merit. Let it remain in your care."

The Name Bākula

The natural parents of the baby in Kosambī learnt the news of a living baby being found in a fish in Bārāṇasī and they went to Bārāṇasī to investigate. They found the baby richly adorned, playing in the house of the rich man in Bārāṇasī. "What a lovely child this is!" the mother remarked and said that it was her child. The foster mother disagreed and said: "No, it is my child."

Natural mother: "Where did you get this child?"

Foster mother: "I get it from the stomach of a fish."

Natural mother: "If so, this is not your child. It is mine."

Foster mother: "Where did you get yours?"

Natural mother: "I conceived it and it was born out of my womb after ten months of pregnancy, I sent it to the Yamunā river to bathe and it was swallowed by a big fish."

Foster mother: “Maybe it was another fish that swallowed your child. It is however true that I got this child from inside a fish.”

Thus the two mothers each claimed the child as her own. This matter was brought before the King for decision.

The King of Bārāṇasī gave his decision as follows: “The wife of the merchant of Kosambī is the natural mother whose claim to the child is unshakable. On the other hand, the wife of the merchant of Bārāṇasī is not groundless in her claim to the child. For, when one buys fish, it is customary that the entrails of the fish are not taken out by the seller so that the buyer gets the whole fish. The child she got from inside the fish is legally her property. The former has her right to the child as a natural mother. The latter has right to the child as a son by way of a gift. Each is entitled to claim the child, and he is entitled to inherit from both the families.” From that day onwards, both the families enjoyed unprecedented fortune and fame. And the child was brought up in luxury by both families. His name was Bākula Kumāra, Bākula the son of a merchant.

Bākula's Luxurious Life

When Bākula came of age, his two pairs of parents built three mansions each; each for his seasonal residence at Kosambī and Bārāṇasī. He spent only four months at each of the two cities, attended by a big retinue of entertaining girls. When he moved from one city to the other at the end of a four-month stay, he travelled in pomp in a grand barge with dancing girls. The entertaining girls at each city divided the transit period equally between them, i.e. the sending-off team served on the barge for two months after which they were relieved (about half-way) by the welcoming team. The merchant's son then spent four months in great ease and comfort at the each place. He completed eighty years of age living in that manner.

Bākula's Bhikkhuhood and Arahatsip

When Bākula was eighty years old, Buddha Gotama had attained Perfect Enlightenment. After teaching His first discourse, the Dhammacakka, the Buddha toured the country and, travelling by stages, reached Kosambī. (According to the reciters of the **Majjhima Nikāya**, He reached Bārāṇasī.) On learning the arrival of the Buddha, the unrivalled type of his previous meritorious deed prompted Bākula to go and see the Buddha. Making offerings of flowers and perfumes to the Buddha, he listened to the His discourse which heightened his devotion so much that he took up bhikkhuhood. As a *bhikkhu*, he remained a worldling for seven days only because, at the dawn of the eighth day, he attained arahatsip with the fourfold Analytical Knowledge.

At that time, the former ladies who awaited on him had returned to their parents' homes in Bārāṇasī and Kosambī. They were devoted to the Venerable Bākula and made robes for him. He wore their robes in turns; half month using those offered from Kosambī, another half month on those from Bārāṇasī. Besides, the citizens of both the cities made special offerings to him of whatever fine food or articles which they had.

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

During the eighty years of household life, Bākula never experienced any ailment, even for a fleeting moment such as holding a piece of solid unguent and savouring its smell. On the completion of his eightieth year, he became a *bhikkhu* with great satisfaction and as a *bhikkhu*, he also enjoyed perfect health. Moreover, he was never in want of any of the four *bhikkhu* requisites. Thus, on one occasion, when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvattī, in a *bhikkhu* congregation, He declared:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ appābādhānaṃ yadidaṃ Bōkulo.”

“Bhikkhus, among My bhikkhu-disciples who enjoy good health, who are free from disease, Bhikkhu Bākula is the foremost (etadagga).”

Wonders of Bākula

Some marvellous facts concerning the Venerable Bākula, as mentioned in the Bākula Sutta, **Upāripaññāsa**, are reproduced here.

Once, the Venerable Bākula was staying in Rājagaha in the Veḷuvana monastery, when the naked ascetic Kassapa, who had been his friend during his lay life, visited him. After the usual exchange of memorable greetings, he sat in a suitable place and said to the Venerable Bākula: “Friend Bākula, for how long have you been a *bhikkhu*?” “Friend, I have been a *bhikkhu* for eighty years.” “Friend Bākula, during these eighty years, how many times have you had sexual intercourse?” This was a rude question. Then the Venerable Bākula revealed some marvellous and extraordinary things about himself as follows:

- (1) “Friend Kassapa, you should not have put the question to me thus: ‘Friend Bākula, during these eighty years, how many times have you had sexual intercourse?’ Instead, friend Kassapa, you should have put the question to me only in this way: ‘Friend Bākula, during these eighty years, how many times has perception concerning sense-pleasures (*kāma-saññās*) arisen in you?’ Friend Kassapa, I have been a *bhikkhu* for eighty years. (The Venerable Bākula’s age was 160 years then.) All through these eighty years, never has there arisen in me any perception concerning sense pleasures.” (That no consciousness concerning sense-pleasures had ever arisen in Venerable Bākula is a marvellous fact about him.)
 - (2) & (3) “Friend Kassapa, I have been a *bhikkhu* for eighty years. All through these eighty years, there never has arisen in me any perception concerning ill-will (*vyāpāda-sañña*) or any perception concerning harmful thought (*vihiṃsa-sañña*) towards anyone.” (That no perception concerning ill-will had ever arisen in the Venerable Bākula is also a marvellous fact and that no perception concerning harmful thought towards others had ever arisen in him is also a marvellous fact concerning him.)
 - (4) “Friend Kassapa, I have been a *bhikkhu* for eighty years. All through these eighty years, there never has arisen in me any sensual thought.” (The fact that no sensual thought had ever arisen in the Venerable Bākula is a marvellous fact concerning him.)
 - (5) & (6) “Friend Kassapa, I have been a *bhikkhu* for eighty years. All through these years, no harmful thought has ever arisen in me.” (The fact that no harmful thought had ever arisen in the Venerable Bākula is a marvellous fact concerning him.)
 - (7) “Friend Kassapa, I have been a *bhikkhu* for eighty years. All through these eighty years, I have never accepted any robe offered by lay supporters who are not related to me.” (This non-acceptance of robes offered by non-relatives is a marvellous fact concerning the Venerable.)
 - (8) “Friend Kassapa, I have been a *bhikkhu* for eighty years. All through these eighty years, I have never cut robe-material with a knife.” (This non-cutting of robe-material is a marvellous fact concerning the Venerable.)
- “Friend Kassapa, I have been a *bhikkhu* for eighty years. All through these eighty years:
- (9) I have never sewn a robe with a needle.
 - (10) I have never dyed a robe.
 - (11) I have never sewn a kaṭhina robe.
 - (12) I have never taken part in the making of robes of companion-bhikkhus.
 - (13) I have never accepted offering of alms-food at any lay person’s house.
 - (14) I have never had any such thought as: ‘It would be well if somebody were to invite me.’
 - (15) I have never sat in a house.
 - (16) I have never taken a meal in a village or a town.
 - (17) I have never cast my eyes on a woman, noticing her feminine characteristics,

- (18) I have never given a discourse to any woman, even a stanza of four lines.

(It is proper for a *bhikkhu* to discourse to a woman in five or six words. If a doctrinal question be asked by a woman, a *bhikkhu* may answer it in as many as a thousand stanzas. Yet the Venerable Bākula did not discourse to a woman. Discoursing to lay supporters is mostly the job of those *bhikkhus* who have attachment to them. This point should be remembered well)

- (19) I have never gone near a *bhikkhunī*'s monastery.

(It is proper for a *bhikkhu* to visit a sick *bhikkhunī*. And yet the Venerable Bākula did not do so. In such rule, where exceptions are allowed, he never bothered those exceptions.)

- (20) I have never given a discourse to a *bhikkhunī*.

- (21) I have never given a discourse to a probationer *bhikkhunī*.

- (22) I have never given a discourse to a female novice.

- (23) I have never initiated anyone into the Order as a novice.

- (24) I have never acted as preceptor to a candidate for full bhikkhuhood. (25) I have never given any instruction to any *bhikkhus*.

- (26) I have never allowed myself to be served by a novice.

- (27) I have never bathed in a bath-house.

- (28) I have never used bath-powder.

- (29) I have never allowed myself to be massaged by a companion *bhikkhu*.

- (30) I have never been ill, even for the duration taken to draw a drop of milk.

- (31) I have never taken even a bit of herbal medicine.

- (32) I have never leaned against a support.

- (33) I have never lain on a bed." (This is also a marvellous fact about the Venerable Bākula.)

- (34) "Friend Kassapa, I have been a *bhikkhu* for eighty years. All through these eighty years, I have never taken up residence for the rains-retreat period near a village (This mode of dwelling in the forest throughout the whole period of bhikkhuhood is another marvellous fact about the Venerable.)

- (35) "Friend Kassapa, I remained in a defiled state (i.e. as a worldling) only for the first seven days of bhikkhuhood, eating the alms-food from the people. On the eighth day, knowledge of *arahatta-phala* arose in me." (That Venerable Bākula attained arahatship on the eighth day of his bhikkhuhood is also a marvellous fact concerning him.)

(After hearing the marvellous and extraordinary facts about the Venerable Bākula, the naked ascetic Kassapa requested the Venerable that he be admitted into the Order as a *bhikkhu* under this Teaching. Venerable Bākula did not act as preceptor but found a suitable *bhikkhu* to be preceptor to Kassapa, who was admitted into the Order. Not long after, Venerable Kassapa, by diligently engaging in the Noble Practice, attained *arahatta-phala* and became an *arahat*.)

- (36) Then one day Venerable Bākula, holding his key, went from one monastery to another and announced thus: "Venerable Ones, come forth! Venerable Ones, come forth! Today I shall realize *parinibbāna*!" (The fact that the Venerable Bākula was able to do so is also a marvellous thing concerning him.)

- (37) When the Sangha was thus apprised and the companion *bhikkhus* had gathered themselves, the Venerable Bākula, reflecting that during his whole life he had never caused any *bhikkhus* any inconvenience, and that at his death also he did not wish any *bhikkhu* to bear the burden of his dead body, wished that his body be consumed by fire by itself. He sat in the midst of the gathering of *bhikkhus*, entering into the *jhāna* of concentration on the element of heat and passed away. As soon as he passed away his body was consumed by a flame which arose from the body and there was

just a small collection of relics resembling Jasmine buds. (This way of passing away in the midst of a gathering of *bhikkhus* is also a marvellous thing concerning Venerable Bākula.)

(34) SOBHITA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Sobhita was born into a worthy family, in the city of Hamsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he saw a *bhikkhu* being designated as the foremost among the *bhikkhu*-disciples who could remember their past lives. He aspired to that honour in some future existence. After making extraordinary offerings to the Buddha, he expressed this wish. The Buddha predicted that his wish would be fulfilled.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

The future Sobhita spent his life in doing deeds of merit and passed away to the good destinations only. During the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn in the brahmin caste in Savatthi. He was named Sobhita.

Young Sobhita had occasions to listen to the Buddha's discourse. When his devotion grew to such an extent that he became a *bhikkhu* and practised the Noble Practice well and eventually attained arahatship. He was especially endowed with a keen Power of remembering past existences (*pubbenivāsa-ñāṇa*).

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

Five hundred world-cycles ago, from the present world-cycle, the future Sobhita, under the teaching of other faiths, had practised *jhāna* of Fine Material Sphere which is devoid of consciousness. While dwelling in the fourth *jhāna* of that description, he passed away without relapsing from *jhāna* and was reborn in the realm of Fine Material Sphere where he lived for five hundred world-cycles, which is the full life span in that existence.

After passing away from that existence, he was reborn in the human world as Sobhita, the brahmin youth. As he was ripe for enlightenment, he became a *bhikkhu* in the Teaching (of Buddha Gotama). He strove diligently for arahatship and eventually attained it and was endowed with the Three Powers, i.e. Power of Remembering Past Existences, Power of the Divine Sight and Power of Extinction of Āsavas.

One day, as he exercised his Power of Remembering Past Existences, he could see his rebirth in the present existence and on going back he could see his death (i.e. death-conscious moment) at the existence in the second last existence. But he could not see the second last existence which was in the Fine Material Sphere, which is without consciousness.

(Power of Remembering Past Existences is founded on the recalling of the death-consciousness moments and the rebirth-consciousness moments of past existences. This Power pertains only to mental phenomena such as understanding the causal relation of mental processes by way of proximity. The Fine Material Sphere (*asaññasatta*), which is devoid of consciousness, does not lend itself to this scrutiny.)

— Sārattha Tīkā, Vol. II —

Thus, his second last existence being devoid of mental phenomena and hence unknowable even by the Power of Remembering Past Existences, Venerable Sobhita used his intuition thus: "Any being who still fares in the round of rebirth has not a single moment when the aggregates (*khandha*) do not arise. A being, reborn in the Fine Material Sphere, is devoid of consciousness, has a life span of 500 world-cycles. Therefore, I must have been reborn in that Sphere and remained alive without consciousness. That was surely my second last existence." That was how Venerable Sobhita arrived at the knowledge of his past existence.

Recollecting past existence of one, who is reborn in the Fine Material Sphere, is devoid

of consciousness, is a matter falling within the province of the Buddhas only, The conclusion drawn by the Venerable Sobhita was an extra-ordinary mental faculty, which is like hitting a yak's hair with a dart of yak's hair, or like printing a foot track in the sky. Therefore, referring to this unparalleled power of the Venerable Sobhita, the Buddha, on another occasion for naming foremost *bhikkhus*, declared:

“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ pubbenivāsaṃ anussarantānaṃ yadidaṃ Sobhito.”

“Bhikkhus, among My bhikkhu-disciples who have the power to recollect their past existences, Bhikkhu Sobhita is the foremost (etadagga).”

(For more information on this extraordinary faculty of the Venerable Sobhita, refer to the *Vinaya Pārājika*, the fourth *Pārājika*, ending with *Vinīta vatthu*, and the Commentary and Sub-Commentary thereon.)

(35) UPĀLI MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Upāli was born into a worthy family, in the city of Hamsavati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While he was listening to a discourse being delivered by the Buddha, he witnessed a *bhikkhu* being designated as the foremost among the *bhikkhu*-disciples who strictly lived by the Vinaya Rules. He wished to be honoured by the same title by some future Buddha. After making extraordinary offerings to the Buddha, he expressed his aspiration before Him, The Buddha predicted that the aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

The future Upāli spent his whole life in meritorious actions and passed away to good destinations only. During the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn in the barber caste and was named Upāli. When he came of age, he served as barber to six Sakyan princes, namely, Bhaddiya, Anuruddha, Kimila, Bhagu, Ānanda and Devadatta. When the six Sakyan princes renounced the world and joined the Buddha at the Anupiya Mango grove in order to get admission into the Order, Upāli also became a *bhikkhu* together with them. (For details of this episode about the group of Sakyan princes taking up bhikkhuhood, refer to Chapter 19)

After becoming a *bhikkhu*, the Venerable Upāli listened to a discourse by the Buddha and said to Him:

“Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā allow me to dwell in the forest.” To which the Buddha replied: “Son, if you live in the forest you will be pursuing Insight-cultivation only. If you live by my side you will be pursuing Insight-cultivation as well as pursuing learning.” The Venerable Upāli gladly agreed, and with due diligence he attained arahatship not long afterwards. Then the Buddha personally taught the Vinaya extensively to the Venerable Upāli.

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

Venerable Upāli proved himself the greatest disciple in the Vinaya Rules by his decisions on three cases, namely: (1) Bhārukacchaka vatthu (2) Ajjuka vatthu, and (3) Kumāra Kassapa vatthu. (Of these three, Kumāra Kassapa vatthu appears in this Chapter: Kumāra Kassapa Mahāthera. The remaining two stories are briefly given below.)

The Story of a Native Bhikkhu of Bhārukaccha

A *bhikkhu* from Bhārukaccha, a seaport town, dreamt that he had sexual intercourse with his previous wife in his lay life. He had qualms of conscience: “I am no longer a *bhikkhu*,” he considered himself and returned to his native seaport town, Bharukaccha, intending to return to lay life. On his way, he met the Venerable Upāli and related his experience to

him. The Venerable Upāli said: “Friend, what you committed in a dream does not amount to a breach of the Vinaya Rules.” (This episode is recorded in the Vinaya, *Pārājika*.)

The Venerable Upāli was giving judgment on a matter regarding which no decision had been pronounced by the Buddha because the Vinaya does not take dreams as (acts of volition that are) faulty. But he knew that wet dreaming is not a fault and so he rightly decided that the *bhikkhu* from Bharukaccha was not at fault.

When the Buddha learnt of that decision, He lauded the Venerable Upāli, saying: “*Bhikkhus*, Upāli has ruled the matter correctly. He has done something like one who has made a foot-track in the sky.”

The Story of Bhikkhu Ajjuka

Once, in the city of Vesālī, a certain lay supporter of the Venerable Ajjuka, who had a son and a nephew as his possible heirs, entrusted the Venerable with a weighty personal affair. He said to the Venerable Ajjuka: “Venerable Sir, here is my son and here is my nephew. Of these two boys, may the Venerable shows where my property is located to the one who has devotion to the Triple Gem.” Having thus created a private trust, the lay supporter died.

The Venerable Ajjuka found that the nephew of the deceased man was devoted to the Triple Gem and so he showed him whose the property of the man was located. The boy made proper use of his inheritance by engaging in business, which resulted in the preservation of his uncle's wealth and enabled him to do acts of charity.

The son of the deceased man brought this question to the Venerable Ānanda, asking: “Venerable Sir, as between a son and a nephew, who is the rightful heir to a deceased person?”

“Lay supporter, the son is the rightful heir.”

“Venerable Sir, the Venerable Ajjuka has shown the property which is rightfully mine to my brother-in-law, my father's nephew.”

The Venerable Ānanda, without going into the details of this matter, said hastily: “In that case the Venerable Ajjuka is no longer a *bhikkhu* (i.e. he has fallen from bhikkhuhood).”

The Venerable Ajjuka then said to the Venerable Ānanda: “Friend Ānanda, give me your decision on the matter.” On this problem, the Venerable Upāli sided with the Venerable Ajjuka. (Herein, the Venerable Upāli was not taking sides without a just cause. He was simply taking up the righteous cause of Ajjuka who was blameless under the Vinaya Rules. In other words, he was standing up to uphold the Vinaya.)

The Venerable Upāli put this question to the Venerable Ānanda: “Friend Ānanda, where a certain *bhikkhu* was told by someone: ‘Show my property to such and such a person’, and the *bhikkhu* did as he was told, what fault does he incur?”

“There is no fault whatever, Venerable Sir, not even a minor offence.”

“Friend Ānanda, Bhikkhu Ajjuka was under instructions by the owner of the property to show it to such and such person, and he showed it to the boy (the nephew). Therefore, Friend Ānanda, Ajjuka incurs no wrong under the Vinaya.”

The news of this bold decision reached the Buddha who said: “*Bhikkhus*, Upāli has given a right decision,” and lauded him.

(There are many more remarkable events that revealed the greatness of the Venerable Upāli which may be found in the **Therāpadāna**, the text and the interpretations are contained in the **Chiddapīdhānaṃ** by the late Mahāvisuddhārāma Sayadaw.)

The Buddha endorsed the three Vinaya rulings given by the Venerable Upāli, lauding him each time. And based on these three instances, on another occasion, the Buddha, sitting in a congregation of *bhikkhus*, declared:

“*Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ vinayadharānaṃ*

yadidaṃ Upāli.”

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhu*-disciples who strictly live by the Vinaya Rules, *Bhikkhu Upāli* is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

(36) NANDAKA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Nandaka was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he witnessed a *bhikkhu* being honoured by the Buddha with the *etadagga* title of foremost *bhikkhu* in giving admonition to *bhikkhunīs*. He had an ardent desire to be designated with the same title by some future Buddha. He therefore made extraordinary offerings to the Buddha and later expressed his wish before Him. The Buddha saw that his aspiration would be fulfilled and made the prediction accordingly.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

The future Nandaka devoted himself to meritorious deeds till his death and after passing away from that existence, he was reborn only in the good destinations. During the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn into a worthy family in Sāvatti. When he attained adulthood, he listened to the Buddha's discourse which aroused his devotion so much so that he renounced lay life and took up *bhikkhuhood*. Soon after, striving strenuously in *bhikkhu* practice, he attained arahatship. He had a special competence in exercising the Power of Remembering past existences. He also was a gifted orator who could draw the attention of the four types of devotees who gathered before the Buddha or the Sangha by his skill in exposition. Thus, he came to be popularly known as Venerable Nandaka, the Expounder of the Doctrine.

At one time, the Buddha had to intervene between the two warring groups of Sakyan princes: the Koliya clan and the Kapilavattu clan. They were living on each side of a small river called the Rohini. They could not amicably decide on the distribution of the scanty water to each clan's cultivators. After pacifying both sides, the Buddha asked 250 princes from each clan to take up *bhikkhuhood*. These five hundred Sakyan princes were young (They were attached to their families) and did not find happiness as *bhikkhus*. Hence, the Buddha took them to (a far-away forest in the midst of which lay) Lake Kuṇāla. There, He delivered the Kuṇāla Jātaka and aroused emotional awakening in them. The Buddha knew about this and expounded the Four Ariya Truths to them which caused them to be established in *sotāpatti-phala*. Then He taught them the Mahāsamaya Sutta in the Mahāvana forest, at the end of which, the five hundred *bhikkhus* became *arahats*. (For detail on this episode refer to Chapter 22.)

The five hundred wives of these *bhikkhus*, who had renounced their lay lives, did not see any reason to remain in their lofty mansions. So they all gathered around Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, the Buddha's foster mother, to plead with the Buddha for admission into the Order.

They went to the Mahāvana forest where, at the ardent request by Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, the Buddha allowed them to become female-*bhikkhus* or *bhikkhunīs* after laying down eight cardinal principles to be observed by them. Since there were no *bhikkhunīs* before them, their admission ceremony was performed by *bhikkhus* only. (Later, admission of *bhikkhunīs* required both a congregation of *bhikkhus* and that of *bhikkhunīs*) The important thing relating to the Venerable Nandaka is that all these five hundred *bhikkhunīs* were, in one of their former existences, queen consorts to the Venerable Nandaka who was then a king.

Then the Buddha enjoined *bhikkhus* to admonish *bhikkhunīs*. When it was the Venerable Nandaka's turn to give admonition to the five hundred *bhikkhunīs*, he did not go to them but deputed another *bhikkhu* to carry out the task. This was because he knew, by his Knowledge of Recollecting Past Existences, that these five hundred *bhikkhunīs* had been

his consorts in his former existence. He was concerned that if some other *bhikkhu* who was endowed with similar knowledge saw him surrounded by these *bhikkhunīs*, he might be misunderstood as being still attached to his former consorts.

The five hundred *bhikkhunīs* were keen on receiving admonition from the Venerable Nandaka. The Buddha then said to Venerable Nandaka: “Nandaka, admonish the *bhikkhunīs* personally, do not depute another *bhikkhu* when it is your turn.” Venerable Nandaka, in respectful compliance with the Buddha's words, went to the *bhikkhunīs* on the allotted day, the fourteenth day of the lunar month, which was on *uposatha* day. He admonished them on the subject of the six internal sense bases (*āyatana*) at the end of which, the five hundred *bhikkhunīs*, former Sakyan princesses, attained Fruition of Sotāpatti-phala.

The *bhikkhunīs* were pleased and delighted with the Venerable Nandaka's discourse. They approached the Buddha and expressed their appreciation of the Supramundane Path and the Fruition which they had experienced. The Buddha then reviewed their case, and saw that the same discourse by the Venerable Nandaka, if repeated, would lead them to arahatship. So, on the following day, the Buddha let them hear the same discourse from Venerable Nandaka. As the result of which, the five hundred *bhikkhunīs* became *arahats*.

On the day when the five hundred *bhikkhunīs* approached the Buddha, He knew that the repeated discourse had benefited them and so He said to the *bhikkhus*:

“*Bhikkhus*, the discourse by Bhikkhu Nandaka yesterday is like the full moon that appears on the fourteenth day of the month whereas the discourse he made today is like the full moon that appears on the fifteenth day of the month.” Thus extolled the Buddha on the merit of the Venerable Nandaka's discourse. (The full text of the discourse by Venerable Nandaka is found in Nandakovāda Sutta, *Uparipañṇāsa*.)

(c) *Etadagga* Title achieved

With reference to the above episode, the Buddha, on another occasion, sitting in the *bhikkhu* congregation, declared:

“*Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūaṃ
bhikkhunovādakānaṃ yadidaṃ Nandako.*”

“*Bhikkhus*, among the *bhikkhu*-disciples who give instruction to *bhikkhunīs*, Bhikkhu Nandaka is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

(37) NANDA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Nanda was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvātī during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When he came of age, he had the occasion to listen to a discourse by the Buddha. As he was listening the discourse, he witnessed the Buddha named a certain *bhikkhu* as foremost in guarding his sense-faculties. He aspired to that distinction in the Teaching of some future Buddhas. After making extraordinary offerings to the Buddha, he expressed his aspiration. The Buddha predicted that the aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

The future Nanda was reborn as the son of Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, the foster-mother of the Buddha, in the city of Kapitavatthu. (He was born two or three days after the Buddha-to-be, Prince Siddhattha, was born by Queen Māyā, who was the elder sister of Mahāpajāpati Gotamī. An account of Prince Nanda becoming a *bhikkhu* has been given in Chapter 29.)

On the third day of his first visit to Kapliavatthu, the Buddha admitted Prince Nanda into the Order of Bhikkhus, (the details which have been given in Chapter 20.)

Although Prince Nanda had taken up bhikkhuhood, the (pitiable) words of his Princess

Janapadakalyāṇī were always ringing in his ears: “O My Lord, come back to me soon!” Quite often he imagined his erstwhile beloved wife were standing by his side. Finding no comfort in the Teaching, he tried to run away from the Nigrodhārāma monastery. But he had not gone beyond a thicket when he thought the Buddha was standing in his way, and he was obliged to go back to the monastery with a mind crumpled like a burnt feather.

The Buddha knew the distress of Bhikkhu Nanda, his utter negligence and his ennui in bhikkhuhood. To give immediate relief to his boredom and despair, the Buddha said to him: “Come, Nanda, let us pay a visit to the celestial world.” “Venerable Sir, the celestial world is accessible to powerful beings only. How would I be able to visit there?” asked Bhikkhu Nanda. “Nanda, just make your wish to go there and you will get there and see celestial things.” (The above account is taken from the **Commentary** on the **Aṅguttara**, Book One. The following account about Venerable Nanda will be based on the **Udāna** and the **Commentary** thereon.)

The Buddha's objective was to allay the pangs of attachment in Nanda's mind by strategy. Then, as if taking Nanda by the arm, the Buddha, by means of his supernormal powers took Bhikkhu Nanda to the Tāvātimsa Deva realm. On the way, the Buddha let him notice a decrepit old female monkey sitting (desolately) on the stump of a burnt tree in a burnt paddy field, with her nose, ears and tail burnt away.

(In this matter, the Buddha took Nanda personally to the Tāvātimsa realm to let him experience stark contrast between the nature of human existence and deva existence, how lowly in birth the former is when compared with the latter. Just by letting him see the Tāvātimsa Deva realm, the Buddha could have opened up the vista of the deva realm while remaining at the Jetavana monastery, or else. He could have sent Nanda alone by the Buddha-power to the Tāvātimsa realm. The magnificence of the deva-world was purposely impressed on Nanda so as to make him take up, as an object of his goal, the task of the Threefold Training of a *bhikkhu* which he would consider enjoyable and worthwhile.)

At the Tāvātimsa realm, the Buddha showed celestial maidens who had crimson feet like the colour of the feet of the pigeon, who were entertaining Sakka, King of Devas. Then followed a dialogue between the Buddha and Bhikkhu Nanda:

Buddha: Nanda, do you see those five hundred celestial maidens whose feet are crimson like the colour of the pigeon's feet?

Nanda: I do, Venerable Sir!

Buddha: Now, answer my question honestly. What do you think of this: Who is more beautiful? These damsels or your (one-time wife) Sakyan Princess Janapadakalyāṇī? Who is more attractive?

Nanda: Venerable Sir, as compared to these celestial maidens, Janapadakalyāṇī would seem to me just like the decrepit old female monkey (we saw on our way). She is not as feminine. She cannot stand beside these girls who are much too superior to her, who are much more lovely, much more attractive.

Buddha: Nanda, take up your *bhikkhu* practice well. Make yourself happy in the Teaching. I assure you that if you do so, you will have these five hundred celestial maidens.

Nanda: Venerable Sir, if the Bhagavā assures me of getting these lovely girls with crimson feet, I will make myself happy in the Teaching and stay with the Bhagava.

After that dialogue at the Tāvātimsa realm, the Buddha brought along Bhikkhu Nanda instantly to the Jetavana monastery as if taking him by the arm.

(The Buddha's strategy needs to be understood here. As a good physician would administer some purgative to purge the toxic waste inside his patient, before administering milder medicine, whereby to vomit the remaining harmful matter

that causes the disease, so also Nanda's sensual attachment for his ex-wife had first to be purged by means of his desire for celestial maidens. After that, the Buddha would direct Nanda's efforts to the practice of the Ariya Path whereby he could get rid of the remaining defilements.

Again, the reason for setting up some sexual object (of celestial maidens) for Nanda, whom the Buddha wishes to get him established in the Noble Practice marked by celibacy, needs to be understood. The Buddha is giving a temporary visual object of a much greater attractiveness so that Nanda could readily forget his erstwhile wife. By giving his assurance to Nanda to get that objective, the Buddha sets the mind of the youthful *bhikkhu* at ease. Incidentally, the course of the Buddha's sermon, which usually progresses from attainment of celestial glory on the part of a donor towards *magga-phala*, should also be understood likewise.)

— Commentary on the *Udāna* —

From the time he got back to the Jetavana monastery, Bhikkhu Nanda arduously pursued *bhikkhu* practice, with the object of getting celestial maidens. Meanwhile, the Buddha had given instructions to the *bhikkhus* to go about Bhikkhu Nanda's meditation place and say: "A certain *bhikkhu* is said to be striving hard in *bhikkhu* practice to get celestial maidens under the assurance of the Bhagavā." The *bhikkhus* said: "Very well, Venerable Sir." And they went about within earshot of Bhikkhu Nanda, saying: "The Venerable Nanda is said to be striving hard in *bhikkhu* practice to get celestial maidens. The Bhagavā is said to have given him the assurance that five hundred celestial maidens with crimson feet like the colour of the pigeon's feet will be his prize."

"O what a mercenary *bhikkhu* the Venerable Nanda is!"

"O what a dignified trader the Venerable Nanda is!"

When Venerable Nanda heard those stinging epithets, 'mercenary' and 'dignified trader' being applied to his name, he was greatly agitated, "Ah, how wrong I have been! How unbecoming a *bhikkhu*! Due to my lack of control of my sense-faculties, I have become the laughing stock of my companion *bhikkhus*. I must guard my sense faculties well." From that moment, Venerable Nanda trained himself to be mindful with clear comprehension in all things that he looked at, whether looking east or west, south or north, upwards or downwards, across or at any intermediate point of the compass, not to allow any thought of greed, hatred, or other demeritoriousness arise in him due to whatever he saw. By restraining himself with respect to his sense-faculties to a most exacting degree, his pursuit of *bhikkhu* practice culminated in arahatship not long afterwards.

Then at about midnight, a Brahmā went to the Buddha and gave the good news that Venerable Nanda had attained arahatship. The Buddha directed his mind to Venerable Nanda and confirmed that what the Brahmā said was true.

Buddha's Freedom from Binding Obligation

The thought that he was practising the Noble Path with the object of getting celestial maidens, brought to his rude awakening by his companion *bhikkhus*, made the Venerable Nanda remorseful and the emotional awakening corrected his attitude, made him ever more ardent in the right practice culminating in arahatship. Then he remembered how he had made the Buddha a guarantor to get him the celestial maidens. He thought it necessary to relieve Him of that undertaking. In the next morning he went to the Buddha, made obeisance, and sitting in a suitable place, said: "Venerable Sir, the Bhagavā had undertaken to see that I get celestial maidens with crimson feet like the colour of the feet of the pigeon. Venerable Sir, I do not want the Bhagavā to be bound any more on that account."

The Buddha said: "Nanda, I know, by My own mind, in reading your mind, that you are now established in *arahatta-phala*. Moreover, a Brahmā also brought this news to Me. Nanda, from the moment of your freedom from the moral intoxicants (*āsavas*) (i.e., from your attainment of Arahantship) I have been released of that bond. (This is the natural thing. You need not free me from it.)" The Buddha saw the unshakable nature of an *arahat*, in the face of the vicissitudes of life rendered possible through extinction of moral intoxicants,

and feeling very delighted with the present status of Venerable Nanda, uttered this joyous stanza:

*Yassa nittiṇṇo paṅko,
maddito kāmakaṇṭako.
Mohakkhayaṃ anuppatto
sukhadukkhesu na redhaṭṭi sa bhikkhu.*

The *arahat* has crossed over the mire of rebirth (by means of the Ariya Path which serves as a bridge). He has completely destroyed (with the Ariya Path as the weapon) the darts of sensuality (that torment devas and humans alike). He has reached (by progressing along the four stages of the Path-Knowledge) the end of bewilderment (i.e. attained Nibbāna). That enlightened *bhikkhu*, (unlike a worldlyling) does not flutter when faced with pain or pleasure (i.e. the vicissitudes of life).

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

In another occasion, when the Buddha was in congregation with the *bhikkhus* at the Jetavana monastery, He declared:

*"Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakaṇaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ indriyesu
guttadvārānaṃ yadidaṃ Nando."*

"*Bhikkhus*, among the *bhikkhu*-disciples who guard their sense-faculties well, Bhikkhu Nanda is the foremost (*etadagga*)."

(Other *bhikkhu*-disciples also guarded their sense-faculties well. The Venerable Nanda excelled all others in that whenever he looked in any of the ten directions to look at something, he did so only after making sure that he had the four kinds of clear comprehension, namely, (i) pondering wisely the pros and cons of an action beforehand (*satthaka sampajāñña*); (ii) pondering wisely whether an action, even though beneficial, would be proper for oneself to do (*sappāyas*); (iii) pondering wisely not to incur fault in one's going about various places (*gocaras*); (iv) pondering wisely to avoid any action influenced by bewilderment (*asammohas*). He applied the rigorous self-discipline because he felt repentant about his lack of such control which lay at the root of his unhappiness in bhikkhuhood. Moreover, he had an innate sense of shame to do evil and dread to do evil. And above all, there was also his past aspiration to attain this distinction which he expressed (before Buddha Padumuttara) a hundred thousand world-cycles previously, which was fulfilled.)

(38) MAHA KAPPINA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Mahā Kappina was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While he was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he witnessed the honouring by the Buddha of a *bhikkhu* as the foremost in admonishing other *bhikkhus*. He aspired to that distinction at some future time. After making extraordinary offerings to the Buddha, he expressed his aspiration before the Buddha. The Buddha predicted that the aspiration would be fulfilled.

(The following account of the future Mahā Kappina's meritorious actions is taken from the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**. The Commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** gives only a brief description of his meritorious action during the time of Buddha Kassapa, and then goes over to his last existence.)

Life as A Chief Weaver

After passing away from the existence where he received the Buddha's prognostication, the future Mahā Kappina was reborn only in the fortunate destinations. In one such

existence, he was the chief weaver in a big village, near the city of Bārāṇasī. During that time, there were one thousand Paccekabuddhas who used to live at the Himalayas for four months of the cold season and four months of the hot season, but lived near the town in the countryside during the four rainy months.

On one occasion, the thousand Paccekabuddhas descended near Bārāṇasī and deputed eight among them to go and ask the King of Bārāṇasī to provide workmen for construction of monastic dwellings. It so happened that the time of this request was made when the King was preparing for the annual ritual of ploughing. As soon as the King heard the news of the arrival of the Paccekabuddhas, he went to meet them and asked about the purpose of their visit. Then he said: “Venerable Sirs, there is hardly any time to start building monasteries immediately because tomorrow I shall be engaged in the annual ploughing ceremony. Therefore, may the Venerables allow us to start on the third day from now.” After saying so, the King returned to his palace without remembering to invite the Paccekabuddhas to receive food offerings on the next day.

The Paccekabuddhas left the palace, thinking of going elsewhere. At that time, the wife of the chief weaver happened to be in the city on business. When she saw the Paccekabuddhas, she made obeisance to them and asked them why they were in the city at that untimely hour. The Paccekabuddhas told her about their meeting with the King. The weaver's wife, being possessed of conviction in the Buddha and having innate wisdom, invited the Paccekabuddhas to accept her food offerings the next day. To which, they said: “Sister, we are rather too many.” “How many, Venerable Sir?” “There are a thousand of us.” “Venerable Sir, there are a thousand households in my village. Each household will offer food to each of the Paccekabuddhas. Just allow us to make the offerings. We shall also build monastic dwellings for your reverences, for which, I am going to take a lead.” The Paccekabuddhas agreed to accept the invitation.

The wife of the chief weaver then went about in the village announcing to everyone: “O brothers! O sisters! I have met a thousand Paccekabuddhas and invited them to receive our food offerings tomorrow. Please prepare rice gruel and cooked rice for them.” The next morning she went to the Paccekabuddhas and led them to a big pavilion which was at the centre of the village. After having them seated in their respective places, the offerings of choice food and delicacies were made. At the end of the meal, she and the other ladies from the village made obeisance to the Paccekabuddhas and said to them: “Venerable Sirs, may the revered Ones agree to dwell at this village for the *vassa* period of three months.” The Paccekabuddhas agreeing, the weaver's wife went about in the village, announcing: “O brothers! O sisters! let us build a monastery for the Paccekabuddhas. Let every household lend a hand in this work. Let a man from every house bring axes, adzes and necessary tools. Let them go into the forest and gather timber. Let them join in this construction.”

There was very good response to her call for action, the whole village joined in the noble effort of putting up a humble monastic dwelling with thatched roof for each of the thousand Paccekabuddhas, complete with living space of night's shelter and for spending the day time. Every householder was eager to serve the Paccekabuddhas, with requests that their services be accepted. Thus they happily arranged for the three month period, tending to the needs of the thousand Paccekabuddhas. At the close of the rains-retreat period, the weaver's wife called upon the village: “O brothers! O sisters! make ready the cloth for robes of each Paccekabuddha who had stayed at each of the monastic dwellings during the rains-retreat period.” Thus each household, which had built a dwelling for a Paccekabuddha, donated robes to its respective Paccekabuddha. Each robe worth a thousand coins. After the offering of robes, the Paccekabuddhas delivered a discourse in appreciation of the donations, wished them well, and returned to their Himalayan abodes.

Life as A Chief Householder

All the residents of the weaver's village, after passing away from that existence, were reborn together in the Tāvātimsa Deva realm. After enjoying the full life span of deva, the whole group was reborn into families of rich householders in Bārāṇasī. The chief weaver was reborn into the family of the chief householder, and his wife of the former existence

also was reborn into the family of a senior householder. When they were of marriageable age, the spouses in their previous existence in the weaver's village became spouses again.

One day, this community visited the monastery of Buddha Kassapa to listen to His discourse. As soon as they had stepped into the monastic compound, there came a deluge of rain. Then, those other people, who had members of the Sangha related to them, went into their premises for shelters from the rain. The thousand couples, who were householders, had nowhere to go for shelter but to remain in the monastic compound and were drenched thoroughly. Then the chief of these householders said to them: "Look, friends, how helpless we are. Considering our social standing, what we now find ourselves in is a total disgrace." "What good work do we need to do?" This question was raised by the community. "We meet with this disgrace because we are total strangers to the Sangha in this monastery. So let us build a monastery by our joint efforts." "Very well, Chief," the men agreed.

Then the chief householder started the fund with his one thousand coins. The rest of the householders put in five hundred each. The wives of the householders donated two hundred and fifty each. With this initial outlay they started constructing a big pinnacled monastery for Buddha Kassapa. It was a big project and the funds fell short. So they each donated an additional amount, which was half of what they donated initially. And in this way they were able to complete the project. Then they held a grand inauguration ceremony for seven days to mark the transfer of the monastery to the Buddha and His Sangha. They also offered a robe each to the twenty thousand *arahats*.

Extra-ordinary Devotion of The Chief Householder's Wife

The wife of the chief householder had innate wisdom. She showed greater devotion to the good work undertaken by the community of a thousand rich householders. When robes were offered to the Buddha and the Sangha, she also offered golden-hued flowers of the Asoka tree to the Buddha besides the golden-hued robe, which was made especially for offering to the Buddha, and which was worth a thousand coins. When Buddha Kassapa delivered a sermon in appreciation of the donation of the great monastery, the wife of the chief householder, placing her specially made robe at the feet of the Buddha, made her aspiration thus: "Venerable Sir, in all my future existences, may I have a complexion as golden-hued as these *anojā* flowers, and may I also have the name of that flower, *Anojā*." And the Buddha replied: "May your wish be fulfilled."

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence.

This community of householders filled their lives with good deeds. After passing away from that existence they were reborn in the deva realm. At the time of the appearance of Buddha Gotama, they passed away from the deva existence, the chief of them was reborn into the royal family in Kukkuṭavati and was called Prince Mahā Kappina. When he came of age, he ascended the throne as King Mahā Kappina. The remaining householders were reborn into the noble families and became courtiers at the court of King Mahā Kappina. The wife of the chief householder was born into the royal family at Sāgala in Madda country. Princess Madda had a golden complexion and she was called Princess Anojā (The Golden-Complexioned) as she had aspired.

When Princess Anojā came of age, she became the Chief Queen of King Mahā Kappina. The wives of the holders in their previous existence were again united with their spouses of the past existence. The thousand ministers and their wives enjoyed the same glories of life as the King and the Queen. When the King and Queen rode on elephant-back, the thousand ministers and their wives rode on elephant-back too. When the King rode on horse-back, they also rode on horse-back, and when the King rode on a chariot, they also rode on chariots. This was because all of them had done meritorious deeds together in their past existences.

Royal Messengers sent for Wonderful News

King Mahā Kappina had five thoroughbred horses, namely, Bala, Balavāhana, Puppha,

Pupphavāhana and Supatta. The King used only Supatta and let his royal riders use the other four. It was the duty of his royal riders to gather daily information for him. They were properly fed in the morning, after which the King sent them out on their daily mission with the command: “Go ye, my good men, go to a distance of two to three *yojanas* around this city of Kukkuṭavatī, each in his own direction to the four quarters, and gather the news of the appearance of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha in the world. As soon as you hear the happy news bring it to me with great haste.” The four riders would gallop away to the four quarters from the four city gates, went to three *yojanas* distance each day, and then returned to the palace with no good tidings which the King had eagerly awaited.

Wonderful News about The Three Gems

Then one day, as King Mahā Kappina visited the royal gardens riding his horse, Supatta, accompanied by his one thousand ministers, he saw a caravan of five hundred merchants, all looking tired, enter the city. The King thought: “These merchants had a weary journey. Probably they must have some fresh news to tell.” He summoned them and addressed them: “O good men, where have you come from?” “Great King, there is the city of Sāvattī which is a hundred and twenty *yojanas* away from this city of Kukkuṭavatī. We have come from that Sāvattī.” “Good men, tell me if there is some special news, current in Sāvattī.”

“Great King, we have no strange news to tell. However, there has appeared the Buddha at Sāvattī.”

On hearing the word ‘Buddha’, the King was so overwhelmed by the five stages of delightful satisfaction that he was senseless for a short while. “What, what did you say?” “Great King, the Buddha has appeared in the world.” For three times, the news had the same stunning effect on the King. This was due to his intense delight. For the fourth time, the King asked again: “What did you say?” “Great King, the Buddha has appeared in the world.” “O men, you have brought me the good news that the Buddha has appeared in the world. For bringing this precious news to me, I award you one hundred thousand coins of silver.”

Then King Mahā Kappina further asked: “Any other strange news?” “Yes, Great King, the Dhamma has appeared in the world.” On hearing the word ‘Dhamma’, the King was so overwhelmed by intense delight that he was senseless for a short while. Three times he repeated his question and three times he seemed to have lost his senses for a while. On the fourth time, for being told: “Great King, the Dhamma has appeared in the world”, the King said: “For bringing this precious news to me, I award you a hundred thousand coins.”

Then the King further asked: “Good men, have you any other strange news?” “Yes, Great King,” they said, “The Sangha has appeared in the world”. On hearing the word ‘Sangha’, the King was so overwhelmed by intense delight and became senseless for a while as before. This happened three times when he was told of the good news. On the fourth time, he said to the merchants: “Good men, for bringing this precious news to me, I award you a hundred thousand coins.”

Renunciation of King Mahā Kappina

Then the King looked at his one thousand ministers and said: “O my good men, what would you do now?” The ministers repeated the same question to the King: “Great King, what would you do now?” “Good men, now that we have been told that the Buddha has appeared, the Dhamma has appeared, the Sangha has appeared, we do not intend to return to our palace. We will go from here to the Buddha, and I will become a *bhikkhu* as his disciple.” The ministers said: “Great King, we too will become *bhikkhus* together with you.”

King Mahā Kappina had a gold plate etched with his order to disburse three hundred thousand coins and handed it to the merchants. “Go, you good men,” he said to them, “present this message to the Queen at the palace, and she will disburse to you on my behalf three hundred thousand coins. Also tell Queen Anojā, that the King has relinquished the throne and the country to her and that she may reign supreme in the land. If she asks:

‘Where is the King?’ you should tell her that the King has gone to the Buddha to become a *bhikkhu*.” The thousand ministers likewise sent messages of their renunciation to their wives. When the merchants went to the palace, the King rode his horse, Supatta, and, accompanied by his thousand ministers, went forth to become *bhikkhu*.

Mahā Kappina welcomed by The Buddha

The Buddha, on his daily reviewing the sentient world, saw that King Mahā Kappina had learnt the appearance of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha from the merchants, that he had honoured the Triple Gem by making an award of three hundred thousand coins, and that he was renouncing the world and would be arriving the next day. The Buddha also saw that King Mahā Kappina and his one thousand ministers would attain arahatship together with the four Analytical Knowledges. “It were well if I go and welcome King Mahā Kappina,” reflected the Buddha. And like the Universal Monarch welcoming a vassal lord, the Buddha, taking His alms-bowl and robe, left the monastery alone to welcome King Mahā Kappina on the way, at a distance of one hundred and twenty *yojanas* from Sāvattī, where He sat underneath a pipal tree by the side of the Candabhāgā river, displaying the six Buddha-rays.

Mahā Kappina crossing The Three Rivers

King Mahā Kappina and his one thousand ministers, mounted on horse-back, went for renunciation when they came across a river. “What is this river?” he asked of his ministers.

“This is the River Aparacchā, Great King,” they said.

“How big is it?”

“Great King, it is one *gāvuta* deep and two *gāvutas* wide.”

“Is there any craft to cross?”

“There is none, Great King.”

The King pondered thus: “While we are looking for some river crafts to cross this river, birth is leading us to ageing, and ageing is leading us to death. I have implicit faith in the Triple Gem and have gone forth from the world. By the power of the Triple Gem, may this expanse of water prove no obstacle to me.” Then reflecting on the supreme attributes of the Buddha, such as, ‘the Buddha, the Homage-Worthy, the Perfectly Self-Enlightened, the Exalted One’, he uttered the following stanza:

*Bhavasotam have Buddho,
tiṇṇo lokantagū vidū;
Etena saccavajjena,
gamanam me samijjhatu.*

The All-Knowing Buddha indeed has crossed over the floods of the recurring existences in the three worlds. Having crossed over the floods, the Buddha has reached the end of the world and known all things analytically. By this asseveration of the truth, may my journey (to the Buddha, on my renunciation) be accomplished without a hitch.

King Mahā Kappina, uttering this verse, crossed the river with his one thousand ministers on horse-back. The waters of the river which was two *gāvutas* wide did not even wet the tips of the hoofs of their horses.

As the King proceeded, he came across another river.

“What is this river?” he asked his ministers.

“This is the River Nilavāhinī, Great King,” they said.

“How big is it?”

“Great King, it is half a *yojana* deep and half a *yojana* wide.”

(The King's further inquiry about river craft and his pondering on the urgency of his journey should be read as the same situation as before.) Then reflecting on the supreme

attributes of the Dhamma, such as, “The Dhamma is well propounded,” etc., he uttered the following verse and crossed the river together with his one thousand ministers:

*Yadi santigamo maggo,
mokkho caccantikaṃ sukhaṃ;
Etena saccavajjena,
gamanam me samijjhatu.*

The *ariya-magga*, the Supramundane Path, indeed leads to the Peace of Nibbāna. The Release (i.e. Nibbāna) attained through the *ariya-magga* is absolute happiness. By this asseveration of the truth, may my journey (to the Buddha on my renunciation) be accomplished without a hitch.”

Uttering this verse, King Mahā Kappina crossed the river with his one thousand ministers on horse-back. The waters of the river which was half a *yojana* wide did not even wet the tips of the horses' hoofs.

Beyond that Nilavāhinī river lay another river to be crossed. He asked his ministers, “What is this river?”

“This is the River Candabhāgā, Great King,” they said.

“How big is it?”

“Great King, it is one *yojana* deep and one *yojana* wide.”

(As with the previous two rivers, the King pondered on the urgency of his journey.) Then reflecting on the supreme attributes of the Sangha, such as, ‘The *ariya* disciples of the Bhagava are endowed with right practice,’ he uttered the following verse and crossed the river together with his one thousand ministers:

*Samgho ve tiṇṇakantāro,
puññakkhetto anuttaro;
Etena saccavajjena,
gamanam me sumijjhatu.*

The *ariya-sangha* have indeed crossed the wilderness of *saṃsāra*, and are the incomparable field for sowing seeds of merit. By this asseveration of the truth, may my journey (to the Buddha on my renunciation) be accomplished without a hitch.

Uttering this verse, King Mahā Kappina crossed the river with his one thousand ministers on horseback. The waters of the river which was one *yojana* wide did not even wet the tips of the horses' hoofs.

(The three stanzas uttered by King Mahā Kappina are taken from Mahā Kappina Therāpadāna.)

Mahā Kappina meeting The Buddha and Adoption of Ascetic Life

As the King had crossed over the Candabhāgā river he saw, to his great wonder, the six Buddha-rays emanating from the Buddha, who was sitting at the foot of the pipal tree. The entire tree, i.e. the trunk, the boughs, branches and foliage, was awash with the golden glow, The King rightly knew that ‘this golden glow is not the sun's rays nor the moon's, nor that of any deva or *māra* or *nāga* or garuda, but must be that of Buddha Gotama, for the Bhagavā has seen me coming and is welcoming me!’

At that instant, King Mahā Kappina dismounted and bowing himself, approached the Buddha, being drawn towards the Buddha-rays. He felt as though he were immersed in a mass of cool liquid realgar as he walked through the Buddha-rays. He and his one thousand ministers made obeisance to the Buddha and sat in a suitable place. Then the Buddha gave them a discourse by gradual stages of exposition, through (1) the merit in giving, (2) the merit in morality, (3) the merit leading to the deva-world, and (4) the gaining of Path-Knowledge. By the end of the discourse, King Mahā Kappina and his one thousand ministers attained *sotāpatti-phala*.

Then they all rose up and asked the Buddha that they be admitted into the Order as *bhikkhus*. The Buddha reviewed their past to find out whether they were fit to receive robes and alms-bowl created by His supernormal powers and He saw that their past merit of having donated robes to one thousand Paccekabuddhas and that, during Buddha Kassapa's time, they had donated robes to twenty-thousand *arahats*, were their merits of receive robes and alms-bowl created by the His supernormal powers. Then the Buddha stretched out His right hand and said: "Come, *bhikkhus*, receive bhikkhuhood as you request. You have heard the Doctrine. Now work out your release with diligence by the Threefold Training." At that very instant King Mahā Kappina and his one thousand ministers were transformed from layman's appearance into that of *bhikkhu* of sixty years' standing, equipped with the *bhikkhu* paraphernalia, such as alms bowl. etc., which were created by the will of the Buddha. They rose into the air, then descended to the ground and, paying obeisance to the Buddha, sat (at a suitable place).

Queen Anojā meeting The Merchants

The merchants of Savatthi went to the court of Kukkuṭavati and sought audience with Queen Anoja, informing her that they were seen by the King. Having obtained the Queen's assent to see them, they entered the palace, saluted her, and sat at an appropriate place. Then a dialogue took place between the Queen and them:

- Queen: O men, what brought you to our court?
- Merchants: O Queen, we are being directed to you by the King to claim three hundred thousand coins as reward.
- Queen: O men, you are making a big claim. What good turn have you done for the King so as to be granted such a rich reward?
- Merchants: O Queen, we have not done any good turn for the King except to impart some strange news, which gladdened him.
- Queen: Will you be able to tell me what that strange news were?
- Merchants: Yes, we can, O Queen.
- Queen: Then go ahead.
- Merchants: O Queen, the Buddha has appeared in the world.

On hearing that news, the Queen, just as the King, was overwhelmed by delight and remained senseless for a short while. This happened three times. On the fourth time that she heard that news, she asked the merchants: "O men, how much did the King reward you for bringing to him the news about 'the Buddha'?" "The King rewarded us one hundred thousand coins for that."

"The King's reward of a hundred thousand for bringing such extraordinary and wonderful news is improper, inadequate. For my part, I reward you, as poor subjects of mine, three hundred thousand coins. But what further news did you tell the King?" The merchants told her that they also apprised the King of the appearance of the Dhamma and the appearance of the Sangha, one by one. The Queen, being overwhelmed by delight, was senseless for a short while, for three times, on hearing each of those wonderful tidings. On the fourth time of mentioning the news, i.e. the news about the Dhamma, and the other about the Sangha, the Queen rewarded them three hundred thousand coins for each piece of the wonderful news. Thus the merchants received nine hundred thousand coins as the Queen's reward, in addition to the King's reward of three hundred thousand, making a total of twelve hundred thousand.

Then the Queen asked the merchants where the King was, and they told her that the King had gone forth to become a *bhikkhu*, as a disciple of the Buddha. The Queen added: "What message did the King leave for me?" The merchants told her that the King was leaving the throne and the country to the Queen who was to succeed him as the sovereign. Then the Queen inquired after the thousand ministers. The merchants told her that the ministers also had gone forth to become *bhikkhus*.

Queen Anojā's Renunciation

The Queen sent for the wives of the one thousand ministers and a discussion took place as follows:

Queen: Dear sisters, your husbands have renounced the world and become *bhikkhus* along with the King. What are you going to do now?

Wives: Great Queen, what was the message to us by our husbands?

Queen: Your husbands have bequeathed all their properties to you. You are lord of the household now.

Wives: Great Queen, what do you intend to do?

Queen: Sisters, my Lord, King Mahā Kappina, was greatly delighted by the news of the appearance of the Three Gems and rewarded three hundred thousand coins to the conveyors of the news as token of honouring the Triple Gem, even while he was on his journey. Now, he has renounced the world considering the glory of kingship as if it were spats of saliva. As for me, the news of the appearance of the Triple Gem was equally welcome. I have rewarded nine hundred thousand coins to the merchants who brought me the news as token of honouring the Triple Gem. The glory of a sovereign is a source of suffering for me, as much as it is for the King. Now that the King has bequeathed sovereign power to me, if I were to accept it, it would be like receiving the spats of saliva with relish. I am not as foolish as that. I too will renounce the world and become a recluse, as a disciple of the Buddha.

Wives: Great Queen, we will also join you in going forth as recluses.

Queen: It is well and good, if you are capable of it.

Wives: Great Queen, we are capable of it.

Queen: Then let us go.

The Queen mounted on a chariot, each of the wives of the ministers also mounted on their chariots and departed forthwith for Sāvatti. On the way, they came across the first river. She inquired, as the King did before, about the possibility for crossing it. She asked her charioteer to look for the footprints of the King's horses but no trace could be found. She rightly surmised that since her husband had a deep devotion for the Triple Gem and for the sake of which he was renouncing the world, he must have made some asseveration in getting across the river. "I too have renounced the world for the sake of the Triple Gem. May the power of the Triple Gem overcome this stretch of water and let the water lose its property as water." And reflecting on the supreme attributes of the Triple Gem, she drove her chariot and accompanied by a thousand other chariots, across the river. And lo! the water did not stay as water but hardened itself like a piece of rock so that not even the rims of the chariots were wet. At the two further rivers that lay across her path, she crossed them without difficulty, with the same devotion as the King. (The above material is gleaned from the **Commentary** on the **Dhammapada**. From this point on, we shall be drawing on the **Commentary** on the **Āṅguttara Nikāya**, Book One.)

After she had crossed over the Candabhāgā river, the third obstacle, Queen Anojā saw the Buddha sitting beneath the pipal tree. The Buddha knew that, if these women were to see their husbands, they would be torn by attachment to them which would render them being unable to listen to the sermon which He would taught, and which would be great disadvantage for attaining the Path-Knowledge. So, He employed His supernormal powers whereby the women could not see their spouses who were with Him. Then He taught them a discourse, at the end of which, all of them attained *sotāpatti-phala*. At that moment, they were able see their spouses. The Buddha then willed that Therī Uppalavaṇṇā appeared at where the women were sitting. Therī Uppalavaṇṇā admitted Queen Anojā and her companions into the Order of Bhikkhunīs. After which, she took them to the nunnery for *bhikkhunīs*. The Buddha took the thousand *bhikkhus* to the Jetavana monastery by His psychic power.

Verse spoken by The Buddha with Reference to Mahā Kappina

Then the Venerable Mahā Kappina practised the Noble Path and attained arahatship. Knowing that he had finished his task as a *bhikkhu*, the Venerable Mahā Kappina dwelt most of the time in the Fruition of Arahantship, and did not bother to discourse to his one thousand followers, the erstwhile ministers. Resorting to seclusion, whether underneath a tree or elsewhere, he would utter words of ecstasy: “Ah, blissful it is! blissful it is!” When other *bhikkhus* heard this they thought that the Venerable Mahā Kappina was ruminating on his kingly pleasures and they reported to the Buddha what they had heard. The Buddha said to these *bhikkhus*: “*Bhikkhu*, Mahā Kappina is extolling the bliss of *magga* and *phala* only, and on that occasion He uttered this stanza:

*Dhammapīti sukhaṃ seti, vipasannena cetasā;
Ariyappavedite dhamme, sadā ramati paṇḍito.*

(*Bhikkhus*;) he, who drinks the Supramundane Dhamma, lives happily with a serene mind. The wise man always finds delight in the Dhamma (i.e. the thirty-seven constituents of Enlightenment) expounded by the *ariyas* such as the Buddha.

(By the end of the discourse many listeners attained Path-Knowledge at various levels.)

— **Dhammapada**, v. 79, and its **commentary** —

The Venerable Mahā-Kappina's Instruction to His Pupils

Then one day, the Buddha called the one thousand *bhikkhus* (who had been ministers) and asked them whether the Venerable Mahā Kappina had given them any instruction. The *bhikkhus* said that their teacher, the Venerable Mahā Kappina, never gave them any instruction, did not bother to instruct them but dwelt in the attainment of *arahatta-phala* most of the time, and that he did not give even an admonition to any of his pupils. The Buddha then asked the Venerable Mahā Kappina: “Kappina, is it true that you do not give even an admonition to your close pupils?” The Venerable Mahā Kappina replied: “Venerable Sir, that is correct.”

“Brāhmaṇa Kappina, do not remain so. From now on, give discourses to your close pupils.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” replied the Venerable Mahā Kappina. And, just by him giving a discourse, the one thousand *bhikkhus* attained arahatship. (This is the achievement that entitled the Venerable to be designated the foremost *bhikkhu*.)

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

On one occasion, when the Buddha held a congregation of *bhikkhus*, He declared:

*“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānam bhikkhūnaṃ
bhikkhuovādakānaṃ yadidaṃ Mahā Kappino.”*

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhu*-disciples who give instruction to *bhikkhus*, Bhikkhu Mahā Kappina is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

(39) SĀGATA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Sāgata was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On a certain occasion, while he was listening to the Buddha's discourse, he witnessed the Buddha honouring a *bhikkhu* as the foremost among the *bhikkhus* who were adept at the attainment of concentrating on the *tejokasiṇadhātu*, the element of heat. He aspired for that honour and expressed his aspiration to become the foremost *bhikkhu* in the mastery of that concentration to the Buddha. The Buddha predicted that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

The future Sāgata devoted himself to works of merit throughout his life. After his death, he was reborn in the deva-world and the human world only, and during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn into a brahmin family in Savatthi. The young brahmin, named Sāgata, had occasion to listen to a discourse by the Buddha which caused him steadfastly devoted to the Buddha and hence become a *bhikkhu*. He mastered the eight mundane jhānic attainments and became adept at the five mundane supernormal powers.

Taming of A Nāga

(Extract from **Vinaya Piṭaka**, Pācittiya Division, Surāpāna Sikkhāpada) Once, on his tour of the country, in the Province of Cetiya, the Buddha arrived at Bhaddivatika village (so named because of its strong fencing). Cow-herds, goat-herds, cultivators and passers-by saw the Buddha coming at a distance and warned Him urgently that there lived a swift, vicious, poisonous serpent at the ferry-crossing, which was marked by the mango tree, and that they were concerned that the Buddha might face danger if He went that way. The Buddha did not say anything to them.

(The vicious serpent at the Mango Tree Ferry, was, in its former life, a ferry man plying there. He quarrelled with some travellers and was killed in the fray. He swore vengeance on his attackers before his death and consequently he was reborn as a powerful serpent there.)

(Since the man had held a grudge against the local populace, when he was reborn as a powerful serpent, he exercised his powers in such a way that he would cause draught in the rainy season and heavy rains to fall in the wrong season. Crops failed and people resorted to propitiating him every year. They also put up a shrine for him at the ferry point.)

— **Commentary on Aṅguttara** —

The Buddha crossed the river at the Mango Tree Ferry with His company of *bhikkhus*, meaning to put up for the night at that place. Cow-herds, goat-herds, cultivators and passers-by warned the Buddha three times against going that way but the Buddha, knowing well how to handle the situation, did not say anything.

Then the Buddha, going by stages, arrived at Bhaddivatika village. The Venerable Sāgata stayed at the shrine dedicated to the serpent at the Mango Tree Ferry. He went into the den where the serpent lived, placed a grass mat on the ground, sat with legs crossed, and with his body held erect, he entered into *jhāna*.

The serpent was very angry with the intruder and sent out hot fumes. The Venerable Sāgata responded with fumes of greater power. The serpent got furious and sent out flames. But the Venerable Sāgata, who was entering into the jhānic attainment of concentration on the element of heat, produced flames of greater intensity.

Then the serpent realized that he was up against someone who was more powerful than himself. He said: “Venerable Sir, I take refuge in your reverence.” The Venerable Sāgata said: “You need not take refuge in me. Take refuge in the Buddha.” “Very well, Venerable Sir,” the serpent said. Hence, he became a disciple of the Buddha and was established in the Three Refuges, and became friendly to the local populace. Rains fell during proper season and bumper crops were harvested. (**Commentary on Aṅguttara**) After the Venerable Sāgata had tamed the serpent, he joined the Buddha at Bhaddhivatika village.

The Buddha's Visit to Kosambī

After bringing Enlightenment to many deserving persons, the Buddha proceeded to Kosambī. The citizens of Kosambī had learnt about the conquest of Venerable Sāgata over the serpent, after a great battle. When the Buddha entered Kosambī, He was welcomed by the citizens. They also visited the Venerable Sāgata, made obeisance to him, and sitting in a suitable place, said him: “Venerable Sir, what sort of thing is a rare thing for your reverence? What sort of thing would please your reverence? What sort of thing shall we prepare for your reverence?” Although Venerable Sāgata did not say anything, *bhikkhus* of the Group of Six intervened and said: “Lay supporters, there is a red beverage with the

colour of the pigeon's feet and which is clear. That alcoholic drink is a rare thing for *bhikkhus*; it is delightful. So prepare that kind of beverage."

A Note on the Band of Six, Chabbaggi

There were in Sāvatti six friends who considered earning a living burdensome and preferred a life of ease as *bhikkhus*. They were (1&2) Paṇḍuka and Lohitaka, the twain; (3&4) Mettiya and Bhūmajaka, the twain; and (5&6) Assaji and Punabbasuka, the twain. They sought *bhikkhu*-elders of great authority, namely, the two Chief Disciples, as their preceptors whom they could look to in case of trouble.

(After five years' standing in *bhikkhu*hood and having mastered the Fundamental Precepts for *bhikkhus* (the *Matikā*), they agreed among themselves to split up into three sub-groups to be stationed at prosperous places. This was to ensure a regular livelihood for themselves.

(The first sub-group with (1) Paṇḍuka and (2) Lohitaka as leaders was, by agreement among the group of Six, assigned to Sāvatti with these considerations: Sāvatti was a city of 5.7 million houses resided by worthy families. It had suzerainty over the Provinces of Kāsi and Kosala with eighty thousand villages, Paṇḍuka and Lohitaka were to set up monastic compounds at advantageous sites at Sāvatti, where fruit trees of sorts were to be cultivated and gardens to attract lay supporters. These fruits and flowers should be presented regularly to lay supporters who, thus befriended, would send their boys to the monastery to be novitiated and then admitted into the Order. In this way, a big following of *bhikkhu* pupils was to be raised by the two leaders.

(Likewise, (3) Mettiya and (4) Bhūmajaka, the second subgroup was assigned to Rājagaha with these considerations: Rājagaha was a city where 130 million people lived. It had suzerainty over the Provinces of Aṅga and Magadha, which were three hundred *yojanas* wide, and had eighty thousand villages. Similarly, Mettiya and Bhūmajaka were to set up monastic compounds at advantageous sites at Rājagaha, where fruit tree of sorts were to be cultivated and gardens to attract lay supporters. By making gifts of fruits and flowers, the people should be befriended. And they would send their boys to the monastery to be novitiated and then admitted into the Order. In this way, a big following of *bhikkhu* pupils was to be raised by the two leaders.

(Kīṭāgiri was a market town with a big area around it. Since it received rains during the rainy season as well as during the cold season, it produced three crops of paddy a year. There the third sub-group, headed by (5) Assaji and (6) Punabbasuka should settle down. They were given the same assignments and objectives as the previous leaders.

(The six leaders carried out the above plan with some success. Each of the three sub-groups were able to raise five hundred (or more) *bhikkhu* pupils, making a total of over fifteen hundred *bhikkhu* pupils in their fold, who were known as the sect of 'the group of six *bhikkhus*'.

(Of the six leaders of the sect, Paṇḍuka and Lohitaka with their five hundred pupils were of good morality. They used to accompany the Buddha on his tours. Although they might commit fresh infringement of the *bhikkhu* precepts, they would do so because there was no specific ban on that particular action. If the precept clearly prohibited something, they did not infringe it. The other four leaders of the sect and their pupils did not care about the precepts.)

— Commentary on the **Nikāya** Book Two —

The citizens of Kosambī were simple folks. They took the advice of the *bhikkhus* of the Band of Six in all sincerity. They made a clear red brew, like the colour of the pigeon's feet, and hence called Kapotika. As Venerable Sāgata passed their door, each house offered the rare drink to the him. At that time there was no Vinaya rule prohibiting *bhikkhus* from

taking liquor. The Venerable Sāgata did not consider it improper to drink it. He obliged his donors by drinking a little of the brew at each house. When he left the city, he collapsed at the city door.

As the Buddha was leaving the city in the company of *bhikkhus*, He saw the Venerable Sāgata lying on the ground. He had him carried to the monastery, where the other *bhikkhus* laid him with his head turned towards the Buddha. But the Venerable, who was intoxicated with liquor, turned himself such that his feet were towards the Buddha. Then the Buddha addressed the *bhikkhus* thus:

Buddha: “*Bhikkhus*, Sāgata usually had respect and deference for Me, did he not?”

Bhikkhus: “He did, Venerable Sir.”

Buddha: “Now, does Sāgata show any respect and deference for me?”

Bhikkhus: “No, Venerable Sir.”

Buddha: “*Bhikkhus*, Sāgata had vanquished the serpent at the Mango Tree ferry, did he not?”

Bhikkhus: “Yes, he did, Venerable Sir.”

Buddha: “In his present state, would Sāgata be able to vanquish the serpent?”

Bhikkhus: “No, Venerable Sir.”

Buddha: “*Bhikkhus*, by taking liquor one is rendered senseless through intoxication, would it be proper for one to take liquor?”

Bhikkhus: “No, Venerable Sir.”

The Buddha continued: “*Bhikkhus*, taking alcoholic drinks is improper, wrong, unwarranted, unbecoming for a *bhikkhu*, and yet Bhikkhu Sāgata, possessed of the five supernormal powers, took it. Why did he do it? *Bhikkhus*, this is an act which does not lend itself to reverence by those who do not already have reverence for a *bhikkhu* ...” After denouncing the act, the Buddha declared that any *bhikkhu* who takes alcoholic drink is liable to incur a *Pācittiya* breach of the Precepts.

— Extract from the **Vinaya Piṭaka**, Pācittiya Division, Surāpāna Sikkhāpada —

Attainment of Arahatsip

On the next day, Venerable Sāgata recovered his senses and repented his mistake. A sense of shame and dread overcame him. After admitting this fault to the Buddha and making obeisance, he had a deep emotional awakening. And with diligence in the development of Insight, he soon attained arahatsip.

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

On one occasion, when the Buddha held a congregation of *bhikkhus* at the Jetavana monastery, He declared:

“*Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakanāṃ bhikkhūnaṃ tejodhātukusalānaṃ yadidaṃ Sāgata.*”

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhu*-disciples who are adept at dwelling in the jhānic attainment of concentration on the element of heat, Bhikkhu Sāgata is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

(40) RĀDHA MAHĀTHERA

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

(In describing the past aspiration of the Venerable Rādha, we draw from the Commentary on the **Theragāthā** as it is more informative than the **Commentary** on the **Aṅguttara**.)

The future Rādha was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvātī, during the time

of Buddha Padumuttara. When he came of age, he visited the Buddha's monastery and, after making obeisance to the Buddha, sat in a suitable place. While sitting there, he witnessed the Buddha honour a *bhikkhu* as the foremost in the field of illuminating the Doctrine to his audience. As such, he had a great desire to be honoured with the same recognition by some future Buddhas. He made exceptional offerings to the Buddha and, thereafter, he aspired to that honour. The Buddha predicted that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

Life as A Clansman in Buddha Vipassī's Time

The future Rādha, after aspiring to the senior discipleship at the time of Buddha Padumuttara, and after many more existences of meritorious deeds, he was reborn as a worthy man again during the time of Buddha Vipassī. When he came of age, he met Buddha Vipassī who was going on the alms-round. He had an intense devotion to the Buddha and offered Him a mango of a very delicious type.

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

Future Rādha was reborn in the deva-world because of that meritorious deed. After the deva existence, he was reborn only in the deva-world and the human world, where he engaged himself in further deeds of merit. During the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn as a brahmin youth by the name of Rādha, in the city of Rājagaha. He married and when he became old, he did not enjoy the usual care by his wife. Wishing to become a *bhikkhu*, he went to the monastery but his requests for admission into the Order were refused by all the *bhikkhus* because they were not interested in having an aged pupil who would not be able to serve them personally.

Radha the brahmin, already decrepit due to old age, looked even more aged because of his frustrations in being refused repeatedly to be admitted into the Order. He was a sorrowful sight as he was being reduced to a mere skeleton, completely worn out, pale like a withered leaf with veins running over his whole body, like netting. One day, he went to the Buddha and after an exchange of courteous greetings, sat in a suitable place. The Buddha saw that the old brahmin had sufficient merit to gain Path-Knowledge. And to start a dialogue, the Buddha asked: "Brahmin, are you being taken good care of by your wife and children?" The old brahmin replied: "O Gotama, I am far from being taken care of by my wife and children. In fact, they have been treating me as a total stranger because I am too old to be of any use to them." "Brahmin, in that case, had you not better take up bhikkhuhood?"

Venerable Sāriputta's Sense of Gratitude

"O Gotama, who would let me get admitted as a *bhikkhu*? There is no *bhikkhu* who is willing to be my preceptor due to my old age." The Buddha then asked the *bhikkhus* why the old brahmin looked so haggard and wasted. The *bhikkhus* answered that he looked so desperate and forlorn because he could not find a preceptor. "*Bhikkhus*, is there any *bhikkhu* who, is in some way, obligated to this brahmin?"

Thereupon, the Venerable Sāriputta said: "Venerable Sir, I remember a good turn done to me by this brahmin." "What was that?" asked the Buddha. "Venerable Sir, when I went on the alms-round in Rājagaha, he had offered me a spoonful of cooked rice. I remember that good turn done to me." "Very good, Sāriputta, very good. Virtuous persons do not forget a good turn done to them, and they feel obliged to repay the debt of gratitude. In that case, Sāriputta, see that the brahmin is novitiated and then admitted into the Order."

"Venerable Sir, by which mode of admission may I admit him?" The Buddha gave a discourse concerning the question of the Venerable Sāriputta and declared thus: "*Bhikkhus*, from now on, the mode of admitting a person into full bhikkhuhood by getting him established in the Three Refuges is to be discontinued. Henceforth, a novice should be admitted by a congregation, after a formal proposal for three times and, if there be no objection, then the novice shall be admitted." This was the first instance of the new mode of admission called *ñatti catuttha* procedure.

(**Points to note:** The Buddha attained Perfect Self-Enlightenment on the full-moon day in Vesākha, 103 of the Great Era. He passed his first *vassa* in the Deer Park. At the end of that *vassa*, He sent the first sixty of His *bhikkhu*-disciples, all *arahats*, to the four corners of the land to propagate the Doctrine. He admitted into the Order new *bhikkhus*, first as novices, and then as full *bhikkhus*, sponsored by these sixty *arahats*, by getting them established in the Three Refuges. The Buddha Himself adopted the same mode. Later, considering the great distances the new entrants had to travel to the Buddha's monastery, admissions by this mode were allowed by the Buddha, at places of their joining the Order.

(On the full-moon day in Phussa of the same year, the Buddha went to reside at Rājagaha. A fortnight later, the two Chief Disciples together with their pupils became *bhikkhus*. On the seventh day of their *bhikkhuhood*, the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna became an *arahat*. On the fifteenth day (in Māgha), the Venerable Sāriputta became an *arahat*. The Brahmin Rādha's admission into the Order took place during the month falling between the full moon day in Māgha and the full moon day in Phagguṇa.

The Venerable Sāriputta had known that when the Buddha lived in the Deer Park at Migadāya forest, admission as novices and as full *bhikkhus* was done by getting the incumbent established in the Three Refuges. And yet why did he ask about the mode of admission in this case?

The answer is: the Venerable Sāriputta, as a constant companion to the Buddha, knew the Buddha's wishes, as was the usual competency of those companions. As a matter of fact, he was the most competent among those close companions. He had hindsight that the Buddha was thinking of instituting a stricter mode of admission than the simple mode of getting the incumbent established in the Three Refuges. Since the Buddha's residence at Rājagaha, the number of *arahats* had also grown to more than twenty thousand. The remarkable acuteness of the Venerable Sāriputta's understanding of the Buddha's mind was revealed on one occasion too. It was in connection with Rāhula, the Buddha's son. In 103 of the Great Era, at the close of the year, the Buddha travelled to His native place, the city of Kapilavatthu. The journey took two months. On the seventh day, after arrival in that city, His son, Rāhula, (aged seven) demanded his inheritance. The Buddha gave him (the most worthy) inheritance by saying to the Venerable Sāriputta to admit Rāhula as a novice. On that occasion, the Venerable Sāriputta, knowing well that novitiation was done by making the incumbent established in the Three Refuges, asked the Buddha: "Venerable Sir, by what mode shall I admit Prince Rāhula as a novice?"

The earlier practice adopted at the Deer Park was to give admission to novices as well as to full *bhikkhus* by getting them established in the Three Refuges. But in the later case of Rādha, the admission into *bhikkhuhood* was done by a congregation of the Sangha making formal proposal for admission by the Preceptor thrice and then if the Sangha agreed (by remaining silent) admission was effected. But, in the case of novitiation, the Venerable Sāriputta fathomed the Buddha's intention that novitiation should be done either by getting the incumbent established in the Three Refuges or by formal congregation. Otherwise, the Sangha might be under the impression that novitiation would be valid only by congregation. Therefore, to get the express consent from the Buddha to perform novitiation by getting Rāhula established in the Three Refuges, the Venerable Sāriputta put that question to the Buddha.)

— Commentary on the *Vinaya Mahāvagga* —

Rādha's Ascetic Life and Attainment of Arahatship

The Venerable Sāriputta, respectfully complying with the orders of the Buddha, acted as preceptor in the formal congregation which admitted Brahmin Rādha into the Order. He knew that the Buddha had a high regard for the Brahmin and so after the admission, he looked after the personal welfare of the aged *bhikkhu*.

He took Venerable Rādha to a forest abode. A *bhikkhu*, who is junior in *bhikkhu* standing, has little privileges in the matter of the four requisites. The Venerable Sāriputta, who was a senior *bhikkhu*, enjoyed priority in receiving these requisites but he shared them with Venerable Rādha, while he himself lived on the daily alms-food. Thus, being shared monastic dwelling and food by his Preceptor, the Venerable Sāriputta, Venerable Rādha recovered physically into a healthy state. Then taking instructions in the practice of the Noble Path from his Preceptor, he worked with diligence and soon attained arahatship.

Alīnacitta Jātaka

Then the Venerable Sāriputta took Venerable Rādha to pay homage to the Buddha. Although the Buddha knew how Venerable Rādha was doing, He asked the Venerable Sāriputta: “Sāriputta, I had given Bhikkhu Rādha to your care. How is Rādha doing? Is he happy in bhikkhuhood?” The Venerable Sāriputta replied: “Venerable Sir, if one were to point to a *bhikkhu* who finds full satisfaction in the Teaching, one has only to point to a *bhikkhu* of Rādha's type.”

Then there became common among *bhikkhus* with words of praise concerning the Venerable Sāriputta, they were saying: “Friends, Sāriputta has a strong sense of gratitude and is also apt to repay the debt of gratitude he owes to others.” When the Buddha heard these words, he said to the *bhikkhus*: “*Bhikkhus*, it is not such great a wonder that Sāriputta, in his last existence, should remember his debt of gratitude and repay it. Even in his long past, when he was a mere animal, he had this sense of gratitude.” The *bhikkhus* then requested the Buddha to relate to them the past story concerning the Venerable Sāriputta. The Buddha related to them the **Alīnacitta Jātaka** (Duka Nipāta).

“*Bhikkhus*, in the past, there lived, at the foot of a hill, five hundred carpenters who used to fell trees in the forest. They would cut them to suitable sizes and then float down the lumbers downstream, in rafts. At one time, an elephant was wounded in the forest by a piece of heavy bough which it tore off from the tree. The pointed piece of wood pierced its foot so severely that it was rendered immobile.

After two or three days, the wounded elephant noticed that there were a big group of men passing its way everyday, and hoped that they might be able to help it. It followed the men. When the men saw it following them, they were frightened and ran away. The elephant then did not follow them but stopped. When the carpenters stopped running, the elephant drew near them again.

The head of the carpenters, being wise, pondered on the behaviour of the elephant: “This elephant comes to us as we do not move on, but stops when we run away from it. There must be some reason.” Then the men went up the trees and observed the movements of the elephant. The elephant went near them and, after showing them the wound at its foot, lay down. The carpenters understood the elephant's behaviour then: it was critically wounded and was seeking help. They went to the elephant and inspected the wound. Then they cut the end of the big wooden spike piercing the elephant's foot into a neat groove, tied a strong rope around the groove, and pulled the spike out. They washed the wound with herbs, applied medicinal preparations to their best of ability and then dressed the wound. Soon the wound healed and the elephant was well.

Deeply grateful to its healers, the elephant thought about repaying the debt of gratitude. It went back to its den and brought back a young calf which was white all over. This was a most auspicious kind of white elephant called *Gandha* species. The carpenters were very glad to see the elephant returned with a calf. The elephant was not merely showing them the noble calf but it meant to make a gift of it to the benefactors. To make its intention clear, it left the place alone.

The calf followed it but the father elephant gave a signal sound to the calf to go back to the men. The calf obeyed. The men then said to the calf: “O dear boy, we have no use with you. Just go back to your father.” The calf went back but the father would not take him back. For three times, the carpenters sent him back, only to be refused by the father. So they were obliged to keep it. The five hundred carpenters each gave a handful of cooked

rice to the calf which was sufficient nourishment for it. It would help them by piling up the cut-up logs, ready to be rafted.

(The **Commentary** on the **Aṅguttara** relates the story up to this point only, to show the sense of gratitude of the Venerable Sāriputta when he was an elephant. We now continue the story as described in the **Jātaka**.)

(**Continuation of the Alinacitta Jātaka**.) From that time on, the white elephant calf became part of the team of carpenters. Obeying their commands, he assisted them in all their tasks. The carpenters fed him with their share of cooked rice. At the close of the day's work, the men and the calf went into the river to bathe and play together.

There is a noteworthy thing about noble elephants or noble horses or noble humans: they never defecate or urinate in the water, but go up to dry ground for the purpose.

One day, great torrent came down from up-stream from Bārāṇasī. In that current, there floated down a piece of dried dung excreted by the white calf, and was caught in a bush at the public washing place in Bārāṇasī. The tenders of the royal elephants brought to the river five hundred elephants to be washed. These elephants sniffed around, got the smell of the dung of the white elephant and panicked. They dared not enter the water but tried to run away with raised tails. The elephant tenders reported the strange behaviour of the elephants to the physicians in charge of elephants. They knew that there must be something in the water that caused the panic of the King's elephants. A close search was made and they discovered the piece of dung in the bush. Thus, the reason for the fright of the five hundred elephants was ascertained. A big jar was filled with water and in it the white elephant's dung was made to dissolve. The five hundred elephants were then washed in that solution which had a pleasant odour. Then only the elephants would enter the water.

The elephant physicians reported their experience to the King and strongly suggested to him that the noble white elephant should be searched for. The King led the expedition in a big flotilla up the stream until they reached the working place of the carpenters, at the foot of the hill. The white elephant calf was then bathing in the river. He heard the sound of the royal drums and ran to its masters, the carpenters, who welcomed the King. "Great King," they said, "you do not need to come up personally to obtain timber. You could send someone for that." The King answered: "Friends, we do not come here for timber. We have come to take this white elephant calf that is in your possession." "Then, O King, take it by all means."

The young calf, however, was not willing to leave its masters, and did not budge from where it was standing. The elephant physicians were consulted. They explained to the King that the young calf would like to see its masters fully compensated for its upkeep. The King then ordered that a hundred thousand coins of silver be placed at each of the six parts of the body of the calf, i.e. at the four feet, at the trunk and at the tail. Still the calf would not budge. It wanted the King to give personal presents (as well). When every man in the party of carpenters, and their wives were given a piece of clothing and playthings for their children, who were his playmates, it then agreed to go with the King. It cast long parting looks at the men, their wives and children as it went along with the King.

The calf was escorted to the city which it was made to go round clockwise thrice in pomp and ceremony, the whole of the city and the elephant-yard were decorated. He was then housed at the elephant-yard, fitted with the paraphernalia of a royal mount. Then it was anointed as the King's personal associate, as well as the royal mount. It was assigned half of the royal estate, with every aspect of regal status. From the day of its arrival, Bārāṇasī acquired the dominance of the whole Jambudīpa.

After some time, the future Buddha was conceived in the womb of the Chief Queen of Bārāṇasī. When the gestation period was due the King died. The news of the King's demise was not revealed to the white elephant for fear that it might suffer broken-heart.

However, the news could not be kept secret for long. For when news of the King's death became known to the neighbouring province of Kosala, the King of Kosala besieged Bārāṇasī. The citizens of Bārāṇasī sent an envoy to the Kosalan King with the message

which purported to say: “Our Queen is due to give birth to a child seven day's hence, according to persons adept at reading people's appearance. If the Queen gives birth to a son, we shall wage war. Meantime, would the Kosalan King hold his peace just for seven days?” The Kosalan King agreed.

The Queen gave birth to a son on the seventh day. The birth of the child was marked by the citizens of Bārāṇasī being in cheerful spirits, hence the boy was named Prince Alinacitta, (meaning ‘Prince who brings good cheer’).

The war started, as mutually agreed, on the day of the birth of the Prince. The warriors of Bārāṇasī, lacking a general on the field, fought bravely yet their morale was running low. The ministers confided with the Queen that to avert defeat, the white elephant should be told of the death of the King, and the plight of a kingless city under siege by the Kosalan King. The Queen agreed. Then fitting the royal infant in regalia, placing it on a piece of white cloth, she carried it to the elephant-yard accompanied by her ministers and put down the child near the foot of the white elephant. She said: “O Great White Elephant, we have kept the news of the King's death from you because we feared you might suffer broken-heart. Here is the Prince, the son of your deceased friend, the King. Now our city is under siege by the Kosalan King, your little child, the Prince, is in danger. The people defending the city are in low spirits. You may now destroy the child, or save him and his throne from the invaders.

Thereupon the white elephant fondled the baby with his trunk, took it up, and placing it on his head, wailed bitterly. Then he put down the baby and placed it in the arms of the Queen. Making a signal, sound of his readiness for action, meaning: “I will capture the Kosalan King alive”, it went out of the elephant yard. The ministers then fitted the white elephant with chain-mail and, opening the city gate, led it out, surrounded by them. After getting out of the city, the white elephant gave out a shrill sound like that of the crane, ran through the besieging forces and, taking the Kosalan King by his hair knot, put him at the feet of the Princeling Alinacitta. Frightening off the enemy troops who threatened to harm the Princeling, it seemed to say to the Kosalan King: “From now on, Kosalan King, be mindful. Do not take the Princeling as someone to trifle with.” The Kosalan King was thus properly subdued.

From that time on, the suzerainty of the entire Jambudīpa became secure in the hands of Prince Alinacitta. No rival king dared challenge the authority of the Prince. When the Prince, the Bodhisatta, was aged seven, he was anointed King Alinacitta. He ruled righteously and at the end of his life span, he was reborn in the deva realm.

(The **Alinacitta Jātaka** was originally related by the Buddha in connection with a certain *bhikkhu* who was faltering in the observance of the Noble Practice. At another time, in connection with the sense of gratitude shown by the Venerable Sāriputta in the case of the Venerable Rādhā, this episode was partially related — up to the noble tusker giving up its white elephant calf to its benefactors.)

After discoursing on the story that had taken place in the past, the Buddha, in the present context, uttered these two verses:

- (1) *Alinacittam nissāya, pahaṭṭhā mahātī camū;*
Kosalam senasantuttham, jivaggāhaā agāhayi.

(*Bhikkhus*,) dependent on Prince Alinacitta, the Bodhisatta, the big army of Bārāṇasī had captured alive, (through the might of the royal white elephant), the Kosalan King who was unsatisfied with his own domain.

- (2) *Evam nissāya sampanno, bhikkhu āradhaviṇṇo;*
Bhāvayam kusalam dhammam; yogakkhemassa pattiya;
Pāpuṇe anupubbena, sabbasaṃyojanakkhayaṃ.

Similarly, with the good fortune in having the virtuous ones, such as the Buddha and the *ariyas*, as friends, a *bhikkhu* who puts forth earnest effort

may cultivate the Good Doctrine (i.e. the Thirty-seven constituents of Enlightenment and attain arahatship which is characterized by the extinction of all fetters, and by gradual stages reach the end of the four bonds (i.e. Nibbāna).

After ending the discourse with the attainment of the Deathless as its highest objective, the Buddha continued to show the Four Ariya Truths. At the end of which, the faltering *bhikkhu* attained Path-Knowledge. The Jātaka story ended with the usual identification of the personalities involved, namely, the Chief Queen, the Bodhisatta's mother was Queen Māyā in the present existence; the King of Bārāṇasī, King Suddhodāna; the royal white elephant, the faltering *bhikkhu*; the noble tusker, father of the white calf, the Venerable Sāriputta; the Kosalan King, the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna; Prince Alinacitta, the Buddha. This is the Alinacitta Jātaka in the **Duka Nipāta**.

The Buddha related the Jātaka story in connection with the Venerable Sāriputta's sense of gratitude, how in the past existence he repaid his debt of gratitude. As regards the Venerable Rādha, the Buddha had made 46 discourses in four *vaggas* in connection with him. Refer to 2-Rādha Saṃyutta, Khandha Vagga Saṃyutta, **Saṃyutta Nikāya**.

Further, when the Venerable Sāriputta took Venerable Rādha before the Buddha after Rādha's attainment of arahatship, both of them kneeling before the Buddha, the Buddha asked Sāriputta: "Sāriputta, does your close pupil Rādha take kindly to your admonition?" The Venerable Sāriputta replied: "Venerable Sir, Bhikkhu Rādha is very amenable to admonition. Whenever a fault of his is pointed out, he does not show the slightest resentment." "Sāriputta, how many amenable pupils like Rādha would you be prepared to accept?" "Venerable Sir, if I am to receive pupils as amenable as Bhikkhu Rādha, I would accept as many as they might come to me."

Then, after relating the past story of Venerable Sāriputta, as described in the *Alinacitta Jātaka*, how, even as an animal, the Venerable Sāriputta had shown his sense of gratitude, which was the subject-matter of fellow-*bhikkhus*' remarks, the Buddha extolled the virtues of the Venerable Rādha thus: "*Bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* should be amenable to admonition like Bhikkhu Rādha. When the teacher points out a fault of the pupil, the latter should not show resentment but should take it as if rich treasures were revealed to him." In this connection, the Buddha uttered this verse:

*Nidhīnaṃ va pavattāraṃ,
yam passe vajjadassinaṃ.
Niggaṃhāvādīṃ medhāvīṃ,
tādisaṃ paṇḍitaṃ bhaje.
Tādisaṃ bhajamānassa,
seyyo hoti na pāpiyo.*

(*Bhikkhus*), if you should meet with a man of wisdom who points out faults and reproves you, you should associate with such a wise person as someone who reveals to you hidden treasures. It will be to the advantage, and not the disadvantage, of one who seeks the company of such a wise man.

— **Dhammapada**, v. 76 —

By the end of the discourse, many hearers attained Path-Knowledge at various levels.

(c) Etadagga Title achieved

On one occasion, when the Buddha named foremost *bhikkhus*, He declared:

"Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ patibhāneyyakānaṃ yadidaṃ Rādho."

"*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhu*-disciples who inspire Me to amplify My discourses, Bhikkhu Rādha is the foremost (*etadagga*)."

(The Venerable Rādha's perspicacity and deep conviction in the Doctrine was a source of inspiration to the Buddha to amplify His discourses. (This fact may be

gathered from **Rādha Saṃyutta**, particularly the six last suttas in the *First Vagga*, and the whole of the *Fourth Vagga*). The term *patibhāṇeyyaka* has been defined as: *Patibhāṇaṃ janentīti patibhāṇeyyakā*, — those disciples who cause to arouse the Buddha's facility in discoursing.)

(41) MOGHARĀJA MAHĀTHERA

(The story of the Venerable Mogharāja is gleaned from the Commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** and the Commentary on the Pārayana vagga of the **Sutta Nipāta**.)

(a) Aspiration expressed in The Past

The future Mogharāja was born into a worthy family in the city of Harisāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, while he was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, he witnessed a *bhikkhu* being declared by Him as the foremost *bhikkhu* among His disciples who wear robes that were inferior in three ways, namely, of inferior rag material, of inferior thread, and of inferior dye. The future Mogharāja had a strong desire to be acknowledged likewise as a foremost *bhikkhu* in some future time. He made extraordinary offerings to the Buddha and expressed this aspiration before Him. The Buddha predicted that the aspiration would be fulfilled.

Life as Minister to King Kaṭṭhavāhana

The future Mogharāja spent a meritorious life and passed away into the realm of devas and then in the realm of humans and devas. Prior to the appearance of Buddha Kassapa he was reborn in the city of Kaṭṭhavāhana, into a noble family. When he was of correct age, he became a courtier at King Kaṭṭhavāhana's court and later was appointed as a minister.

We shall now relate the story of King Kaṭṭhavāhana, the details of which are found in the Commentary on the **Sutta Nipāta**, Book Two. Before the advent of Buddha Kassapa, there was an accomplished carpenter, a native of Bārāṇasī, whose carpentry skill was unrivalled. He had sixteen senior pupils, each of whom had one thousand apprentices. Thus, together with this Master Carpenter, there were 16,017 carpenters, who made living in Bārāṇasī. They would go to the forest and gather various kinds of timber to make various kinds of articles and high class furniture, which were fit for royalty and nobility in the city. They brought their wares to Bārāṇasī in a raft. When the King wanted to have palaces built, ranging from a single-tiered mansion to a seven-tiered mansion, they did it to the satisfaction and delight of the King. They also built other structures for other people.

Construction of A Flying Machine

The master craftsman conceived an idea one day: "It would be too hard for me to live on my carpenter's trade in my old age; (I must do something)." He ordered his pupils to gather species of light wood with which he built a flying machine resembling the garuḷa bird. After assembling the machinery in it, he started the 'engine' which made the contraption fly in the air like at bird. He flew in it to the forest where his men were working and descended there.

He said to his pupils: "Boys, let us build flying machines like this and with our superior power, we can rule the Jambudīpa. Now, copy this flying machine. We must escape from the drudgery of our carpenters' existence." The pupils successfully built similar flying machines and reported it to the master. "Now, which city shall we conquer?" asked the master. "Let us conquer Bārāṇasī, Master," they suggested. "That would not do, boys. We are known as carpenters in Bārāṇasī. Even if we were to conquer and rule it, everybody will know our origin as carpenters. The Jambudīpa is a vast place. Let us find our fortune elsewhere," thus advised the master. The pupils agreed.

Ascension to The Throne as Kaṭṭhavāhana

The carpenter guild of 16,017 members had each of their families put aboard a 'flying machine', and wielding arms, flew in the direction of the Himalayas. They entered a city,

grouped together in the royal palace and dethroned the king. They then anointed the master craftsman as king. Because he was the inventor of the 'flying machine' made of wood, he came to be known as King Kaṭṭhavāhana ('one who rode on a vehicle made of wood'). Based on this personal name of the King, the city and the country also acquired the same name. An heir-apparent and a council of sixteen ministers were appointed. The King and all these top leaders of the country conducted themselves with righteousness. The King extended necessary assistance to the people according to the principle of four means of help, with the result that the people were happy and prosperous and had few dangers and hazards. Everybody spoke in praise of the King and his staff who were loved, respected and relied upon.

Friendship with King of Bārāṇasī

One day, a group of merchants from Bārāṇasī went to Kaṭṭhavāhana with their merchandise. When they were given audience by King Kaṭṭhavāhana, the King asked them where they lived. Being told that they lived in Bārāṇasī, the King said to them:

"O men, I would like to be on cordial relationship with the King of Bārāṇasī. Would you render your service to that end?" The merchants gladly undertook to help. During their stay in Kaṭṭhavāhana, the King provided them with all their needs and at the time of their departure, they were again reminded courteously to help promote friendship between the two cities.

When the merchants arrived at Bārāṇasī, they conveyed to their King the message of the King of Kaṭṭhavāhana. The King was delighted. He made public announcement by the beat of the drum that merchants of Kaṭṭhavāhana, who were selling their goods in Bārāṇasī, would be exempt from taxes. Thus, the two Kings, who had never met, were already in bonds of friendship. The King of Kaṭṭhavāhana reciprocated by proclaiming that merchants of Bārāṇasī, who were doing business in his city, would also be exempt from taxes. He also issued standing orders that merchants of Bārāṇasī would be provided with all their needs out of the King's coffers.

The King of Bārāṇasī then sent a message to the King of Kaṭṭhavāhana to the effect that if there should occur within the domains of Kaṭṭhavāhana something noteworthy, whether seen or heard, would King Kaṭṭhavāhana see to it that that event be seen or heard by the King of Bārāṇasī? The King of Kaṭṭhavāhana also sent to the King of Bārāṇasī a similar message.

Exchange of Gifts

One day the King of Kaṭṭhavāhana obtained a certain fabric of most rare quality which was not only extra-fine but had a sheen that dazzled like the rising sun. He remembered the message received from the King of Bārāṇasī and thought it fit to send this extraordinary fabric to Bārāṇasī. He had eight caskets of ivory carved out for him, in each he put a piece of the fabric. Outside the ivory caskets, he had a lac ball embalming each casket. The eight lac balls were placed in a wooden box which was wrapped in very fine fabric. On it was written the inscription: "To be presented to the King of Bārāṇasī." An accompanying message suggested that the King of Bārāṇasī open this gift himself on the palace grounds where all the ministers should be present.

The royal delegation from the court of Kaṭṭhavāhana presented the gift box and the message to the King of Bārāṇasī who caused a meeting of the ministers at the courtyard. He opened the box in their presence. On finding just eight balls of lac, he was disappointed, thinking that the King of Kaṭṭhavāhana had played a practical joke on him. He struck one of the lac balls hard against the throne which he was sitting on and to his amazement when the lac broke open and the ivory casket and its lid came apart. Inside, the King saw the fine fabric. The seven other lac balls yielded similar ivory caskets with the fabric inside. Each piece of fabric measured 16 cubits by 8 cubits. When these fabrics were unfolded, they presented a most spectacular scene as though the entire courtyard were glimmering in the sun.

The onlookers snapped their fingers in amazement and some threw up their head-gear

into the air in joy, saying: “King Kaṭṭhavāhana, the unseen friend of our King, has sent such a marvellous gift! Truly that King is a worthy friend of our King.”

Gift from Bārāṇasī

The King of Bārāṇasī sent for valuers and referred the fine fabrics to them for their appraisal. The valuers were at a loss to name a value for them. Then the King thought to himself: “My good friend, the King of Kaṭṭhavāhana has sent me a priceless gift. A return gift should be somehow superior to the gift received. What should that gift be?”

It was the time when Buddha Kassapa had appeared in the three worlds and was residing at Bārāṇasī. The King considered that there is nothing as adorable as the Triple Gem. “I should send the news of the appearance of the Buddha to King Kaṭṭhavāhana. That would make the most appropriate return gift.”

So he had the following stanza consisting six lines inscribed with vermilion on gold plate:

*Buddho loke samuppanno, hitāya sabbapāṇinam.
Dhammo loke samuppanno, sukhāya sabbapāṇinam.
Saṃgho loke samuppanno, puññakkhettaṃ anuttaram.*

(O Friend Katthavahana,) for the welfare of all living beings, the All-Knowing Buddha has appeared in our world, like the rising of the sun at the Udaya Mountain in the east.

For the happiness of all living beings, the Dhamma (comprising the four *maggas*, four *phalas*, Nibbāna and the Doctrine) has appeared in our world like the rising of the sun in the Udaya mountain in the east.

The Sangha, the incomparable fertile field for all to sow seeds of merit, has appeared in our world, like the rising of the sun at the Udaya mountain in the east.

Besides these lines, the King had an inscription containing the practice of the Dhamma, beginning from getting established in morality for a *bhikkhu*, progressively towards attainment of *arahatta-phala*. The above gold plate was: (1) first put inside a casket wrought with the seven kinds of gems; (2) then the jewel casket was placed inside a casket of emerald; (3) then the emerald casket was placed inside a casket of cat’s-eye gem; (4) the cat’s-eye casket was then placed inside a casket of red ruby; (5) the ruby casket was then placed inside a gold casket; (6) the gold casket was then placed inside a silver casket; (7) the silver casket was then placed inside an ivory casket and (8) the ivory casket was then placed inside a casket of scented musk wood. This casket was put inside a box, wrapped with fine fabric and on it the royal seal was affixed.

This gift was sent to Kaṭṭhavāhana in state. A noble tucker in musk was fitted with golden ornaments, covered with gold lace, and a golden flag flew on his majestic body. On its back, they secured a raised platform, on which the gift box was placed. A white umbrella was hoisted above it. It was sent off after performing acts of honour with flowers and scents, dancing and music. The King himself headed the group of royal escorts in sending it off up to the border of Kasi Country, the King’s domain. Moreover, the King of Bārāṇasī sent presents with his messages to other rulers of neighbouring states on the route, requiring them to pay homage to the special return gift of his. All those rulers complied gladly till the carrier tusker reached the border of Kaṭṭhavāhana.

King Kaṭṭhavāhana went out to some distance to welcome the return gift; paying homage to it. The gift was opened in the courtyard before the people. After removing the thin cloth wrapper and opening the box, a scented hard-wood casket was found. Inside it, the eight caskets were opened, one after the other in turn till the gold plate informing the appearance of the Triple Gem was revealed. “This is the rarest gift that one comes by only over an immense period of time. My good friend, the King of Bārāṇasī, has been very thoughtful in sending this news to me together with an outline on the practice of the Dhamma.” thus reflected King Kaṭṭhavāhana joyfully. “The appearance of the Buddha, never heard of

before, has taken place. It were well if I should go and see the Buddha and learn his Doctrine," he mooted. He consulted the idea with his ministers who advised him to stay awhile in the city during which they would go and inquire.

Ministers' Mission

The sixteen ministers, together with a thousand followers each, said to the King: "Great King, if the Buddha has actually appeared in the world, there is no likelihood of our seeing you again (at your palace) i.e. we are all going to become *bhikkhus*. If the Buddha has not actually arisen, we shall come back to you."

Among the ministers was the King's own nephew (son of his sister) who said: "I am going too." The King said to him: "Son, when you have found that the Buddha has appeared, come back to me and tell me the news." His nephew agreed: "Very well, O King."

The sixteen ministers with their sixteen thousand followers went hastily, resting only once at a night camp on the way and reached Bārāṇasī. However, before they got there, Buddha Kassapa had passed away. The ministers entered the Buddha's monastery and asked: "Who is the Buddha? Where is the Buddha?" But they found only the *bhikkhu*-disciples who had been living together with the Buddha.

The *bhikkhu*-disciples told them: "The Buddha has passed away." The ministers then wailed, saying: "We have come from afar and we miss even the chance to see the Buddha!" They said to the *bhikkhu*-disciples: "Venerable Sirs, are there some words of advice or admonition of the Buddha left for the world?" "Yes, lay supporters. They are: 'Be established in the Three Refuges. Observe the five precepts all the time. Also observe *uposatha* precepts of eight constituents. Give in charity. If you are capable, take up *bhikkhuhood* yourself.' " Thereupon, all the ministers, with the exception of the King's nephew, together with their followers, took up *bhikkhuhood*.

King Kaṭṭhavāhana's Demise

King Kaṭṭhavāhana's nephew returned to Kaṭṭhavāhana after having obtained an article that had been used by the Buddha, as an object of veneration. It was a water strainer. In this connection, it may be noted that the articles that had been used by the Buddha included the Bodhi tree, alms-bowl, robes, water-strainer, etc. The nephew also arranged for a *bhikkhu* who had learnt by heart the Suttanta, the Vinaya and the **Abhidhamma** to accompany him to Kaṭṭhavāhana.

Travelling by stages, the nephew reached Kaṭṭhavāhana and reported to the King: "Uncle, the Buddha actually had appeared in the world, and it is also true that He had passed away." He related the Buddha's advice as he had learned from the Buddha's disciples. The King resorted to the *bhikkhu* learned in the Tipiṭaka and listened to his discourses. He built a monastery for the teacher, erected a stupa where the Buddha's water strainer was enshrined and planted a new Bodhi Tree. He was established in the five precepts and observed *uposatha* precepts on *uposatha* days. He gave freely in charity; and after living till the end of his life span, he passed away and was reborn in the deva realm. The sixteen ministers, who had become *bhikkhus* together with their sixteen thousand followers, also practised the Noble Practice, died as worldlings, and were reborn in the deva realm as followers to the deva who had been King Kaṭṭhavāhana. (Among the sixteen deva followers of the deva king there was the future Venerable Mogharāja.)

(b) Ascetic Life adopted in His Final Existence

During the world-cycle that intervened the two Buddhas, the master craftsman and all his followers had deva existence. Then on the eve of the advent of Buddha Gotama, they were reborn in the human world. Their leader was born as a son of the King's *purohita* at the court of King Mahā Kosala, father of Pasenadi Kosala. He was named Bāvarī, and was endowed with three distinguishing marks of a great man. Being a master of the three Vedas, he succeeded to the office of *purohita* (Counsellor) at the death of his father. The remaining sixteen thousand men were reborn in Savatthi in the brahmin clan. Among them

were:

*Ajito Tissa Metteyya,
Puṇṇako atha Mettāgū,
Dhotako Upasīvo ca,
Nando ca atha Hemako.
Todeyya Kappā dubhavo,
Jatukkaṇṇī ca paṇḍito,
Bhadrāvudho Udayo ca,
Posālo cāpi Brāhmaṇo.
Mogharāja ca medhāvī,
Piṅgiyo ca mahā isi.*

(1) Ajita (2) Tissa Metteyya, (3) Puṇṇaka (4) Mettāgū (5) Dhotaka (6) Upasīva (7) Nanda (8) Hemaka (9) Todeyya (10) Kappa (11) Jatukaṇṇī (12) Bhadrāvudha (13) Udaya (14) Posala (15) Mogharāja (16) Piṅgiya.

These sixteen Brahmins learned the three Vedas from Master Bāvarī. The one thousand followers under each of them, in turn, learned from them. Thus, Bāvarī and his company of followers making a total of 16,017 Brahmins became united again in their last existence. (The fifteenth brahmin, Mogharāja, later became the Venerable Mogharāja.)

Renunciation by Bāvarī and His Followers

At the death of King Mahā Kosala, his son, Pasenadi Kosala, was anointed King. The King's *purohita*, Bāvarī, retained his office under the new king, who granted fresh privileges to him in addition to those given by his father. (This was so because the new King, as a prince, had been a pupil under Bāvarī so that his relationship with the old Counsellor was not only official but also personal.)

One day, Bāvarī, remaining in seclusion, took a cool assessment of the learning that he possessed. He saw that the Vedas were not of any value to him in good stead in the hereafter. He decided to renounce the world as a recluse. When he revealed this plan to King Pasenadi Kosala, the King said: “Master, your presence at our court gives me the assurance of elderly counsel which makes me feel I am still under the eyes of my own father. Please don't leave me.” But, since past merit had begun to ripen into fruition, old Bāvarī could not be persuaded against his plan, and insisted that he was going. The King then said: “Master, in that case, I would request you to stay as a hermit in the royal gardens so that I might be able to see you by day or by night.” Bāvarī conceded to this request and he and his company of sixteen senior pupils together with the sixteen thousand followers resided in the royal gardens as recluses. The King provided them with four requisites and paid his master regular visits, in the morning and evening.

After some time, the pupils said to their master: “Master, living near the city makes a recluse's life unsatisfactory because of the many botherations. The proper place for a recluse is somewhere remote from the town. Let us move away from here.” The master had only to agree. He told this to the King but the King would not let him leave him alone. For three times Bāvarī made persistent requests to the King. At last the King had to yield to his wishes. He sent along two of his ministers with two hundred thousand coins of money to accompany Bāvarī and his followers to find a suitable site for their hermitage, on which all monastic dwellings for them were to be built.

The hermit Bāvarī, together with 16,016 recluse pupils, under the care of the two ministers, left in the southerly direction from Sāvatti. When they went beyond the Jambudīpa to a place, which lay between the two kingdoms of Assaka and Aḷaka, which was a big island where the two streams of River Godhāvarī parted, a three-*yojana* wide forest of edible fruits, Bāvarī said to his pupils: “This is the spot where ancient recluses had lived. It is suitable for recluses. As a matter of fact, it was the forest where famous hermits, such as Sarabhaṅga, had made their dwellings.

The King's ministers paid a hundred thousand coins of silver each to King Assaka and

King Aḷaka for possession and use of the land. The two rulers gladly ceded the property and also added the two-*yojanas* wide land adjoining the forest, thereby granted a total area of five *yojanas*. The ministers from the court of Sāvatti caused a dwelling to be built there. They also brought some necessary materials from Sāvatti and set up a big village for the hermits to gather daily alms-food. When their task was completed, they returned to Sāvatti. (The above account is what is stated in the **Commentary** on the **Sutta Nipāta**. The **Commentary** on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** tells us of further incidents concerning recluse Bāvarī which are described below:) On the day, after the two ministers had returned to Sāvatti, a man appeared at the dwelling and sought permission from the hermits to build a house for his own dwelling on the estate. He was allowed to do so. Soon other families followed suit and there were a hundred houses on the estate. And so with the kindness of Recluse Bāvarī, the community of lay householders flourished, providing a source of daily alms-food for the recluses, who also got daily sustenance from the fruit trees.

Yearly Charity worth A Hundred Thousand

The village at the hermitage had become prosperous. Revenues from agriculture and other activities amounted to a hundred thousand every year which the villagers paid to King Assaka. But King Assaka said to them that the revenue should be paid to Hermit Bāvarī. When they took the money to Bāvarī, the hermit said: "Why have you brought this money?" The householders said: "Reverend Sir, we pay this sum as token of our gratitude for the right of occupancy of your land." Bāvarī replied: "If I cared for money, I would not have become a recluse. Take back your money." "But, Sir," the householders said, "we cannot take back what has been given to you. We shall be paying you the sum of a hundred thousand every year. We may humbly suggest that you accept our annual tribute and make your own donations with the money as you please." Bāvarī was obliged to agree. And so every year there took place a big charity by the good recluse for the benefit of destitutes, peasants, travellers, beggars and mendicants. The news of this noble act spread to the whole of the Jambudīpa.

A Bogus Brahmin's Threat

After one such annual occasion, on a certain year, while Bāvarī was exulting in his good deed at his dwelling, he was roused up from his short slumber by a hoarse cry of a man demanding: "Brahmin Bāvarī, give something in charity. Give something in charity." It was the voice of a bogus Brahmin who was a descendant of Brahmin Jūjakā (of the Vesantara **Jātaka**) who came from Dunnivīṭṭha brahmin village in the Kingdom of Kālīṅga. He had come at the behest of his nagging wife who said to him: "Don't you know that Brahmin Bāvarī is giving away freely in charity? Go and get gold and silver from him." The bogus Brahmin was a hen-pecked husband. He could not help but do her bidding.

Bāvarī said to him: "O Brahmin, you are late. I have distributed everything to those who came for help. I have not a penny left now." "O Bāvarī, I do not want a big amount of money. For you, who are giving away such big sums, it is not possible to be penniless as you say. Give me just five hundred." "I don't have five hundred. You will get it at the next round." "Do I have to wait till the next time you chose to give?" He was clearly angry in saying those words for he started to utter a curse with some elaboration. He fetched some cow-dung, red flowers, coarse grass into the dwelling, and hastily smeared the floor at the entrance to the residence of Bāvarī with cow-dung, strewn it with red flowers, and spread the coarse grass all over. Then he washed his left foot with water from his water pot, made seven steps on the floor and, stroking his (left) foot with his hand, uttered the following curse as when a holy man would chant a *manta*:

*Sace me yācamānassa, bhavaṃ nānupadassati.
Sattame divase tuyhaṃ, muddha phalatu sattadhā.*

If you refuse to give me the money asked by me, may your head splinter into seven pieces on the seventh day from now.

Bāvarī was deeply disturbed. "Perhaps his curse might take effect," he pondered as he lay

on his bed, unable to sleep. Then Bāvarī's mother, in the immediately previous existence, who was now the guardian goddess of the hermitage, seeing his former son in distress, said:

*Na so muddham pajānāti, kuhako so dhanatthiko,
Muddhani muddhapāte vā, ñāṇam, tassa na vijjati.*

(Son,) that Brahmin does not know what is called 'the head'. He is a mere bogus Brahmin who is out to get your money. Neither does he understand the meaning of 'the head' (*muddha*) nor the factor that can cause 'the head' to be split asunder (*muddhādhīpāta*).

Then Bāvarī said: "O mother, if you know what is meant by 'the head' and the factor that can cause 'the head', may I know them."

The goddess said: "Son, I do not know these two things. Only the Buddhas know them." "Who in this world know them? Please direct me to that person." "There is the All-Knowing Buddha, Lord of the Three Worlds." When the word 'Buddha' was heard, Bāvarī was extremely delighted and all worries left him. "Where is the Buddha now?" "The Buddha is residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthi."

Early next morning, Bāvarī called his sixteen pupils and said: "O men, the Buddha is said to have appeared in the world. Go and verify the fact and let me know. I mean to go to the Buddha myself but at my advanced age, I am expecting death at any moment. Go and see the Buddha and put these seven questions to him." The questions arranged in verse known as *muddha phālana* (also known as *muddhādhīpāta*) were then taught to them in detail.

Note that on the eighth year of Bāvarī's settling down by the banks of River Godhāvarī, the Buddha appeared in the-world.

— **Commentary** on the **Sutta Nipāta**, Book Two. —

Then Bāvarī pondered thus: "All of my sixteen pupils are wise persons. If they have attained the ultimate goal of bhikkhuhood (i.e. Arahātship) they might or might not come back to me." And so he said to Piṅgiya, his nephew: "Nephew Piṅgiya, you ought to come back to me without fail. Do tell me the benefit of the Supramundane when you have attained to it."

Then the sixteen thousand followers of Bāvarī under the leadership of Ajita (of the sixteen pupils), together with their sixteen teachers, made obeisance to Bāvarī and left their dwelling in the northerly direction.

They proceeded their journey through Mahissati which was the royal city of Aḷaka, Ujjeni, Gonaddha, Vedisa, Pavana, Kosambi, Sāketa, Sāvatthi, Setabya, Kapilavatthu, Kusinārā, Pāvā, Bhoga, Vesālī and Rājagaha,, which was in Magadha country. It was a long journey covering many *yojanas*.

As they passed a city, the people asked them where they were going and when they said that they were going to see the Buddha to clarify certain problems, many people joined them. By the time they passed Kosambī and reached Sāketa, the line of pilgrims was six *yojanas* long already. The Buddha knew the coming of the hermits, pupils of Bāvarī, and that they were being joined by many people along the way. But as the faculties of the hermits were not ripe yet, the Buddha did not stay in Sāvatthi to receive them, as the proper place for their enlightenment was Pāsāṇaka Shrine in Magadha. By having to pass through more cities to that particular place, the number of pilgrims would have grown larger and that all of them would benefit from His discourse there, i.e. gain the Knowledge of the Four Ariya Truths.

Taking into consideration this great advantage to the pilgrims, the Buddha left Sāvatthi and went in the direction of Rājagaha ahead of the arrival of the pilgrims there.

When the big crowd reached Sāvatthi, they entered the Buddha's monastery and inquired where the Buddha was. At the entrance to the private quarters of the Buddha, the scented chamber, they noticed the footprint of the Buddha (which was left there by the Buddha's

will to remain intact till they came there). They were adept at reading the footprints of all types of persons that:

*Rattassa hi ukkutikaṃ padaṃ bhava,
duṭṭhassa hoti avakaḍḍhitam padaṃ,
Mūlhassa hoti sahas ānupīṭitaṃ
vivaṭacchadassa idam īdisaṃ padaṃ.*

A person who is lustful has his or her footprint with a hollow at the middle.

A person who is full of hatred has his or her footprint inclined backwards.

A person who has much bewilderment has his or her print very markedly impressed at the toes and at the heel.

The present footprint is surely that of the All-Knowing Buddha who has destroyed all the defilements.

By their own learning, the recluses were sure that they had come across the footprint of the Buddha.

The Buddha travelled by stages through Setabya, Kapilavatthu, etc. and reached the Pāsāṇaka Shrine near Rājagaha, letting a big number of persons follow him. The hermits then left Savatthi as soon as they had ascertained themselves about the footprint of the Buddha, and travelling by stages through Setabya and Kapilavatthu, etc., reached the Pāsāṇaka Shrine near Rājagaha.

(Pāsāṇaka Shrine was a pre-Buddhistic shrine. It was built on a vast rock in honour of a local deity. When the Buddha appeared, the people built a new temple and donated for the use by Buddhist devotees. The old name however was retained.)

Sakka had prepared sufficient place to have the huge crowd accommodated at the Pāsāṇaka temple. In the meanwhile, the hermits tried their best to catch up with the Buddha, travelling in the cool hours of the mornings and evenings. When they saw Pāsāṇaka Shrine, their destination where the Buddha was understood to be residing, they were extremely happy like a thirsty man seeing water, or like a merchant who has realized a good fortune, or like a weary traveller seeing a cool shade. They rushed into the Shrine in all haste.

They saw the Buddha delivering a sermon in the midst of many *bhikkhus* with a voice that reminds one of a lion roaring. Ajita, the leader of the Brahmins, was greatly delighted on seeing the Buddha emitting the six Buddha-rays while expounding the Dhamma and was further encouraged by the Buddha's amiable words of greetings, such as: "How did you find the weather? Was it tolerable?" etc. Sitting in a suitable place, he put the first question to the Buddha without speaking it aloud but directing his mind to the stanza taught by his master Bāvarī, thus:

*Ādissa jammanam brūhi, gottam brūhi salakkhaṇam;
Mantesu paramīm brūhi, kati vāceti Brāhmaṇo.*

May I be told: (1) How old our master (Bāvarī) is? (2) What distinguishing bodily marks is our master endowed with? (3) What his lineage is? (4) How accomplished is he in the three Vedas? (5) How many pupils are learning the Vedas under him?

Bāvarī had instructed Ajita to put those questions mentally. And he did as he was told. The Buddha, as expected by Bāvarī, knew Ajita's questions and gave the following answers without hesitation (in two stanzas):

*Vīsam vassasatam āyu, so ca gottena Bāvarī;
Tiṇissa lakkhaṇā gatte, tiṇṇam vedāna pārāgū.*

Lakkhaṇe itihāse ca, sanighaṇḍu saketubhe;

Pañca satāni vāceti, sadhamme Paramīm gato,

(Ajita,) (1) your teacher's age is one hundred and twenty years, (2) he belongs to the clan of Bāvarī, (3) he has three distinguishing marks of a great man, (4) he has mastered the three Vedas; "He has mastered the Nigandu (the *Abidhāna*), the Ketubha (poetics), Lakkhaṇa (Characteristics of the great man), the Itihāsa (Legendary lore). (5) He is teaching the three Vedas to five hundred pupils who are lazy and dull.

Ajita wanted to know what three characteristics are possessed by his master, with reference to the third answer above, and put the following question mentally:

*Lakkhaṇaṃ pavicayaṃ, Bāvarissa naruttama;
Kaṅkhaṇhida pakāsehi, mā no kaṅkhaṇiyatāṃ ahu.*

O Supreme Man endowed with the faculty of dispelling doubts of all beings, please specify in detail what are the three distinguishing marks of Bāvarī. Do not let us have any scepticism.

The Buddha made the following reply:

*Mukhaṃ jīvhāya chādeti, uṇṇassa bhamukantare,
Kosohitaṃ vatthaguyham, evaṃ jānāhi mānava.*

(Ajita,) (1) your teacher Bāvarī can cover his face with his tongue, (2) there is the spiral auspicious hair between his eyebrows, (3) his genital organ is sheathed (like that of the Chaddanta elephant). Ajita, note these three distinguishing marks on him.

This the Buddha answered in precise terms. Then the audience, which covered an area of twelve *yojanas*, were amazed, for they heard no one asking questions except the Buddha's prompt and detail answers. Raising their joint palms above their heads, they wondered aloud: "Who is the questioner? Is he a deva or a Brahmā, or Sakka the beloved husband of Sujātā?"

Having heard the answers to his five questions, Ajita asked two more questions mentally:

*Muddhaṃ muddhāhipātāṇ ca, Bāvarī paripucchati;
Tam vyākaroḥi Bhagavā, kaṅkhaṇaṃ vinaya no ise.*

O Virtuous One, our teacher wishes to ask two problems: first what is meant by 'the head' (*muddha*)? Secondly, what is the factor that can chop off 'the head' (*muddhāhipāta*)? Kindly answer these two questions and dispel our doubts.

To that mental question of Ajita, the Buddha answered aloud thus:

*Avijjāṃ muddhā ti jānāhi, vijjā muddhāhipātini;
Saddhā sati samādhīhi, chandavīriyena saṃyutā.*

(Ajita,) Ignorance (*avijjā*) of the four Ariya Truths is the head (*muddha*) of repeated rebirths (*saṃsāra*). Knowledge of the Ariya Path (*muddhāhipātini*) that is associated with confidence (*saddhā*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhī*), strong will (*chanda*) and endeavour (*vīriya*), is the factor that chops off the head. Thus should you know.

On hearing the exact answers, Ajita was overjoyed. And, placing the antelope's skin on his left shoulder, touched the Buddha's feet with his head. Then he said aloud:

*Bāvarī Brāhmaṇo bhoto,
saha sissehi mārisa;
Udaggacitto sumano,
pade vandati Cakkhuma.*

Venerable One who has made an end of *dukkha*, endowed with the Eye of Knowledge, Brahmin Bāvarī, together with his pupils numbering sixteen thousand, being in high spirits, worship at your feet!

The other pupils of Bāvarī joined Ajita in these words of praise and made obeisance to the Buddha. The Buddha had compassion on Ajita and wished him well in these terms:

*Sukhito Bāvarī hotu,
saha sissehi brāhmano;
Tvañ cā pi sukhito hohi,
ciraṃ jīvāthi māṇava.*

May Bāvarī and his pupils be happy and well. Young brahmin, may you also be happy and well. May you live long.

Then the Buddha continued:

*Bāvarissa ca tuyhaṃ vā, sabbesaṃ sabbasaṃsayāṃ;
Katāvakāsā pucchavho, yam kiñci manasicchatha.*

If Bāvarī or yourself, Ajita, or anyone of you would like to clear up any problem that may arise in your mind, I allow you to ask.

It was the custom of the All-Knowing Ones to invite queries.

When this opportunity was extended to them, all the Brahmin sat down, made obeisance to the Buddha, and took turns to ask. Ajita was the first to do so. The Buddha answered his questions and those answers gradually culminated in the realization of arahatship. Ajita and his one thousand pupils attained arahatship at the end of the discourse; thousands of others also attained *magga-phala* at various levels. As soon as Ajita and his pupils attained arahatship, they were called up by the Buddha into bhikkhuhood. They instantly assumed the form of *bhikkhu*-elders of sixty years' standing, complete with *bhikkhu* equipment which appeared by the supernormal power of the Buddha. They all sat before the Buddha in worshipping posture. (The rest of Bāvarī's pupils asked their own questions to the Buddha, the details about which may be found in the **Sutta Nipāta**. Here we shall continue only with what is concerned with the Venerable Mogharāja and Bāvarī.)

Bāvarī's pupils, mentioned above, asked questions in turn to which the Buddha gave answers and which ended in the attainment of arahatship by the questioner and his one thousand pupils. All of them, becoming *bhikkhus*, were called up by the Buddha.

Mogharāja was a very conceited person who considered himself as the most learned among the sixteen close pupils of Bāvarī. He thought it fit to ask his questions only after Ajita because Ajita was the eldest among the close pupils. So after Ajita had finished, he stood up to take his turn. However, the Buddha knew that Mogharāja was conceited and was not yet ripe for enlightenment, and that he needed chastisement. So the Buddha said to him: "Mogharāja, wait till others have asked their questions." Mogharāja reflected thus: "I have all along been thinking of myself as the wisest person. But the Buddha knows best. He must have judged that my turn to ask questions has not become due." He sat down silently.

Then after the eight pupils of Bāvarī, viz., (1) Ajita, (2) Tissa Metteyya, (3) Puṇṇaka, (4) Mettāgū (5) Dhotaka, (6) Upasīva, (7) Nanda and (8) Hemaka, had finished their turns, he became impatient and stood up to take his turn. Again, the Buddha saw him still not ripe yet for enlightenment and asked him to wait. Mogharāja took it silently. But when remaining six pupils of Bāvarī, viz., (9) Todeyya (10) Kappa, (11) Jatukaṇṇi, (12) Bhadrāvudha, (13) Udaya, and (14) Posala, had finished their turns, Mogharāja was concerned about the prospect of his becoming the most junior *bhikkhu* among Bāvarī's disciples and took the fifteenth turn. And now that Mogharāja's faculties had ripened, the Buddha allowed him. Mogharāja began thus:

*Dvāhaṃ sakkāṃ apucchissāṃ,
na me vyākāsi Cakkhumā;*

*Yāvataṭṭiyaṇ ca devīsi,
vyākaroṭī ti me sutam.*

Twice have I put my questions to the Buddha of Sakyan descent, but the Possessor of the Five Eyes, has not replied to me. I have heard it said that the Buddha answers, out of compassion, at the third time.

*Ayam loko paro loko,
Brahmā loko sadevako;
diṭṭhiṃ te nābhijānāti,
Gotamassa yasassino.*

Neither this human world nor the world of devas and Brahmas understand the view held by Buddha Gotama of great fame and following.

*Evaṃ abhikkantadassāviṃ,
aṭṭhi pañhena āgamaṃ;
katham lokam avekkhantam,
maccurājā na passati.*

To ‘the One-who-sees-the-excellent-Dhamma’ (i.e. the Knower of the inner tendencies (*āsaya*), supreme release (*adhimmutti*), destinies (*gati*) and Nibbāna (*pārāyana*), etc. of the sentient world), we have come to ask a question: howsoever should one perceive the world so that *māra* cannot see him (any more)? (By what manner of perceiving the conditioned world, does one attain arahatship which is liberation from death?)

To the question contained in the second half of Mogharāja's three stanzas above, the Buddha replied:

*Suññato lokam avekkhassu,
Mogharāja sadā sato.
Attānudiṭṭhiṃ ūhacca,
evaṃ maccutaro siyā.
Evaṃ lokam avekkhantam
maccurājā na passati.*

Mogharāja, be mindful all the time, and abandoning the wrong view concerning the five aggregates, i.e. the delusion of self, perceive the world (animate or inanimate) as naught, as empty. By perceiving thus, one should be liberated from *māra* (Death). One who perceives the world thus cannot be seen by *māra*.

— Sutta Nipāta, v. 1126. —

(The wrong view of a personal identity as ‘oneself’ which is the mistaken concept of the present body, *sakkāyadiṭṭhi*, must be discarded and all conditioned phenomena should be viewed as insubstantial not-self (*anatta*), and in truth and reality, a mere nothingness. When this right perception has struck root, Death is conquered. When *arahatta-phala* is realised, the *arahat* passes beyond the domain of death (*māra*). ‘Passing beyond Death's domain’ is a metaphor which means attainment of arahatship. This stanza has as its main object, the attainment of arahatship.)

After hearing this stanza which culminated in *arahatta-phala*, Mogharāja and his one thousand followers attained arahatship, as did the previous pupils of Bāvārī. They were ‘Called-up *bhikkhus*’. Thousands among the audience gained *magga-phala* at various levels, too.

(c) **Etadagga Title achieved**

Since he became a *bhikkhu* by being called up as a *bhikkhu* by the Buddha, the Venerable Mogharāja had the habit of wearing only inferior or poor robes in that they were stitched out of coarse rags, dyed poorly just to meet the rules of the Vinaya, and stitched with inferior thread. Therefore, on one occasion, when the Buddha was holding a congregation of *bhikkhus* at the Jetavana monastery, He declared:

*“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakanāṃ bhikkhūnaṃ
lūkhacīvaradharānaṃ yadidaṃ Mogharājā.”*

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhu*-disciples who always wear coarse robes (of poor material, poor dye and poor thread), *Bhikkhu* Mogharāja is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

ADDENDA

BĀVARĪ THE BRAHMIN TEACHER (Continued)

Of the sixteen close pupils of Hermit Bāvarī, the first fifteen, up to Mogharāja, after putting forwards their questions to the Buddha and receiving the answers, attained arahatship along with their respective pupils of a thousand each. All were ‘called-up *Bhikkhus* by the Buddha.’ Pingiya, the sixteenth close pupil and a nephew of Bāvarī, who was then 120 years of age, asked the Buddha this question:

*Jiṇṇohamasmi abalo vītavaṇṇo,
nettā na suddhā savanaṃ na phāsu.
Māham nassaṃ momuho antarāva,
ācikkha dhammaṃ yam ahaṃ vijaññaṃ.
Jātijarāya idha vippahānaṃ.*

(Venerable Sir,) I am worn out with age, weak and wan. My eyes and ears are failing me. I do not wish to die in deep ignorance before having the benefit of your Doctrine. So please show me, here in Your very presence, the Supramundane Dhamma that can abandon rebirth and ageing.

Pingiya was very much concerned about his physical deterioration, He had attachment to his body. To gain a detached view of the body, the Buddha taught him thus:

*Disvāna rūpesu vihaññaṃāne,
ruppanti rūpesu janā pamattā.
Tasmā tuvaṃ Piṅgiya appamatto,
jahassu rūpaṃ apunabbhavāya.*

(Piṅgiya,) the heedless multitudes are brought to ruin on account of corporeality. Having seen yourself how corporeality is the cause of the suffering of those heedless persons, be heedful (mindful) and abandon attachment to the corporeality so that fresh existence may not arise.

(The Buddha expounded the necessary practice (*patipatti*) that leads one to arahatship by the expression ‘so that flesh existence (*apunabbhava*) may not arise’.) The hearer, Pingiya, however was old and getting mentally slow. So he did not gain enlightenment at once. He put a further question in the following stanza, extolling the immense wisdom of the Buddha:

*Disā catasso vidisā catasso,
uddhaṃ adho dasa disā imāyo.
Na tuyhaṃ adiṭṭhaṃ asutaṃ amutaṃ,
atho aviññātaṃ kiñcanaṃ atthi loke.
Ācikkha dhammaṃ yam ahaṃ vijaññaṃ,*

jātijarāya idha vipphāṇaṃ.

(Venerable Sir,) in all the four cardinal directions, in all the four intermediate directions, above, and below, in all the ten directions, there is nothing whatever in the world that the Bhagavā does not see, hear, know, or understand. Do show me, here in Your very presence, the supramundane Dhamma that can abandon rebirth and ageing.

The Buddha again pointed to the necessary practice leading to Nibbāna thus:

*Taṇhāhipanne manuje pekkhamāno,
santāpajāte jarasā parete.
Tasmā tuvaṃ Piṅgiya appamatto,
jahassu taṇhāṃ apunabbhavāya.*

(Piṅgiya,) the multitudes are afflicted by their own craving. Having seen yourself how they are worn out and ruined by the relentless process of ageing, be heedful (mindful) and abandon craving for sense pleasures, for continued existence, and for non-existence so that fresh existence may not arise.

At the end of the discourse, which was directed towards *arahatta-phala*, Piṅgiya attained *anāgāmī-magga*, the Path-Knowledge at the third level. While listening to the discourse, Piṅgiya's mind was wandering: he felt sorry that his uncle, Bāvarī, had missed the opportunity to hear such a profound exposition. Hence, his failure to attain arahatship. However, his one thousand pupils became *arahats*. All of them, Piṅgiya as an *anāgāmin* and his pupils as *arahats*, were called up as *bhikkhus* by the Buddha.

(The question posed by each of the sixteen pupils of Bāvarī and the Buddha's answers to them were compiled as distinct Suttas by the reciters at the Council such as Ajita Sutta, etc. The background story and the sixteen suttas has been given the title of Pārāyana Sutta because they lead to the yonder shore (Nibbāna) of *saṃsāra*.)

By the end of Pārāyana Sutta, 16,016 recluses attained arahatship, i.e. all but Piṅgiya became *arahats*. Fourteen crores of hearers also attained *magga-phala* at various levels of Path-Knowledge, having understood the Four Ariya Truths.

The huge audience, on the occasion of the Pārāyana Sutta, came from different places, found themselves back at home at the end of the sermon due to the Buddha's powers. The Buddha returned to Savatthi accompanied by thousands of *arahat* disciples (with the exception of the Venerable Piṅgiya).

Piṅgiya's Discourses to Bāvarī

The Venerable Piṅgiya did not accompany the Buddha to Sāvattthi because he had undertaken to report back his experience to his uncle. Buddha granted him the permission to return to his dwelling. He appeared at the bank of River Godhāvarī by his psychic power, and thence to his dwelling on foot.

As Bāvarī awaited the return of his nephew, sitting and watching the road, he saw Venerable Piṅgiya, in the guise of a *bhikkhu*, instead of his former appearance as a hermit with the usual equipment. He rightly conjectured that the Buddha indeed had appeared in the world. When the Venerable Piṅgiya got before his presence, he asked him: "How is it? Has the Buddha appeared?" "That's true, Brahmin, the Buddha has appeared in the world. He gave us a sermon while residing at the Pāsānaka Shrine. I shall pass on the Doctrine to you." On hearing this, Bāvarī and his five hundred pupils prepared a special seat for the Venerable Piṅgiya, showing him great respect. Then the Venerable Piṅgiya took his seat and delivered a discourse consisting of 15 stanzas to Bāvarī, which is known as the *Pārāyanānugīti*. (Refer to the Pāli text in **Sutta Nipāta**. A prose rendering of it follows.)

The Venerable Piṅgiya expounded thus:

- (1) "I will attempt to echo the Buddha's discourse on *Pārāyana*:

The Buddha who is an *arahat*, untainted by the filth (of delusion), endowed with vast knowledge comparable to the earth, released from sensuousness, barren of forests of defilements, expounded the Dhamma as He has understood it. Why should the Buddha say something which is untrue?

- (2) "Come, now, I will sing in praise of the Buddha, the One purified of the dirt of delusion (*moha*), the One purged of vanity (*mānā*) and ingratitude (*makkha*).
- (3) "Brahmin, the Buddha has dispelled the darkness of defilements. He is endowed with the All-seeing Eye. He has reached the end of the world. He has passed beyond all forms of existence. He is free of moral intoxicants. He has exhausted all *dukkha*. He has earned the name of 'the Awakened One'. This man, Brahmin, is the man I have resorted to.
- (4) "Brahmin, like a bird that leaves the lowly bushes of scanty fruit and resorts to a fruitful grove, so also I have left the company of lesser minds, and like a golden swan, have reached a great lake of immense wisdom.
- (5) "Brahmin, before the time of Buddha Gotama's Teaching, religious teachers proclaimed their views to me saying: 'This is how it has always been, and this is how it will always be'. They were mere hearsay knowledge, gaining ground as oral tradition. They only serve as sources of unwholesome speculation bearing on sensuality, etc.
- (6) "Brahmin, that Buddha Gotama whom I have followed is unrivalled. He is committed to dispelling darkness. He has a halo around His person and sheds light of knowledge everywhere. My Teacher, Buddha Gotama, has awe-inspiring wisdom. His intelligence is infinite like the earth.
- (7) "Brahmin, the Buddha expounded to me the Dhamma which can be personally apperceived, which is not delayed in its result, which leads to the end of Craving, and to Security (Nibbāna). That Buddha, my Teacher, is beyond comparison.
- (8 - 9) "Thereupon Bāvarī asked Pingiya thus: "Pingiya, whereas the Buddha expounded to you the Dhamma which is personally appreciable, which is not delayed in its result, which leads to the end of craving, and to security against all defilements and, whereas the Buddha is beyond comparison; has awe-inspiring Wisdom, and infinite intelligence like the earth, yet why do you ever stay away from him?" (Bāvarī scolded his nephew for not staying close to such a great man as the Buddha.)
- (10 - 11) "Brahmin, that Buddha, my Teacher, expounded to me the Dhamma which can be personally apperceived, which is not delayed in its result, which leads to the end of craving, and to security against all defilements. He has awe-inspiring wisdom, and infinite intelligence like the earth. In fact, I do not stay away from Him even for a moment.
- (12) "Brahmin, with mindfulness, I am seeing the Buddha with my mind as clearly as with my eyes, I am seeing Him by day or by night. By night I remain remembering His greatness with reverence. That is why I never consider myself away from the Buddha, even for a moment.
- (13) "Brahmin, my conviction, my delightful satisfaction, and my mindfulness, never leave Buddha Gotama's Teaching. Wherever the Buddha, endowed with infinite Wisdom, goes I bow (with my mind) in that direction in homage.
- (14) "Brahmin, it is due to my old age that I am not physically able to go near the Buddha. But I always go to Him in my thoughts. My mind is always connected with His presence.
- (15) "Brahmin, I had lain in the mire of sensuousness, agitating all the time, while drifting from one island to another, i.e. taking refuge in one teacher now, and then another teacher next. Now I have met (seen) the Teacher, (at the Paṣāṇaka Shrine) who is free of moral intoxicants, who has crossed over the floods of *samsāra*."

(Note: that the Venerable Piṅgiya having become an *ariya*, could address his uncle only as 'Brahmin', and not 'uncle'. On the part of Bāvarī, he was used to calling his nephew, 'Piṅgiya' and did not mean to be disrespectful to the *bhikkhu* in calling him by the name.)

Buddha's Sending of Rays and Delivery of A Discourse

At the end of the fifteenth stanza above, the Buddha knew that the Venerable Piṅgiya and his uncle, Bāvarī, had become fit enough to receive higher Knowledge, their five faculties [confidence (*saddhā*), endeavour (*vīriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*)] had matured, and sent His Buddha-rays to them while remaining at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvattī. The golden-hued rays appeared before them. Just as the Venerable Piṅgiya was describing the noble qualities of the Buddha to his uncle, he saw the golden shaft of rays and, paying his attention to it carefully, he saw the presence of the Buddha as if the Buddha was standing in front of him. "Look! The Buddha has come!" he exclaimed in wonderment.

Bāvarī then stood up and paid homage to the Buddha with palms joined and raised to his forehead. The Buddha then intensified the rays and let His person seen by Bāvarī. Then He made a discourse suited to both Bāvarī and his nephew, but addressing it to the Venerable Piṅgiya:

*Yathā ahū Vakkali muttasaddho,
bhadrāvudho Āḷavi Gotamo ca.
Evam eva tvampi pamuñcassu saddham,
gamiṣasi tvaṃ Piṅgiya maccudheyassa pāram.*

Piṅgiya, there have been *bhikkhus* who attained arahatship through sheer force of confidence in the Triple Gem such as Vakkali, Bhadrāvudha (one of the sixteen close pupils of Bāvarī) and Gotama of Āḷavī. Likewise, you should place your confidence in the Triple Gem and by directing that confidence towards Nibbāna, you cross over from the other shore of *saṃsāra*, which is the domain of death.

At the end of the discourse, the Venerable Piṅgiya attained arahatship. Bāvarī attained *anāgāmī-phala* and his five hundred pupils attained *sotāpatti-phala*.

The Venerable Piṅgiya responded to the above admonition of the Buddha thus:

1) *Esa bhiyyo pasīdāmi,
suvāna munino vaco.
Vivaṭṭacchado Sambuddho,
akkhilo paṭibhanavā.*

2) *Adhideve abhiññāya,
sabbhaṃ vedi varovaram.
Pañhānantakaro Satthā,
kaṅkhinam patijānatam.*

- (1) Venerable Sir, the words of the Great Recluse (*Mahāmuni*), the Buddha, makes me deeply satisfied. My confidence in the Triple Gem is strengthened. The Buddha has removed the roof of *saṃsāra*. He is free from the darts of defilements. He is endowed with elaborate and analytical Knowledge.
- (2) The Perfectly-Enlightened One, who resolves all problems and who is the Teacher of those that falsely claim to be free from doubt, knows the Pure Ones that are superior to the greatest of devas and humans, having understood through His extraordinary wisdom all factors that lead to Purity.

3) *Asaṃhīram asaṃkuppam,
yassa n'atthi upamā kvaci.*

THE GREAT CHRONICLE OF BUDDHAS

*Addhā gamissāmi na m'ettha kaṅkhā,
evaṃ maṃ dhārehi adhimuttacittaṃ.*

- (3) (O Great Recluse,) unperturbable, immutable, and beyond any standards of comparison is Nibbāna with no trace of existence remaining. And I have no doubt that I am bound for that Nibbāna. May the Bhagavā recognize me as one who has directed his confidence to Nibbāna, whose mind is free from defilements.

Chapter 44

LIFE HISTORIES OF BHIKKHUNĪ ARAHATS

(1) MAHĀPAJĀPATI GOTAMĪ THERĪ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Mahāpajāpati Gotamī Therī was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, she was listening to a discourse by the Buddha when she happened to see a *bhikkhunī* being named by the Buddha as the foremost among the *bhikkhunis* who were enlightened earliest¹. She aspired to the same distinction in a future existence. So, she made extraordinary offerings to the Buddha and expressed that wish before Him. The Buddha predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

In Her Previous Existence as The Head of Water-carriers

The future Mahāpajāpati Gotamī Therī led a life of charity and observed the moral precepts and at the end of her life she was reborn in the deva realm. When she passed away from deva existence during the interval between the two Buddhas, she was reborn into the slave class in Bārāṇasī, as the head of water carriers.

Then, when the rains-retreat period was drawing near, five Paccekabuddhas who lived in Nandamū Cave, descended at the Migadāvana Forest, near Bārāṇasī, from the sky and went into the city to gather alms-food. They stayed at the Isipatana Migadāvana forest after the alms-round and discussed among themselves about seeking help in making small dwelling places for use during the rains-retreat.

(A *bhikkhu*, who vows to remain at a chosen place during the rains-retreat period, is required by the Vinaya Rules to live in a sort of dwelling with some roof (made of slate, or baked tile, or cement tile, or grass or leaves) and with a door. This rule has no exception even for those *bhikkhus* who have vowed to observe such austere practices as the *Nālaka* practice or the *Moneyya* practice. If a dwelling for the purpose is not offered to them ready-made, they have to seek assistance in getting one built. This dwelling is the place where they vow to live during the three-month rains-retreat period, and is essential for making the vow.)

The five Paccekabuddhas, who had to fulfil the need for a dwelling for use during the rains-retreat, arranged their robes in the evening and entered the city of Bārāṇasī to seek assistance. Their going into the city was noted by the chief of the water carriers. The Paccekabuddhas stood at the door of the rich man of Bārāṇasī but when they told him about their need, the rich man said, “We were not prepared to help. May the revered ones go elsewhere.”

The chief of water carriers met the Paccekabuddhas as they came out of the city at the city gate and putting down the water pot, she made obeisance. Then she asked the purpose of the revered ones in going into the city and coming out so soon from it. The Paccekabuddhas told her that they were seeking assistance to have a small dwelling built for use during the rains-retreat period. And also on further inquiry, she learnt that the need was still unfulfilled. She asked them: “Is this dwelling to be the gift of only well-to-do donors? Or is it proper for a slave like me to donate one?”

“Anybody may do so, female lay supporter,” they replied.

1. *Rattāññū Puggala*: one who was enlightened earliest. This is a technical term which means the *bhikkhu* who is the senior-most in the Order. It also means the *bhikkhu* who understands the Four Ariya Truths earliest. It also may mean the *bhikkhu* who attain arahatship earliest.

“Very well, Venerable Sirs, we shall donate the dwellings tomorrow. Meantime, may the Venerables accept my offering of food tomorrow.”

After making the invitation, she picked up her water pot and, instead of returning to the city, she went back to the water-hole and gathered her company of water carriers there. Then she said to them: “Now girls, do you want to be slaves to others all the time? Or do you want freedom from servitude?”

They answered in unison: “We want freedom from servitude!”

“If so, I have invited the five Paccekabuddhas to an offering tomorrow. They are in need of dwellings. Let your husbands give their helping hands for one day tomorrow.”

“Very well,” they all said. They told this to their husbands in the evening after the latter had come home from the forest where they worked. The men all agreed to help and made an appointment at the door of the chief of the male slaves. When they had assembled there, the head of the water carriers urged them to lend a hand in building dwellings for the five Paccekabuddhas during the rains-retreat period, and thus extolling great benefits of such contribution. A few of the men, who did not agree to help at first, were admonished by her and persuaded into the task.

The next morning, the head of the water carriers offered food to the five Paccekabuddhas. After that, she signalled the five hundred male slaves to start work. They promptly went to the forest, cut down trees, and each group of a hundred men built a modest dwelling unit for one Paccekabuddha, complete with an adjacent walk to it. They filled the water pots and saw to the bare essentials in five dwellings for the five Paccekabuddhas. They then offered them to the Paccekabuddhas, requesting them to dwell there during the rains-retreat period. Having received the consent of the revered ones, they also took turns to offer daily food to them.

If there was some poor water carrier who was unable to prepare a meal for the five Paccekabuddhas on her appointed day, the head of the water carriers would give her the necessary provisions. The three months of *vassa* thus passed. Near the end of the *vassa*, the head of the water carriers asked the five hundred slave girls each to weave a piece of rough cloth. The five hundred pieces collected from them were exchanged for five sets of fine robes which were offered, one set to each of the five Paccekabuddhas. The Paccekabuddhas, after receiving the robes, rose to the sky in the presence of their donors and went away in the direction of Gandamādāna mountain.

In the Past Existence as The Chief Weaver

These water carriers slave girls spent the rest of their life in doing meritorious acts. On their death, they were reborn in the deva realm. The head of the deva girls, on her passing away, was reborn into the family of the chief weaver, in a weaver's village, near Bārāṇasī. One day, the five hundred sons of Queen Paduma devī, all Paccekabuddhas, went to the door of the royal palace at the Bārāṇasī on invitation. But there was no one to attend to them; to offer seats or to offer food. They had to return to their abode. As they left the city and were at the weaver's village, the chief weaver, who had much devotion for them and after paying obeisance to them, offered food. The Paccekabuddhas accepted her offering of food and, after finishing the meal, left for the Gandamādāna mountain.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

The chief weaver spent the rest of her life in deeds of merit. After passing away from that existence, she was reborn in the deva realm or the human realm in turns. On the eve of the appearing of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into the Sakyan royal family as the younger daughter of King Mahāsuppabuddha in Devadaha. She was named Gotamī and was the younger sister of Princess Mahāmāyā. Court astrologers, learned in the Vedas and adept at reading human forms and marks (physiognomy) and palmistry, after scrutinizing the distinctive bodily features of the two sisters predicted that the sons born of the two sisters would become a Universal Monarch.

When the two sisters came of age, they were betrothed to King Suddhodāna and they were taken to Kapilavatthu where Princess Mahāmāyā was made the Chief Queen. Later,

the Buddha-to-be passed away from Tusitā Deva realm and was conceived in the womb of Queen Mahāmāyā. After the Queen had given birth to her son (on the full moon of Kason (May) in the 68th year of the Great Era), on the seventh day, she passed away and was reborn in Tusitā Deva realm by the name of Santusita. On the death of Queen Mahāmāyā, King Suddhodāna made the younger sister, Queen Gotamī, the Chief Queen.

After Queen Mahāmāyā had given birth to Prince Siddhattha, two or three days later, Queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, the step mother of Prince Siddhattha, gave birth to Prince Nanda. So, at the time Queen Mahāmāyā died, Prince Siddhattha was only seven days old while Prince Nanda was only four or five days old. Queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī nursed her nephew, Prince Siddhattha, from her own breast, while leaving her own son, Prince Nanda, to be nurtured by nurses. She devoted her whole attention to the bringing up of her little nephew, the Buddha-to-be.

Later, the Buddha-to-be renounced the world and attained Supreme Enlightenment. While He was on the Buddha's mission to bring welfare to the world, He made His first visit to Kapilavatthu. On the next day, after His arrival, He went into the city to collect alms-food. His father, King Suddhodāna, had the opportunity to listen to the Buddha's discourse while He was still on His alms-round and resulted in him attaining the Stream-Entry Knowledge. Then on the second day, Prince Nanda was admitted into the Order. On the seventh day, the Buddha's son, Rāhula, was admitted as a novice (The details of these events have already been given.)

The Buddha spent His fifth *vassa* in Kūtagāra monastery in the Mahāvana forest, near Vesālī. During that time King Suddhodāna attained arahatship under the regal white umbrella at the court of Kapilavatthu and passed away the same day. Then Queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī renounced the world and become a *bhikkhunī*. Later, the five hundred queen consorts of the five hundred Sakyan princes, who became *bhikkhus* on the occasion of the expounding of the Mahāsamaya Sutta, unanimously decided to become *bhikkhunīs*. They made Queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī their spokeswoman to request the Buddha for admission into the Order. The first attempt by the Queen, the Buddha's step-mother, failed. Then she and the five hundred Sakyan princesses shaved their heads, donned dyed robes, and marched on foot from Kapilavatthu to Vesālī. They sought Venerable Ānanda's support in pleading for their admission. Finally, the Buddha admitted them into the Order as *bhikkhunīs* or female *bhikkhu*. Mahāpajāpati Gotamī was admitted by administering the eight principal vows (*garu dhamma*). The five hundred Sakyan princesses were admitted by an assembly of *bhikkhus* only. (Note: Later under normal procedure, a *bhikkhunī* had to be admitted by an assembly of *bhikkhunīs* also.) (The details about this paragraph may be found in Chapter Thirty-two.)

The Buddha's step-mother, Mahāpajāpati Gotamī Therī, attained arahatship after hearing the Saṅkhiṭṭa Sutta. The five hundred *bhikkhunīs* later attained enlightenment at various levels after hearing the Nandakovāda Sutta.

(c) Mahāpajāpati Gotamī Therī The Foremost Bhikkhunī

On one occasion when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery and naming foremost *bhikkhunīs*, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who are of long standing in the Order, Mahāpajāpati Gotamī is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

(Herein, the name ‘Gotamī’ represents the Gotama clan. ‘Mahāpajāpati’ is the epithet which means ‘mother of great offspring’. This epithet was based on the prognostication of physiognomists and palmists that, from the special features observed on her person, she was to be the mother of a Universal Monarch if she gave birth to a son, or the mother of the wife of a Universal Monarch if she gave birth to a daughter.) — **Commentary on Majja**

The Passing Away of Gotamī Therī

When Gotamī Therī was of 120 years' age, she was residing at a *bhikkhunī* monastery which was in the city of Vesālī. (As a rule, *bhikkhunī* monasteries were set up inside the town or village.) The Buddha was then staying at the Mahāvana monastery near Vesālī. One morning, after collecting alms-food in the city and finishing her meal, Gotamī Therī entered into the attainment of *arahatta-phala* for a predetermined period. After rising from the *jhāna* attainment, she remembered the long series of her acquisition of merits in her past existences and felt very delighted. Then she reviewed her life span. She saw that it had come to an end. She thought it proper to inform the Buddha at Mahāvana forest about her approaching death, as well as bidding leave of her passing away to her colleagues who had been a source of her inspiration such as the two Chief Disciples and co-resident *ariyas*. Then only she would return to her “monastery” and pass away. The same idea also arose in the minds of the five hundred *bhikkhunīs* of Sakyan origin.

(The touching events concerning the passing away of Gotamī Therī will now be told based on: (1) The **Chiddapīḍhānaṇī** (Volume One, Chapter Twelve) by Mahāvisuddhārāma Sayadaw, and the **Apādāna, Khuddaka Nikāya**, IV. Only a gist of those texts is given here.)

The Buddha's step-mother, Gotamī Therī thought: “I am not going to live to see the passing away of my son, the Buddha, nor that of the two Chief Disciples, nor that of my grandson Rāhula, nor that of my nephew Ānanda. I am going to predecease them. I shall seek permission to pass away from my son, the Buddha now.” The same thoughts also occurred in the minds of five hundred *bhikkhunīs* of Sakyan origin.

At that moment, the earth quaked violently. Unseasonable rains thundered in the sky. The guardian spirits of the *bhikkhunī*-monasteries wailed. The five hundred *bhikkhunīs* went to Gotamī Therī and told her about the wailing of the guardian spirits and Gotamī Therī told them her plan to pass away. The five hundred *bhikkhunīs* also told her their plan likewise. They all asked the guardian spirits of the monastery to pardon them if they had offended them in any way. Then, casting her last glance at the “monastery”, Gotamī Therī uttered this verse:

“I shall now proceed to the unconditioned (Nibbāna) where there is no aging or death, no association with beings or things one dislikes, no separation from beings or things one holds dear.”

Among those who heard these words, those who had not rid themselves of attachment, devas and humans alike, wailed miserably. (The touching scene of their lamentation is vividly described in the **Pāli text**.)

When the *bhikkhunīs* came out of their *vihāra* (nunnery), along the main street, devotees came out of their homes, and kneeling themselves before Gotamī Therī, wailed, expressing their deep distress. The Buddha's step-mother, Gotamī Therī, spoke words that help quell their sorrow. (Her words, rich with the Doctrine, may be gleaned from the Pāli text. This remark also applies to other stanzas that she was to utter later on.) She uttered nine and a half stanzas to allay the lamentation of the citizens of Vesālī. When she arrived before the Buddha, she informed Him of her impending death and asked the Buddha's approval to release her life-maintaining thought process, in verse, sixteen in all, beginning with the words: *Ahaṃ sugata te mātā tuṃ ca vīra pitā mama*. The Buddha gave His approval in a stanza. After that, she recited five stanzas in praise of the Buddha.

Then she asked permission of the Sangha, the Venerable Rāhula, the Venerable Ānanda and the Venerable Nanda, to approve of her passing away in two stanzas (beginning with the words, “*āsvīṣālayasame*”) describing the banefulness of sentient existence. The Venerables Nanda and Rāhula who were then *arahats* took the words of the great Therī as inspiring emotional religious awakening; but as for the Venerable Ānanda, who was still training himself for arahatship, they caused much sorrow and lamentation. He expressed his grief in a stanza beginning with, “*hā santiṃ Gotamī yā it.*” The great Therī solaced her nephew with words of wisdom.

Thereafter, the Buddha asked Gotamī Therī, in the following verse, to display her

supernormal powers:

“Gotamī, for the sake of those who have doubts about female devotees attaining Enlightenment in My teaching, to enable them shed those doubts, display your supernormal powers.”

The one hundred and twenty years old *bhikkhunī* complied by showing her supernormal powers as described in the text on Supernormal powers, such as from being one to become many; from being many to become one; to become visible and to become invisible; to pass through a wall or a mountain, etc. Then she walked in mid-air holding Mount Meru as the prop on which the great earth rested as an umbrella, and turning upside down this miraculous umbrella. She created an atmosphere of incense heat as when six suns arise simultaneously, etc. Having complied with the Buddha's request, she came down and making obeisance to Him, sat in a suitable place. She said: “Venerable son, I, your step-mother, is 120 years of age. I have grown old, I have lived long enough. May I be allowed to die.”

The audience, stunned by the miraculous powers displayed by Gotamī Therī, asked her: “Venerable, what was the extent of merit you had performed to be endowed with such power and capability?” And Gotamī Therī related to them the successive acts of merit she had performed since the days of Buddha Padumuttara to the last existence. Those events ran into a number of stanzas.

Then the five hundred *bhikkhunīs* rose up to the sky as a cluster of stars, captivating the eye of the audience, displayed their supernormal powers, and having obtained the Buddha's approval to end their miraculous feats, they made obeisance to Him and sat in a suitable place. They recounted to the Buddha in verses how much they owed to Gotamī Therī. Then they asked the Buddha's permission to pass away.

The Buddha said: “*Bhikkhunīs*, you know the time to pass away.” Thus having obtained the Buddha's approval, they made obeisance to Him and returned to their “monastery”. The Buddha, accompanied by a large company of devotees, saw Gotamī Therī off up to the entrance to His forest abode. There, the great Therī and her five hundred *bhikkhunīs* disciples made their last obeisance to the Buddha together. Then the five hundred *bhikkhunīs* entered the city and sat cross legged in their respective dwellings in the “monastery”.

At that time, many male and female lay disciples of the Buddha, seeing the time had come to see the last of the noble ones, gathered around to pay their last respect, beating their chests in great sorrow. They threw themselves down on the ground like a tree uprooted. Gotamī Therī caressed the head of the eldest of the female devotees and uttered this stanza:

“Daughters, lamentation leads only to Māra's domain and is therefore in vain. All conditioned things are impermanent; they end up in separation, they cause endless agitation.”

Then she told them to go back to their homes. When alone, she entered into the first *jhāna* of Fine Material Sphere and then, stage by stage, till the *jhāna* of the neither-consciousness-nor-nonconsciousness, and then back, stage by stage, to the first *jhāna* of Fine Material Sphere. Thus, back and forth, she dwelt in the eight mundane *jhānic* attainments. Then she dwelt in *jhānic* attainment beginning from the first *jhāna* up to the fourth *jhāna*. Arising from that *jhāna* she realized complete Cessation of the aggregates, just as a lamp goes out when the oil and the wick become exhausted. The remaining five hundred *bhikkhunī*-disciples also realized complete Cessation.

At that moment, the great earth quaked violently and meteors fell from the sky. The skies rumbled with thunder. The celestial beings wailed. Celestial flowers rained from the sky. Mount Meru tottered like a dancer swaying. The great ocean roared, as if deeply troubled. *Nāgas*, *asuras*, devas and Brahmas expressed their emotional religious awakening in such term as: “Impermanent are all conditioned things; they have the nature of dissolution.”

Devas and Brahmas reported the death of Gotamī Therī and the five hundred *bhikkhunīs*

to the Buddha. The Buddha sent the Venerable Ānanda to inform the matter to the *bhikkhus*. Then, accompanied by many *bhikkhus*, the Buddha joined the funeral procession which took this order: (1) devas, humans, *nāgas*, *asuras* and Brahmās marched at the head, followed by; (2) the five hundred Golden hearses of five hundred *bhikkhunis* with multi-tiered roofs created by Deva Visukamina wherein were placed the remains of the *bhikkhunis* on their cots, and these hearses were borne by devas; (3) then followed the hearse of Gotamī Therī, the Buddha's step-mother, which was borne by the Four Great Deva Kings; (4) then followed the Sangha and the Buddha. The whole route from the nunnery to the funeral ground was canopied and all along the route were placed streams, pennants, while all the ground was strewn with flowers. Celestial lotus flowers came down, thick and fast, as though they were hanging loosely in the sky. All sorts of flowers and perfumes wafted in the air. All sorts of music, singing and dancing took place in honour of the departed noble *arahats*.

During the progress of the funeral procession, both the sun and the moon were visible to the people. Stars were shining in the sky. Even at noon, the sun's rays were cool like that of the moon. In fact, the occasion of Gotamī Therī's funeral was surrounded by even more wonderful happenings than on the occasion of the funeral of the Buddha himself. On the occasion of the Buddha's funeral there was no Buddha nor the Venerable Sāriputta and *bhikkhu*-elders to supervise the funeral proceedings whereas on the occasion of the funeral of Gotamī Therī, there were the Buddha and the *bhikkhu*-elders, such as the Venerable Sāriputta, to supervise the proceedings.

At the charnel-ground, after the remains of Gotamī Therī were incinerated, the Venerable Ānanda picked up the relics and uttered this stanzas:

“Gone now is Gotamī. Her remains have been burnt up. And soon the passing away of the Buddha, the much anxiously awaited event, will take place.”

The Venerable Ānanda collected the relics in the alms-bowl used by Gotamī Therī and presented them to Buddha. Thereupon, the Buddha held up the relics of his step-mother for the audience to view and spoke to the assembly of devas, humans and Brahmās thus:

“Just as a big tree full of hard core standing firmly has a great trunk and that great trunk, being of impermanent nature, falls down, so also Gotamī who had been like a big tree trunk to the *bhikkhuni-sangha* is calmed (i.e. has entered Nibbāna.)”

The Buddha uttered altogether ten stanzas for the benefit of the audience on that memorable occasion. These ten stanzas with text and word-for-word meanings may be gleaned by the reader in the **Chiddapīdhānī**.)

2. KHEMĀ THERĪ

(The story of Khemā Therī is treated briefly in the Commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, the Commentary on the **Therīgāthā** and the Commentary on **Dhammapada**. In the **Apādāna Pāli**, it is related in detail by the great Therī herself. What follows is mainly based on the **Apādāna** with selections from the three Commentaries.)

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Khemā Therī was born into a worthy family in the city of Hāmavātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara, a hundred thousand world-cycles ago. One day, she listened to the Buddha's sermon and became a devotee of the Buddha, being established in the Three Refuges.

Then she had her parents approval to offer an extraordinary feast to the Buddha and His Sangha. At the end of seven days of the great offering, she saw Sujātā Therī whom the Buddha named as the foremost *bhikkhuni* in Knowledge. She was inspired by that. She gave an extraordinary offering again before expressing her wish to become such a foremost *bhikkhuni* in her own time later. Buddha Padumuttara prophesied that a hundred thousand world-cycles hence she would become the foremost *bhikkhuni* with regards to Knowledge in the time of Buddha Gotama.

Repeated Existences as Deva Queen or Human Queen

The future Khemā Therī, on passing away from that existence, was reborn in five deva realms, namely, Tāvātimsa, Yāmā, Tusitā Nimmānarati, and Paranimmitavasavati successively, as queen of the devas. When she passed away from there, she was reborn as queen of the Universal Monarch or as queen of a great king. Thus, wherever she was reborn, she was born as queen. She enjoyed the most glorious state in the deva-world and the human world for many many world-cycles.

Existence as A Bhikkhunī leading A Life of Purity

After being reborn in the fortunate existences only, during the time of Buddha Vipassī, ninety-one world-cycles previous to the present world-cycle, she was reborn into a worthy family. She had the opportunity of hearing the Buddha's Dhamma which made her solely devoted to the Pure Life and she became a *bhikkhunī* who was learned in the Doctrine, skilful in the knowledge of Paṭiccasamuppāda, a bold exponent of the Four Ariya Truths, and a persuasive preacher besides being a diligent one in the practice of the Dhamma. Thus she was a model to those who took up the Threefold Training under the Buddha's Teaching. She spent this life of Purity during her life span of ten thousand years.

Passing away from there, she was reborn in Tusitā Deva realm. After that, wherever she was reborn, the great merit, which she acquired in her existence during time of Buddha Vipassī, endowed her with the best that that particular existence could offer, such as making her talented, pure in morality, rich in resources attended by wise following, well provided with ease and comfort. Further, the religious practices observed in that existence led her to superior social status such as making her a queen, whether in deva existence or human existence and being loved and respected by her king.

Her Existence as Donor of A Monastic Complex

During the time of Buddha Koṇāgamaṇa, in the present world-cycle, she was reborn into a rich family in Bārāṇasī. Together with two other rich ladies by the name of Dhanañjānī and Sumedha (her own name being unknown but may be referred to as Khemā), they built a monastic complex for the Sangha as a whole. At their death, they were reborn in the Tāvātimsa Deva realm, and after that existence, they were reborn in the human world and the deva-world, enjoying superior social status too.

Her Existence as The Eldest of The Seven Daughters of King Kikī

During the time of Buddha Kassapa, in the present world-cycle, King Kikī of Bārāṇasī, in the province of Kāsi, was an ardent supporter of the Buddha. He had seven daughters by the names of: (1) Princess Samañī, (2) Princess Samaṇaguttā, (3) Princess Bhikkhunī, (4) Princess Bhikkhadāyikā, (5) Princess Dhammā, (6) Princess Sudhammā and (7) Princess Saṃghadāyikā. Later, during time of Buddha Gotama, they became respectively (1) Khemā Therī, (2) Uppalavaṇṇā Therī, (3) Paṭācārā Therī, (4) Kuṇḍalakesī Therī, (5) Kisāgotamī Therī, (6) Dhammadinnā Therī and (7) Visākhā, donor of Pubbārāma Monastery.

The future Khemā Therī (Princess Samañī), on hearing a sermon by Buddha Kassapa, was very keen to become a *bhikkhunī* but her father would not give her permission to do so. So, as the eldest, together with her six younger sisters, they made a common resolve not to marry and remained spinsters throughout their lives which lasted twenty-thousand years. They supported Buddha Kassapa with the four *bhikkhu* requisites for life.

On one occasion, the Buddha made a marvellous discourse entitled Mahānidāna Sutta, (which is recorded as the second sutta in Mahāvagga of **Dīgha Nikāya**). Princess Samañī was so absorbed in hearing it that she learnt it by heart, and recited it often.

As the result of these good deeds, on her death, she became the Chief Queen (of Sakka) in the Tāvātimsa.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn in her last existence as the daughter

of King Maddarāja of Sāgala. Since her birth brought peace to the land, she was named 'Khemā' (peace). When she came of age, she became the Queen of King Bimbisāra and was adored by her husband. She was conceited with her beauty.

The Buddha was then residing at the Veḷuvana monastery in Rājagaha. Queen Khemā had heard people saying that the Buddha always made discourses pointing out the faults of physical beauty, so she never went to see Him for fear that her beauty might well come under His censure.

King Bimbisāra's Clever Manoeuvre

King Bimbisāra thought: "While I am the most important lay supporter to the Buddha, it is inconceivable that my Queen has never visit the Buddha." He contrived a plan by having a song composed by an able poet, in praise of the Veḷuvana monastery, which he ordered songsters to sing within earshot of the Queen.

A Four-stanza Eulogy on The Veḷuvana Monastery

- (1) Anyone who is not fortunate enough to see the Veḷuvana monastery, the Bamboo grove residence of the Buddha, we consider him or her as one who has never seen the Nandavana Park of the celestial realm.
- (2) He or she who has seen the Veḷuvana Grove, which is so much cherished by King Bimbisāra of Rājagaha, the people's favourite ruler, the cynosure of the whole world, has truly seen the Nandavana Park, the favourite resort of Sakka, King of Devas.
- (3) Many of the Tāvātimsa devas, having abandoned the Nandavana Park and descended to the earth (the southern Island Continent) and cast their eyes on the Veḷuvana Grove, are astonished and all their cares forgotten, they are never satisfied with seeing it.
- (4) That Veḷuvana Grove has appeared due to the King's past merit and is adorned by the Buddha's majesty that poet could adequately describe its endless merits?

When Queen Khemā heard that song, although she had been to the Veḷuvana Grove on a pleasure visit with the King, her interest in the Grove was aroused afresh. She was very keen to visit it again. She asked the King's permission to go there and went there with a big retinue. She chose the hour of the day that she presumed the Buddha was surely not there, i.e. during the morning, when the Buddha usually went to the city for collecting alms-food. She roamed about the Bamboo Grove which was full of all kinds of flowering trees, fruit trees, where bees and bumble bees busied themselves collecting honey, and where the koels sang and the peacocks preened their feathers in the quiet seclusion of the park. She also visited the monastic dwellings of the religiously inclined men, their meeting halls, rest-houses and walks.

She came across a youthful *bhikkhu* sitting in meditation at the foot of a tree and thought that young man should be enjoying the pleasures of life at present and take up the religious life only in his old age. Feeling sure that the Buddha was not in his private chamber, she went near it. Instead, the Buddha knew that she would come and He remained in His private chamber. He had created, by His powers, a young maiden whose beauty surpassed that of Queen Khemā and was fanning Him.

When Queen Khemā saw that lovely maiden, she abandoned attachment to her own good looks but became fascinated and enamoured of the strange beauty in front of her. But even as she was gazing at the girl, due to the Buddha's powers, the beauty of the girl diminished perceptibly and within a few moments, she turned old and decrepit with wrinkled skin, gray hair, nursing teeth, black spots all over the skin, floppy breasts, bony joints protruding, veins twining about the body, bent double, and soon the old woman was trembling and breathing hard struggling for life and finally she gasped and collapsed. She was dead.

This vivid sight caused emotional religious awakening (*samvega*) in Queen Khemā. She realized thus:

"Oh, this form (body) is impure. It is indeed loathsome. Foolish women relish this

impure, loathsome body.”

Then the Buddha spoke to Queen Khemā in these verses:

- (1) “Khemā, look at the body that is afflicted with pain, impure, putrid, discharging impurities upwards and downwards, which foolish persons take so much delight in.
- (2) “Cultivate the mind to get fixed on an object of meditation, so as to be able to perceive the loathsomeness of the body. Let you be mindful of the thirty-two aspects (constituent parts) of the body; let there be weariness about them.
- (3) “(Khemā), just as the body of this woman by My side breaks up, so too will your body break up. Just as your body seem attractive for a while before death, so too the body of this woman by My side looked attractive before she died; (therefore) give up attachment to the body, both internally and externally.
- (4) “Cultivate a perception of unsubstantiality and noting closely the rising and falling of phenomena. Give up the notion of a self, by doing so, you will quell the eleven fires burning in you and reach Nibbāna.
- (5) “Just as the spider follows the web of its own making, so also sentient beings, who have attachment, follow the stream of defilements that are of their own making. The wise do not have any desire or regard for sense pleasures, but cut off the stream of defilements and go forth to Nibbāna.”

The Buddha knew that after listening to the discourse, the mind of Queen Khemā had become delighted and receptive, He continued with another discourse entitled *Mahānīdāna Sutta* (which was the very *sutta* Queen Khemā had heard and learnt by heart from Buddha Kassapa in her previous existence as Princess Somaññī). Queen Khemā remembered this *Sutta* and she attained Stream-Entry knowledge immediately.

After becoming an *ariya* as a Stream-Enterer, she wanted to make amends for her mistaken conceit about her beauty. She prostrated before the Buddha and submitted her apology in these five stanzas:

- (1) “The all-knowing One, I pay homage to You.
The Embodiment of Compassion, I pay homage to You.
Buddha who has crossed over the flood of *saṃsāra*, I pay homage to you.
Giver of the Deathless, I pay homage to you!
- (2) “I had been befuddled and led astray by attachment to sensuality, thus springing forward into the thicket of wrong view. By means of an appropriate device, you, the Bhagavā, have tamed me (who had been befuddled) and made me happy in being so tamed.
- (3) “Lacking an opportunity of meeting such a great One as Yourself, who is endowed with morality, concentration, etc., sentient beings suffer enormous *dukkha* in the ocean of *saṃsāra*.
- (4) “Even though the Pure One, who has reached the Purity of Nibbāna, had been staying at the Veḷuvana monastery, I had failed to come and pay homage to the Lord of the three worlds. That failure, on my part, I (now) admit to the Bhagavā as my fault.
- (5) “I had a mistaken idea about the Great Benefactor to the three worlds, the Bestower of the Ultimate Boon (*magga, phala, Nibbāna*) as one who is unprofitably censorious because I had been too fond of my beauty. My fault in having entertained such foolish thoughts and my failure to come and pay homage to you earlier, I (now) admit to the Bhagavā as my fault. (The Myanmar renderings are by the late Mahāvisuddhārāma Sayadaw in his **Chiddapīḍhānāṇī**.)

Upon admission by Queen Khemā of her previous fault, the Buddha said: “Let it be Khemā”, which cooled her heart as though ambrosial water were poured onto her person. Then Queen Khemā made obeisance to the Buddha and respectfully left Him. Back at the royal palace, she saw King Bimbisāra and addressed him thus:

- (1) “O great conqueror with golden complexion, you had employed a most apt strategy to persuade me to visit the Veļuvana monastery. Marvellous indeed was your idea! For I had become keenly desirous of seeing the Veļuvana Park, (with the consequence that) I have seen (with both my physical eye and the eye of wisdom) the Buddha, the great sage.
- (2) “O King! If you would agree, I would take up bhikkhunīhood in the Teaching (which is replete with eight marvels) of the Buddha of unrivalled wisdom, of the embodiment of the highest virtues. Thanks to the wise words of the Buddha, I have gained insight into the tiresome nature of my body.”

On hearing the two stanzas spoken by Queen Khemā, King Bimbisāra, who had even, from her mien, been recognizable as an *ariya*, one who had attained Path-knowledge, raised his joined palm to his forehead and said to his Queen: “My dear Queen, I allow you to become a *bhikkhunī*. May your renouncing the world come to its fulfilment (i.e. may you attain arahatship). (These words were spoken in half a stanza.) Thereupon the King put Queen Khemā on a golden Palanquin and sent her to the *bhikkhunī* ‘monastery’ in great state.

Khemā Therī gained Arahatsip

On the fifteenth day of her bhikkhunīhood, Khemā Therī, while observing the *uposatha*, contemplated on the lamp in front of her, how the flame arose and how it went out. A keen emotional religious awakening took place in her mind. Applying the insight into the nature of the rise and fall of the flame to all conditioned phenomena, i.e. the mind-body complex that constituted her present existence, she gained arahatship together with the Four Discriminations and the Six Supernormal Powers. (This account of Khemā Therī's attainment of arahatship is as described in the **Khemā Therī Apādāna Pāli**. The Commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** and the Commentary on the **Dhamapada** tell this event in a somewhat different manner. We have refrained from discussing them here lest it would confuse the reader.)

Khemā Therī was devoted both to the learning and the practice of the Doctrine and so she was most proficient in the Seven Stages of Purity, and was unrivalled in the exposition of the Ten Subjects of Discussion (*kathāvatthu*), most erudite in the application of the **Abhidhamma** method, outstanding both in learning and practice. The veracity of these statements may be gauged from Khemā Sutta, the first *sutta* in the *Abyākata Saṃgutta* of **Salāyatana Saṃyutta**.

Khemā Therī makes A Subtle Discourse to The Kosalan King

At one time, when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatti, Khemā Therī was making a tour of the Kosalan country, and was sojourning at Torāṇa, which lay between Sāvatti and Sāketa. At that time, King Pasenadi of Kosala was camping for the night at Torāṇa. Then the King said to a courtier: “So, man, make inquiries in this place which *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* is fit for my spiritual guide for today.” The courtier made thorough inquiries in Torāṇa but could find no *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* whom the King should go to for spiritual guidance. He only saw Khemā Therī who happened to be sojourning there. He went back to the King and said:

“There is no *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* in this place. But there is a *bhikkhunī* named Khemā Therī, a disciple of the Buddha. She is reported to be wise, skilful, learned, an expounder of the Doctrine in a fascinating way, endowed with a remarkable perspicacity. I would humbly suggest that your Majesty go to her for advice and guidance.” The King accepted the advice and went to Khemā Therī. He made obeisance to her and sitting in a suitable place, addressed Khemā Therī thus:

“Venerable, does a sentient being exist after death?”

“Great King,” replied Khemā Therī, “the Buddha does not say that a sentient being exists after death.”

"If so, Venerable, does a sentient being not exist after death?"

"Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being does not exist after death."

"Venerable, does a sentient being exist as well as does not exist after death?"

"Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being exist as well as does not exist after death."

"If so, Venerable, does a sentient being not exist after death?"

"Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death."

The King was at his wit's end. He further put questions which were replied as follows:

"Venerable, (1) When I asked: 'Does a sentient being exist after death?' you replied: 'Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being exists after death!' (2) When I asked: 'If so, Venerable, does a sentient being not exist after death?' you replied: 'Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being does not exist after death.' (3) When I asked: 'Venerable, does a sentient being exist as well as does not exist after death?' you replied: 'Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death.' (4) When I asked: 'If so, Venerable, does a sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death?' you replied: 'Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death.' Now, Venerable, why does the Buddha not say anything regarding these four questions? What is the reason for the Buddha's refusal to answer these four questions?"

Khemā Therī then said:

"Great King, in that case, let me put you a question. You may answer it as you wish. What do you think of what I am going to say now? Do you have within your dominion any man who can practically count things or an arithmetician who can say: 'There are such and such number of grains of sand in the Gaṅgā river?' Or who can say: 'There are so many hundreds, so many thousands, so many hundred thousand grains of sand in the Gaṅgā river?' "

"No, Venerable, there is none."

"Great King, do you have any man who can practically count things or an arithmetician who can say: 'There are so many vessels or bowls of water in the great ocean.' Or who can say: 'There are so many hundred, so many thousands, so many hundred thousands of bowls of water in the great ocean?' "

"No, Venerable, This is because the great ocean is too deep, beyond measure, incomprehensible."

"Even so, Great King. The Buddha has given up materiality (corporeality) which may be referred to as sentient being; he has eradicated it completely. He has made it like an uprooted palm tree, has rendered it incapable of coming into being again, and has made it impossible to arise in the future."

"The Buddha, who is liberated from being called the aggregate of corporeality or the phenomenon of materiality, is endowed with attributes and disposition or intention which are as great as the great ocean, beyond measure, incomprehensible. As for the Buddha, the statement, 'a sentient being exists after death' is irrelevant statement, 'a sentient being does not exist after death' is equally irrelevant; the statement, 'a sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death' is equally irrelevant; the statement, 'a sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death' is equally irrelevant."

(It is not proper for the Buddha to say that a sentient being exists after death; or a sentient being does not exist after death; or that a sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death, or that a sentient being neither exists nor

does not exist after death. This is a very profound matter.)

“The Buddha has given up Sensation.... p ...Perception... p ...Volitional activities... p ...Consciousness, which may be referred to as a sentient being; has eradicated it completely, has made it like a palm tree stump, has rendered it incapable of coming into being again, and has made it impossible to arise in the future.

“The Buddha who is liberated from being called the aggregate of Consciousness or the phenomenon of Consciousness is endowed with attributes and disposition or intention which are as great as the great ocean, beyond measure, incomprehensible. As for the Buddha the statement, ‘a sentient being exists after death’ is irrelevant statement, ‘a sentient being does not exist after death’ is equally irrelevant; the statement, ‘a sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death’ is equally irrelevant; the statement, ‘a sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death’ is equally irrelevant.”

(That was the discussion that took place between the Kosalan King and Khemā Therī for the second round. Explanations on this will be given later.)

King Pasenadi of Kosala was delighted with the words of Khemā Therī. He made obeisance to her and respectfully departed. Later on, the King visited the Buddha and put the same questions as he did to Khemā Therī. The Buddha answered them just as Khemā Therī did, (These questions and answers may be gleaned from the text.)

When the King found that the Buddha's answers and those of Khemā Therī were exactly the same, down to the letter, he was greatly astonished and exclaimed: “Marvellous it is, Venerable Sir! Astounding it is! The Buddha's exposition is exactly the same as that of His disciple, both in meaning and in words. They are in full agreement without any discrepancy. Venerable Sir, I had once put these questions to Khemā Therī and she had answered to me in exactly the same way, both in essence and in words. Marvellous it is, Venerable Sir! Astounding it is! The Buddha's exposition is exactly the same with that of His disciple, both in meaning and in words. They are in full agreement without any discrepancy.” Then he begged leave of the Buddha. He was greatly delighted with the Buddha's answers. He rose, made obeisance to the Buddha and respectfully departed.

This is a gist of Khemā Sutta.

Explanation:

Why did the Buddha not give any reply to the questions which are so framed: ‘that a sentient being exists after death’; ‘that a sentient being does not exist after death’; ‘that a sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death’; ‘that a sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death’?

- (1) There is, in truth and reality, nothing in the sentient world other than the five aggregates. There is nothing, in the ultimate sense, such a thing as a sentient being. Therefore, whether a ‘sentient being’ exist or not is not for the Buddha to say. (**Abyākata Saṃyutta**; the third sutta therein).
- (2) Only to one, who does not understand the nature of the five aggregates according to the Four Ariya Truths, there arises the problem of a sentient being and its existence or non-existence, in the said four questions, which occur to him due to Wrong View. To one who understands the Four Ariya Truths, there is no Wrong View that gives rise to these four questions. Since the Buddha has the most complete understanding of the Four Ariya Truths, there do not arise in Him these four questions. That is why He does not say anything about them. (**Ibid.**, the fourth sutta.)
- (3) Such questions, based on wrong view, arise only in one who has not rid of attachment, or craving for the five aggregates. To one who has no craving for the five aggregates, they do not occur. The Buddha, who has rid of Craving for the five aggregates together with any trace of acquired habit, does not have these wrong concepts. Therefore, He remained silent when these questions were asked. (**Ibid.**, the fifth sutta.)

(In the sixth sutta of the same Saṃyutta the four questions are dealt with adequately.)

In Khemā Sutta, Khemā Therī's answer was somewhat different; it had the undercurrent of reference to the Buddha. This was because she knew that the questioner (Kosalan King) had the Buddha also in mind when asking the four questions. So, Khemā Therī's answer in essence was:

The Buddha had (by getting rid of the cause of the five aggregates) rid of the five aggregates so that what was usually called a 'sentient being' was not coming into being after his death. He was freed from a future set of five aggregates, therefore, there was nothing that might be referred to as a being or a person. Since the Buddha knew this, a 'sentient being' after 'death was irrelevant for Him to speak of'. Therefore, He remained silent about the four questions.

One might argue thus: since the Buddha would not acquire a fresh set of the five aggregates, it is understandable that He refused to answer the first question, i.e. 'Does sentient being exist after death?' But why did He refuse to answer the second question: 'Does a sentient being not exit after death?' Should He say: 'No, it does not'? He refused to answer this question too because a 'sentient being' is not a real thing in the ultimate sense. (This is the explanation given in the Sub-Commentary.) Khemā Therī Sutta is profound in Dhamma. It is a matter for further inquiring for the virtuous.

(c) Khemā Therī is named as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

The discourse to the Kosalan King at Toraṇa was the immediate cause of Khemā Therī's being designated by the Buddha as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in the possession of profound Knowledge. On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery, in a *bhikkhu* congregation, while naming outstanding *bhikkhunīs* as foremost in their own areas (of proficiency), He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who have profound Knowledge, Khemā Therī is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

This declaration accorded her by the Buddha also had been happily recorded by Khemā Therī herself in the following stanzas, in her own life history:

- (1) “After I had become a *bhikkhunī*, I had explained to King Pasenadi of Kosala in accordance with the Doctrine on the profound questions he put to me at a place called Torana (which was between Sāvatti and Sāketa.)
- (2) “Later the King approached and put these same questions to the Buddha, and He answered these profound questions exactly as I had answered.
- (3) “The Conqueror of the five *māras*, the Supreme One among all men, being satisfied with my excellence in expounding the Dhamma, has designated me as the foremost *bhikkhunī* among the eminently wise.”

3. UPPALAVAṆṆĀ THERĪ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Uppalavaṇṇā Therī was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumutara. On one occasion, she listened to a discourse by the Buddha in the midst of a big audience, where she saw the Buddha named a *bhikkhunī* as the foremost *bhikkhunī* among those endowed with supernormal powers. She aspired to become such a great *bhikkhunī* in the future. She made an extraordinary offering to the Buddha and His Sangha for seven days. At the end of seven days, she placed seven bunches of lotus flowers at the feet of the Buddha as her tribute and expressed her aspiration to be the foremost *bhikkhunī* among those endowed with supernormal powers. Buddha Padumuttara prophesied that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

Offering of Lotus flowers to A Paccekabuddha

After passing away from that existence in which she made a lifelong dedication to the Buddha and the Sangha, she was reborn in the Tāvātimsa Deva realm. Next, she was reborn in the human world where she offered lotus flowers and alms-food to a Paccekabuddha.

In Her Existence as The Daughter of A Rich Man

Ninety-one world-cycles ago, there appeared Buddha Vipassī during which period the future Uppalavaṇṇā Therī was born into a Rich Man's family in Bārāṇasī. She invited the Buddha and the Sangha to her residence and made an extraordinary offering of food. Making a gift of lotus flowers to Buddha Vipassī, she mentally wished for personal charm in her future existences.

In Her Existence as A Daughter of King Kikī

After passing away from that existence, and as a result of her meritorious deeds, the rich man's daughter was reborn as a deva, and subsequently in the deva or human existence. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, in the present world-cycle, she was the second of the seven daughters of King Kikī of Bārāṇasī and was named Princess Samanaguttā. In that existence she, like her eldest sister, the future Khemā Therī, remained a spinster for life, which lasted twenty thousand years. They donated a monastic complex to the Sangha. At her death, she was reborn in the deva realm again.

In Her Existence as Ummādanṭī

After passing away from the deva realm, she was reborn into a worthy family in the human world. During that existence, she donated a gold coloured piece of cloth to an *arahat*, who was a disciple of Buddha Kassapa. (For details refer to **Ummadantī Jātaka**.)

She passed away from that existence to be reborn as Ummādanṭī, the exquisitely beautiful daughter of a rich brahmin named Tiriṭivaccha in Ariṭṭhapura, in the Province of Sivi. (For details refer to **Ummādanṭī Jātaka**, Paṇṇāsa Nipāta).

In Her Existence as A Watch Woman in The Field

Her next existence was the daughter of a farmer in a small village. Early one morning, as she went to the farm house, she found in a pond, on her way, a freshly blooming lotus flower. She went into the pond and plucked it. In the farm house she gathered some ears of rice and roasted them into pop corn which she counted up to five hundred. She put the pop corn in a lotus leaf which was gathered from the pond.

At that moment, a Paccekabuddha, after rising from His dwelling in the attainment of cessation, came by way of the air and stood not far away from the farmer's daughter. She saw Him and went to the farm house to get the pop corn and the lotus flowers, and then she put the pop corn into the Paccekabuddha's alms-bowl, covered it with the lotus flower, and offered it to Him.

After the Paccekabuddha had gone awhile, she thought: "A Paccekabuddha has no use with a flower, perhaps I should get it back and wear it." Hence, she went towards the Paccekabuddha and then asked back the lotus flower. But then she pondered: "Well, if the Paccekabuddha did not want my gift of the flower, He would have refused to accept it at the beginning. Now that He allowed me to put it on His alms-bowl, He must have liked it as a gift." So thinking, she placed the flower back into the alms-bowl. (For this wavering act, her future existences, as we shall see, were marked by mixed fortunes.)

Having thus returned the gift of the lotus flower, and admitting her fault for taking it back earlier, she expressed her wish: "'Venereal Sir, for offering this pop corn may I be blessed with five hundred sons in my future existence. This is equal to the number of pop-corn flowers that make up my gift.

Furthermore, for my gift of the lotus flower, may lotus flowers rise up from the earth to receive every step I make in my future existence!'"

(According to the life history of Uppalavaṇṇā, while the farmer's daughter was

making her offerings to the Paccekabuddha, five hundred farm workers, who were watching the field, offered some honey to the Paccekabuddha and made their wish that in their future existence they be reborn as the sons (five hundred of them all) of the young lady.)

The Paccekabuddha then rose into the sky even while the girl was watching Him and returned to Gandamādhāna mountain where He placed the lotus flowers at the entrance to Nandamūla Cave, for use by all Paccekabuddhas as a door-mat at the foot of the flight of steps.

In Her Existence as Queen Padumadevī

As the result of that good deed, when future Uppalavaṇṇā Therī passed away from that existence, and was reborn, by instantaneous full-grown birth, as a deva. There, in her own existence, a lotus flower arose from the earth at her foot at every step she made. When she passed away from this deva existence, she was reborn in the human world from a lotus flower in a big lake of lotus flowers at the foot of a mountain. A recluse living nearby, early one morning, went to the lake to wash his face and saw a lotus flower in bud which was already bigger than other buds. While the other buds had opened up their petals into full bloom, this bud remained in bud. He thought it strange and so he went into the lake and plucked it.

While in his hand, the big bud opened its petals and inside he saw a female child lying. He felt a curious sense of paternal love for the child. He took her to the hermitage along with the lotus flower, and put her on a small cot. Thanks to the past merits of the baby girl, milk oozed out from the big thumb of the recluse with which he nursed her. When the first lotus flower that she lay on became withered, a new lotus flower was placed underneath her.

When the young girl could walk and romp about, lotus flowers appeared from the earth, under her feet wherever she went. She had a saffron-coloured complexion. Her personal charm was super-human and would nearly equal that of a celestial maiden. Since she was born from the lotus, her foster father, the good recluse, named her Padumavatī (Miss Lotus). Whenever the recluse went out in search of fruit, she was left alone at the hermitage.

Padumavatī becomes A Queen

When Padumavatī came of age, one day, when the recluse was out gathering fruit, a hunter who happened to come to the hermitage saw her and thought: “There is no human being on earth as beautiful as this girl. I must find out what she is.” And so he awaited for the return of the recluse. When the recluse was seen returning, the girl went out to meet him, took the yoke (laden with fruits) and the water pot from him, had her foster father seated and attended on him lovingly.

The hunter was now sure that the girl was, in fact, a human being, and after paying homage to the recluse, he sat. The recluse gave him fruits and water, then asked him: “Are you going to stay in the forest or, are you going back to your home?”

The hunter said: “I have no business in the future, Sir, I am going back to my home.”

“Could you keep this experience of your meeting with the girl to yourself without letting anyone know about it?”

“If you would rather not let others know about this, Sir, why should I tell others?” But he said this merely to please his kind host. On his way home, after paying respect to the recluse, he carefully carved on the trees and arranged some branches along his way from the hermitage so that he could recognize his path.

And back at the city, he went to see the King who asked the purpose of his visit. He said: “Great King, I am your humble servant, a hunter. I come to report to you the presence of a most remarkable woman in the forest at the foot of the mountain, who would surely be an asset for Your Majesty.” He explained the circumstance of his discovery to the King. The

King was deeply interested. He marched for the foot of the mountain without losing time. Having encamped at a place not far away from the hermitage, he awaited till the recluse had finished his meal and went to see the recluse, accompanied by a few courtiers. The recluse was then sitting in his hermitage where the King greeted him, exchanged courteous words and sat in a suitable place.

The King made offering to the recluse, articles used by recluse. And then as a 'feeler' he said: "Venerable Sir, what is the use of living here? Let us go to the city." "I am not going, Great King," said the recluse. "You may go." To which the King said: "Very well, Venerable Sir, but I am given to understand that there is a woman in your company. It is not proper for a woman to be living in the company of a recluse. I would request that the woman be allowed to go with me."

To this direct request made by the King the recluse replied: "It is not easy for one to please many people. How could my daughter fit in with the court life with its many queens and ladies in waiting?"

The King allayed the fear of the recluse, saying: "Venerable Sir, if I (am allowed to marry her and) have given my love to her, I will make her my Chief Queen."

Thereupon the recluse called his daughter, as he usually addressed her since childhood: "Padumavati, my little girl!" Young Padumavati promptly responded; she came out of the hermitage and, saluting her father, stood before him, who said: "Dear girl, you have come of age. From the moment the King has cast his eyes on you, you should not stay here any longer. Go along with the King, my little girl."

"Very well, dear father," she said, weeping, and still standing.

The King of Bārāṇasī, wishing to prove his sincerity, showered Padumavati with gold, silver and jewellery and anointed her as his Chief Queen immediately.

Queen Padumavati became A Victim of Court Intrigue

At the court of Bārāṇasī, the King's heart was captivated by the Chief Queen so much so that since her arrival, all the other queens and ladies-in-waiting were totally neglected by the King. The womenfolk felt bitter about this and they tried to undermine the King's affection for the Chief Queen, saying: "Great King, Padumavati is not a human being. Where on earth have you ever seen a human being whose every step is received by a lotus flower arising from the earth? She is a demon, for sure. She is dangerous. She ought to be banished forthwith!" The King did not say anything.

At another time, when the King was called away by duty to suppress a rising at the remote part of the kingdom, he had to leave behind Padumavati at the palace, knowing that she was pregnant. The womenfolk at court seized this opportunity to strike. They bribed Padumavati's attendant into a wicked plot. She was instructed to remove the infant when the Chief Queen gave birth to her child and replace it with a piece of wood smeared with blood.

When Padumavati delivered the child, Prince Mahā Paduma was the real off-spring whom she gave birth to, as he was the only child conceived in her womb. The other sons, four hundred and ninety-nine of them, arose from the drops of her blood splattered about at child birth. The attendant duly carried out the instruction and informed the news of the Chief Queen's delivery to the other queens. The five hundred womenfolk at the court stole one child each while their mother was still asleep after her labour. Then they ordered five hundred wooden caskets, made by turners, to put each child in one. They placed them inside the caskets, and put seals on each.

When Queen Padumavati woke up and asked her assistant about her child, the latter frowned and retorted: "When did you ever give birth to a child? This is what you have delivered," and produced the piece of wood smeared with blood. The Queen was very unhappy and asked her to put it away quickly. The woman quickly complied as if eager to safeguard the Queen's honour by splitting up the piece of wood and throwing it into the fireplace in the kitchen.

The King returned from his expedition and was camping outside the city awaiting the

auspicious time, according to astrological calculation. The women-folk went to greet the King there and pressed their case for banishing Queen Padumavati. "Great King, you did not believe our word about the Chief Queen. But now ask the assistant of Queen Padumavati who had given birth to a block of wood!" The King, without investigating on the matter, believed that Padumavati was a demon and ordered her banishment.

As she was banished from the palace, no lotus flowers appeared underneath her feet. Her good looks left her. She roamed about in the road, feeling forlorn. When an old woman saw her, she had an instinctive affection for her and said: "Where are you going, my daughter?" Padumavati replied: "O mother, I am looking for some place for shelter." The old woman said: "In that case, my daughter, come with me to my house," and taking her home, fed her and put her up there.

The Court Intrigue came to light

When Padumavati was staying at the old woman's house, the women-folk at the court said to the King in one voice: "O Great King, when you were on your military expedition, we had invoked the guardian spirit of the Gaṅgā river for your success and promised him to make offerings on your victorious return. So let the King and all of us go to the Gaṅgā river and make offerings to the river spirit and have fun bathing in the river." The King gladly consented and they all went to the river.

The five hundred women of the court secretly carried the caskets with babies in them and went into the water with their garments on, underneath which were the hidden caskets. Once in the river, they released the caskets which floated down-stream in the river. The five hundred caskets grouped together in the current, floated down together, and were caught in fishermen's net at down-stream. After the King had finished bathing in the river, the fishermen also raised their net from the water and to their great surprise, found the five hundred caskets, which they presented to the King. The King asked them: "What do the caskets contain?" And they answered: "We do not know what is inside them, Great King, we only believed them to be something strange." When the five hundred caskets were opened under the King's orders, the first one to be opened happened to contain Prince Mahāpaduma.

The past merit of the five hundred princelings was such that from the day of their confinement in the caskets, milk flowed from their thumbs to nourish them. Sakka also cleared the doubts in the King's mind by inscribing inside the caskets the message:

"These babies are born of Queen Padumavati and are the sons of the King of Bārāṇasī. They have been put inside the caskets by the five hundred Queens and their accomplices, who bore a grudge against the Chief Queen, and have them thrown into the river. Let the King of Bārāṇasī know these facts."

The King, being thus enlightened, took up Prince Mahāpaduma, and ordered: "O men, harness the chariots and dress up the horses quickly! I shall now go into the city and show my love to some womenfolk." So saying, he rode hastily into the city, entered his palace, and ordered the royal elephant fitted, for a tour of the land with (a velvet bag of) a thousand ticals tied at the neck of the elephant, and ordered the proclamation read aloud to all the people, announcing that whoever has seen Queen Padumavati may take the King's reward of one thousand ticals.

Padumavati, on hearing the proclamation, said to the old women: "Mother, take that one thousand from the neck of the royal elephant!" The old women said: "O daughter, I dare not do it." Padumavati urged her thrice to do so. Then the old lady said: "O daughter, what should I say in taking the reward?" Just say, mother: "I have seen Queen Padumavati?" The old lady then made herself bold to claim the reward.

The King's men asked her: "Have you actually seen Queen Padumavati?" "I have not seen her myself," she said, "but my daughter has."

"Where is your daughter now?" the men asked. And they were let to her house by the old lady. They recognized their queen and prostrated themselves before her. The old lady,

seeing only now the real identity of the young woman, affectionately chided her: “This noble lady has been so reckless. Notwithstanding her eminent position as the Chief Queen, she had chosen to live unattended in such a lowly place.”

The King's men then made an enclosure of white cloth around the humble house which Padumavati was staying, posted guards around it, and reported their discovery to the King. The King sent a golden palanquin to her. Padumavati however insisted that she deserved more ceremony on returning to the palace. She had a canopied walk decorated with gold stars set up all along her way to the palace with exquisite carpets. She also demanded that her regal paraphernalia be sent to her. “I am walking there,” she said, “Let my greatness be seen by all the citizens.” The King ordered that every wish of the Chief Queen must be complied. Then Queen Padumavati, outfitted with full regalia, announced: “I am now going to the palace.” Thereupon every step she made, a lotus flower arose from the earth through the exquisite carpets. Thus letting all the people witness her greatness as she entered the palace. After that, she gave the rich carpets to the old lady as taken of the gratitude she owed to her.

The Magnanimity of Queen Padumavati

The King summoned the five hundred women-folk to court and said to Queen Padumavati: “My Queen, I give these five hundred women as slaves to you.” The Queen said: “O King, let the whole city know about this giving of the five hundred ladies to me.” The King had the fact of this assignment of the five hundred women to Queen Padumavati proclaimed throughout the city by the beat of the gong. Having been satisfied with the public knowledge of the assignment, Queen Padumavati said to the King: “Great King, do I have the authority of emancipating my own slaves?” To which the King replied: “O Queen, you have the right to do whatever you wish with them.” “In that case, O King,” she said, “Let those men, who had made the proclamation of the assignment, made another round of the proclamation to the effect that all the five hundred slaves assigned to Queen Padumavati are hereby granted their freedom by the Queen.” Then the Queen entrusted the 499 princelings to the care of the emancipated women while she took charge of looking after Prince Mahāpaduma.

The Five Hundred Princes became Paccekabuddhas

When the five hundred princelings were of playing age, the King provided all sort of things in the royal gardens for the boys to play. When they were of sixteen years of age, one day, while they were playing in the royal lakes, where the *Paduma* lotus were growing in profusion, they observed the blossoming of the lotus flowers as well as the withering away and dropping off of old flowers which, thanks to their acquisition of sufficient merit, struck their young hearts as a phenomenon worth reflecting on. And this was how they reflected:

“Even these lotus flowers dependent only on temperature and nutrient are subject to ageing; how could our bodies, dependent on four factors (kamma, mind, temperature and nutrient) escape the same fate (i.e. we are likewise subject to ageing and death.)”

They reflected deeply on that phenomena (of impermanence of conditioned existence), gained insight into the nature of mind-and-body, and attained Enlightenment on their own, without being taught by anyone. This is called *Paccekabodhi-ñāṇa*, which lead to the four Ariya Path-Knowledges. In other words, they became Paccekabuddhas. Then rising from their respective seats, they each sat cross-legged on a lotus flower by means of their supernormal powers.

Late in the evening, the attendants of the princelings reminded them: “O Lords, it is time to go home.” The five hundred Paccekabuddhas did not say anything. So the attendants went to the palace and reported the matter to the King about the princes remained silent, all of them sitting on the lotus flowers. The King merely said: “Let my sons remain as they wish.”

The five hundred Paccekabuddhas were placed under guard during the whole night, as

they remained sitting on the flowers. In the dawn, the attendants went near them and said to them: “O princes, it is time to go home.” Then the princes, who were Paccekabuddhas, said: “We are no more princes; we are Paccekabuddhas.” The men were sceptical and said: “You say in an irresponsible way. Paccekabuddhas are not like you, they have only two finger-breadths of hair and moustache or beard, they have recluse's paraphernalia on them. But you have your princely garb on, with long hair and moustaches, and with regal paraphernalia on you. How could you say you are Paccekabuddhas?” (The attendants were describing the Paccekabuddha as they knew it to be.) Thereupon the princes passed their hands on their heads, and lo! their appearance turned into Paccekabuddhas, and they were fully equipped with the eight requisites of a *bhikkhu* (Paccekabuddha). And while the people were looking at them, they rose into the air and went in the direction of Gandamādāna mountain.

The Future Uppalavaṇṇā Therī in Her Existence as A Farm Hand

Queen Padumavatī, after enjoying deep satisfaction on regaining her five hundred sons, was now shocked by the sudden loss of them. She did not survive the shock. After passing away from that existence, she was reborn, as a woman, into a family of labourers, in a village near a city gate in Rājagaha. She married, and went to live with her husband's family. One day, while she was carrying some gruel for her husband, who was working in the field, she saw eight of the five hundred Paccekabuddhas travelling by way of the air. She went quickly to her husband and said: “O Lord look at those Paccekabuddhas! Let us invite them to an offering of aims food.” But the husband who was a simpleton did not know what a Paccekabuddha meant. He said to her: “Dear wife, they are called flying *bhikkhus* (lit, ‘*bhikkhu*-birds’). They are also found in other places (at other times also. Sṛī Laṅkā version) flying about. They are not Paccekabuddhas, they are just (strange) birds.”

As the couple was still discussing, the eight Paccekabuddhas descended to the ground not far away from them. The wife offered her share of meal for the day to the eight Paccekabuddhas and invited them for the next days offerings. The Paccekabuddhas said: “Very well, female lay supporter, let your offerings be for eight donees only. And let your accommodation be for eight invitees only. When you see many other Paccekabuddhas besides ourselves, your devotion will grow even greater.” And the woman (who in her previous existence had been the mother of the Paccekabuddhas,) prepared eight seats and offerings for eight Paccekabuddhas.

The eight invitees said to the remaining Paccekabuddhas: “Do not go elsewhere today for alms-food, but bestow welfare to your mother of previous existence.” Those other Paccekabuddhas agreed, and all the five hundred of them went through the sky to their former mother's residence. The mother in her past existence who had wished of seeing all the five hundred sons, now Paccekabuddhas, did not have any worry about the insufficiency of her offerings. She invited all the five hundred into her house and offered eight seats. When the eight had taken their seats the ninth Paccekabuddha created through his supernormal powers another eight seats and sat there; and so on until the last of the five hundred was seated and her house was expanded through their supernormal powers.

The farm labourer, the mother in the previous existence, who had prepared alms food for eight donees went on serving it to all the five hundred as much as needed by them. Then she brought eight stalks of lotus flowers, and placing them before the original eight invitees, offered them, saying: “Venerable Sirs, for this act of merit, may I be born with a complexion like the colour of the inside of the pollen chamber of this brown lotus.” The five hundred Paccekabuddhas said complimentary words for her good deed, and went back to Gandamādāna mountain through the sky.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

The farm hand (the future Uppalavaṇṇā Therī) lived a life full of meritorious deeds and at the end of her life span was reborn in the deva-world. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into the family of a rich man in Sāvatti. She was born with a complexion like the inner side of the pollen chamber of the brown lotus and hence was

named Uppalavaṇṇā. When she came of age, all the worthy families; rich men and Princes of the whole of the Southern Island Continent, asked her father to give Uppalavaṇṇā in marriage to their sons.

Her father was in a quandary, he did not know how to reply to so many proposals from the worthy men. Not wishing to disappoint them, as a final resolve, he asked his daughter: "Dear daughter, would you become a *bhikkhunī*?" Now, Uppalavaṇṇā, being the bearer of the last burden of sentient existence, was extremely delighted to hear these words, just as rarefied scented oil, refined a hundred times over, were poured down her head. "Yes, father, I would become a *bhikkhunī*," she replied gladly.

As such, he sent his daughter Uppalavaṇṇā to the *bhikkhunīs'* 'monastery', after paying great honour to her. Uppalavaṇṇā became a *bhikkhunī*. Not soon after, she was assigned to tidy up and light up the outside of the Sīmā (the congregation hall). There she observed the flame arising in a lamp which she used as her subject of meditation. She concentrated on the element of Heat in that flame, and achieved concentration (*jhāna*). Basing that concentration as object of insight meditation, (through contemplating the three characteristics of physical and mental phenomena, she gained insight into conditioned phenomena) and soon attained arahatship. As the result of her past aspiration to be outstanding in supernormal powers, she became endowed with facility in *jhānic* practice, which is the essential asset in bringing into effect her supernormal powers.

(c) Uppalavaṇṇā Therī as the Foremost Bhikkhunī

On the day Uppalavaṇṇā Therī displayed her miraculous powers, was during the Buddha's seventh year after His Enlightenment. Before doing so, she first asked the Buddha: "Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā allow me to display my miraculous powers.". Referring to this, the Buddha, on another occasion when outstanding *bhikkhunīs* were named at a congregation, declared:

"*Bhikkhus*, among my *bhikkhunī*-disciples endowed with supernormal powers, Bhikkhunī Uppalavaṇṇā is the foremost (*etadagga*)."

4. PAṬĀCĀRĀ THERĪ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Paṭācārā Therī was reborn into a rich man's family in the city of Hamsāvati during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, while she was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a *bhikkhunī* being named as the foremost among those who were most learned in the Vinaya Rules. She aspired to that honour. And after making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, she expressed her desire for the honour of being declared as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in Vinaya learning. Buddha Padumuttara prophesied that her wish would be fulfilled.

In Her Existence as One of The Seven Daughters of King Kikī

After filling her whole life with meritorious deeds, the future Paṭācārā Therī passed away and was reborn in the deva-world and subsequently the human world or the deva-world in turn. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, she was reborn as the third of the seven illustrious daughters of King Kikī (of Bārāṇasī). Her name was Bhikkhunī. She and the six sisters remained spinsters, living a life of chastity for their whole life span of twenty thousand years. Together with her sisters, they donated a big monastic complex.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

The King's daughter (the future Paṭācārā Therī), after passing away from that existence, was reborn in the deva-world. For the innumerable years of the intervening period between the two Buddhas she enjoyed celestial pleasures. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of the rich man of Sāvattthi.

When she came of age, she fell in love with a servant of her father's household. When

her parents arranged for her betrothal to the son of another rich man, she warned her lover, on the day before the day of betrothal, that unless he was prepared to elope with her, their love affair would be ended. The man was true to her. He eloped with her, taking whatever little savings he had set aside. The two lovers ran away stealthily and took shelter in a small village three or four *yojanas* away from Sāvaththi.

Soon the rich man's daughter became pregnant and she said to her husband: "My Lord, this is a desolate place for us to give birth to my child. Let us go back to my fathers house." Her husband was a timid man. He dared not face the consequences of returning to his master's house and, therefore, procrastinated. The wife then decided that her husband was not going to accompany her back to her father's house and she chose, during the absence of her husband, to return alone.

When the husband returned from his short trip and learnt that his wife had gone back to her parents' house, he felt pity for her. "She has to suffer because of me," he repented and went after her without delay. He caught up with her on the way but by then she had given birth. Then they agreed that since the purpose of her returning to her parents was for the safe birth of her child, and since she had given birth safely, there was no point in going there. So they went back to their small village.

When she was pregnant again, she asked her husband to take her to her parents' place. Her husband procrastinated as before, and getting impatient, she went alone. On the way, she gave birth to her second child safely before her husband could catch up with her. At that time, there was heavy rains everywhere. The wife asked her husband to put up some shelter from the rains for the night. He made a rickety shelter from whatever faggots he could find. He then went in search of some tufts of grass to build an embankment around the little hut. He started pulling out grass from a mound, regardlessly.

The cobra, which lay inside the mound, was annoyed and struck the husband who fell dead on the spot. The wife, who was kept waiting in the rickety hut, after awaiting the whole night, thought that her husband had deserted her. She went to look for him and found him dead near the mound. "Oh, me! my husband met his death all on account of me!" She wailed. And holding the bigger child by the hand and putting the infant on her waist, she took the road to Sāvaththi. On the way, she had to cross a shallow stream (which seemed deep). She thought she might not be able to cross it with both the children together. So she left her elder boy on this side of the stream and after crossing it, placed the infant on the other side, wrapped up snugly. She waded the stream back for the elder son. Just as she was half-way in the stream, a kite swooped down on the infant baby taking it for its prey. The mother became excited and tried to frighten away the kite but her throwing up the hands in the air was mistaken as beckoning to him by the elder son who ran into the stream. He slipped and was carried away by the swift current. Before the mother could reach her infant child, the kite had flew away with it. She wailed her fate in half a stanza thus:

"Both my two sons are dead and gone!
And my husband too had died on the way!"

Wailing in these desperate words, she proceeded along her way to Sāvaththi.

When she arrived in Sāvaththi, she was unable to find her parents' home. This was partly due to her intense grief but there was a substantial reason for her failure to recognize her own childhood home. For, as she asked the people where the Rich Man's house which used to be somewhere there, they answered: "What use is there if you find the house? It has been destroyed by last nights' gale. All the inmates of the house died inside the house which collapsed. They were cremated on a single pyre. And that is the place of their burial," the people showed her the thin smoke from the burnt pyre.

"What, what did you say?" Those were the only words she could say and she fainted. When she recovered, she was not in her own wits. She could not care about decency: with no clothes on, her hands raised in the air wildly, she went near the burnt-up pyre and wailed:

“Both my two sons are dead and gone!
And my husband too has died on the way!
My mother, my father and my brother,
(Having perished together,)
Have been cremated on a single pyre.”

The Meaning of The Word 'Paṭācārī'

The Rich Man's daughter went about the city naked. When other people tried to cover up her body, she would tore off the clothes. Thus, wherever she went, she was surrounded by astonished crowds. Hence, she came to be referred to as 'The naked woman' (Paṭācārī). (Or in another sense of the Pāli word, 'the shameless woman'.) As she went about dazed and confused wailing the tragic stanza, people would say: “Hey go away, mad woman!” Some would throw dirt and refuse on her head, some would throw stones at her.

Paṭācārā found Peace

The Buddha saw Paṭācārā roaming about aimlessly while He was making a discourse to an audience at the Jētavana monastery. Seeing that her faculties had now ripened, the Buddha willed that Paṭācārā come to Him at the monastery. People tried to prevent her going into the monastery but the Buddha said to them: “Don't try to stop her.” When she went nearer, the Buddha said to her: “Paṭācārā be mindful.”

As soon as she heard the Buddha's words, Paṭācārā regained her senses. Awared of her nakedness, she sat down on her closed knees and remained with her body bent, and trying her best to cover up her naked body with her hands. Someone then threw to her a piece of garment which she picked up, cloaked herself, and drew near the Buddha. In worshipping posture, she related the tragic story thus:

“Venerable Sir, may you be my refuge! My younger son was swooped away by a kite. My elder son was drowned in the current of a stream. My husband died on the way. My parents and my brothers were killed in the house which collapsed and they were cremated on a single pyre.”

The Buddha said to her: “Paṭācārā do not vacillate. You have now come to one in whom you can take refuge. Just as you have shed tears for the loss of your sons, husband, mother, father and brother, so also had you shed much tears, even greater than the waters of the four great oceans, throughout the beginningless round of existences.” The Buddha also spoke in verse as follows:

“Paṭācārā, the waters of the four great oceans are little when compared to the amount of tears shed by one person on account of the grief suffered for loss of his or her beloved ones. Now, my daughter, why are you so negligent? Be mindful.”

On hearing the Buddha's discourse containing the perspective of *saṃsāra*, grief abated in the mind of Paṭācārā. The Buddha, knowing that Paṭācārā had been able to control her sorrow, discoursed further thus:

“Paṭācārā, neither son nor husband can protect one on the journey through afterlife, nor are they one's refuge. That being so, even though sons or husband may be living, they are as good as non-existent for a wayfarer in *saṃsāra*. Therefore a wise person should purify his morality and get himself or herself established on the Noble Practice leading to Nibbāna.”

Then the Buddha spoke in verse as follows:

“Paṭācārā, when one falls victim to Death, neither one's sons nor parents nor close relations can protect one; one's kith and kin have no power to give protection.”

— Dhammapadā, V-288 —

“Knowing this lack of protection against Death, the wise person restrained by morality, should make haste to clear the Ariya Path that leads to Nibbāna.”

At the end of the discourse, Paṭācārā burnt up the infinite defilements by means of Stream-Entry Knowledge and was established in *sotāpatti-magga*.

After becoming a Stream-Enterer, Paṭācārā requested the Buddha that she be admitted into the Order of Bhikkhunīs. The Buddha caused her to be taken to a *bhikkhunīs* and be admitted as a *bhikkhunī*.

How Paṭācārā attained Arahatsip

One day, Bhikkhunī Paṭācārā was washing her feet. As she poured down the water on her feet, the water flowed to a short distance and then stopped there. When a second cup was poured, the water flowed to a place slightly farther away than the first stream and then stopped. When a third cup was poured, the water flowed to a place slightly farther away than the second stream. Paṭācārā, already a Stream-Enterer, meditated on this phenomenon of the three stream of water, and applied it to the three periods of life thus:

“Just as the first stream of water stopped at a short place, sentient beings are liable to die during their first period of life. Just as the second stream flowed slightly farther than the first stream and stopped, so also sentient beings are liable to die during their middle age.

And just as the third stream flowed farther than the second stream and stopped, so also sentient being are liable to die in their last period of life.”

She reflected further that just as all the three streams must end and disappear, so also living beings must give up their tenure of life and perish. Thus, the impermanence of things gave her insight into all conditioned phenomena. From that insight into impermanence, the characteristic of the woefulness (*dukkha*) of all conditioned phenomena dawned on her conditioned mind and hence the insubstantiality, the emptiness of all and conditioned phenomena also was then perceived.

Pondering deeply on the three characteristics, she went into her monastic dwelling for a suitable change in the temperature. There she placed the lighted lamp at its usual place and, wishing to extinguish it, she pulled down the wick into oil with a pointed needle.

Just at that moment, the Buddha, while sitting in His private chamber, sent the Buddha-rays to Paṭācārā making Himself visible to her and said:

“Paṭācārā, you are thinking rightly: all sentient beings are subject to death. Therefore, it is in vain to be living for a hundred years without the right perception of the five aggregates, of their arising and dissolution, whereas it is really worthwhile to live even for a day with a full understanding of the five aggregates.”

The Buddha put this point in verse as follows:

“Paṭācārā, even if one were to live a hundred years without perceiving (with Insight) the arising and perishing of conditioned phenomena (i.e. mind-and-body), yet more worthwhile indeed is a single day's life of one who perceives the arising and perishing of mind-and-body.”

— Dhammapada, V 13 —

At the end of the discourse, Paṭācārā attained Arahatsip together with the Four Discriminative Knowledges.

(c) Paṭācārā as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

After attaining arahatsip, Paṭācārā learnt the Vinaya from the Buddha extensively and made wise judgments on matters concerning the Vinaya. Therefore, on one occasion when the Buddha named distinguished *bhikkhunīs* in a congregation at the Jetavana monastery, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who are wise in (adept in) the Vinaya, Bhikkhunī Paṭācārā is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

5. DHAMMADINNĀ THERĪ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Dhammadinnā Therī was born into a poor working class family in the city of Haṁsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She was wise and virtuous. One day, when the Venerable Sujātā, the Chief Disciple of Buddha Padumuttara, went on his alms-round, she met him in the course of carrying water and personally offered him her share of ration (a cake) for the day. The Venerable, as a mark of appreciation for her devotion, and intending to bestow welfare on her due to her meritorious deed, sat down and ate the cake immediately.

The Venerable had just arisen from dwelling in the attainment of Cessation, a condition which is conducive to immediate fruition of the merit.

The devotion, in the labourer girl slave, grew by leaps and bounds that she cut her (luscious) hair and sold it for whatever little price it could fetch. With that meagre but well-earned money, she bought a meal and offered it to Venerable Sujātā at her house. When the master of the slave girl heard this news, he was so pleased with her noble conduct that he gave his son in marriage to her and she became the Rich Man's (her master) daughter-in-law.

One day, she visited the Buddha's monastery together with her mother-in-law. When listening to the Buddha's sermon, she saw the Buddha naming a *bhikkhunī* as the foremost in expounding the Doctrine. She had a great desire to be honoured with the same title in future time. So, she made an extraordinary offering to the Buddha and His Sangha and aspired to that position. Buddha Padumuttara prophesied that her wish would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha Gotama.

Her Existence as Royal Treasurer

The future Dhammadinnā Therī lived a meritorious life and after her life span had ended, she passed away and was reborn in the deva realm. Thereafter, she was reborn only in the human world or the deva-world. Ninety-two world-cycles ago, she was reborn as the wife of a rich man, who was the official royal treasurer to three princes who were half brothers of the Buddha. She had a very generous mind so that when someone asked for one she would give two. (Regarding the story of the Treasurer and his wife read Chapter 15.)

Her Existence as One of The Seven Daughters of King Kikī

The rich man's wife had a life full of meritorious deeds. When she passed away, she was reborn in the deva realm. During Buddha Kassapa time, she was reborn as Princess Sudhammā, the sixth of the seven daughters of King Kikī of Bārāṇasī. Along with the other sisters, she remained a spinster, leading a noble chaste life for the whole life span of twenty-thousand years, and was a joint donor, with her sisters, of a great monastic complex to the Sangha.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

Princess Sudhammā spent the whole of her life doing meritorious deeds and at her death, she was reborn in the deva realm. Subsequently, for innumerable years, she was reborn either in the deva-world or the human world. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into the family of a rich man in Rājagaha. When she was of marriageable age, she married a rich man named Visākhā and she was called Dhammadinnā (the Rich Man's wife).

Visākhā and Dhammadinnā, ninety-two world-cycles ago, were also a rich couple, as the Royal Treasurer and wife during Buddha Phussa time, who were noted for their liberality. Visākhā, the rich man, was one of the one hundred and one disciples of the Buddha, who gained Stream-Entry Knowledge on the day the Buddha arrived in Rājagaha (on the full moon in the month of Pyatho (January) in the year 103 of the Great Era). He was a close friend of King Bimbisāra.

After having become an *ariya* as Stream-Enterer, Visākhā, on a later occasion, listened to

the Buddha's discourse and gained *sakadāgāmi-phala* (a Once Returner) and then on a later day *anāgāmi-phala* (a Never-Returner). Once he became a Never-Returner, his outlook and behaviour changed visibly. For whereas he would go home with expectancy to see his wife, his face full of smiles, he was now looking staid, his mien composed and mind tranquil.

His wife Dhammadinnā was, as usual, looking through the window with a long motif carved at the sill, awaiting his return. When she saw the sedate attitude of her husband treading home, it struck her as strange. "What has gone wrong?" she thought. She went down the stair and stretched out her hand to him at the landing. Although it was his custom to take hold of his wife's welcoming hand and go up the stairs (speaking amiably together), on that day, he withdrew his hand instead of holding hers. "Perhaps I shall find out about this at the table," she thought to herself. But at the morning meal, he did not sit at table together with his wife as usual, but took his meal alone in silence, like an elderly *bhikkhu* engaged in meditation. "Perhaps I shall find out about this in the evening," she thought to herself.

But when evening came, Visākhā did not go into their inner chamber, instead, he had a separate room prepared for him with a wooden cot on which he slept alone. His wife now started worrying. "Is my husband in love with another woman? Or has someone tried to cause misunderstanding between us? Or has he seen some fault in me?" These wild unfounded speculations gnawed at her innocent heart. After two or three days she could not bear it any further silently and standing by his side meekly, her joined palms raised in salutation to her husband, she awaited how he would respond. Then he said:

"Why do you come near me at this untimely hour?"

"Untimely, yes, my lord. But you have changed now. What's the matter with you? Is there another woman beside me?"

"No, Dhammadinnā, there is none."

"Then, has someone put in a wedge between us?"

"No, there is none of the sort."

"In that case, do you see any fault in me?"

"No, Dhammadinnā, you have no fault whatever."

"If so, why do you stay aloof from me as though we were total strangers and not husband and wife? You have not talked to me much these few days."

When confronted thus by his wife, Visākhā pondered: "Supramundane Dhamma is a profound thing, not easy to explain like mundane matters. If possible, it had better be kept to oneself. But now, if I did not talk about it Dhammadinnā would certainly take it amiss and be broken hearted."

Thus thinking to himself, Visākhā said to her:

"Dhammadinnā, after I have listened to the Buddha's discourses, I have comprehended the Supramundane Dhamma. One who comprehends the Supramundane finds mundane affairs incompatible with him. If you would agree, there are forty crore worth of treasures that your parents have endowed to us, and another forty crore worth of treasures that my parents have endowed to us, these eighty crore worth of treasures, I would bequeath to you as sole owner, and treat me just as a mother or an elder sister. I shall be content with whatever manner you might look after me. Or, if you so choose, you may take all those wealth with you and go back to your parents' house. If you have no other man to give your heart, I shall look after you as my younger sister or as my daughter."

On hearing these momentous and frank words from her husband, Dhammadinnā was deeply satisfied. She thought to herself: "It is no ordinary man to say such things. My husband surely must have comprehended the Supramundane Dhamma. But is the Supramundane solely for men? Is it possible for a woman to understand it?" Pondering thus, she said to her husband: "My lord, is the Supramundane Dhamma solely for men? Are women also capable of knowing it?"

“Why, Dhammadinnā, anyone, male or female, who practices the Dhamma according to the Doctrine, with due diligence can become heirs to the Buddha, in the matter of the Dhamma. If one has sufficing condition, i.e. a built-up of past merit for attaining the Path-Knowledge, the Supramundane is realisable.” answered Visākhā.

“If so, my lord, give me permission to become a *bhikkhunī*.”

“Very well, my dear, I am glad you aspire for the Supramundane. I have not suggested it to you only because I did not know your aptitude.”

Visākhā then immediately went to see King Bimbisāra who asked him: “O Rich Man, what is your purpose in seeing me at this untimely hour?”

“Great King,” Visākhā said, “Dhammadinnā wishes to become a *bhikkhunī*.”

“What shall I provide Dhammadinnā with?”

“Great King, I want just-two things: the golden palanquin and the tidying up of tile city.”

The King complied with these two requests.

Great Ceremony on Dhammadinnā becoming A Bhikkhunī

Visākhā had Dhammadinnā bathed in scented water, fitted out gorgeously, and got her seated in the palanquin. Then, surrounded by all her relatives (and the husband's relatives) she was carried to the *bhikkhunīs*’ ‘monastery’ through the city whose environment was rich with the fragrance of incense and flowers. At the *bhikkhunīs*’ ‘monastery’, Visākhā requested the *bhikkhunī*-elders to admit his wife Dhammadinnā into the Order of Bhikkhunīs. “O rich man,” they said, “forbear if she has been at fault for once or twice.” (They thought that Visākhā was forsaking his wife.)

“Venerable”, Visākhā replied, “My wife has no fault whatever, she is taking up the monastic life of her own accord.”

Thereupon, a *bhikkhunī* who was adept at the Vinaya gave Dhammadinnā instructions to reflect on the loathsomeness of the body, beginning with reflecting on the group of its five constituent parts, namely, hair, body hair, nails, teeth, and skin. Then she shaved Dhammadinnā's hair, donned her with the robes. Visākhā then made obeisance to Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā and said: “Venerable, be happy in the monastic life in the Teaching. The Buddha has taught us the Doctrine which is superb in the beginning, in the middle, and in the end.” Then he went home.

From the day Dhammadinnā became a *bhikkhunī*, she received much respect and many gifts from the people. In seeing so many visitors, she had little time left to meditate alone. (Thus this much is the account of Dhammadinnā, taken from the Commentary on **Majjhima Nikāya**, Mūla paṇṇāsa, Cūḷavedalla Sutta).

Dhammadinnā Therī considered thus: “Visākhā has made an end of *dukkha* even while remaining in household life. I, as a *bhikkhunī*, must make an end of *dukkha*.” She went to her preceptor *bhikkhunī* and said: “Venerable, I am tired of living in this place which is full of five kinds of sense pleasures. I would like to go and live in a nunnery at a small village.” The preceptors knew well that Dhammadinnā's wish could not be ignored as she came of a high class family, and so they took her to a nunnery at a small village.

Due to her meditative exercises, in her many past existences, in seeing through the nature of conditioned phenomena, Dhammadinnā did not take long to gain Insight and attained arahatship together with the Four Discriminate Knowledges. Then knowing her own attainment, she considered which place would suit her to help others attain Enlightenment. There was nothing much she could do in the small village whereas in Rājagaha she could help her own kith and kin. So she decided to return to Rājagaha and, requesting her preceptors to accompany her, she returned to Rājagaha.

Visākhā's Questions on The Doctrine

When Visākhā learnt that Dhammadinnā Therī had returned to Rājagaha, he was eager to

know why, after having gone to live in a small village, she returned so soon. He would go to her and find out but he did not wish to ask a plain question whether she was quite at home with monastic life. Rather, he would pose profound questions relating to the five aggregates that are the objects of clinging (i.e. about *sakkāyadiṭṭi*), and judge her mind from the way she answered. So after paying homage to her, he sat in a suitable place and asked her doctrinal questions concerning the five aggregates that are the objects of clinging. (The series of these profound questions and answers may be found in **Mūlapaṇṇāsa**, 5-Cūḷayamaka vaggā, 4-Cūḷavedalla Sutta.)

Dhammadinnā answered all the questions put to her by Visākhā as promptly as a racing horse gallops away and so precisely as if lotus stems were cut down by a sharp blade. Visākhā realized the high intellect of Dhammadinnā and proceeded from matters relating to the (three) lower *magga*-knowledges which was his limit of knowledge. He then proceeded to matters relating to *arahatta-magga* which he had not attained himself but about which he had merely hearsay knowledge. Dhammadinnā knew that Visākhā could properly ask about matters pertaining to the *anāgāmi-phala*, and that he had exceeded his limitation of knowledge when he asked:

“Venerable, what is the counterpart of Nibbāna?” She answered: “Friend Visākhā, your question has gone too far. It is not possible for you to reach the limit of such questionings. (It is not possible for him to reach the limit of such questionings because he has asked what the counterpart of Nibbāna is, whereas Nibbāna is unique and has no counterpart.) Indeed, friend Visākhā, the Noble Practice of Purity consisting of three kinds of training tends to Nibbāna, has its ultimate goal in Nibbāna, and ends in Nibbāna. Friend Visākhā, if you so desire, go to the Bhagavā and ask him to explain this matter. And bear in mind the explanation of the Bhagavā.”

Then Visākhā approached the Buddha and related to the Buddha all that had been said between him and Dhammadinnā Therī. When the Buddha heard the details of the questions and answers that took place between them, He said: “Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā is free of all forms of Craving, either of the past, or the future, or the present *khandha* (aggregates).” Then the Buddha spoke in verse thus:

“(Visākhā,) he who does not cling to the aggregates that are past, future, or present, who is free from moral intoxicants and attachment him I call a Brāhmana (i.e., an *arahat*).”

— **Dhammapada**, V. 421 —

By the end of the discourse, many in the audience attained Enlightenment and its Fruition at the various levels.

Then the Buddha praised Dhammadinnā, “Visākhā, layman devotee, Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā is wise. Visākhā, she is of great knowledge. Visākhā, had you asked Me the answers to those questions I, too, would have answered them in the same way Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā had answered. These are the answers to the questions. Bear in mind the answers given by Dhammadinnā.” (This event was an immediate cause of Dhammadinnā being designated as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in expounding the Doctrine.)

(Herein, it should be remembered that the discourse given by Dhammadinnā, when endorsed by the Buddha in those clear terms, becomes a discourse of the Buddha Himself. It is like in the case of a message (written by a writer) properly endorsed and sealed by the King's seal, becomes the King's message. Other discourses by other disciples that have the Buddha's endorsement also became the Buddha's discourses.)

(c) Dhammadinnā Therī being designated as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

On one occasion, when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthi, and naming distinguished *bhikkhunis*, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who are skilled in expounding the Doctrine, Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

6. NANDĀ THERĪ

(Nandā Therī's full name was Janapadakalyānī Rūpanandā Therī. Her story has been told in detail in Chapter 34 on Vijaya sutta. In the present Chapter, only a short account will be given, as described in the commentary on the **Āṅguttara Nikāya**.)

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Nandā Therī was reborn into a rich man's family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumattara. On a certain occasion when she was attending to a sermon by the Buddha, she witnessed the Buddha naming a *bhikkhunī* as the foremost among *bhikkhunīs* who enjoyed themselves in abiding in *jhāna*. She aspired to that distinction and after making an extraordinary offering she wished that she be designated as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in *jhānic* ecstasy, some time in the future. The Buddha prophesied that her wish would be fulfilled.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

After passing away from that memorable existence, she was reborn in the fortunate existences for a hundred thousand world-cycles. In her last existence, she was reborn as a Sakyan Princess who later was intended to be betrothed to Prince Nanda. She was named Princess Abhirūpanandā, and her extreme attractiveness also earned her the endearing name of Princess Janapadakalyānī. She was born of Queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī

Prince Nanda, Prince Rāhula and some of the closest kith and kin of the Buddha were admitted into the Order of Bhikkhus during the Buddha's visit to Kapilavatthu. Later, after the death of King Suddhodāna, her own mother, Queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī and Queen Yasodaya, her sister, mother of Prince Rāhula, also joined the Order of Bhikkhunīs. As Princess Janapadakalyānī saw no point in her remaining at the royal palace, she joined her mother, Bhikkhunī Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, as a *bhikkhunī*.

After becoming *bhikkhunī*, she did not go to see the Buddha on the days scheduled for her to receive the Buddha's admonition, as other *bhikkhunīs* did. This was because the Buddha was reputed as being derogatory to personal attractiveness. So, she would send some other *bhikkhunīs* to receive the Buddha's admonition on her behalf. The Buddha knew that she was conceited about her personal beauty and ordered that *bhikkhunīs* must go personally to Him to receive admonition and not depute another. Bhikkhunī Rūpanandā had to abide by the rule and reluctantly she went to see the Buddha.

The Buddha had, by His powers, created a most attractive girl by His side, respectfully fanning Him with a palm-leaf fan. When Bhikkhunī Rūpanandā saw her, her vanity about her own personal beauty vanished. "Why," she thought to herself, "I had been so conceited about my beauty! Shame on me! Here is a girl whose beauty I could not match, for I am not even 256th part of her beauty. How foolish of me to stay away from the Bhagavā." She stood there awestruck by the beauty of the mind made girl near the Buddha.

Rūpanandā Therī had sufficing condition (of accumulated merit in the past), so that after hearing one stanza beginning with:

"*aṭṭhīnaṃ nagaraṃ kataṃ...*" (On the loathsomeness of the body; **Dhammapada** V. 150) and one *sutta* entitled **Vijaya Sutta** beginning with:

"*caraṃ vā yadi vā tiṭṭhaṃ nisinno uda vā sayam...*" ("While walking, or standing, or sitting, or lying down...?" describing the constitution of the body which is basically no different from a corpse. — **Sutta Nipāta**, Vijaya Sutta), she meditated diligently on the emptiness of this sentient existence and in two or three days, she attained arahatship.

(c) Being designated as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

From the time of attaining arahatship, Rūpanandā Therī was unequalled by any other *bhikkhunī* in abiding in *jhāna*. Accordingly, when on the occasion of naming foremost *bhikkhunīs* during His residence at the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who derive pleasure from jhānic absorption, *Bhikkhunī Nandā* is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

7. (BAHUPUTTIKA) SOṆA THERĪ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Bahuputtika Soṇa Therī was reborn into a rich man's family in the city of Haṁsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She had occasion to listen to the sermon by the Buddha when she saw a *bhikkhunī* being named as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in earnest endeavour. She then had a strong desire to become such a foremost *bhikkhunī* in the future. So she made an extra-ordinary offering and later, aspired to the title. Buddha Padumuttara prophesied that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

The future Bahuputtika Soṇa Therī was reborn, for a hundred thousand world-cycles, in the fortunate destinations. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into the family of a rich man in Sāvātthī. She was married to the son of a rich man and went to live in her husband's house. She bore ten children and was known as Soṇa of the many children.

When her husband took up bhikkhuhood, she arranged for the marriage of her ten children and bequeathed all her property to them, leaving nothing for herself. The children were all ungrateful to her. None of them was willing to let her stay at their houses for more than two or three days, after which, they treated her unkindly.

The old lady became an unwanted, helpless mother, neglected by her own children. Realizing her dire position, she decided that she must renounce the world and became a *bhikkhunī*. After she had become a *bhikkhunī*, her seniors in the Order would scold her for any slight mistake or shortcoming in her community obligations. She was often required to serve out punitive measures by her seniors. When her unkind children saw her undergoing such punishment, instead of taking pity on their old decrepit mother, they made a laughing stock of her saying: “This old women has still not learnt monastic discipline.”

This ridicule by her own children caused emotional religious awakening in her. “I do not have to live long. I must safeguard myself against unfortunate destinies.” So reflecting, she let no time pass, whether sitting or going, or standing or lying down, without uttering and contemplating on the thirty-two aspects (constituent parts) of the body. Then, during all the free moment left to her, after discharging the communal duties to her co-residents, she went into meditation throughout the night. For she rightly realized that for her late age as a *bhikkhunī*, she could not afford to let a moment pass without being mindful. When she sat meditating at night, she held to a post on the ground floor of her nunnery, without losing hold of it. When she walked, meditating at night, she held a tree with her hand, never letting it go, for fear that she might otherwise bump her head against something in the darkness. (As per **Therīgāthā Commentary**)

Soṇa Therī's Name became associated with Earnest Endeavour

When she first became a *bhikkhunī*, she was called Bahuputtika Soṇa Therī. But later, her earnest endeavour in taking up the three kinds of training earned her the epithet ‘earnest endeavour’ and was known as *Āraddha vīriya Soṇa Therī*, — Soṇa Therī of earnest endeavour!

Attainment of Arahatsip

One day, when the *bhikkhunis* went to the Jetavana monastery to receive the Buddha's admonition, they told Āraddha vīriya Soṇa Therī to boil some water for the community. But before attending to that task, the old *bhikkhunī* walked up and down the kitchen and contemplated on the thirty two aspects of the body, uttering each item. The Buddha saw her, while sitting in His private-chamber at the Jetavana monastery and sent forth the

Buddha-rays to her, making His person visible to her, and uttered this verse:

“Even though one should live a hundred years without seeing the sublime Dhamma (i.e. the Supramundane Dhamma comprising nine factors), yet more worthwhile indeed is a single day's life of one who perceives the sublime Dhamma.”

After thus hearing the Buddha's discourse made through the Buddha's rays (which also made her see the Buddha in person), Āraddha vīriya Soṇa Therī attained arahatship. She now thought: “I have attained *arahatta-phala*. Those who do not know this will, on their return from the Jetavana monastery, treat me with disrespect (as usual) which will result in them doing great demerit. I must let them know about my attainment of arahatship so as to forewarn them. She placed the pot of water for boiling on the fireplace but did not make the fire.

When the co-resident *bhikkhunīs* returned from the Buddha's monastery, they saw no fire at the fireplace and murmured: “We told the old woman to boil some water for the community but she has not even made the fire.” Then Soṇa Therī said to them: “Friends, what use with the fire? Let anyone who needs warm water take it from that pot (on the unlit fireplace).” The co-residents were surprised by these strange words and they realized that there must be some reason for the old *bhikkhunī* to say so. They went to the pot and felt the water inside. It was quite warm. They took an empty pot to the fireplace and poured out the warm water into it. Whenever they took out the water from that pot, the pot became filled up again.

Then only the *bhikkhunīs* realized that Soṇa Therī had attained arahatship. Those *bhikkhunīs* who were junior in *bhikkhunī* standing to Soṇa Therī made obeisance to her with fivefold contact, and said: “Venerable, we had been foolish in being disrespectful to you and bullied you. For all these transgressions, we beg your pardon.” Those *bhikkhunīs*, who were senior in *bhikkhunī* standing, sat squatting before Soṇa Therī, and said: “Venerable, pardon us for our misbehaviour.”

(c) Soṇa Therī as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

Soṇa Therī became an example of how an elderly person could become an *arahat* by dint of earnest effort. On one occasion, when the Buddha sat in congregation at the Jetavana monastery naming foremost *bhikkhunīs*, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who have diligence and make earnest effort, Bhikkhunī Soṇa is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

8. SAKULĀ THERĪ

(Sakulā Therī is mentioned by the name of Bākula in the Commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** in the recorded version of the Sixth Council, whereas in the Sri Laṅkā version, the name is mentioned as Sakulā. In the Commentary on **Therīgāthā** of the Sixth Council version, the name also appeared as Sakulā. Hence we have opted for the name Sakulā, and based our narration on the Commentary on **Therī-geṭ he** which gives a more extensive coverage.)

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Sakulā Therī was reborn into the family of King Ānanda of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She was the half sister of Buddha Padumuttara and was named Princess Nandā. When she had come of age, she attended the Buddha's sermon. She saw a *bhikkhunī* being named by the Buddha as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in the endowment of supernatural power of Deva Eye (characterized by a knowledge of past existences). She then had a strong desire to become one like that *bhikkhunī* with supernatural power of Deva Eye and accordingly she made an extra-ordinary offering and made her aspiration before Buddha Padumuttara. Buddha Padumuttara prophesied that her aspiration would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha Gotama. (For details of this part of the story, read

Sakulā Therī Apādāna.)

Her Past Existence as A Female Wandering Ascetic

Princess Nandā engaged herself in doing many great deeds of merit throughout her life, and, after passing away from that existence, she was reborn in the deva realm. Subsequently, she was reborn in the human or deva realm only. During Buddha Kassapa time, she was reborn into a brahmin family. She became a recluse and led a life of a secluded ascetic. After the passing away of Buddha Kassapa, His relics were enshrined in a great stupa. The ascetic, who was future Sakulā Therī, one day obtained some oil on her round for alms-oil. With that amount of oil she made an offering of lights throughout the night at the shrine where Buddha Kassapa's relics were enshrined.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

The wandering ascetic passed away and was reborn in Tāvātimsa Deva realm, as a deva endowed with special deva faculty of vision. For the whole period of the interval between the two Buddhas, she fared in the deva realm only. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into brahmin family in Sāvathi, by the name of Sakulā. When she became of age, she attended a ceremony which celebrated the donations of the Jetavana monastery (by Anāthapiṇḍika) to the Buddha where she listened to the Buddha's discourse and she became a lay disciple of His. Later, she received a discourse from an *arahat* which kindled her emotional religious awakening and resulted in her becoming a *bhikkhunī*. She strove diligently in the Noble Practice of Purity and soon attained arahatship.

(c) Sakulā Therī as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

After attaining *arahatta-phala*, Sakulā Therī, as the result of her past aspiration, was specially devoted to the exercise of the supernormal power of the Deva Eye, and was an adept at it. On one occasion, when the Buddha was naming outstanding *bhikkhunīs* at the Jetavana monastery, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who are proficient in the supernormal power of the Deva Eye, Sakulā Therī is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

9. KUṆḌALAKESĀ THERĪ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Kuṇḍalakesā Therī was reborn into the family of a rich man in the city of Hamsāvtī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She was listening to the Buddha's discourse, when she saw Subha Therī being named as the foremost *bhikkhu* in attaining arahatship with the quickest Insight. She wanted most strongly to be named such a foremost *bhikkhunī* in future time. After making great offering, and she made known her aspiration in front of Buddha Padumuttara, who then made the prognostication that her aspiration would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha Gotama.

Her Past Existence as A Daughter of King of Bārāṇasī

After faring for a hundred thousand world-cycles, either in the deva or human realms, the future Kuṇḍalakesā Therī was reborn as the fourth daughter, named Bhikkhadāyikā, of the seven daughters of King Kikī of Bārāṇasī, during the time of Buddha Kassapa. In that existence, she, like her other sisters, led a life of chastity for her entire life span of twenty thousand years, observing the ten precepts. She was also a joint donor, together with her sisters, of a great monastic complex for the Sangha.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

Princess Bhikkhadāyikā was reborn either in the deva realm or the human realm for the whole world-cycle during the interim period between the two Buddhas. During the time of

Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as a rich man's daughter in Rājagaha, by the name of Bhadda. On the same day when she was born, a son was also born to the King's Counsellor in Rājagaha. At the moment of the birth of the Chief Counsellor's son, all weapons throughout the city, beginning with those at the King's palace, dazzled mysteriously.

The King's Counsellor went to see the King early in the next morning and asked the King: "Great King, did you sleep well?" To which the King replied: "Master, how could I sleep well? All the weapons in the palace dazzled mysteriously the whole night making us nervous." "Great King," the Counsellor said, "Do not be afraid. Dazzling of weapons took place last night not only in the palace but throughout the city."

"Why, Master, did that happen?"

"Great King, last night a son was born to my family, whose time of birth coincided with the dominance of certain planets in the zodiac, and whose influence will determine the character of the new-born child. Due to that planetary influence, my son will grow into an incorrigible thief, an enemy to the whole city. But your Majesty, if you so desire, I shall eliminate him."

"If there is no personal danger to me, there is no reason to eliminate the child."

The Counsellor named his son, Sattuka (Vile Enemy) as signifying innate quality of the child which was acquired through his stellar influence at birth. As the future Kuṇḍalakesā Therī grew to age, so also young Sattuka. Even as a young boy of two or three years old, wherever he went, he would snatch anything that he could lay his hands on and took them home. The father admonished him not to do so but he would not listen.

Sattuka The Bane of Rājagaha

When Sattuka attained adolescence, his father, seeing that the son was truly beyond his correction, abandoned him. Giving the youth two pieces of dark cloth (to use in nocturnal exploits), a gadget for breaking open walls and fences and a sweep of twine ladders to his son, he mournfully said to him: "Take these, you useless boy, make your living by robbery. And be off!"

The young waif proved himself a formidable robber. Making use of the housebreaking gadget and the rope ladder, he would execute housebreaking neatly and rob all the houses of the well-to-do. Not before long every house in the city suffered from his exploits, showing gaping holes in the walls.

When the King made a chariot ride around the city, these holes made a curious sight for the King who then asked the charioteer the reason for them. Being told by the charioteer that all of them were the work of Sattuka, the housebreaker, the King sent for the Mayor and asked him why the robber was not apprehended. The Mayor explained that nobody had ever caught the robber red-handed and hence he was not apprehended. The king ordered him: "Catch the robber today, or else your life is forfeit."

His very life being at stake, the Mayor posted undercover men throughout the city and was successful in catching the robber red-handed. Sattuka was apprehended and brought before the King who ordered: "Take Sattuka out of the city by the South Gate and execute him. (Note: this event took place during King Ajātasattu's reign.) The Mayor acknowledged the King's sentence. He took Sattuka to every cross road in the city where a thousand lashes of whipping were administered to him at each cross road. And thus he was taken towards the South Gate, his hands bound at the back.

The Affection of Bhaddā, The Rich Man's Daughter

At that time, the tumult caused by the people watching the thief being punished aroused the curiosity of Bhaddā (the future Kuṇḍalakesā Therī). She looked out through the window which was carved with a lion motif at the sill. When she saw Sattuka in bondage being savagely whipped (owing to the mutual love and affection that had existed in their past existences), Bhaddā felt great pity for the robber. She felt very unhappy. She went to her bed-room with her hands pressed on her bosom to check the mental pain and lay on her bed with face downwards. As the only child, Bhaddā was the cynosure of the family. The

slightest scowl on her forehead caused much concern on the part of the parents.

Her mother went to her and asked the reason for her despair. The daughter did not hide her emotions but opened her heart to the mother that she had such love and affection for Sattuka that she would not live unless she was married to the man. The parents and the relations tried their best to make her see sense but to no avail. Finally they had to yield to her wishes making the conclusion: “At least that (giving the daughter to the culprit) is better than her death.”

Her father approached the Mayor with a bribe of a thousand ticals to get the prisoner escape the death penalty, explaining that his daughter was hopelessly enamoured of the robber. The Mayor co-operated. He procrastinated the execution by all sorts of explanations until it was sundown. Then he substituted a prisoner with Sattuka, who was stealthily escorted to the rich man's house. The substituted prisoner was taken out of the city by the South Gate-and executed (in lieu of Sattuka).

Parental Love

When the rich man secretly received Sattuka from the Mayor's men, he decided to make his daughter happy by pampering the criminal. He had Sattuka bathed in scented water, dressed up finely, and sent to his daughter's mansion. Bhaddā was very happy for having obtained her prize. She made herself as lovely as possible with much adornment and attended on Sattuka fondly.

Sattuka's Wicked Plan

Sattuka's evilness was such that he coveted Bhaddā's personal adornments. He thought out a wicked plan and after two or three days, he said to Bhaddā: “I have to say something to you.”

“Say it, my dear,” said Bhaddā, anticipating some good words.

“You might think that you saved my life,” Sattuka said. “As a matter of fact, I owe my life to the guardian spirit of the Corapapāta mountain. I had promised him an offering, if I came out of my captivity alive. Now I am bound by my word to make the spirit an offering. Make necessary preparations.”

Bhaddā, being innocent and loving, readily agreed to comply with the wish of her husband. She prepared offerings, adorned herself fully, and rode in a carriage with Sattuka. At the foot of Corapapata mountain, she alighted from the carriage and made ready to go up the mountain, accompanied by her attendants. Sattuka, concealing his evil motive, persuaded Bhaddā to go up to the mountain alone because she must have no friend by her side. She carried the offering on her head and went up to the mountain with Sattuka.

Sattuka's Evil Motive Revealed

Once they were alone together on the ascent to the mountain, Sattuka's tone suddenly changed in his conversation with Bhaddā. His oily tongue now gave way to harsh usage. Bhaddā was intelligent enough to fathom the evil motive of her robber-husband. When they got to the top of the mountain, Sattuka commanded in his natural harshness: “Now Bhaddā, take off all your personal ornaments and wrap them up in your upper garment.”

Bhaddā, pretending not to know the evil motive of Sattuka, sweetly replied: “What wrong have I made against you, my Lord?”

“Foolish girl, do you think I came here to make offerings to the mountain spirit? Fie! I dare open the heart of the mountain spirit. I have brought you here alone to rob you of your ornaments.”

Bhaddā's Wisdom in Facing The Situation

Now that Sattuka's true colours had been revealed, Bhaddā employed her wit to save herself. Politely she asked: “But, my Lord, whose ornaments are all these? Whom do I belong to?”

“Look here, I do not understand what you mean. I only know that your property belongs

to you and you alone, and has nothing to do with me.”

“Very well, my Lord. My only request is that I be allowed to show my love before I take off my ornaments (and make myself less beautiful to you). Allow me to embrace you from the front, from the sides, and at the rear,” she begged him in a concerning voice.

“Very well,” said Sattuka unsuspectingly.

Bhaddā now quickly embraced Sattuka from the front, and then going to his rear, pretended to embrace him but shoved him off violently over the mountain top. He fell headlong into a deep crevice, his body torn up into parts all along the way down.

(Here is a subtle point in analysing Bhaddās' mind in her act of self defence. At the moment of her actually pushing the villain off the mountain top, her mind is rooted in hatred and dominated by the mental concomitant of killing. However, the thoughts immediately preceding that killing impulsion and those which immediately follow it are meritorious thoughts called great types of moral consciousness (or Sublime consciousness), *Upāya kosalla nāṇa* dominated by skill in strategy to ward off the danger to her life.)

The Mountain Spirit lauds The Cleverness of Bhaddā

The mountain spirit who witnessed the astounding wit and courage of Bhaddā, sang two verses in praise of her astute wisdom thus:

- (1) A 'wise person' may not always be a man in all matters. A woman, with discerning wit in a given situation, may also prove herself to be a wise person.
- (2) A 'wise person' may not always be a man in all matters. A woman, who can quickly choose her solution to the problem, can very well be a wise person.

After what has happened to her, Bhaddā had no desire to return home. She left the mountain and not knowing where she was going. Her only thought was to become a recluse. She happened to arrive at a place of some (female) ascetics, and asked them to let her join their Order. They asked her: “Which mode of admission would you prefer? The inferior mode, or the superior mode?” Being a person endowed with the destiny of winding up her existence, she replied: “Let me be admitted into your Order by the most valued mode of admission.”

The Name 'Kuṇḍalakesā'

“Very well,” the leading female ascetic said, and they pulled out Bhaddā's hair one by one with a pair of the shell of the Palmyra fruit. No doubt, shaving the head in this manner is most painful but it was the belief of those ascetics that shaving the head with a blade or a pair of scissors was an inferior mode of admitting one into their Order, and that plucking the hairs one by one was the superior mode. When fresh hair grew again they formed small clusters of rings that resembled ear-rings. Hence Bhaddā came to be called by her new name of Kuṇḍalakesā, ‘one with little ear-ring-like coils of hair’.

Kuṇḍalakesā as A Doctrinaire Ascetics

Kuṇḍalakesā learned all that her ascetic teachers could teach her and, being a person of innate wisdom, decided that there was no superior kind of learning that she could get from them. So she left them and roamed the country in search of further knowledge, learning from various teachers. In time, she became learned in various doctrines which were acquired at various places and was also unequalled in expounding doctrines. She would go from place to place to find her match in the exposition of doctrines. As a mark of open challenge, she would set up a heap of sand at the entrance to the town or village she visited, on the top of which she would plant a twig of *Eugenia*. She would tell the children nearby to let everybody know that anyone, who could outwit her in the exposition of doctrines, might signal his or her challenge by destroying the *Eugenia* twig. If after seven days there appeared no challenger, she would pluck up the *Eugenia* twig in triumph and go on to another place.

Venerable Sāriputta tamed Kuṇḍalakesā

By that time, Buddha Gotama had appeared in the world and was residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvattthi. The wandering ascetic Kuṇḍalakesā, who wore only a single garment, after touring cities, towns and villages, arrived at Sāvattthi. At the entrance of the city, she set up her symbol of challenge, a heap of sand with a twig of Eugenia planted atop it. After giving word to the children nearby about the meaning of the twig of Eugenia being used, she entered the city.

At that time, the Venerable Sāriputta, the Marshal of the Doctrine, had entered the city for collection of alms-food. He went alone after the other *bhikkhus* had entered the city for alms-food. This was because he had been discharging the tasks, set by himself, of overseeing the tidiness of the entire Jetavana monastery such as putting *bhikkhus'* beddings and articles of use in order, filling water pots, sweeping the grounds, tending to the sick *bhikkhus*, etc. When he saw the Eugenia twig planted on a heap of sand he inquired the children nearby what that meant. The children explained to him about Kuṇḍalakesā's message. Thereupon the Venerable Sāriputta told them to destroy the Eugenia twig. Some children were reluctant to do so but a few daring ones trampled the Eugenia twig into pieces.

When Kuṇḍalakesā returned from the city after finishing her meal, she saw her Eugenia twig destroyed and asked the boys who was responsible for it. They told her that they did it as asked by Venerable Sāriputta. Kuṇḍalakesā pondered thus: "Someone who does not know my ability would not dare to challenge me. This Venerable must be someone who has great wisdom and virtue. Now I will announce to all the people that I am going to engage in a test of wits with Venerable Sāriputta, the Marshal of the Doctrine, and thus build up a following of my own before meeting him." She spread the news to the people and within a short time the whole city of eighty-thousand houses were informed of the event among themselves.

The Venerable Sāriputta, after having finished his meal, sat underneath a tree, and waited for Kuṇḍalakesā. Then she arrived with a large crowd behind her. After exchanging cordial greeting with the Venerable Sāriputta, she sat in a suitable place and said:

"Venerable Sir, did you ask the children to destroy Eugenia twig set up by me?"

"Yes, I did," replied the Venerable.

"Venerable Sir, if that is so, shall we enter into a debate?"

"So be it, young female ascetic."

"Who should start putting the questions, Sir?"

"It is my privilege to put questions. However, you can begin by asking me about what you know."

When she had the permission to ask, Kuṇḍalakesā asked the Venerable Sāriputta all the doctrines that she knew. He answered them all. Then he said: "Young female ascetic, I have answered all your questions. Now I shall ask you a question."

"Please do Venerable Sir."

"*Ekam nāma Kim?* — What is the one factor (that needs to be fully understood)?"

"Venerable Sir, I do not know it."

"Young female ascetic, you do not know even what a young *sāmaṇera* knows in our Teaching, what else would you know?"

Thereupon Kuṇḍalakesā, being a person of no mean past merit, knew the worth of her opponent. She said: "May Your Reverence be my refuge!"

"Kuṇḍalakesā," said Venerable Sāriputta, "You should not take refuge in me. There is the Buddha, the Supreme One among the three worlds, now residing at the Jetavana monastery, in His private chamber. Go and take refuge in the Buddha."

"Very well, Venerable Sir, I take your advice," she said.

In that evening she went to the Jetavana monastery where she found the Buddha delivering a discourse. She made obeisance to the Buddha with the five-fold contact and sat in a suitable place. The Buddha, knowing her ripeness for Enlightenment spoke this verse:

“Better than a thousand verses that deal with trash, not tending to edification, is a single verse (such as one who says: “Unforgetfulness is the way to the Deathless”), by hearing which one is calmed.”

— *Dhammapada*, V. 101. —

At the end of the verse, Kuṇḍalakesā attained arahatship and was endowed with the four Discriminative Knowledges. She requested the Buddha to admit her into the Order of *Bhikkhunīs*. The Buddha agreed. So, she went to a *bhikkhunī* ‘monastery’ and was admitted as *bhikkhunī*.

(c) Kuṇḍalakesā as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

When the Buddha sat amidst the four kinds of assemblies, there was the lively topic among the audience about the marvellous facility of Kuṇḍalakesā Therī in attaining arahatship after hearing just a stanza comprising four lines. The Buddha, with reference to that topic, declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who attain Path-Knowledge quickly, *Bhikkhunī* Bhaddā, known as Kuṇḍalakesā, is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

10. BHADDĀKĀPILĀNĪ THERĪ

(The story of Bhaddākāpilānī Therī is connected with that of the Venerable Mahā Kassapa whose elaborate account has been given in Chapter 43: Mahā Kassapa Mahāthera. The Commentary gives only brief account of this Therī. For a more complete account, the reader is advised to refer back to Chapter 43.)

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Bhaddākāpilānī Therī was born as the wife of Vedeha, the rich man of Hamsāvātī, during the time of Padumuttra Buddha. When she was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, she saw a *bhikkhunī* being named as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in supernormal power of remembering past existences. She aspired to be such a *bhikkhunī* and, after making an extra-ordinary offering, mentioned that aspiration before the Buddha.

Her Existence as the Wife of A Householder

After passing away from her existence as a rich man's wife, she was reborn in the deva-world and subsequently either in the human world or the deva-world, for a hundred thousand world-cycles. Finally, she was reborn as the wife of a householder in Bārāṇasī. At one time, while she was having a quarrel with the sister of her husband, a Paccekabuddha arrived for alms-food. The householder's sister offered alms-food to the Paccekabuddha and said her wish which chafed his wife (the future Bhaddākāpilānī Therī), who became furious and took the alms-bowl from the Paccekabuddha, and threw away the alms-food in it. Further, she put mud in it, and offered it to the Paccekabuddha. Only when the astonished onlookers reminded her of her fault did she recover her proper sense. She threw out the mud from the Paccekabuddha's alms-bowl, cleansed it thoroughly, applied scented powder to it and then put in the four-food nutriment, *catu madhu*. In addition, she added ghee that had been made pure white, like the inside of the pollen chamber of the lotus, with the result that the food she offered glistened in the alms bowl. In returning the alms-bowl to the Paccekabuddha, she wished aloud that just as the food she offered glistened, so would she possess a glistening complexion. (All these happenings may be gleaned from the Chapter 43: Mahā Kassapa Mahāthera.)

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

It is noteworthy that both husband and wife renounced the world together. The husband,

the Venerable Mahā Kassapa-to-be, at a forked road took the right turn while his wife, Bhaddhākāpilānī, the left turn. The former, met the Buddha sitting under the great banyan (pipal) tree, known as Bahuputtaka. At that time, women were not yet admitted into the Order, so Bhaddākāpilānī had to spend five years as a wandering ascetic. (This fact was recounted by herself in her life story: “*Pañca vassānī nivasim̐ paribbājavate aham̐.*”)

(c) Bhaddākāpilānī Therī as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

Thanks to her past aspiration, Bhaddākāpilānī Therī, after attaining arahatship, was exceptionally competent in remembering past existences. Therefore, on one occasion when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery and naming distinguished *bhikkhunīs*, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who can recall past existences, Bhaddā, who is now called Kāpilānī, is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

(Kāpilānī was the family name of Bhaddā's husband Pippali.)

11. YASODHARĀ THERĪ

(As the Myanmar saying goes: “Masses of water follow the tide”, so also is the story of Bhaddhā Kaccānā (Yasodharā Therī), which is inseparably bound with that of the Buddha. The Commentary therefore treats her story only in a brief manner. We do likewise in this book.)

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Bhaddha Kaccānā (Yasodharā Therī), was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When she was attending a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a *bhikkhunī* being named by the Buddha as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in attaining great supernormal power. She aspired to that attainment. After making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, she made her aspiration in front of Him.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

The future Bhaddha Kaccānā was reborn only in the deva realm or the human realm for one hundred thousand world-cycles. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of the Sakyan Prince Suppabuddha, who was an uncle of the Buddha. She was named Bhadda Kaccānā.

When she came of age, she was married to Prince Siddhattha and became his Chief Queen. She gave birth to Prince Rāhula. On the night she gave birth to Rāhula, Prince Siddhattha renounced the home life. After attaining Perfect-Enlightenment at the foot of the Mahābodhi tree, the Buddha concerned Himself with the spiritual welfare of the sentient world. He made a journey to Kapilavatthu where He caused the enlightenment of His kith and kin.

During the Buddha's fifth year (*vassa*) of Buddhahood, His father attained arahatship while reigning as a king and passed away the same day. Then Queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī and the five Sakyan Princesses, whose husbands had become *bhikkhus* (as a result of listening to the discourse of the Great Occasion of Mahāsamaya Sutta), became *bhikkhunīs* in the Buddha's Teaching. At that time, Queen Yasodharā (Bhaddha Kaccānā) and Princess Janapadakalyāṇī became *bhikkhunīs* with Mahāpajāpati Gotamī as the *therīs*' preceptress.

Yasodharā, as a *bhikkhunī* was referred to as Bhaddha Kaccānā Therī. She strove to gain Insight and in due time attained arahatship.

(c) Bhadda Kaccānā Therī as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

Bhaddha Kaccānā Therī, after attaining arahatship, was most proficient in the exercise of supernormal powers. At one sitting, in a single adverting of her mind (*āvajjana*), she could recall all her previous existences over one incalculable period and a hundred thousand world-systems. This extraordinary feat of hers became the talk of the *bhikkhu*-world. With

reference to that wide reputation, the Buddha, in naming distinguished *bhikkhunis* in a congregation in Jetavana monastery, declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who are endowed with great supernormal powers, Bhikkhunī Bhaddha Kaccānā is the foremost *etadagga*.”

(Note that there are only four outstanding disciples of the Buddha who are endowed with such great supernormal powers. They have exceptional powers to recall past lives over one incalculable period and a hundred thousand world-systems whereas other disciples can recall their past lives over a hundred thousand world-systems only. The four such exceptional disciples were the two Chief Disciples, Venerable Bākula and Bhaddha Kaccānā Therī.

The original name of the *bhikkhunī* was Bhaddha Kaccānā but on account of her golden complexion she was also known as Bhaddakañcānā.)

12. KISĀGOTAMĪ THERĪ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Kisāgotamī Therī was reborn into an unknown family in the city of Hamsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When she was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a *bhikkhunī* being named as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in wearing coarse, inferior robes. She aspired to be like that *bhikkhunī* in wearing coarse, inferior robes. After making an extraordinary offering, she expressed that wish before the Buddha. The Buddha prophesied that her aspiration would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha Gotama.

Her Existence as a Daughter of King Kikī

The future Kisāgotamī Therī was reborn in the fortunate destinations, and never into miserable states, for a period of a hundred thousand world-cycles. During the time of Buddha Kassapa in the present world-cycle which was graced by five Buddhas, she was reborn as the fifth daughter of King Kikī of Bārāṇasī. She was named Dhammā. For the whole of her life span of twenty thousand years, she led a life of purity, observing the Ten Precepts.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

Princess Dhammā was reborn in the Tāvātimsa Deva realm. In her last existence, she was born into a rich man's family, whose fortunes had dwindled and was in a state of poverty. Her original name was Gotamī but due to her lean and emaciated body she was called Kisāgotamī, “Gotamī the lean one.”

(How Kisāgotamī became the daughter-in-law of a rich man will now be narrated, as told in the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**.)

"Exhaustion of Good Kamma causes Extreme Poverty."

Yadā kammakkhayo hoti, sabbametam vinasati

“When good kamma is exhausted everything is lost.”

So has the Buddha said in the Nidhikaṇḍa Sutta. There was a rich man in Sāvattthi whose property were all strangely turned into charcoal due to the exhaustion of his good kamma. The man was in a despondent state. He lost his appetite and lay on a couch. A friend came to his house and gave him encouragement. He also gave a practical way out of the stark poverty of the once rich man. His instruction was as follows:

“Friend, spread out a mat in front of your house as a bazaar seller would. For you are going to sell the heaps of charcoal that are now your only property. Passers-by will say: ‘Oh, other people sell oil, honey, molasses, etc. but you, rich man, are selling charcoal.’ Then you just said to them: ‘One sells what one owns. What's wrong with it?’ These people are the ordinary people with no great past merit.

“Someone will come and say to you: ‘Ah, other people sell oil, honey molasses, etc. but you, rich man, are selling gold and silver!’ To that person you should say: ‘Where are the gold and silver?’

“Then that person will point out to your heaps of charcoal and say: ‘There they are.’

“Then you should say: ‘Bring them to me,’ and receive with your hands what that person has brought (from your heaps of charcoal) to you in his or her hands. Since that person is one endowed with great past merit, all he or she had touched and delivered into your hands will be turned into gold and silver, as they originally had been.

“I must mention the stipulation. It is this, if the person who mention about your gold and silver (and turns them back to gold and silver) is a young woman, you must marry your son to her, entrust all your property with forty crores to her and let her, as your daughter-in-law, manage your household. If that person is a young man, you must marry your daughter to him, entrust all your property worth forty crores to him, as your son-in-law, and let him manage your household”

Kisāgotamī, The One With Great Past Merit

The ruined rich man took his friend's advice. He sat as a bazaar seller in front of his house where every passer-by could see him sitting there selling his charcoal. People said to him: “Ah, other people sell oil, honey, molasses, etc., but you are selling charcoal.” To them he simply said: “One sells what one owns. What's wrong with it?”

One day, Kisāgotamī herself, the daughter of another ruined rich man, happened to come along to the charcoal vendor. She said: “O father, other people sell oil, honey, molasses etc., but you are selling gold and silver!” The ruined rich man said to her: “Where are the gold and silver?”

“Well, are you not dealing in them here?”

“Bring those gold and silver to me, little daughter!”

Kisāgotamī took a handful of the vendor's ‘goods’ and handed it to him and to his amazement, all of them turned into gold and silver as they originally had been!

Kisāgotamī became The Daughter-in-law of The Rich Man

The rich man asked Kisāgotamī: “What is your family name?”

“It is called Kisāgotamī,” she replied. The rich man then knew her to be unmarried. He collected his riches from that place, took Kisāgotamī to his house and married his son to her. Then every of his former gold and silver items assumed its original form. (This is according to the Commentary to the Dhammapada.)

In due course, Kisāgotamī gave birth to a son. From that time onwards, she began to be treated with love and respect by her father-in-law's family (for at first she was looked down by them as the daughter of a poor man). Just when her son could romp about, he died. Kisāgotamī, who had never suffered loss of a child, was overwhelmed with grief. She valued her son as the condition for her improved status and wellbeing. Her fortunes had improved with his birth. She could not think of her dead child being thrown away at the cemetery. So she held the dead child fondly in her arms, and muttering continuously: “O, let me have the medicine to bring back life to my son!” she roamed about from house to house.

As she behaved in that senseless though pitiable manner, people had no sympathy with her. They said jeeringly, flipping their fingers: “Where have you ever seen a medicine that restores life to the dead?” These unkind but truthful words failed to bring her sanity. A wise man then considered: “This young woman has lost her good senses due to the death of her son. The right medicine for her can only be dispensed by the Buddha,” and said to her: “Little daughter, the medicine that can bring back life to your son is known only to the Buddha and to no one else. Indeed, there is the Buddha, the greatest person among devas

and humans, residing at the Jetavana monastery. Go and ask him.”

The Buddha's Strategy to quell Kisāgotamī's Sorrow

Kisāgotamī thought the man's advice was a wise one. She went straight to the Buddha's monastery, holding her dead child in her arms. The Buddha was seated on His throne amidst an audience and was about to make His discourse when Kisāgotamī shouted to the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, give me the medicine that will bring back life to my child!” The Buddha saw the sufficiency of her past merit in attaining Enlightenment and said to her: “O Gotamī, you have done the right thing in coming to this place to ask for the medicine to restore life to your dead child. Now go to every house in Sāvatti and ask for a small quantity of mustard oil from the house whose family has no death occurred, and bring it to me.”

(Herein, the Buddha's strategy is to be noted carefully. The Buddha merely says to Kisāgotamī to bring him a small quantity of mustard oil from the house whose family had no death occurred. He did not say that He would restore the dead child to life when she has got the oil. The Buddha's objective is to let the demented mother realized the point that loss of a son is not a unique experience but that everybody has suffered the same sorrow of death.)

Kisāgotamī thought that if she obtained the mustard oil, her son would be restored to life. She went to the first house and said: “The Buddha asks me to get a small quantity of mustard oil for making a medicine to restore life to my dead son. Kindly give me some mustard oil.”

“Here it is,” the householder said and gave some mustard oil.

“But, Sir,” she said, “I must know one thing: has nobody died in this family?”

“What a question! Who can remember the number of people that died in this family?”

“In that case, I am not taking the oil,” she said and went to another house. She heard the same reply there. At the third house she also heard the same reply. Now truth dawned into her merit. There can be no family in this city where death never occurred. Of course, the Buddha, the benefactor of the world, knew it.” An emotional religious awakening arose in her. She went to the country and left her dead child there, saying: “Dear son, as a mother, I had thought quite wrongly that death came to you alone. But death is common to everybody.”

Then, muttering this soliloquy (the meaning of which will be given later), she went to see the Buddha:

*Na gāmadhammo no nigamassa dhammo,
Na cāpiyaṃ ekakulassa dhammo.
Sabbassa lokassa sadevakassa,
Eseva dhammo yadidaṃ aniccatā.*

She approached the Buddha who asked her: “Have you got the mustard oil?”

“I have no need for mustard oil, Venerable Sir, only give me the firm ground to stand upon, let me gain a foothold!”

The Buddha, spoke this verse to her: (translated below)

“Gotamī, one who is intoxicated with one's children and wealth (lit. ‘herds of cattle’) and is attached to one's possessions (old and new), is carried away by Death, just as a sleeping village is swept away by a huge flood.”

— **Dhammapada**, V. 287. —

At the end of the discourse, Kisāgotamī was established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry Knowledge.

(This is according to the Commentary on **Aṅguttara Nikāya**.)

In the life story of Kisāgotamī, when she came back from her search for the mustard oil,

the Buddha spoke to her in two verses:

The first verse beginning with:

Yo ca vassasatam jīve, apassam udayabbayam

— **Dhammapada** verse 113 —

the meaning of which has been given in the story of Paṭācārā and the second as follows:

“Gotamī, the impermanence of all conditioned things is not a peculiar phenomenon confined to any village, or town, or a family, but an inescapable fact that concerns all sentient beings including devas, humans and Brahmās.”

After hearing these two verses, Kisāgotamī attained Stream-Entry. This is the Life Story of Kisāgotamī Therī as told in the **Apādāna Pāli**.

Having been established in *sotāpatti-phala*, Kisāgotamī requested the Buddha that she be allowed to become a *bhikkhunī*. The Buddha consented. Kisāgotamī left the Buddha after going three rounds around Him with the Him on her right. She went to the ‘monastery’ of *bhikkhunīs*, and was admitted into the Order of Bhikkhunīs. Then, she acquired the name of Kisāgotamī Therī.

Attainment of Arahatsip

Kisāgotamī Therī worked diligently to gain Insight. One day, it was her turn to look after lighting in and around the congregation hall. While watching a flame in a lamp, she had the perception of the flame as a phenomena of a series of rising and vanishings (i.e. perishing). Then she saw that all living beings are coming and going, that is, they are born only to die and that only those who attain Nibbāna do not come under this process of arising and falling.

The thoughts that were occurring in Kisāgotamī’s mind came to the notice of the Buddha who was sitting in His private chamber at the Jetavana monastery, and He sent His Buddha-rays to her, making her see Him sitting in front of her and said: “Gotamī, your thinking is right. All living beings rise and fall, just as the series of flames do. Only those who attain Nibbāna do not come under this process of arising and falling. It is living in vain for those who may live a hundred years without realizing Nibbāna through Path-Knowledge and its Fruition.” He made this point further in the following verse:

“(Gotamī,) even if one were to live a hundred years without perceiving through Path-Knowledge, the Deathless (Nibbāna), yet more worthwhile indeed is a single day’s life of one who perceives through Path-Knowledge, the Deathless (Nibbāna).”

At the end of the discourse, Kisāgotamī Therī attained arahatsip, having extinguished all mental intoxicants.

(c) Kisāgotamī as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

As aspired in her previous existence, Kisāgotamī devoted her entire *bhikkhunī* life to being contented with inferior robes, i.e. robes made of inferior cloth, sewn in inferior thread, and dyed in an inferior pale colour. Therefore, on one occasion, when the Buddha was naming outstanding *bhikkhunīs* during His residence at the Jetavana monastery, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who make do with inferior robes, Bhikkhunī Kisāgotamī is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

13. SĪṄGALAKAMĀTU THERĪ

(What follows is a synthesis of the sketchy account of Sīṅgalakamātu Therī in the Commentary on the **Āṅguttara Nikāya** and the Life Story of the Bhikkhunī in the **Apādāna Pāli**.)

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Siṅgālakamātu Therī was born as the daughter of a court official, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She went to the Buddha's monastery and after listening to His Doctrine, she became a *bhikkhunī* and flawlessly observed the morality consisting in the Four kinds of Purification. She had an exceptional devotion to the Triple Gem, very keen to listen to the Doctrine, and had an ardent desire to see the Buddha (just as Bhikkhu Vakkali).

One day, she saw a *bhikkhunī* being named by the Buddha as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in faith (*saddhā*). She aspired to be like that foremost *bhikkhunī* and redoubled her effort in the practice of the threefold training. The Buddha gave a discourse to her in three stanzas beginning with: “*Yassa saddhā tathāgate ...*” which in essence says: “One who has faith in the Triple Gem, morality and straight view or knowledge is not called a poor person, and so a wise person should cultivate devotion to the Buddha, morality, faith about the Doctrine and the Sangha, and perception or Insight that enables one to see the Dhamma.” (The three stanzas may be gleaned from the **Apāḍāna Pāli**, Book Two.)

On hearing the discourse, the young *bhikkhunī* was greatly encouraged and asked the Buddha if her aspiration would come true. Buddha Padumuttara prophesied that her aspiration would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha Gotama. She was elated by the prognostication and served the Buddha respectfully by living up to the Buddha's Teaching. (It should be noted that putting effort in the right practice of the Dhamma with devotion or loving thoughts about the Buddha itself amounts to serving or attending on the Buddha.)

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

The future Siṅgālakamātu Therī was reborn in the fortunate destinations for a hundred thousand world-cycles. Then, during the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of the Rich Man in Rājagaha. When she came of age she was married to a son of another rich man of the same clan and went to live in her husband's resident. She gave birth to a child named Siṅgāla. She acquired the name Siṅgālakamātu, Mother of Siṅgāla.

Her son, Siṅgāla had the wrong belief. He worshipped the eight directions daily. One day, as the Buddha was entering the city for alms-food, he saw young Siṅgāla turning to the eight directions in the act of worshipping. The Buddha stood on the wayside and gave a discourse to the young boy. On that occasion, two crores of the listeners, both men and woman, realized the Four Truths. Saṅgālakamātu attained Stream-Entry Knowledge and joined the Order of Bhikkhunīs. Since then, she came to be called Siṅgālakamātu Therī. Due to her past aspiration, since she became a *bhikkhunī*, her faculty of faith was exceptionally strong. Wherever she visited the Buddha's monastery to listen to the sermons, she could not turn her gaze away from the glorious person of the Buddha. The Buddha, knowing her intense devotion to Him, gave discourses to her that tended to enhance her conviction. With faith as her stepping stone or springboard, she meditated on Insight and attained arahatship. (An *arahat* who attains Enlightenment with conviction as the dominant factor.)

(c) Siṅgālakamātu designated as The Foremost Bhikkhunī.

On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery and naming distinguished *bhikkhunīs* according to their merits, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who have strong conviction, Bhikkhunī Siṅgālakamātu is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

Chapter 45

THE LIFE STORIES OF MALE LAY DISCIPLES

1. TAPUSSA and BHALLIKA

(a) Their Past Aspirations

(I shall describe the story of the brothers, Tapussa and Bhallika, based on the Commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** and the Commentary on the **Theragāthā**, the *Ekaka nipāta*.)

The future Tapussa and future Bhallika were reborn into a worthy family in the city of *Hamsāvati*, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When they were listening to a discourse by the Buddha, they saw two disciples being named as the foremost in being the first of the Buddha's disciples who were established in the Three Refuges. The two brothers aspired to that distinction and after making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, they wished for that goal. (**Aṅguttara Commentary**)

Other Past Existences in The Intervening Period

The two brothers lived a life full of meritorious deeds and, after passing away from that memorable existence, they were never reborn into the miserable states of *apāya* but, instead, in the deva-world or the human world only. The future Bhallika was reborn, thirty-one world-cycles ago in a period which was devoid of any Buddhas, as a man who offered all kinds of fruits to a Paccekabuddha named Sumana. For that good deed, he was reborn only in the good destinations. During the time of Buddha Sikhī, he was reborn into a brahmin family in the city of *Arunavati*. He heard the news that two merchant brothers, *Ujita* and *Ojita*, had opportunity of offering first alms-food to Buddha Sikhī who had appeared from the seventh seven-day abiding in the attainment in Cessation and who was about to begin his eighth seven-day abiding in the attainment of Cessation. He went to visit Buddha Sikhī together with his friend, (the future Tapussa), and after paying homage to the Buddha, requested Him to accept their alms-food offering the next day. On the next day, they made an extra-ordinary offering to the Buddha and said: “Venerable Sir, for this good deed, let both of us have the opportunity of making the first alms-food to a Buddha in the future.”

The two friends were reborn in various existences, during which they performed meritorious deeds together, resulting in rebirth at the fortunate destinations. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, they were born into the family of a cattle merchant. For a long period of life, lasting many years, they offered milk-food to the Sangha. (These events are described in the Commentary on the **Theragāthā**.)

(b) Discipleship in Their Last Existence

The two friends were reborn into the fortunate destinations for the infinite years which constituted the interim period between the two Buddhas. During the time of Buddha Gotama, before the Buddha attained Perfect Enlightenment, they were reborn as two sons to a travelling merchant who carried his goods, using a big caravan, from place to place. Their native town was called *Asitañcana* (the Commentary on **Theragāthā** refers to it as *Pokkharavati*). The elder brother was named Tapussa and the younger, Bhallika.

They became householders and carried on the trading together, using a caravan of five hundred bullock carts. At that time, Buddha Gotama had attained Perfect Enlightenment and had passed seven times the seven-days of abiding in the attainment of Cessation, and was about to enter into the eighth seven-days period of abiding in the attainment of Cessation at the foot of a ‘*Linlun*’ tree, (the *Sapium baccatum*).

The caravan of the two merchant brothers were then not far from that tree. At that

moment, the deva, who had been the mother to the merchant brothers in the immediately previous existence, saw the dire need of the Buddha for sustenance, who, after staying for forty-nine days (having last taken Sujātā's milk-rice in forty-nine morsels), must eat that day for His survival. She thought that her two sons should be able to provide the food just in time. So, using her psychic powers, she made the bullocks unable to move.

The two brothers inspected the bullocks, the carts, and all relevant conditions which made the carts immobile. They were at their wit's ends to find the reason. Their deva mother, seeing them disheartened, possessed a man in the caravan and said to them: "Dear sons, you are not harassed by any demon or *peta* or *nāga* but it is me, a deva of the terrestrial realm, who was your mother in your last existence, who is doing this. (Now, sons,) the Buddha, who is endowed with Ten Powers, is staying at the foot of a 'Linlun' tree. Go and offer alms-food to the Buddha which will be the first food He takes after attainment of Buddhahood."

The two brothers were delighted by the deva's word. And thinking that if they were to cook alms-food it would take too much time, therefore they took some of their choicest preserved food, put them in a gold salver, and, going near the Buddha, said: "Venerable Sir, may you, out of compassion, accept this victuals." The Buddha reviewed the situation and considered what action the previous Buddha did in such a case. The Four Great Deva Kings then visited the Buddha and each offered an alms-bowl, which was made of granite and having the colour of the green gram. The Buddha considered the great benefit that would accrue to the four devas, and so accepted all the four bowls, and (placing them one a top the other,) willed that the four bowls became one, and accordingly, the four granite bowls became a single alms-bowl with four rims.

The two brothers then put their alms-food into the Buddha's alms-bowl. (The Buddha ate the food.) After the Buddha had finished eating, the brothers offered water for drinking and washing. Then they made obeisance to the Buddha and sat in a suitable place. The Buddha gave them a discourse, at the end of which, both brothers were established in the Two Refuges. (The story of the establishment of the two brothers in the Two Refuges (*dve vācika saraṇagamaṇa*) has been described in Chapter 8.).

After having established in the Two Refuges, before departing, the two brothers requested from the Buddha: "Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā, out of compassion, bestow on us something which we may revere every day." The Buddha passed His right hand over His head and gave them eight hairs as relics. The brothers put the hairs in a gold casket and took them home. Back at their town, they erected a shrine at the entrance of the town of Asitañcana where the eight relic-hairs from the living Buddha were enshrined. On *uposatha* days, the shrine emitted Buddha-rays.

(c) The Two Brothers being designated as Foremost Lay Disciples

On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery and acknowledging distinguished lay disciples accordingly to their merits, He declared:

"*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who have taken refuge earliest in the Buddha and the Dhamma, the merchant brothers, Tapussa and Bhallika, are the foremost."

The Attainment of Path-Knowledge

Tapussa and Bhallika were the earliest of the Buddha's lay disciples who took refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma. Later, the Buddha made His first discourse, the Dhammacakka, at the Migadāvana forest near Bereave. After that, He went and resided in Rājagaha. The two brothers also arrived at Rājagaha on a trading journey. They visited the Buddha, made obeisance and sat in a suitable place. The Buddha gave discourse to them, at the end of which, the elder brother Tapussa was established in Stream-Entry Knowledge and its Fruition. The younger brother became a *bhikkhu* and in due time attained arahatship and was endowed with the Six Supernormal Powers. (Commentary on the **Theragāthā**, Book I).

2. ANĀTHAPIṆḌIKA the Rich Man

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Anāthapiṇḍika was reborn into a wealthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When he was listening a sermon by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named as the foremost lay disciple among those who delight in charity. He had a strong desire to become such a distinguished disciple and after making an extra-ordinary offering to the Buddha, he expressed his aspiration before Him.

(b) His Last Existence as A Rich Man

The future Anāthapiṇḍika was reborn in fortunate destinations for a hundred thousand world-cycles and during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn as the son of Sumana, the Rich Man of Sāvatti. His name, given by his parents, was Sudattha.

How He came to be known as 'Anāthapiṇḍika'

Sudattha in time became the head of the family. He earned the reputation of 'one who gives food to the destitute' which in Pāli means *Anātha* (destitutes) + *piṇḍika* (rice-giver), hence Anāthapiṇḍika. (For more details about this remarkable man refer to Chapter 29. Here, only a brief account will be given as described in the Commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**.)

One day, Anāthapiṇḍika went to Rājagaha on a trading trip where he visited his friend the Rich Man of Rājagaha. There, he learned the great news that the Buddha had appeared in the world. He could not wait till the city gates of Rājagaha were open in the next morning to meet the Buddha. Such was his zeal. So he left the city at dawn with the devas helping him to have the gate open for his visit. He met the Buddha, benefitted from a discourse by Him, and was established in the Fruition of Stream Entry-Knowledge. On the next day, he made a great offering to the Buddha and His Sangha and had the Buddha's consent to visit Sāvatti. He returned to Sāvatti. On the way back to Sāvatti, he made arrangements with his friends of each location by providing them with one lakh of money to build a monastery at interval of one *yojana*, for the temporary residence of the Buddha and His company of *bhikkhus*. The distance between Rājagaha and Sāvatti being forty-five *yojanas*, therefore, he spent forty-five lakhs on the forty-five temporary transit monasteries. At Sāvatti, he bought a large park, which was the pleasure garden of Prince Jeta. He paid the sum of money according to the number of gold coins laid out over the entire park, with their rims touching each other. This amounted to eighteen crores. On that piece of land, he built a (golden) monastery costing another eighteen crores. At the formal dedication ceremony of the Jetavana monastery (meaning monastery built on Jeta's garden), which lasted for three months (some say five months, some even nine months), a lavish feast was provided to guests, both in the mornings and in the daytime. This cost him another additional eighteen crores.

(c) Anāthapiṇḍika The Foremost Giver

The Jetavana monastery alone cost fifty-four crores. The regular donations to the Buddha and His Sangha consisted of the following offerings:

- five hundred *bhikkhus* were offered with alms-food daily by the ticket system (*Salaka bhatta*-drawing lots);
- five hundred *bhikkhus* were offered with alms-food once during the waxing period of the month and once during the waning period;
- five hundred *bhikkhus* were offered with rice gruel daily by 'the ticket system';
- five hundred *bhikkhus* were offered with rice gruel once during the waxing period of the month and once during the waning period;
- daily offerings of alms-food were made to:

- (a) five hundred *bhikkhus* who had arrived in Sāvatti recently and who had not acquainted themselves with the daily route for collecting alms-food;

- (b) five hundred *bhikkhus* who were about to go on a journey;
- (c) five hundred *bhikkhus* who were sick;
- (d) five hundred *bhikkhus* who tended the sick *bhikkhus*;
- there was always seating place for five hundred *bhikkhus* at any time at Anāthapiṇḍika's house.

Hence, on one occasion when the Buddha, while residing at the Jetavana monastery, was acknowledging lay disciples according to their merit, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who delight in giving, Sudattha the Householder, also known as Anāthapiṇḍika, is the foremost.”

The Anāthapiṇḍikovāda Sutta, the Favourite Discourse of Anāthapiṇḍika

(Here we shall give a condensed account of the Anāthapiṇḍikovāda Sutta which Anāthapiṇḍika liked very much. A full account of this discourse is contained in *Uparipañāsa*.)

During the Buddha's residence at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatti, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder was sick, in pain, and gravely ill. Then he called an attendant and said: “O man, go to the Bhagavā and approach Him. Prostrating yourself at His feet and says to Him: ‘Venerable Sir, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder is sick, in pain, and gravely ill. He pays homage with his head at the feet of the Bhagavā.’ (Further,) go to the Venerable Sāriputta, and approach him, prostrating yourself at his feet, and says to him: ‘Venerable Sir, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder is sick, in pain, and gravely ill. He pays homage with his head at the feet of the Venerable.’ And also say thus: ‘Venerable Sir, may the Venerable Sāriputta, out of compassion, come to the house of Anāthapiṇḍika.’ ”

(When Anāthapiṇḍika was in good health, he usually paid a visit to the Buddha at least once a day, and twice or three if he could manage it. But now that he was on his death bed, he was sending an attendant as messenger.)

“Very well, Sir,” replied the attendant to Anāthapiṇḍika, and went to the Buddha. He paid homage to the Buddha, prostrating himself at His feet, and said to Him as instructed by his master. Then it was nearly sundown. He next went to the Venerable Sāriputta, approached him, prostrating himself at his feet, and said to the Venerable as instructed by his master, requesting the Venerable to visit Anāthapiṇḍika. The Venerable Sāriputta signified his acceptance by remaining silent.

Then, the Venerable Sāriputta, re-robing himself, carrying his alms-bowl and great robe, went to the house of Anāthapiṇḍika the householder, accompanied by the Venerable Ānanda as his attendant (in place of another *bhikkhu* which was the custom). Upon arrival and after taking the seat prepared for him, he asked Anāthapiṇḍika: “Householder, are you feeling well? Are you feeling better? Is your pain decreasing and not increasing? Does it appear to be decreasing and not increasing?”

Anāthapiṇḍika, replied to the Venerable Sāriputta how he was feeling unwell, how he was not feeling any better, how his pain was increasing and not decreasing, and how it appeared to be increasing and not decreasing, by giving four examples.

The Venerable Sāriputta knew that the illness of the householder was not controllable but that it would end only with this death. So he considered it important not to talk about anything but to give a discourse that would be of benefit to him. (He gave the following discourse in a comprehensive manner: Since there is no possibility of checking an ailment which will end only with the death of the sufferer who, being under the influence of craving, conceit and wrong view, is attached to the six sense-doors, the six sense objects, the six kinds of consciousness, the six kinds of contact, the six kinds of sensation, etc.), He said: “Householder, you should practise thus:

‘I will have no attachment, by way of either Craving or Conceit or Wrong view, for the eye, which is corporeality with sensitivity of seeing; then the consciousness which is dependent on the eye (through a subtle fondness *nikanti taṇhā* for the eye)

will not arise in me!’ Householder, you should practise the Threefold Training in this way.”

(Herein, “You should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment to the eye’ is said to exhort the householder to view the eye as impermanent, woeful (*dukkha*) and unsubstantial. This is so because if one views the eye as impermanent, Conceit cannot have any foothold, i.e. it cannot arise; if one views the eye as woeful (*dukkha*), Craving, attachment to the eye as ‘my eye’ cannot arise; if one views that eye as unsubstantial, the Wrong View of a personal identity or the ego as ‘my Self’ cannot arise. Hence to be free of the misconceptions through Conceit, Craving and Wrong View, one should repeatedly view the eye as impermanent, woeful (*dukkha*) and unsubstantial.

The three misconceptions of Conceit, Craving and Wrong View are crude mental states. Even when those misconceptions may disappear, there is a subtle fondness (*nikanti*) for the eye that tends to persist in one. The Venerable Sāriputta exhorts the householder to have his consciousness to be free of this subtle fondness.

The same applies to the other five sense bases, such as ear, nose, etc. and also to sense objects, etc.)

Having exhorted Anāthapiṇḍika to train himself to be free of attachment to the eye through Conceit, Craving and Wrong View, and also to have no lingering fondness for the eye, the Venerable Sāriputta further exhorted him as follows:

- (1) “That beings so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for the ear ...p... the nose ...p..., the tongue ...p... for the mind, the mind-base; (not even a subtle fondness for the mind).’
- (2) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for visual objects ...p... sounds ...p... odours ...p... tangible objects...p...mind-objects (not even a subtle fondness for mind-objects).’
- (3) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for eye-consciousness ...p... ear-consciousness ...p... nose consciousness ...p... body-consciousness ...p... mind-consciousness (not even a subtle fondness for mind-consciousness).’
- (4) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for eye-contact ...p... ear-contact ...p... nose-contact ...p... tongue-contact ...p... body-contact ...p... mind-contact (not even a subtle fondness mind-contact).’
- (5) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for sensation arising out of eye-contact ...p... sensation arising out of ear-contact ...p... sensation arising out of nose-contact ...p... sensation arising out of tongue-contact ...p... sensation arising out of body-contact ...p... sensation arising out of mind-contact (not even a subtle fondness for sensation arising out of mind-contact).’
- (6) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for the Element of solidity ...p... the Element of cohesion ...p... the Element of heat ...p... the Element of motion ...p... the Element of Space ...p... the Element of consciousness (not even a subtle fondness for the element of consciousness).’
- (7) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for corporeality ...p... sensation ...p... perception ...p... volitional activities ...p... consciousness (not even subtle fondness for consciousness).’
- (8) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for the *jhāna* of infinity of Space ...p... the *jhāna* of infinity of consciousness ...p... the *jhāna* of Nothingness...p...the *jhāna* of Neither-consciousness-nor-non-consciousness (not even a subtle fondness for the *jhāna* of Neither-consciousness-nor-nonconsciousness).’
- (9) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for the present world; then the consciousness which is dependent on the present world

(through a subtle fondness for the present world) will not arise in me.’ Householder, you should practise the Threefold Training in this way.

“That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for the hereafter; then the consciousness which is dependent on the hereafter (through a subtle fondness for the hereafter) will not arise in me.’ Householder, you should practise the Threefold Training in this way.

(From the first to eight rounds of exposition, the sentient world is being referred to. In the last (ninth) round, ‘the present world’ refers to volitional activities related to dwelling, food and raiment and other possessions; ‘the hereafter’ means all forms of existence beyond the human existence. The Venerable Sāriputta, by mentioning the hereafter, hints that the householder should not crave for grand mansions, gorgeous food and raiment, etc. in any of the celestial world.)

Thus the Venerable Sāriputta give a comprehensive discourse in nine turns (on the same theme). It may be noted that the three roots, Craving, Conceit and Wrong View, are completely eliminated on attainment of *arahatta-phala*. Of the three, Wrong View is eradicated when Stream-Entry Knowledge is gained. The Venerable Sāriputta repeatedly exhorted Anāthapiṇḍika to practise so that no attachment to anything arises in the mind through any of these misconceptions. This connotes that *arahatta-phala* should be the goal. This theme he impressed on the householder by nine different factors, viz.: Sense-doors, Sense-objects, Consciousness, Contact, Sensation, Dhātu (Elements), Khandha (aggregates), *jhāna* of the Non-Material Sphere, and all things knowable (*sabba-dhamma*). The voidness, the emptiness, the unreality of these phenomena is comprehended when one attains *arahatta-phala*.

When the discourse had ended, Anāthapiṇḍika, wept bitterly. Then the Venerable Ānanda said to Anāthapiṇḍika: “Householder are you attached to your possessions? Householder, are you wavering about the meritorious deeds?”

“Venerable Sir,” replied Anāthapiṇḍika, “I am not attached to my possessions. Nor am I wavering. I have indeed, for a long time, attended upon the Bhagavā. I have also attended upon the *bhikkhus* who are worthy of respect. But, I have never heard such words of the Dhamma before.”

“Householder, the laity who wear white cloths cannot understand clearly this word of the Dhamma. (For lay persons it is not easy to follow the exhortation to break away from the dear ones, such as wife and children, and various other possessions, such as valued attendants, fertile fields, etc..) Householder, this word of the Dhamma can be understood only by *bhikkhus*. (Only *bhikkhu* can appreciate such admonition.)”

“Venerable Sāriputta, I beg of you. Let this word of the Dhamma be made clear to the laity who wear white cloths. Venerable Sir, there are many worthy men whose understanding is not clouded by the dust of defilements. For them, it is a great loss in not being able to see the Supramundane for not having heard the Dhamma. There are likely to be people who will be able to fully understand the Dhamma and attain arahatship, only if you expound the Dhamma to them.”

(“I have never heard such words of the Dhamma before.” These words spoken by Anāthapiṇḍika needs to be explained. It is not that the householder was never before admonished by the Buddha using words of the same profound meaning. But the Doctrine leading to *arahatta-phala* expounded by means of such a comprehensive arrangement involving nine different turns (or rounds), such as the six sense-doors, the six sense objects, the six kinds of Consciousness, the six Elements, the Aggregates, the four *jhānas* of the Non-Material Sphere, the present world and the hereafter, through all manner of knowing them, i.e. seeing, hearing, attaining, cognizing, has never been discoursed to him before.

To explain in another way: Charity and the delight in giving is the hallmark of Anāthapiṇḍika's character. Never would he pay a visit to the Buddha or to *bhikkhus* worthy of respect empty-handed: in the mornings, he would take gruel and eatables

to them, in the afternoons, ghee, honey or molasses, etc. Even on some rare occasions when he had no offering to make to them, he would take his attendants along, carrying fine sand with them, which he let them spread about the monastic compound. At the monastery, he would make his offering, observe the precepts, and then go home. His noble behaviour was reputed to be one worthy of a Buddha-to-be. The Buddha, during the twenty-four years of association with Anāthapiṇḍika, mostly praised him for his charity: “I had practised charity over four incalculable period and a hundred thousand world-cycles. You are following my footsteps.” Great disciples, like the Venerable Sāriputta, usually discoursed to Anāthapiṇḍika on the benefits of giving in charity. That is why the Venerable Ānanda said to him: “Householder, the laity who wear white clothes cannot understand clearly this word of the Dhamma” with reference to the present discourse by the Venerable Sāriputta.

This should not be taken to mean that the Buddha never discoursed to Anāthapiṇḍika on the cultivating of Insight, leading to Path-Knowledge and its Fruition. In fact, the householder had heard the need for Insight-development. Only that he had never listened to such an elaborate discussion running to nine turns (round) as in the present discourse. As the Sub-Commentary on Anāthapiṇḍiko-vāda Sutta has pointed out: “As a matter of fact, the Bhagavā had discoursed to him (Anāthapiṇḍika) on the subject of Insight development as the straight course to the attainment of the Ariya Path.”)

Anāthapiṇḍika was reborn in The Tusitā Deva Realm

After admonishing Anāthapiṇḍika, the Venerables Sāriputta and Ānanda departed. Not long after they had left, Anāthapiṇḍika passed away and was reborn in the Tusitā Deva realm.

Then, around the middle watch of the night, Deva Anāthapiṇḍika approached the Buddha, made obeisance to Him in verse:

(Herein, before mentioning the verses, the reason for Deva Anāthapiṇḍika's visit to the Buddha should be noted. Being reborn in the Tusitā Deva realm, Anāthapiṇḍika found out, was a great thing full of sense pleasure. His body, three gāvutas long, was shining like a mass of gold. His mansion, pleasure gardens, the Wish Tree where he could get anything by mere wishing, etc. were indeed alluring. He reviewed his past existence and saw that his devotion to the Triple Gem had been the causes of this resplendent fresh existence. He considered his new deva life. It was full of ease and comfort which could easily make him drowned in sense pleasures and forgetting the Good Doctrine. “I must now go to the human world and sing in praise of the Jetavana monastery (my past deed of merit), the Sangha, the Buddha, the Ariya Path, and Venerable Sāriputta. Only on returning from the human world will I start enjoying this fleshly acquired life,” thus he decided.)

Four Stanzas address to The Buddha

1. “(Venerable Sir,) this Jetavana monastery as the resort by day and by night, of the Sangha (Comprising *bhikkhus* who are *arahats* as well as those training themselves for arahatship.) It is the residence of the Bhagavā, King of the Dhamma. (That is why) it is source of delight to me.

(The Jetavana monastery was a monastic complex comprising the Buddha's Private (Scented) chamber, the square Pinnacled monastery, a number of monastic dwellings with exquisite ornate designs with fruit trees, flowering trees and shrubbery and restful seats. It was a religious premise of rare elegance, a visitor's delight. However, the real attraction of the Jetavana monastery lay in its residents, the taint-free *ariyas* such as the Buddha and His noble disciples. And it was that spiritual beauty of the place rather than the sensual attraction that appealed to an ariya like Anāthapiṇḍika.)

2. “It is through action (i.e. volitional activities associated with *magga*), Knowledge (i.e. Right View and Right Thinking), Dhamma (i.e. Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration), and virtuous living based on morality (i.e. Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood) that beings are purified. They are not purified through lineage or wealth.

(In this stanza, Anāthapiṇḍika extols the Ariya Path of eight constituents.)

3. “That being so, the wise person, discerning his own welfare (culminating in Nibbāna), should contemplate, with right perception, the impermanence, the woefulness and the unsubstantiality of five aggregates (i.e. this body) which are the object of Clinging, Contemplating, thus, that person is purified through realizing the Four Ariya Truths.

(This body, the mind-body complex which one clings to as oneself, when brought to its ultimate analysis by means of Insight-development, reveals its true nature. As Insight fully develops into Path-Knowledge, the Truth of *dukkha* or woefulness of repeated existences, is seen through by the full understanding of phenomena. The Truth of the Origin of *dukkha* is seen through and discarded. The Truth of the Cessation of *dukkha* is realized by direct experience. The Truth of the Path is penetratingly understood by developing it. Then the yogi is free from of the defilements and purity is achieved. In this stanza, Anāthapiṇḍika extolled the development of Insight and the realization of the Path-Knowledge.)

4. “A certain *bhikkhu* reaches the other shore (that is Nibbāna). In this respect, he is equal to Sāriputta. But Sāriputta, with his knowledge, morality and calm (pacification of *āsava*), *paññā*, *sīla*, *upasama*, is the noblest among those *bhikkhus* who reach the other shore (that is Nibbāna).”

(In this stanza, Anāthapiṇḍika extols the virtues of Venerable Sāriputta.)

Deva Anāthapiṇḍika addressed these four stanzas to the Buddha. The Buddha listened to them without making any interruption, thus showing His approval. Then Deva Anāthapiṇḍika gladly thinking: “The Teacher is pleased with these words, of mine,” made obeisance to Buddha and vanished there and then.

Then, when the night passed and morning came, the Buddha addressed the *bhikkhus* thus: “*Bhikkhus*, last night, about the middle watch of the night, a certain deva approached Me, made obeisance to Me, and stood in a suitable place. Then he addressed to Me with these stanzas.” The Buddha recited to the *bhikkhus* the verses spoken by Deva Anāthapiṇḍika.

(Here, the Buddha did not mention the name of Anāthapiṇḍika because he wanted the intuition of Ānanda to be brought to the fore.)

Accordingly, as soon as the Buddha had spoken, the Venerable Ānanda, without hesitating a moment, said: “Venerable Sir, that deva must have been Deva Anāthapiṇḍika. Venerable Sir, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder had much devotion to the Venerable Sāriputta.”

“Well said, Ānanda, well said, Ānanda, you do have the right intuition. Ānanda, that deva is indeed Deva Anāthapiṇḍika,” thus said the Buddha.

3. CITTA The Householder

(Both Anāthapiṇḍika and Citta are termed as *gahapati*, the English rendering being ‘Householders’. In Myanmar renderings, Anāthapiṇḍika is usually termed as ‘*thuthay*’ whereas Citta is usually rendered as ‘*thukye*’. Both these Myanmar terms are synonymous.)

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Citta the householder was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, while listening to the

Buddha's discourse, he saw a certain disciple being named by Him as the foremost in expounding the Doctrine. The worthy man aspired to that distinction. After making an extraordinary offering, he expressed his wish that, at some future existence, he would be designated by a Buddha as the foremost disciple in expounding the Doctrine.

In His Existence as The Son of A Hunter

The future Citta was reborn either in the deva realm or the human realm for a hundred thousand world-cycles. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, he was born as a son of a hunter. When he came of age, he took up the vocation of hunter. One rainy day, he went to the forest to hunt, carrying a spear. While searching for games, he saw a *bhikkhu* with his head covered with his robe of dirt-rags, sitting on a rock platform inside a natural cavern. He thought that must be a *bhikkhu* meditating. He hurried home and had two pots cooked simultaneously, one in which rice was boiled and the other for meat.

When the rice and the meat had been cooked, he saw two *bhikkhus* coming to his house for alms-food. He invited them into his house, took their alms-bowls, and requested them to accept his offering of alms-food out of compassion for him. Having had the two *bhikkhus* seated, he let his family to take care of the offering of alms-food to them while he hurried back to the forest to offer the alms-food to the meditating *bhikkhu*. He carried the rice and the meat in a pot properly covered with banana leaves. On the way, he gathered various kinds of flowers and wrapped them in some leaves. He went to the *bhikkhu* in the cavern, filled his alms-bowl with the alms-food and offered it and the flowers to him reverentially.

Then he sat in a suitable place and said to the *bhikkhu*: “Just as this offering of delicious food and flowers makes me very glad, may I, in the future existences in the course of *samsāra*, be blessed with all kinds of gifts. May flowers of five hues shower down on me!” The *bhikkhu* saw that the donor was destined to gain sufficient merit leading to attaining of *magga-phala* and taught him in detail the method of contemplating the thirty-two aspects of parts of the body.

That son of the hunter (the future Citta) lived a life full of good deeds and at his death, he was reborn in the deva realm. There, he was blessed with showers of flowers that rained down on him up to knee-deep.

(b) Discipleship in His Last Existence

The future Citta was reborn in fortunate destinations throughout the world-cycle that intervened the appearance of the two Buddhas, and during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn as the son of the Rich Man in the town of Macchikāsaṇḍa, in the Province of Magadha. At the time of his birth, flowers of five hues rained down over the whole town up to knee-deep. His parents said: “Our son has brought his own name. For he has delighted the mind of the whole town by being blessed with the wondrous floral tribute of five colours. Let us call him ‘Citta’.”

When young Citta came of age, he was married and at the death of his father, he succeeded to the office of the Rich Man of Macchikāsaṇḍa. At that time, the Venerable Mahānāma, one of the Group of Five Ascetics, came to Macchikāsaṇḍa. Citta was full of reverential adoration for Venerable Mahānāma for his serenity. He took the alms-bowl of the Venerable, and invited him to his house for offering of alms-food. After the Venerable had finished his meal, Citta took him to his orchard, had a monastery built for him and requested him to reside there as well as to accept daily alms-food from his house. Venerable Mahānāma consented out of compassion, and seeing that the householder was destined to acquire sufficient merit leading to attainment of *magga-phala*, he taught a discourse to him extensively on the six internal sense-bases and the six external sense-bases, i.e. sense objects. This subject was taught to Citta because he was a person of middling intelligence, *majjhīm-puggala*.

As Citta had, in his past existences, cultivated Insight into the impermanence, woefulness (*dukkha*) and unsubstantiality of mind and matter which are conditioned phenomena, his

present efforts in Insight-meditation led him to the enlightenment stage of Never-Returner (*anāgāmin*). (It is not mentioned in the scriptures by which method of meditation he attained *anāgāmi-phala*. However, considering his training, it might be assumed that he attained Path-Knowledge by meditating on the Sense-bases.)

(Incidentally, the difference in the attainments between Citta and Anāthapiṇḍika should be noted here. Anāthapiṇḍika, donor of the Jetavana monastery in Sāvattthi, was a Stream-Enterer who delighted in charity, (*dānā-bhirata*) whereas Citta, donor of the Ambāṭaka monastery in Macchikāsaṇḍa, was a Never-Returner who delighted in charity as well as in the *dhmma*, *dānā-bhirata*, *dhmma-bhirata*.)

Householder Citta's Delight in Charity and in The Dhamma

A few instances of Citta's natural delight in charity and in the Dhamma are mentioned here as recorded in the **Citta Saṃyutta**.

The First Isidatta Sutta

At one time, many *bhikkhus* were living in the Ambāṭaka monastery which was donated by Citta the householder, in Macchikāsaṇḍa. One day, Citta went to the monastery and after making obeisance to the *bhikkhu*-elders, he invited them to an offering of food in his home the next day. Next day, when the *bhikkhu*-elders were seated at the prepared seats, Citta made obeisance, sat in a suitable place, and said to the Venerable Thera, the senior-most *bhikkhu* present then: “Venerable Sir, ‘Diversity of Elements’, ‘Diversity of Elements’ (*Dhātu nānattam*), it has been said. To what extent is there the diversity of Elements as taught by the Bhagavā?”

The Venerable Thera knew the answer but he was diffident to give a reply to the question, and so he remained silent. For a third time too, the Venerable kept his silence.

Then the Venerable Isidatta, the junior-most *bhikkhu* among the *bhikkhus* present, thought: “*Bhikkhu*-elder Thera does not answer the question, nor ask another *bhikkhu* to answer. The Sangha, by not answering to Citta's question, makes him appear as harassing. I shall save the situation by answering his question.” So, he went near the Venerable Thera and said: “Venerable Sir, may I be allowed to answer the question by Citta.” And the Venerable Thera gave him permission to do so. Then, the Venerable Isidatta returned to his seat and said to Citta: “Householder, you asked the question, ‘Venerable Thera, ‘Diversity of Elements’, ‘Diversity of Elements’, it has been said. To what extent is there, the Diversity of Elements?”

“Yes, Venerable Sir, that is so,” replied Citta. “Householder, as taught by the Bhagavā there are various Elements, such as Eye-element (*cakkhu-dhātu*), Element of visual object (*rūpa-dhātu*), Eye-consciousness element (*cakkhu-viññāṇa-dhātu*), Ear-element (*sota-dhātu*), Element of sound (*sadda-dhātu*), Ear-consciousness element (*sota-viññāṇa-dhātu*); ...p... Mind-element (*mano-dhātu*), Element of phenomena (*dhmma-dhātu*), Mind-consciousness element (*mano-viññāṇa-dhātu*). Householder, these are the various Elements (*nānatta-dhātu*), as taught by the Bhagavā.”

Citta was satisfied with the answer given by the Venerable Isidatta and personally attended to him at the food offering. When, after finishing the meal, the *bhikkhus* returned to monastery, the Venerable Thera said to the Venerable Isidatta: “Friend Isidatta, you perceived the problem well. I have no such perception. Therefore, friend Isidatta, when similar questions are asked of us, you may do the answering.”

The Second Isidatta Sutta

On another occasion, when Citta the householder was making an offering of food to the Sangha in his residence, before serving the food he put this question to the Venerable Thera: “Is the world permanent or is it impermanent?” The question is characteristic of wrong views, and implies the arising or otherwise of such view. As in the previous case, the Venerable Thera did not answer although he knew it. When he kept his silence for three repeated questionings by Citta, the Venerable Isidatta obtained the elder Thera's permission to answer and replied to him: “When there is the erroneous concept regarding the present

body or the five aggregates, *sakkāya diṭṭhi* (wrong views) arises; when there is no erroneous concept regarding the five aggregates, wrong views do not arise.”

Citta pursued the problem with questions as to how the erroneous concept regarding the present body of five aggregates arises, and how that concept does not arise. The Venerable Isidatta gave analytical answers to the satisfaction of him. (For the complete set of questions and answers the reader may read The Second Isidatta Sutta, 1- Citta Saṃyutta, **Saḷāyatana Saṃyutta**.)

After that a conversation between Citta and the Venerable Isidatta took place as follows:

Citta: “From which place do you come, Venerable Sir?”

Isidatta: “I come from Avanti country.”

Citta: “Venerable Sir, in Avanti country there is a friend of mine, whom I have never met, by the name of Isidatta who had become a *bhikkhu*. Have you met him, Venerable Sir?”

Isidatta: “Yes, I have, householder.”

Citta: “Venerable Sir, where is that *bhikkhu* now?”

The Venerable Isidatta did not give a reply

Citta: “Venerable Sir, are you my friend whom I had never seen?”

Isidatta: “Yes, householder.”

Citta: “Venerable Sir, may the Venerable Isidatta be pleased to stay in Macchikāsaṇḍa. The Ambāṭaka monastery is pleasant to live in. I will see to all the four requisites (robes, alms-food, dwelling, medicines).”

Isidatta: “Householder, you speak well. (You say what is good.)”

(The Venerable Isidatta said so merely to express his appreciation of the donation, but he did not say so with the intention of accepting the donation of any of the four requisites.)

Citta was delighted with the answer given by Venerable Isidatta and personally attended on the Venerable in making offering of alms-food. When the *bhikkhus* returned to the monastery, the Venerable Thera said to Venerable Isidatta in the same words as he did previously (on the occasion of the First Isidatta Sutta.)

Then the Venerable Isidatta considered that after revealing his identity as an unseen friend of Citta, before becoming a *bhikkhu*, it would not be proper for him to stay in the monastery donated by Citta. So after tidying up his living quarters and the monastery, he took his alms-bowl and great robe and left the monastery for good, never to return to the town of Macchikāsaṇḍa.

The Mahakapāṭihāriya Sutta

At one time, many *bhikkhus* were living in the Ambāṭaka monastery, which was donated by Citta the householder, in Macchikāsaṇḍa. Then Citta went to the monastery and after paying respects to the Sangha, he invited them to his farmyard the next day, where his cows were kept. On the following day, the Sangha went to his farmyard and sat in the seats prepared for them. Then the householder personally offered milk-rice to the Sangha.

He was served the milk-rice in a gold vessel by his servants at the same time the Sangha were being served. As he was accompanying the Sangha, after the meal, to the monastery, he gave orders to his servants to make offerings of remaining milk-rice to suitable offerees. Then he accompanied the Sangha to their monastery.

It was scorching hot when the Sangha left the householder’s farmyard. Walking in the hot sun, a rich meal was a rather inconvenient thing for the Sangha. Then the Venerable Mahāka, the junior-most *bhikkhu*, said to the Venerable Thera, the senior-most *bhikkhu*: “Venerable Thera, would a cool breeze in an overcast-sky with slight rain drops be convenient for everyone?” And the Venerable Thera replied: “Friend Mahāka, a cool breeze in an overcast sky with slight rain drops would be convenient for everyone.”

Thereupon, the Venerable Mahāka, by his powers, changed the weather, letting the cool breeze blow in an overcast sky with slight rain drops.

Citta noted this event as a marvellous power possessed by the junior *bhikkhu*. When they arrived at the monastery, the Venerable Mahāka said to the Venerable Thera: “Venerable Thera, is that enough?” And the Venerable Thera replied: “Friend Mahāka, that is enough. Friend Mahāka, that is something done well that deserves reverence.” After this recognition of the Venerable Mahāka’s powers, all the *bhikkhus* returned to their respective dwelling places (within the monastery complex).

Then Citta requested the Venerable Mahāka to display his miraculous powers. The Venerable said: “In that case, householder, spread your cloak at the door-step to my monastery. Put a pile of grass from the bundle of grass on the cloak.” Citta did as was instructed by Venerable Mahāka. Then the Venerable entered the monastery, bolted the door from inside and sent out flames through the keyhole and through the edges of the door. The flames burned up the grass but the cloak remained unburnt. Then Citta picked up his cloak and, awestruck and goose-flesh appeared on his skin, he sat in a suitable place.

Thereafter, Venerable Mahāka came out of the monastery and said to Citta, “Householder, is that enough?” Citta replied: “Venerable Mahāka, that is enough. Venerable Mahāka, that is something accomplished. Venerable Mahāka, that deserves reverence. Venerable Mahāka, may the Venerable Mahāka be pleased to stay in Macchikāsaṇḍa. The Ambāṭaka monastery is pleasant to live in. I will see to the four requisites (robes, alms-food, dwelling, medicines).”

The Venerable Mahāka said: “Householder, you say what is good.”

However, Venerable Mahāka considered that it would not be proper for him to stay at the Ambāṭaka monastery. So after tidying up his living quarters and the monastery, he took his alms-bowl and big robe and left the monastery for good.

[In the above two *suttas*, Citta the householder had great reverence and admiration for the Venerable Isidatta and the Venerable Mahāka in donating his monastic complex to the two *bhikkhus*. However, from the point of view of the *bhikkhus*, the four requisites they had been donated were flawed because they amounted to rewards for their actions; Isidatta for expounding the Dhamma, and Mahāka for displaying miraculous power. Hence, out of regard for the *bhikkhu* rules of conduct, they left the place for good. (The Commentary and the Sub-Commentary are silent on this point.)]

We have chosen these three *suttas*, the two Isidatta Suttas and the Mahākapāṭihāriya Sutta as examples of how Citta the householder cherished the Dhamma. (The reader is earnestly advised to go through the *suttas* in the **Citta Saṃyutta**, **Salāyatana Saṃyutta**.)

A Brief Story of Venerable Sudhamma

One day, the two Chief Disciples, accompanied by a thousand *bhikkhu*-disciples, visited the Ambāṭaka monastery. (At that time, the Venerable Sudhamma was the Abbot of the monastery.) Citta the householder, donor of the monastery, made magnificent preparations to honour the visiting Sangha (without consulting the Venerable Sudhamma). The Venerable Sudhamma took exception to it and remarked: “There is one thing missing in this lavish array of offerings and that is sesame cake.” This was an innuendo to belittle Citta, whose family, in the earlier generation, consisted of a seller of sesame cakes.

Citta made a suitably rude response in vulgar language to the sarcastic remark of the Abbot, who was touched to the quick and took the matter to the Buddha. After listening to the Buddha’s admonition, the Abbot, Venerable Sudhamma, made amends to Citta. Then, staying at the Ambāṭaka monastery, and practicing the Dhamma, the Venerable Sudhamma gained Insight and attained arahatship. (This is as mentioned in the Commentary on the **Āṅguttara Nikāya**. For details refer to the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**, Book One; and **Vinaya Cūlavagga**, 4-Paṭisāraṇiya kamma.)

Citta's Pilgrimage to The Buddha

(The following account is taken from the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**.)

When the Venerable Sudhamma attained arahatship, Citta the householder reflected thus: "I have become a Never-Returner. But my stages of Enlightenment from *sotāpatti-phala* to *anāgāmi-phala* had been attained without even meeting the Buddha. It behoves me to go and meet Him now." He had five hundred carts fully laden with provisions, such as sesame, rice, ghee, molasses, honey, clothing, etc. for the long journey to Sāvattthi. He made a public invitation to the populace in Macchikāsaṇḍa that anyone, *bhikkhu*, *bhikkhunī*, male lay disciple or female lay disciple, might, if they wished, join him on a pilgrimage to the Buddha and that he would see to every need of the pilgrims. And, in response to his invitation, there were five hundred *bhikkhus*, five hundred *bhikkhunīs*, five hundred male lay disciples and five hundred female lay disciples who joined him on the pilgrimage.

The two thousand pilgrims who joined Citta plus the one thousand of his entourage, totalling three thousand, were well provided for the thirty-*yojana* journey. However, at every *yojana* of his journey, on the way devas welcomed them with temporary shelter and celestial food, such as gruel, eatables, cooked rice and beverages and every one of the three thousand pilgrims was attended on to his satisfaction.

By travelling a *yojana* a day, meeting with the devas' hospitality at every stop, the pilgrims reached Sāvattthi after a month. The provisions carried in his five hundred carts were not used. They even had surfeit of provisions which were offered by the devas and human beings along the way, and which they donated to other persons.

On the day when the pilgrims were due to arrive in Sāvattthi, the Buddha said to the Venerable Ānanda: "Ānanda, this evening Citta the householder, accompanied by five hundred lay disciples, will be paying homage to Me." Ānanda asked: "Venerable Sir, are there miracles to happen then?"

"Yes, Ānanda, there will be miracles."

"In what manner will they happen, Venerable Sir?"

"Ānanda, when he comes to me, there will rain a thick floral tribute of five hues that will rise to knee-deep over an area of eight *karisas*¹."

This dialogue between the Buddha and Venerable Ānanda aroused the curiosity of the citizens of Sāvattthi. People passed on the exciting news of Citta's arrival, saying: "A person of great past merit by the name of Citta a householder, is coming to town. Miracles are going to happen! He is arriving today! We will not miss the opportunity of seeing such a great person." With presents ready, they awaited on both sides of the road for the visitor and his friends.

When the pilgrim party arrived near the Jetavana monastery, the five hundred *bhikkhus* of the party went first. Citta told the five hundred female lay disciples to stay behind, and follow later and went to the Buddha accompanied by five hundred male lay disciples. (It should be noted that disciples paying homage to the Buddha were not an unruly crowd but well-disciplined; whether sitting or standing, they left a passageway for the Buddha to go to His raised platform, and they would remain motionless and silent on either side of the aisle.)

Citta then approached the aisle between a huge gathering of devotees. Whichever direction the *ariya* disciple, who had been established in the Fruition of the three lower Paths glanced, the people murmured: "That is Citta the householder!" He became a thrilling object in that big gathering. Citta drew close to the Buddha and he was enveloped by the six Buddha-rays. He stroke the Buddha's ankles with great reverence and vigour and then the floral tribute of five colours, described earlier, rained. People cheered enthusiastically loud and long.

Citta spent one whole month in close attendance on the Buddha. During that time, he

1. *karisa*: a measure of land equivalent to 1.75 acres.

made a special request to the Buddha and His Sangha not to go out for alms-food but to accept his offerings at the monastery. All the pilgrims that had accompanied him also were taken care of in every aspect. In his month-long stay at the Jetavana monastery, none of his original provisions were used to feed everyone, for devas and humans made all sorts of gifts to Citta.

At the end of one month, Citta made obeisance to the Buddha and said: “Venerable Sir, I came with the intention of making offerings of my own property to the Bhagavā. I spent one month on the way and another month here in the Jetavana monastery. Still I have had no opportunity to offer my own property for I have been blessed with all sorts of gifts from devas and humans. It would seem that even if I were to stay here a year, I still may not have the chance to make offerings of my own property. It is my wish to deposit all my property I have brought here in this monastery for the benefit of the Sangha. May the Bhagavā be pleased to show me the place to do so.”

The Buddha asked Venerable Ānanda to find a suitable place for Citta to off-load the five-hundred cart-loads of provisions and were then offered to the Sangha. Then Citta returned to Macchikāsaṇḍa with the five hundred empty carts, people and devas, seeing the empty carts, remarked in mild rebuke: “O Citta, had you done such deeds in the past as would lead to your going about with empty cans?” Then they loaded his empty carts to the full with seven kinds of treasures. Citta also received sufficient gifts of all kinds, with which he catered to the needs of the pilgrims till he reached Macchikāsaṇḍa in ease and comfort.

The Venerable Ānanda paid his obeisance to the Buddha and said:

“Venerable Sir, Citta the householder took one month coming to Sāvatti, and spent another month at the Jetavana monastery. During this period, he had made great offerings with gifts received from devas and humans. He had emptied his five hundred carts of all provisions which he had brought, and was returning home with empty carts. However, people and devas who saw the empty carts said in mild rebuke: ‘Citta, you had done such deeds in the past as would lead to your going about with empty carts?’ And they are said to have filled Citta’s five hundred carts with seven kinds of treasures. And Citta is said to get home comfortably, looking after the needs of his companions with gifts received from devas and humans.

“Venerable Sir, may I be allowed to ask a question: Does Citta meet with such abundance of honour and tribute only because he was on a pilgrimage to the Buddha? Would he meet the same kind of honour and tribute if he were to go elsewhere?”

The Buddha said to the Venerable Ānanda: “Ānanda, Citta the householder will receive the same kind of honour and tributes whether he comes to Me or goes elsewhere. This is indeed so, Ānanda, because Citta the householder had been one who had firm conviction about kamma and its consequences, both in the mundane aspect and the supramundane aspect. Further, he had been fully convinced about the supramundane benefits that the Triple Gem are capable of. For a person of such nature, honour and tribute lines his path wherever he goes.”

The Buddha further uttered this verse (translation in prose):

“(Ānanda,) the *ariya* disciple who is endowed with conviction (regarding the mundane and the supramundane aspects) of one’s own actions and morality, and is possessed of following and wealth, is held in reverence (by men and devas) wherever he goes.”

— (Dh, V 303) —

By the end of the discourse many hearers attained Path-Knowledge, such as Stream-Entry, etc.

(c) Citta designated as The Foremost Lay Disciple.

From that time onwards, Citta the householder went about accompanied by five hundred *ariya* lay disciples. On one occasion, when the Buddha was naming distinguished lay disciples according to their merit, He declared, (with reference to the discourses made by

Citta as recorded in the Citta vagga of **Salāyatana saṃyutta**:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who are exponents of the Dhamma, Citta the Householder, is the foremost.”

(The proficiency of Citta in expounding the Dhamma may be gleaned from **Salāyatana vagga Saṃyutta**, 7-Citta saṃyutta, 1-Saṃyojana Saṃyutta, and 5-*Paṭhāna kāmabhū Sutta*).

The Gilānadassana Sutta

(The Gilānadassana Sutta, an example of Householder Citta's discourse given even on his deathbed.)

As an *anāgāmi-ariya* who was the foremost expounder of the Dhamma among lay disciples, Citta the householder gave a discourse even on his deathbed. This story is given in *Gilānadassana Saṃyutta* in *Citta Saṃyutta*.

Once Citta was terminally ill. Then many devas who were guardians of the his premises, guardians of the forest, guardians of certain trees and guardians who had power over herbs and deified trees, (because of huge proportions), assembled before him and said to him: “Householder, now make a wish saying: ‘May I be reborn as the Universal Monarch when I die.’ ” Citta replied to them: “Being a Universal Monarch is impermanent in nature, unstable in nature. It is something that one must leave behind at last.”

His relatives and friends by his bedside thought he was uttering those strange words in a fit of delirium and said to him: “Lord, be careful. Do not talk absent-mindedly.”

Citta asked them: “You say: ‘Lord be careful. Do not talk absent-mindedly.’ With respect to what words of mine do you say so?” And the relatives and friends said: “Lord, you were saying: ‘Being a Universal Monarch is impermanent in nature, unstable in nature. It is something that one must leave behind at last.’ ”

Citta then tell them: “O men, devas who are guardians of my premises, guardians of the forest, guardians of trees, guardians who have power over herbs and defied trees, came and said to me: ‘Householder, now make a wish saying: ‘May I be reborn as the Universal Monarch when I die.’ So I told them: ‘Being a Universal Monarch is impermanent in nature, unstable in nature. It is something ones must leave behind at last.’ I was not saying these words absent mindedly.”

Thereupon Citta's friend and relatives asked him: “Lord, what advantages did these devas see in advising you to wish for rebirth as Universal Monarch?”

Citta replied: “O men, these devas thought that ‘this householder Citta has morality, has clean conduct, if he would wish for it he could easily have his wish fulfilled. One who is righteous can see benefits accruing to the righteous.’ This was the advantage they saw in advising me to wish for rebirth as a Universal Monarch. Thus, I replied to them: “Being a Universal Monarch is impermanent in nature, unstable in nature. It is something one must leave behind at last.’ I was not saying these words absent-mindedly.”

The friends and relatives of Citta then asked him again: “In that case, Lord, give us some admonition.” And Citta gave his last discourse thus:

“In that case, friend and relatives, you should practise with the resolve, ‘We will have perfect confidence in the Buddha, reflecting that:

- (1) The Buddha is called *Arahāṃ* because He is worthy of homage by the greatest of devas, humans and *Brahmās*.
- (2) The Buddha is called *Sammāsambuddha* because He knows all things fundamentally and truly by His own perfect wisdom.
- (3) The Buddha is called *Vijjācaraṇasampaññā* because He is endowed with supreme Knowledge and perfect practice of morality.
- (4) The Buddha is called *Sugata* because He speaks only what is beneficial and true.

- (5) The Buddha is called *Lokavidū* because he knows all the three worlds;
- (6) The Buddha is called *Anuttaropurisa dammasārathi* because He is incomparable in taming those who deserve to be tamed.
- (7) The Buddha is called *Satthādeva manussana* because He is the Teacher of devas and humans.
- (8) The Buddha is called Buddha because He makes known the Four Ariya Truths;
- (9) The Buddha is called *Bhagavā* because He is endowed with the six great qualities of glory.

‘We will have perfect confidence in the Dhamma reflecting that:

- (1) The Teaching of the *Bhagavā*, the Dhamma, is well expounded.
- (2) Its Truths are personally appreciable.
- (3) It is not delayed in its results.
- (4) It can stand investigation.
- (5) It is worthy of being perpetually borne in mind.
- (6) Its Truths can be realized by the *ariyas* individually by their own effort and practice.

‘We will have perfect confidence in the Sangha reflecting that:

- (1) The eight categories of *ariya* disciples of the Bhagavā, the Sangha, are endowed with the noble practice.
 - (2) They are endowed with straightforward uprightness.
 - (3) They are endowed with right conduct.
 - (4) They are endowed with the correctness in practice deserving reverence.
- (Being thus endowed with these four attributes:-)
- (5) The eight categories of *ariya* disciples of the Bhagavā consisting of four pairs are worthy of receiving offerings brought even from afar.
 - (6) They are worthy of receiving offerings specially set aside for guests.
 - (7) They are worthy of receiving offerings made for the sake of acquiring great merit for the hereafter.
 - (8) They are worthy of receiving obeisance.
 - (9) They are the incomparable fertile field for all to sow the seed of merit.

And also you should practice with the resolve: ‘We shall always lay everything we have to be at the disposal of donees who have morality and who conduct themselves well.’ ”

Citta the householder then made his friends and relatives to be established in the routine of paying reverence to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha and in charity. With these last words he expired.

(The scriptures do not specifically say in which realm Citta the householder was reborn, but since he was an *anāgāmin*, he was presumed to be reborn in one of the fifteen Brahmā realms of Fine Material Sphere outside of Non-Material Sphere, most probably in the Pure Abodes, *Suddhā vāsa Brahmā* realm).

4. HATTHAKĀLAVAKA of Uposatha Habit

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Hatthakālāvaka was reborn into a worthy family in the City of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, when he was listening to the Buddha's sermon, he saw a lay disciple being named the foremost among those lay

disciples who were accomplished in the practice of the four ways of kind treatment to others². He emulated that man, and, making an extraordinary offering, he aspired to that distinction. The Buddha prophesied that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) His Last Existence as Prince Ālavaka

The future Hatthakālavaka was reborn in the good destinations for the entire one hundred thousand world-cycles. During the time of Buddha Gotama he was reborn as Prince Ālavaka, son of King Ālavaka, in the city of Ālavī.

(In this connection, the background events beginning with the sporting expedition of King Ālavaka, to the establishment in the Uposatha precepts of Prince Ālavaka, his attainment of *anāgāmi-phala*, and his following of five hundred lay disciples who were established in the *Uposatha* precept, have been described fully in Chapter 33. The reader is advised to refer to the relevant pages therein.)

(c) Hatthakālavaka being named as The Foremost Lay Disciple

One day, Hatthakālavaka, the Uposatha-habituate, accompanied by five hundred lay disciples, visited the Buddha. After making obeisance to Him, he sat in a suitable place. When the Buddha saw the big following of very sedate manners that came with Hatthakālavaka, He said: “Ālavaka you have a big following; what sort of kind treatment do you extend to them?” And Hatthakālavaka replied: “Venerable Sir, (1) I practise charity towards those persons who would be delighted by my act of charity. (2) I use pleasant words to those who would be delighted by pleasant words. (3) I give necessary assistance to those who are in need of such assistance and who would be delighted by my assistance. (4) I treat those as my equals in respect of those who would be delighted by such treatment.

With reference to that conversation between the Buddha and Hatthakālavaka, on one occasion, during the Buddha’s residence at the Jetavana monastery when He was conferring titles to outstanding lay disciples, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who kindly treat their followers in four ways, Hatthakālavaka is the foremost.”

5. MAHĀNĀMA The Sakyan Prince

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Mahānāma was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. One day, while he was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named as the foremost lay disciple in offerings of the most delicious and palatable alms-food, medicines and medicinal articles. He had a strong wish to become such a distinguished lay disciple in future. After making an extraordinary offering, he made known his aspiration to the Buddha who then prophesied that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) His Last Existence as Prince Mahānāma of The Sakyan Clan

One day, the Buddha, after staying in Verañjā for the *vassa* period, made a journey to Kapilavatthu by travelling in stages. Upon arrival, He took up His abode at the Nirodhārāma monastery in Kapilavatthu, together with His many *bhikkhus*.

When Mahānāma, the Sakyan Prince (Elder brother of the Venerable Anuruddhā), learnt of the arrival of the Buddha, he visited Him, made his obeisance, and sat in a suitable place. Then he said to the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, I have been told that the Sangha had had a hard time in gathering alms-food in Verañjā. May I be allowed the privilege of offering daily alms-food to the Sangha for a period of four months, so that I may provide the

2. Four ways of kind treatment to others:

Saṅgha-Vatthu: Liberality, kindly speech, beneficial actions, impartiality (A. IV, 32: VIII 24).

necessary nourishment (to compensate for the deficiency of nourishing in them during the last three months or more.)” The Buddha signified His assent by remaining silent.

Prince Mahānāma, understanding that the Buddha had accepted his invitation, made offerings of five kinds of very delicious victuals and the four-food concoction (*catu madhu*), which has medicinal effects to the Buddha and His Sangha from the following day onwards. At the end of the four months, he obtained the Buddha's consent to make the same kind of offerings for another four months, at the end of which he obtained permission to continue with his offerings for a further four months, thus totalling twelve months in all. At the end of one year, he sought further approval but the Buddha refused.

[At the end of the year, Prince Mahānāma sought and obtained the approval of the Buddha to let him have the privilege of offering medicinal requisites to the Sangha for life. Yet later, due to circumstances that led to a Vinaya provision in the matter, the Buddha did not extend the period beyond one year. After the Buddha had agreed to let Mahānāma provide medicinal requisites to the Sangha for life, the group of six *bhikkhus* bullied Prince Mahānāma to cause much annoyance. When the Buddha knew thus He rescinded the earlier privilege allowed to the Prince and laid down the rule known as the *Mahānāma sikkhāpada* that no *bhikkhu* may, without further invitation and a standing invitation, accept medicinal requisites from a donor. Breach of the rule entails *pācittiya* offence. (Read **Vinaya Pācittiya** Section for details.)]

It became the routine practise of Prince Mahānāma to offer five kinds of very delicious victuals and the four foods concoction which has medicinal effects to every *bhikkhu* who came to his door. This elaborate style of providing alms-food and medicinal requisite to the Sangha became his hall-mark which was recognised throughout the Southern Continent (Jambūdīpa).

Therefore, on a later occasion, when the Buddha, during his residence at the Jetavana monastery, designated titles to outstanding lay disciples according to their merit, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who are in the habit of making offerings of delicious alms-food and medicinal requisites, Mahānāma, the Sakyan Prince, is the foremost.”

6. UGGA The Householder

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Uggā was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumutara. On one occasion, while he was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, he saw a disciple being named as the foremost among those who made gifts that delighted the donees. He aspired to that distinction, and after making extraordinary offerings, he expressed his wish before the Buddha. The Buddha prophesied that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) His Last Existence as Uggā The Householder

After being reborn in the deva-world or the human world for a hundred thousand world-cycles, the future Uggā was reborn into a rich man's family in this city of Vesālī, during Buddha Gotama's time.

How The Rich Man's Son got The Name 'Uggā'

The future Uggā was not given any name during his childhood. When he came of age, he possessed a majestic physique like an ornamental door-post, or a golden apparel hung for display. His exquisite masculine body and personal attributes became the talk of the town, as such people came to refer to him as ‘Uggā the householder’.

It is noteworthy that Uggā gained Stream Entry Knowledge on his very first meeting with

the Buddha. Later, he came to be established in the three lower *maggas* and three lower *phalas* (i.e. he became an *anāgāmin*).

When Ugga grew old, he resorted to seclusion and this thought occurred to him: “I shall offer to the Bhagavā only those things that I cherish. I have learnt directly from the Bhagavā: ‘That he, who makes gift of what he cherishes, reaps the benefit that he cherishes.’ ” Then his thought extended to the wish: “O that the Bhagavā knew my thought and appeared at my door!”

The Buddha knew the thought of Ugga and at that very moment appeared miraculously at his door, in the company of many *bhikkhus*. Ugga, on learning the Buddha’s arrival, went to welcome Him, paid obeisance to Him with five-fold contact, took the alms-bowl from His hands and invited Him to the prepared seat in his house, at the same time, he offered seats to the accompanying *bhikkhus*. He served the Buddha and the Sangha with various kinds of delicious food, and after the meal was finished, he sat in a suitable place and addressed the Buddha thus:

- (1) “Venerable Sir, I have learnt directly from the Bhagavā that ‘he who makes a gift of what he cherishes, reaps the benefit that he cherishes.’ Venerable Sir, my cake made to resemble the sal flower is delightful. (*p:*) *May the Bhagavā, out of compassion, accept this food.*” And the Buddha, out of compassion for the donor, accepted it.

Further Ugga said:

“Venerable Sir, I have learnt directly from the Bhagavā that ‘he who makes a gift of what he cherishes reaps the benefit that he cherishes.’ Venerable Sir:-

- (2) my specially prepared dish of pork with jujube is delightful ... (**repeat p:**) ...
- (3) my vegetable dish of water convolvulus cooked in oil and water and done in oil gravy is delightful ... (**repeat p:**) ...
- (4) my special rice, carefully discarded of black grains, ... (**repeat p:**) ...
- (5) my fine cloth made in Kāsi Province is delightful ... (**repeat p:**) ...
- (6) Venerable Sir, my dais, big carpet of long-fleece, woollen coverlets with quaint designs, rugs made of black panther’s hide, couches with red canopies and with red bolsters at either end are delightful. Venerable Sir, I understand that these luxurious things are not proper for use by the Bhagavā. Venerable Sir, this seat made of the core of sand wood is worth over a lakh of money. May the Bhagavā, out of compassion, accept these pieces of furniture.” The Buddha out of compassion for the donor, accepted them.

(Note here that Ugga the householder is offering the items of furniture after serving the gruel but before serving the square meal. His offerings are made not only to the Buddha but also to the Sangha. Under item (6) above, Ugga said: “I understand that these luxurious things are not proper for use by the Bhagavā.” There are also things that are proper for use by the Buddha. He has caused them to be heaped together and assigned items, which are improper for use by the Buddha, to his store room, and donates only items which are proper. The sandalwood, being very dear and rare, is valued so highly. After the Buddha had accepted it, he had it cut up into small bits and distributed to the *bhikkhus* for use as a powder in preparing eye-lotion.)

Then the Buddha spoke the following verses in appreciation of the donations.

“(Ugga,) one who gives in charity with a delightful heart reaps the benefit of that deed in various delightful ways. One gives away clothing, dwelling place, food and various other things, strongly desirous of merit, to those Noble Ones who are straight in thought, word, and deed (i.e. *arahats*).

“That virtuous one who distinctly knows the *arahats* as the fertile field for sowing seeds of merit and gives up delightful things that are hard to be given, sacrifices them, releases them liberally in a delightful heart, reaps the benefit of that deed in various delightful ways.”

After uttering these stanzas in appreciation of the householder's memorable offerings, the Buddha departed (These statements are based on the *Manāpadāyī Sutta*, **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Book Two.)

On that occasion, Ugga the householder said to the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, I have heard from the Bhagavā's Teaching that ‘he, who makes a gift of what he cherishes, reaps the benefit that he cherishes.’ Venerable Sir, whatever suitable articles in my possession may be assumed by the Bhagavā as already donated to the Bhagavā and His Sangha.” Thenceforth, he always donated various suitable things to the Buddha and His Sangha.

(c) Ugga The Householder was named as The Foremost Lay Disciple

On account of this, when the Buddha, during His residence at the Jetavana monastery, designating outstanding lay disciples according to their merit, declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who are in the habit of giving delightful things in charity, Ugga the Householder of Vesālī, is the foremost.”

The Destination of Ugga The Householder

Thereafter, on a certain day, Ugga the householder of Vesālī died and was reborn in one of the (five) Pure Abodes of Brahmās. The Buddha was then residing at the Jetavana monastery. At that time, about the middle of the night, Brahmā Ugga, with his resplendent body that flooded the whole of the Jetavana monastic complex, approached the Buddha, made his obeisance to Him, and stood at a suitable place. To that Brahmā Ugga, the Buddha said: “How is it? Is your desire fulfilled?” And Brahmā Ugga replied: “Venerable Sir, my desire is indeed fulfilled.”

Herein, it might be asked: “What did the Buddha mean by the ‘desire’? And what does the Brahmā's reply mean?” The answer is: The Buddha means *arahatta-phala* and the Brahmā's answer is also *arahatta-phala*. For the main desire of Ugga was attainment of *arahatta-phala*.)

Then the Buddha addressed Brahmā Ugga in these two stanzas:

“He who gives away a delightful thing begets a delightful thing. He who gives away the best begets the best. He who gives away what is desirable begets what is desirable. He who gives away what is praise-worthy begets what is praise-worthy.

“He who is in the habit of giving away the best things, things that are desirable, things that are praiseworthy, is reborn as one who lives long and who has a big following.”

7. UGGATA The Householder

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Uggata was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, he was listening to a sermon by the Buddha when he saw a lay disciple being named as the foremost in attending on the Sangha without discrimination. He emulated that man. As such, he made an extraordinary offering to the Buddha and His Sangha and after that, he aspired to the same distinction in front of the Buddha who prophesied that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) His Last Existence as Uggata The Householder

The future Uggata was reborn in fortunate destinations for a hundred thousand world-cycles before being reborn into a rich man's family in Hatthigama, during the time of Buddha Gotama. He was named Uggata. When he came of age, he inherited his father's estate.

At the time when the Buddha, after a tour of the country in the company of many *bhikkhus*, arrived at Hatthigama and was sojourning in the Nāgavana Park, Uggata was then

indulging himself in a drinking spree, in the company of dancing girls, for seven days at the Nāgavana Park too. When he saw the Buddha, he was overwhelmed with shame and when he was before the presence of the Buddha, he became sober suddenly. He made obeisance to the Buddha and sat in a suitable place. Then the Buddha preached to him a discourse, at the end of which, he was established in the three lower *maggas* and *phalas*, (i.e. he became an *anāgāmin*).

From that moment, he released the dancing girls from his service and devoted himself to charity. Devas would come to him at the middle watch of the night and report to him as to the conduct of various *bhikkhus*. They would say: “Householder, such and such *bhikkhu* is endowed with the Three Knowledges; such and such *bhikkhu* is endowed with the six kinds of supernatural powers; such and such *bhikkhu* has morality; such and such *bhikkhu* has no morality, etc.” Uggata disregarded the failings of the *bhikkhus* who lacked in morality as his devotion to the Sangha remained steadfast was on account of the *bhikkhus* of good morality (An example worth following). In making gifts (therefore), he never discriminated between the good and the bad *bhikkhu*, (his devotion being directed to the Sangha as a whole.) When he went before the Buddha, he never mentioned about the bad *bhikkhus* but always extolled the virtues of the good.

(c) Uggata The Householder was named The Foremost Lay Disciple

Therefore, on one occasion, during His residence at the Jetavana monastery, prominent lay disciples were mentioned for their respective merits, the Buddha declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who devotedly attend on the Sangha without discrimination, Uggata the householder of Hatthigāma is the foremost.”

(Incidentally, the householder Uggata's native place, Hatthigama, lay in the Country of the Vajjis.)

Both Householders Uggata and Ugga of Vesālī, have eight marvellous qualities each.

(A brief description of these qualities is given here. For a full account the reader is directed to the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Book Three, Aṭṭhaka Nipāta, Paṭhama Paṇṇasaka, 3-Gahapati Vagga, the first two *suttas*.)

The Eight Marvellous Qualities of Ugga of Vesālī

At one time, when the Buddha was staying at the Kūṭāgārasālā monastery in the Mahāvana Forest, near Vesālī, He said to the *bhikkhus*: “*Bhikkhus*, note that Ugga the householder of Vesālī, has eight marvellous qualities.” He then retired to His private chamber.

Later, a *bhikkhu* went to the house of Ugga and sat at a place prepared for the Sangha (five hundred seats being made available for the Sangha at all times,). Ugga greeted him, paid his respects to the *bhikkhu*, and sat in a suitable place. To Ugga, the *bhikkhu* said: “Householder, the Bhagavā said that you are endowed with eight marvellous qualities. What are these eight qualities?”

Ugga replied: “Venerable Sir, I am not sure which eight qualities the Bhagavā sees in me that He calls marvellous. As a matter of fact, I have eight qualities that are most extraordinary. May your reverence listen to them and consider well.”

“Very well, householder,” the *bhikkhu* said. And Ugga told his story:

- (1) “Venerable Sir, from the moment I cast my eyes on the Buddha, I had explicit faith in Him as the Buddha, with no vacillation. So, Venerable Sir, my confidence in the Buddha at first sight is the first extraordinary thing about me.
- (2) “Venerable Sir, I approached the Buddha with pure conviction. The Bhagavā discoursed to me in a step-by-step exposition on (i) the merits of giving charity, (ii) the

virtue of morality, (iii) the description about the celestial world, the world of devas, (iv) the practice of the Ariya Path leading to *Magga-Phala-Nibbāna*. That made my mind receptive, malleable, free of hindrances, elated and clear. The Bhagava, knowing this, expounded to me the exalted Dhamma, the Four Ariya Truth of Dukkha, the Origin of Dukkha, the Cessation of Dukkha, and the Way leading to the Cessation of Dukkha. Consequently, I gained the Eye of the Dhamma and attained the *anāgāmī-phala*. From the time I became an *anāgāmī ariya*, I took the lifelong vow of the Supramundane Refuge and observed the Five Precepts with the pure life of chastity (*brahmā-cariya*) as one of the routine precepts. (This is the ordinary Five Precepts with abstinence as a vow in lieu of the vow of wrongful sexual conduct.) This is the second extraordinary thing about me.

- (3) “Venerable Sir, I had four teenage wives. When I returned home on the day I became an *anāgāmī ariya*, I called the four wives and said to them: ‘Dear sisters, I have taken the vow of chastity for life. You may continue staying in my house, enjoying my wealth and practising charity, or you may return to your parents’ house, taking sufficient riches with you for a comfortable life. Or, if any one of you wishes to remarry, just tell me who is going to be your new bridegroom. Each of you are free to exercise these options.’ Thereupon, my first wife expressed her wish to remarry and she named the bridegroom. I then let that man come to me, and holding my first wife in my left hand, and the libation jug in my right hand, I offered my wife to that man and sanctified their marriage. In relinquishing my first wife, who was still very young, to another man, I felt nothing in my mind. Venerable Sir, my detachment in giving up my first wife to another man is the third extraordinary thing about me.
- (4) “Venerable Sir, whatever possessions I have in my house, I deem them to be assigned to the virtuous ones with morality. I hold back nothing from the Sangha. It is as though they are already in the possession of the Sangha as a body. Venerable Sir, this liberality towards the Sangha, in considering all my possessions as being assigned to the virtuous *bhikkhus*, is the fourth extraordinary thing about me.
- (5) “Venerable Sir, whenever I attend to a *bhikkhu*, I do so reverently and personally, but never irreverently, Venerable Sir, reverentially attending to *bhikkhus* is the fifth extraordinary thing about me.
- (6) “Venerable Sir, if that *bhikkhu* preaches me a discourse, I listen reverentially, but never irreverently. If that *bhikkhu* does not preach me a discourse, I will preach a discourse to him. Venerable Sir, my listening reverentially to a discourse by a *bhikkhu*, and my preaching a discourse to the *bhikkhu* who does not preach to me is the sixth extraordinary thing about myself.
- (7) “Venerable Sir, devas often come to me, saying: ‘Householder, the Bhagavā expounds the Dhamma which is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, and excellent in the end.’ I would say to those devas: ‘O devas, whether you say so or not, the Bhagavā expounds the Dhamma which is indeed excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, and excellent in the end.’ I do not think the devas’ coming to me to say those words is extraordinary. I do not feel exhilarated by their coming to me and for the experience of conversing with them. Venerable Sir, my indifference to the coming of devas to me and the experience of conversing with them is the seventh extraordinary thing about me.
- (8) “Venerable Sir, I do not see any of the five fetters that tend to rebirth in the lower (i.e. sensuous) realms of existence that have not been discarded in me. (This shows his attainment of *anāgāmī-magga*.) Venerable Sir, my having attained *anāgāmī-magga* is the eighth extraordinary thing about me.

“Venerable Sir, I know I have these eight extraordinary qualities. But I am not sure which eight qualities the Bhagava sees in me that He calls marvellous.”

Thereafter, the *bhikkhu*, having received alms-food from Ugga the householder, departed. He took his meal and then went to the Buddha, made obeisance to Him, and sat in a suitable place. Sitting thus, he related to the Buddha the full details of the conversation that

took place between him and Ugga the householder.

The Buddha said: “Good, good, *bhikkhu*. Anyone who could answer your questions well, should be given these very answers that Ugga the householder did. *Bhikkhu*, I say that Ugga the householder is endowed with those eight extraordinary qualities that are marvellous. *Bhikkhus*, note that Ugga the householder has these very eight marvellous qualities that he told you.”

The Eight Marvellous Qualities of Uggata of Hatthigāma

At one time, when the Buddha was sojourning at Hatthigāma, in the country of the Vajjians, He said to the *bhikkhus*: “*Bhikkhus*, note that Uggata the householder of Hatthigāma has eight marvellous qualities.” After saying this brief statement, the Buddha went into the monastery.

Thereafter, a *bhikkhu* visited Uggata the householder’s residence in the morning and put forwards the same questions as those asked by the previous *bhikkhu* to Ugga of Vesālī. Uggata the householder gave his reply as follows:

- (1) “Venerable Sir, while I was indulging myself in sensuous pleasures in my own Nāgavana Park, I saw the Buddha from a distance. As soon as I cast my eyes on the Buddha, I had explicit faith in Him as the Buddha, and was deeply devoted to him. I became suddenly sober after my drunken bout. Venerable Sir, my explicit faith in and devotion to the Buddha at first sight and my recovering sobriety at that moment is the first extraordinary thing about me.
- (2) “Venerable Sir, I approached the Buddha with a pure conviction. The Bhagava discoursed to me in a (most appropriate) step-by-step exposition on: (1) the merits of giving in charity, (2) the virtue of morality, (3) the description about the world of devas, (4) the practice of the Ariya Path. That made my mind receptive, malleable, free of hindrances, elated and clear. The Bhagavā, knowing this, expounded to me the exalted Dhamma, the Four Ariya Truths of *Dukkha*, the Origin of *Dukkha*, the cessation of *Dukkha*, and the way leading to the cessation of *Dukkha*. Consequently, I gained the Eye of the Dhamma, and attained the *anāgāmi-phala*. From the time I became an *anāgāmi-ariya*, I took the life-long vow of the Supramundane Refuge, together with the observance of the Five Precepts with abstinence (*Brahmacariya*) as one of them. Venerable Sir, my attainment of *anāgāmi-phala* after my first meeting with the Buddha, my subsequent taking up the Supramundane Refuge with the Five Precepts with the vow of abstinence, is the second extraordinary thing about me.
- (3) “Venerable Sir, I had four teenage wives. When I returned home on the day I became an *anāgāmi-ariya*, I called up my four wives and said to them: ‘Dear sisters, I have taken the vow of chastity for life. You may continue staying in my house, enjoying my wealth and practising charity, or you may return to your parents’ house, taking sufficient riches with you for a comfortable life. Or, if anyone of you wishes to remarry, just tell me who is going to be your new bridegroom. Each of you are free to exercise those options.’ Thereupon, my first wife expressed her wish to remarry and she named the bridegroom. I then let that man come up to me, and, holding my first wife in my left hand, and the libation jug in my right hand, I offered my wife to that man and sanctified their marriage. In relinquishing my first wife, who was still very young, to another man, I felt nothing in my mind. Venerable Sir, my detachment in giving up my first wife to another man is the third extraordinary thing about me.
- (4) “Venerable Sir, whatever possessions I have in my house, I consider them to be assigned to the virtuous *bhikkhus*. I hold back nothing from the Sangha. Venerable Sir, this liberality towards the Sangha, in considering all my possessions as being assigned to the virtuous *bhikkhus*, is the fourth extraordinary thing about me.
- (5) “Venerable Sir, whenever I attend to a *bhikkhu*, I do so reverently and personally, but never irreverently. If that *bhikkhu* preaches me a discourse, I listen reverentially, but never irreverently. If that *bhikkhu* does not preach me a discourse, I preach a discourse to him. Venerable Sir, my reverentially attending to *bhikkhus*, reverentially listening to

their discourses, and my preaching a discourse to the *bhikkhu* who does not preach to me is the fifth extraordinary thing about me.

- (6) “Venerable Sir, whenever I invite the Sangha to my residence, devas would come to me and say: ‘Householder such and such *bhikkhu* is emancipated both ways from corporeal body (*rūpa-kāya*) and mental body (*nāma-kāya*), i.e. *Ubhatobhāga Vimutta*; such and such *bhikkhu* has attained emancipation through full knowledge, Insight (*paññā vimutta*); such and such *bhikkhu* is one who has realized Nibbāna through *nāmakāya* (*kāyasakki*); such and such *bhikkhu* has attained to the three higher *magga* and *phala* through Right View (*diṭṭhippatta*); such and such *bhikkhu* is emancipated through faith (*saddhāvimutta*); such and such *bhikkhu* is one who follows faith, *saddhānusārī*; such and such *bhikkhu* is one who pursues Dhamma, *dhammānusārī*; such and such *bhikkhu* has morality, and is virtuous; such and such *bhikkhu* lacks morality and is vile.’ I do not think the devas’ coming to me to say these words is extraordinary. When I attend to the Sangha, it never occurred to me that such and such *bhikkhu* lacks morality, and so I will make only scant offering to him, or that such and such *bhikkhu* is virtuous and so I will make much offering to him. I make offerings both to the virtuous *bhikkhus* and the vile *bhikkhus* in the same (reverential) spirit. Venerable Sir, my indiscriminate offering and attendance on both the virtuous and the vile *bhikkhus* is the sixth extraordinary thing about me.
- (7) “Venerable Sir, devas often come to me, saying: ‘Householder, the Bhagavā expounds the Dhamma which is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, and excellent at the end.’ And I would say to these devas: ‘O devas, whether you say so or not, the Bhagavā expounds the Dhamma which is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, and excellent in the end.’ I do not think that the devas coming to me to say those words is extraordinary. Venerable Sir, my indifference to the coming of devas to me and the experience of conversing with them is the seventh extraordinary thing about to me.
- (8) “Venerable Sir, in the event of my predeceasing the Bhagavā, the Bhagavā’s remarks about me such as: ‘Uggata the householder of Hatthigāma has no fetters in him that tend to rebirth in the sensuous realm’ will not be anything extraordinary. (This shows that he is an *anāgāmi-ariya*.) Venerable Sir, the fact that there is no fetter in me that tend to rebirth in the sensuous realm is the eighth extraordinary thing about me.

“Venerable Sir, I know I have these eight extraordinary qualities. But I am not sure which eight qualities the Bhagavā sees in me that he calls marvellous.”

(Further events are exactly the same as in the previous case. In the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** both the above two householders are called ‘Ugga’. Here we are leaning on the **Etadagga Pāli** in calling the householder of Hatthigāma, Uggata, in contradistinction to Ugga the householder of Vesālī. Since the noble and rare attributes of these two Householders inspire devotion, these notes are somewhat more than summarized statements.)

8. SĪRAMBAṬṬHA The Householder

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Sūrambaṭṭha the householder was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While listening to a sermon by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named by the Buddha as the foremost lay disciple who had firm conviction in the Teaching. He aspired to that distinction, and, after making an extraordinary offering, he expressed his wish that at some future existence his aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) His Last Existence as Sūrambaṭṭha The Householder

The future Sūrambaṭṭha was reborn in the deva or human realms for a hundred thousand world-cycles before being reborn into a rich man’s family of Sāvattī, during the time of

Buddha Gotama. His name was Sūrambaṭṭha. When he came of age, he married and became a regular lay supporter of ascetics who were outside the Buddha's Teaching.

Sūrambaṭṭha The Householder attained Stream-Entry Knowledge

Early one morning, the Buddha, in His routine review of the world for individuals who were ready for Enlightenment, saw the ripeness of the past merit of Sūrambaṭṭha the householder to gain *sotāpatti-magga*. So, He went to Sūrambaṭṭha's house for alms-food. Sūrambaṭṭha thought to himself: "Samana Gotama comes from a royal family and has earned a vast reputation in the world. Perhaps, it is only proper for me to welcome Him." Thinking thus, he went to the Buddha, made obeisance at His feet, took His alms-bowl, and conducted Him to a raised couch which was set aside for noble persons. He made offerings of food and after attending on Him, sat in a suitable place.

The Buddha preached a discourse, which suited the mental framework of Sūrambaṭṭha. At the end of which, he was established in *sotāpatti-phala*. After bestowing Sūrambaṭṭha with Stream-Entry Knowledge, the Buddha returned to the monastery.

Māra tested The Conviction of Sūrambaṭṭha

Then Māra thought: "This Sūrambaṭṭha the householder belongs to my fold (being a follower of the ascetics which are outside the Buddha's Teaching). But the Buddha has visited his house today. Why? Has Sūrambaṭṭha become an *ariya* after hearing the Buddha's discourse? Has he escaped from my domain of sensuality? I must find out." Then, being possessed of powers of impersonating anyone, he assumed the form of the Buddha completed with the thirty-two marks of the great man and in perfect Buddha-style of holding the alms-bowl and the robe. In that deceitful impersonation, he stood at the door of Sūrambaṭṭha the householder.

Sūrambaṭṭha wondered why the Buddha visited a second time, when he was informed by his attendants. "The Buddha never comes without some good reason," he replied, and approached the impersonated Buddha in the belief that he was the real Buddha. After making obeisance to the impersonated Buddha, he stood in a suitable place, and asked: "Venerable Sir, the Bhagavā has just left this house after having a meal. For what purpose does the Bhagavā come again?"

The bogus Buddha(Māra) said: "Lay supporter Sūrambaṭṭha, I made a slip in my discourse to you. I said that all of the aggregates are impermanent, woeful and insubstantial. But the five aggregates are not always of that nature. There are certain of the five aggregates that are permanent, stable and eternal."

The Steadfast Conviction of Sūrambaṭṭha The Householder

Sūrambaṭṭha, a Stream-Enterer, was vexed by that statement. He pondered thus: "This is a statement of most serious import. The Buddha never makes a slip in His speech, for He never utters a word without proper consideration. They say that Māra is the opponent of the Buddha. Surely this must be Māra himself." Thinking correctly thus, he asked bluntly: "You are Māra, are you not?" Māra was shocked and shaken as if struck with an axe because it was a confrontation by an *ariya*. His disguise fell off and he admitted: "Yes, Sūrambaṭṭha, I am Māra."

Sūrambaṭṭha rebuked: "Wicked Māra, even a thousand of your kind will not be able to shake my conviction. Buddha Gotama, in His discourse has said: 'All conditioned things are impermanent.' And the Buddha's discourse has led me to *sotāpatti-magga*. Get out of here!" He said sternly to Māra, flipping his fingers. Māra had no words to cover up his ruse, and vanished immediately.

In the evening, Sūrambaṭṭha went to the Buddha and related the visit of Māra to him and what Māra had said, and how he had dealt him. "Venerable Sir," he said to the Buddha, "in this way has Māra attempted to shake my conviction."

(c) Sūrambaṭṭha is named as The Foremost Lay Disciple

Referring to this incident, the Buddha, during His residence at the Jetavana monastery, on the occasion of naming outstanding lay disciples in accordance with their merits, declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who have unshakeable conviction in My Teaching, Sūrambaṭṭha is the foremost.”

9. JĪVAKA The Physician

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Jivaka was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While listening to a sermon by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named as the foremost among those who had personal devotion to the Buddha. He aspired to that distinction in future time. After making an extraordinary offering, he expressed his wish before the Buddha who then prophesied its fulfilment.

(b) His Last Existence as Jivaka

The future Jivaka was reborn in the deva realm or the human realm for a hundred thousand world-cycles, before being reborn, under strange circumstances, in the city of Rājagaha, during the time of Buddha Gotama. He was conceived in the womb of a courtesan named Sālavatī, the conception being caused by Prince Abhaya.

It was the custom of courtesans to nurture only female children whereas male children were discarded discreetly.

Accordingly, Sālavatī, the courtesan, had her newly-born baby put on an old bamboo tray and thrown into rubbish heap by a trusted servant without being noticed by anyone. The child was observed even from a distance by Prince Abhaya who was on his way to attend on his father King Bimbisāra. He sent his attendants: “O men, what is that thing that is being surrounded by crows?” The men went to the rubbish heap and finding the baby, said: “My Lord, it is a newly-born baby boy!”

“Is he still alive?”

“Yes, my Lord, he is.”

Prince Abhaya had the child taken to his royal residence and taken care. As the Prince's attendants replied to their master: “It is still alive” (‘Jivati’), the child was named Jivaka. And since he was brought up by Prince Abhaya, he was also called ‘Jivaka, the adopted son of the Prince (Abhaya)’.

Young Jivaka, the adopted son of Prince Abhaya, was sent to Taxila for his education at the age of sixteen. He learned Medicine and gained mastery of the subject. He became the King's physician. At one time, he cured King Caṇḍapajjota of a grave illness, for which he was honoured by that King with five hundred cartloads of rice, sixteen thousand ticals of silver, a pair of fine cloth made in the Province of Kāsi, and a thousand pieces of cloth to supplement it.

At that time, the Buddha was staying in the mountain monastery on the side of Gijjhakuta Hill, near Rājagaha. Jivaka, the King's Physician, cured the constipation of the Buddha by administering a mild laxative. Then it occurred to Jivaka: “It were well if all the four requisites of the Bhagavā were my donations,” and accordingly, he invited the Buddha to stay in his Mango Grove as a monastery. After curing the Buddha's illness, he offered the fine Kāsi cloth to the Buddha and the one thousand pieces of cloth that were supplementary to it were offered to the Sangha. (This brief account of Jivaka is based on the Commentary on the **Āṅguttara Nikāya**, Book One, Etadagga Vagga. For a fuller account, the reader is urged to refer to **Vinayo Mahāvagga**, 8-Cīvarakkhandhaka.)

(c) Jivaka is designated The Foremost Lay Disciple

On one occasion, during the Buddha's residence at the Jetavana monastery when He conferred titles to distinguished lay disciples in accordance with their merit, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who have personal devotion, Jivaka, the adopted son of Prince Abhaya, is the foremost.”

10. NAKULAPITU The Householder

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Nakulapitu was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While he was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named by Him as the foremost among those who were close to the Buddha. He aspired to that title. After making extraordinary offerings, he expressed his wish in front of the Buddha, who then prophesied that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) His Last Existence as Nakulapitu The Householder

The future Nakulapitu was reborn either in the deva realm or the human realm for a hundred thousand world-cycles until, during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn into a rich man's family in Susumāragira in the Province of Bhagga. When he succeeded to the family estate, he and his wife were called by the name of their son Nakula, as ‘the Father of Nakula’, Nakulapitu, and ‘the Mother of Nakula’, Nakulamātu.

The Buddha, on His tour of the country in the company of many *bhikkhus*, arrived at Susumāragira and was sojourning in the Bhesakaḷā Forest. (Susumāragira, ‘the sound of a crocodile’, was the name of the town because, at the time of the founding of the town, a crocodile's sound was heard. The forest was known as Bhesakaḷā because it was the domain of a female demon by the name of Bhesakaḷā.)

Nakulapitu and his wife went to the Bhesakaḷā forest along with other people of the town to visit the Buddha. At the first sight of Buddha, the couple took Him as their own son and prostrating themselves before Him, said together: “O dear son, where have you been over this long time, away from us?”

[Nakulapitu had, in the past five hundred existences, been the father of the Buddha-to-be; for five hundred existences, he had been His paternal uncle (junior to His father); for five hundred existences, he had been His paternal uncle (senior to His father); for five hundred existences, he had been His maternal uncle. Nakulamātu had, for the past five hundred existences, been the mother of the Buddha-to-be; for five hundred existences, she had been His maternal aunt (junior to His mother); for five hundred existences, she had been His maternal aunt (senior to His mother); for five hundred existences, she had been His paternal aunt. These long blood-relations of the past existences had left such a strong sense of affection in the hearts of the Nakulapitu and his wife for the Buddha that they perceived Him as their own son (who had been somehow staying away from them).]

The Buddha allowed the couple to remain at His feet (holding them) for as long as they wished, and waited until such time they were satisfied emotionally in the joy of seeing Him again. Then, when the parents of His past existences had gained a mental state of equanimity, the Buddha, knowing their mental framework, i.e. their inclination, preached them a discourse, at the end of which, they were established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry Knowledge.

On a later occasion, when the Nakulapitu couple were advanced in age, they made another visit to Susumāragira. The old couple invited the Buddha to their house and on the next day offered delicious food of various kinds. When the Buddha had finished His meal, the old couple approached Him, made their obeisance, and sat in a suitable place. Then Nakulapitu said to Him: “Venerable Sir, since in my youth I married my wife, I had never been disloyal to her even in my thoughts, not to speak of being disloyal physically. Venerable Sir, we wish to see each other in the present existence, and we wish to see each other in our future existences.”

Nakulamātu also said likewise to the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, since in my youth I became the wife of Nakulapitu, I had never been disloyal to him, even in my thoughts, not to speak of being disloyal physically. Venerable Sir, we wish to see each other in our present existence, and we wish to see each other in our future existences.” (The Commentary to the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Book One, gives only a brief account. We shall supplement this here.)

Thereupon, the Buddha said to them:

“Lay supporters, if a certain couple wish to see each other in the present existence as well as in the future existences, their wishes will be fulfilled on these four conditions, namely, (1) they should have the same degree of conviction in the Teaching, (2) they should have the same degree of morality; (3) they should have the same degree of giving in charity; (4) they should have the same degree of intelligence.”

Then the Buddha uttered the following stanzas:

- (1) “For that couple, both of whom possess conviction in Teaching, who have a liberal mind towards those who come for help, who have restraint (in thought, word and deed), who use kind words towards each other, who lead a righteous life —
- (2) benefits multiply, and a life of ease and comfort is their lot. Unfriendly people bear malice against such a couple with equal morality (virtue).
- (3) For such a couple with equal morality (virtue) and good conduct who are desirous of sensual objects, living a life according to the Dhamma in the present existence, both of them find delight in this world and rejoice in the deva-world.”

— **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Book One —

(c) The Nakulapitu Couple designated as The Foremost Disciples

The above discourse stemming from the intimate statements made by the Nakulapitu couple is known as the Paṭhama santajīvī Sutta. The discourse reveals the intimate relationship that existed between them and the Buddha in the nature of filial connection. The old couple evidently put great faith in and reliance on the Buddha, whom they considered as their own son. That was why they were disclosing their inner sentiments to the Buddha, without any sense of diffidence.

That was why, while the Buddha was staying in the Jetavana monastery and outstanding lay disciples were designated by Him as foremost in their own merit, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who are close to the Buddha, Nakulapitu, the Householder, is the foremost.”

LIFE STORIES OF FEMALE LAY DISCIPLES

1. SUJĀTĀ, Wife of The Householder of Bārāṇasī

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Sujātā was reborn into the family of a rich man in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, as she was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a female lay disciple being named by the Buddha as the foremost in getting established in the Three Refuges. She aspired to that distinction. After making an extraordinary offering, she expressed her aspiration before the Buddha who prophesied that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) Her Last Existence as Sujātā, Wife of The Householder of Bārāṇasī

The future Sujātā was reborn either in the deva-world or the human world for a hundred thousand world-cycle. Some time before the appearance of the Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of Seniya, in the town of Senā, near the Uruvelā forest. When she came of age, she went to the banyan tree which was near her town and after making an offering to its guardian spirit, she vowed that if she should be married to a bridegroom of equal social status (of the same clan) and if she bore a boy as her first child, she would make offering to the guardian spirit yearly. Her wish was fulfilled.

(Sujātā was married to the son of the Rich Man of Bārāṇasī and her first child was a boy whom was named Yasa. She kept her vow and made annual offerings to the guardian spirit of the banyan tree.)

After making these annual offering at the banyan tree for twenty times or so, on the day the Buddha was to attain Perfect Enlightenment in the year 103 of the Great Era, Sujātā went to make her annual offering to the guardian spirit of the banyan tree. On that occasion, Sujātā's son, Yasa, was already married and was indulging in luxury in the three mansions. This is mentioned because Sujātā had been generally imagined as a young maiden when she offered the specially prepared milk rice to the Buddha.)

On the full moon of Kason (May) in 103 Mahā Era, after six years of self-tormenting practice in search of the Truth, the Buddha attained Perfect Enlightenment. Sujātā rose early that morning to make an early offering at the banyan tree. On that day, the young calves, somehow did not go near their mothers for milk. When the house-maids of Sujātā brought the vessels to draw milk from the cows, the nipples of the cows automatically flowed freely with milk. On seeing the strange phenomenon, Sujātā herself collected the milk, put it in a new cooking vessel, kindled the fire and started cooking the rice milk.

When the milk was being boiled, extra-large bubbles arose in a series and rotated in clockwise direction in the pot and not a drop of milk foam overflowed. The Mahā Brahmā held the white umbrella above the pot; the Four Great Guardian Devas of the World guarded the pot with their royal swords in hand; Sakka attended to the fire which boiled the milk; devas brought various nutrients from the four Island Continents and put them into the pot. In these ways, the celestial beings joined in the effort of Sujātā in preparing the milk-rice.

While Sujātā was preparing the rice-milk, she called her servant Puṇṇā and said: "Good girl, Puṇṇā, I believe the guardian spirit of the banyan tree is in a particularly good mood because I had never seen such strange phenomena happen before in these long years. Now, go quickly and clean the precinct for offering at the banyan tree." "Very well, Madam," the servant girl responded and went to the banyan tree promptly.

The Buddha-to-be sat at the foot of the banyan tree, earlier than the time for collection of his daily alms-food. The servant girl, who went to clean the foot of the banyan tree,

mistook the Bodhisatta as the guardian spirit of the tree and she reported to her mistress with excitement. Sujātā said: “Well, girl, if what you say is true, I will release you from bondage.” Then dressing and decorating herself, Sujātā went to the banyan tree, carrying on her head the milk-rice, which was put into a golden vessel worth one lakh, covered with a golden lid and wrapped with a white piece of cloth and over which, garlands of fragrant flowers were placed so that they hang around the vessel. When she saw the Bodhisatta, whom she presumed to be the guardian spirit of the tree, she was intensely glad and approached him with a series of slight bowing. Then she put down the vessel, took off the lid and offered it to the Bodhisatta, saying: “May your desire come to fulfillment as had mine!” Then she left him.

The Bodhisatta went to the Nerañjarā river, put down the golden vessel of rice-milk on its bank and bathed in the river. Then, coming out of the river, he ate the rice-milk in forty-nine morsel. After which, he placed the empty gold vessel on the Nerañjarā river. It floated against the river current and then sank. He then went to the foot of the Tree of Enlightenment. He attained Perfect Self-Enlightenment and remained there for seven weeks; each week at seven locations at and around the Tree of Enlightenment. At the end of forty-nine days (during which the Buddha dwelled in the attainment of Cessation), He went to Isipatana Migadāvana forest where He set the Wheel of Dhamma rolling by expounding the Dhamma to the Group of Five ascetics. Then He saw the ripeness of the past merit of Yasa, the son of Sujātā, wife of the householder of Bārāṇasī and He waited for him by sitting underneath a tree.

Yasa had grown weary of sensuous pleasure after seeing the unsightly spectacle in his harem (past midnight). “O, how woeful are these sentient beings with their mind and body being oppressed by all sorts of defilements! O, how terribly they are being tormented by defilements!” Yasa murmured and left his home in sheer disgust with life.

On leaving the town, he met the Buddha and after listening to His discourse, he gained penetrative knowledge of the Truth and became established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry Knowledge. (In the Commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, he gained the three lower *magga* and *phalas*.)

Yasa’s father traced his son’s whereabouts almost behind his heels. He went and asked the Buddha whether his son came that way. The Buddha, by His power, hid Yasa from his father’s vision and preached a discourse to his father. At the end of which, Yasa’s father attained Stream-Entry Knowledge and Yasa, arahatship. Then, the Buddha made Yasa a *bhikkhu* by calling him up: “Come, *bhikkhu*,” and Yasa’s appearance instantly changed into that of a *bhikkhu*, complete with alms-bowl, robes and essential items for *bhikkhu* use. These were all mind-made by the Buddha’s power.

Yasa’s father invited the Buddha to his home the next day for an offering of alms-food. The Buddha went, accompanied by the Venerable Yasa. After the meal, He preached a discourse, at the end of which, the Venerable Yasa’s mother, Sujātā, and his erstwhile wife were established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry Knowledge. On the same day, they were established in the Three Refuges. (This is a brief account of Sujātā and her family. For fuller details, the reader may go through Chapter 12, at two places therein.)

(c) Sujātā was named The Foremost Female Lay Disciple

On one occasion, while the Buddha was naming foremost female lay-disciples, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My female lay-disciples who were the earliest to get established in the Refuges, Sujātā, daughter of Seniya the householder, is the foremost.”

2. VISĀKHĀ, Donor of Pubbārāma Monastery

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Visākhā was reborn into a rich man's family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, when she was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, she saw a female lay disciple being named by Him as the foremost in giving in charity. She aspired to that distinction. After making an extraordinary offering, she expressed her aspiration before the Buddha, who prophesied that it would be fulfilled.

In Her Past Existence as The Youngest Daughter of King Kikī

The future Visākhā was reborn either in the deva-world or the human world for a hundred thousand world-cycles, where five Buddhas are to appear. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, she was reborn as the youngest of the seven daughters of King Kikī, in the Province of Kikī. His seven daughters were: (1) Princess Samāṇi, (2) Princess Samāṇuttā, (3) Princess Bhikkhunī, (4) Princess Bhikkhadāyika, (5) Princess Dhammā, (6) Princess Sudhammā and (7) Princess Saṅghadāsi. These seven princesses were reborn during the time of Buddha Gotama as the seven distinguished ladies, viz., (1) Khemā Therī, (2) Uppalavaṇṇā Therī, (3) Paṭācārā Therī, (4) Mahāpajāpati Gotamī Therī, the step mother of the Buddha and (7) Visākhā, donor of the great Pubbārāma Monastery.

(b) Her Last Existence as Visākhā

Princess Saṅghadāsi, the youngest of the seven daughters of King Kikī was reborn in the deva realm or the human realm for the entire interim period between two Buddhas (Kassapa and Gotama). During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was conceived in the womb of Sumana Devī, the Chief Consort of Dhanañcaya the householder, son of Meṇḍaka the householder, in the town of Bhaddiya, in the Province of Aṅga. She was named Visākhā by her parents and kinsmen. When Visākhā was seven years of age, the Buddha arrived in Bhaddiya in the company of many *bhikkhus* in His religious mission in the country. He visited Bhaddiya for the purpose of causing the Enlightenment of Sela, the brahmin, and other persons whose past merit had ripened for Enlightenment.

Five Personages with Great Past Merit

At that time, Meṇḍaka, the father-in-law of Visākhā, was the chief among the five remarkable personages endowed with great past merit, namely, (1) Meṇḍaka the householder, (2) Candapadumā, his wife, (3) Dhanañcaya, the son of Meṇḍaka, (4) Sumana Devī, the wife of Dhanañcaya and (5) Puṇṇa, the servant of Meṇḍaka. (How remarkably endowed with great past merit these five person were, will be described here, condensed from the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**, Book Two, 18-Mala Vagga, 10-Meṇḍaka the householder.)

1. The Miraculous Power of Meṇḍaka The Householder

One day, Meṇḍaka, wishing to know his own power, had his granaries, 1250 in all, emptied. Then, after washing his head, he sat in front of the door of his house and glanced skyward. Suddenly, there rained from the sky heavy showers of top quality red rice which filled his 1250 granaries. Meṇḍaka further wished to know the miraculous powers of the members of his household and asked them to find out themselves.

2. The Miraculous Power of Candapadumā, Wife of Meṇḍaka

Then, Candapadumā, wife of Meṇḍaka, having adorned herself, took a measure of rice in the presence of everybody and had it cooked. She sat at a seat prepared at her front door and after announcing to all that anyone wishing to have cooked rice might go to her, she would ladled out, with her golden ladle, to every caller. Her rice-pot never diminished more than one ladle-mark, even after the whole day's distribution.

How Candapadumā acquired Her Name

In her past existence, during the time of some past Buddha, this remarkable lady had offered alms-food to the Sangha, with her left hand holding the rice vessel and her right

hand holding the spoon, filling the alms-bowl full. As the result of that good deed, in her present existence, her left palm bore the mark of a lotus flower (*adupa*) while her right palm bore the mark of a full moon (*canda*). Further, she had, during the time of some past Buddha, offered filtered water with her hand holding the water-strainer and going about from one *bhikkhu* to another. As the result of that good deed, her right sole bore the mark of a full moon while her left sole bore the mark of a lotus flower. On account of these distinctive marks on her palms and soles, she was named ‘Canda padumā’ by her parents and kinsmen.

3. The Miraculous Power of Dhanañcaya, Son of Meṇḍaka

Dhanañcaya the householder, after washing his hair, sat at his door with one thousand ticals of silver by his side, after making a public proclamation to the effect that anyone wishing to have money, could ask from him. He filled the vessel of every caller with money. After having done so, his money of one thousand ticals remained the same amount.

4. The Miraculous Power of Samana Devī, The Daughter-in-law of Meṇḍaka

Samana Devī adorned herself and sat in the open with a basket of seed grain, after making an announcement that anyone wishing to have seed-grain could ask from her. She distributed the seed-grain to every caller, filling their vessel. After having done so, her basket of seed-grain remained the same amount.

5. The Miraculous Power of Puṇṇa, The Trusted Servant of Meṇḍaka

Puṇṇa, after dressing decently as benefiting his status, yoked a team of oxen, on whose side he made his five-finger imprint of scented unguent and whose horns he decorated with gold, harnessing them to golden chains, and mounting a plough, he started ploughing Meṇḍaka’s field before the spectators. His plough made not just a furrow underneath his plough but made three extra furrows on either side, so that in one operation he accomplished seven times his effort.

Thus the whole populace of the Southern Island Continent obtained all their needs, such as rice, seed-grain, money, etc., from Meṇḍaka’s house. This is a brief description of the five personages with great past merit.

Within the area of Rājagaha, King Bimbisāra’s domain, besides Meṇḍaka, there were four other householders, namely, Jotika, Jaṭila, Puṇṇa and Kāka Vailya. King Bimbisāra had within his domain these five householders with inexhaustible resources. (Of these five, the story of Puṇṇa the householders will be included in the story of Uttarā. The other four will be briefly describes near the end of this book.)

When Meṇḍaka heard the arrival of the Buddha, he said to his grand daughter (daughter of Dhanañcaya): “Grand daughter, what I am going to say is for the auspicious earning of merit for you and as well as for me. Go and welcome the Buddha, who is on His way, ride with your five hundred female attendants in each of your coaches together with five hundred maid servants.”

Visākhā is established in Stream-Entry Knowledge at The Age of Seven

Visākhā gladly obeyed her grandfather and left home in five hundred coaches. Her grandfather might have thought of her riding the coach to the presence of the Buddha, such being his sense of self-importance, but Visākhā was a person of innate wisdom and considered it improper to go to the Buddha’s presence riding in a coach. As such, she dismounted at a reasonable distance from the Buddha, went on foot to Him, made obeisance to Him and sat in a suitable place.

The Buddha preached her a discourse which suit her mental frame of (the seven year old). At the end of the discourse, Visākhā and her five hundred attendants attained Stream-Enlightenment Knowledge and first Fruition.

Meṇḍaka also visited the Buddha, made obeisance to Him and sat in a suitable place. The Buddha preached a discourse to suit the mental frame of Meṇḍaka, at the end of which, he was established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry Knowledge. He invited the Buddha to an

alms-food offering in his house on the next day. On the next day, he made an offering of delicious food to the Buddha and His Sangha. He made the offerings on a lavish scale for fifteen days continuously. The Buddha stayed at Bhaddiya for as long as there were people who deserved to be enlightened.

Visākhā and Family moved to Sāketa

Pasenadi of Kosala, King of Sāvatti, wrote to King Bimbisāra saying that as there was no householder of inexhaustible resources in his Kingdom, he requested him to send one such family to Kosala.

King Bimbisāra held a conference with his ministers, who said: “Great King, we cannot afford to spare any of our householders who are of inexhaustible resources. But, to satisfy the King of Kosalans, let us send the son of one of your (five) such householders.” King Bimbisāra agreed to the proposal. Dhanañcaya, son of Menḍaka, was requested to move to the Kosalan Kingdom.

(Herein, the commentary on the **Dhammapada** states that the Kosalan King and King Bimbisāra were brothers-in-law, in double sense. King Bimbisāra could not fail to satisfy the wish of the Kosalan King. He also could not offend his five famous Householders, and so he requested Dhanañcaya to go and settle in the Kosalan Kingdom. Dhanañcaya agreed and he was sent to the King of the Kosalan.)

After moving his family from Bhaddiya to the Kosalan Kingdom, Dhanañcaya identified a location which had great potentials for human settlement. He asked the Kosalan King as to whose territory that location belonged to. And being told that it lay within the Kosalan Kingdom, he further asked as to how far it was from Sāvatti, the Capital. The King answered: “It is one yojana from here to Sāvatti.” Then Dhanañcaya said to the King: “Great King, Sāvatti is not big enough for my householder to live in. If your Majesty would agree, I would settle in this location so that my big following can live in comfort.” The King consented. And, Dhanañcaya founded a town at that location. Since it was a location of the settler’s choice, it was named “Sāketa”.

In Sāvatti, Puṇṇavaḍḍana, son of Mīgāra the householder, had come of age. His father considered that it was time for his son to get married and he told his kinsmen to look for a bride for his son. The bride should come from a householder’s family. Intelligent and discreet scouts were sent to look for such a bride but none could be found in the City of Sāvatti. The scouts therefore went to Sāketa.

One day, Visākhā went to a lake, which was outside Sāketa, accompanied by five hundred attendant maidens who were of the same age as her, to bathe and frolic in the water. At that time, the scouts from Sāvatti had left Sāketa after without success to look for a suitable lady. They resorted to standing at the town’s gate. Then rain came pouring. Visākhā and her companions had left the town to seek shelter from the rain in a public rest-house. The five hundred maidens ran into the rest-house. None of them caught the eyes of the scouts as promising. But, coming behind these maidens was young Visākhā, who was walking towards the rest-house in her normal pace, disregarding the rain. The scouts suddenly recognized her beauty. They pondered: “As regard personal appearance, there can be no other girl in the world who can equal to her. However, personal beauty is like a fresh ripe pomegranate. Her manner of speech needs to be assessed. We should start a conversation with her.” And so they addressed her in the following way:

“Little daughter, you walk like an elderly lady.”

Visākhā replied: “Fathers, why do you say so?”

“Your companions entered this rest-house by running, fearing to get wet. As for you, you came in your normal steps like an elderly lady. You do not seem to mind your dress being drenched. Supposing, an elephant or a horse were after you, would you take the same leisurely steps?”

“Father, clothing may be bought without difficulty. What does my dress matters? But my

person is important to me, for a girl is like a piece of merchandise. If by running, I were to stumble and break my limb and become physically unsound, where is my worth as a likely bride? That was why I did not run?"

The scouts from Sāvatti agreed among themselves that they had found a suitable bride for their master's son; a girl fair in form as well as fair in speech, with a beautiful voice. They threw the bridal garland above Visākhā, who, understanding what it meant, acquiesced in the act by sitting on the spot. Migāra's scout then put up a screen around the proposed bride. Having been thus ceremonially treated, Visākhā went back to her home accompanied by her maid servants. Migāra's scout went along to the house of her father, Dhanañcaya the householder.

A conversation between Migāra's men and Visākhā's father about the proposed betrothal took place as follows:

Dhanañcaya: O men, what is your native village?

Elders: Householder, we represent Migāra the householder of Sāvatti. Our master has learnt that you have a young daughter who is of marriageable age and he wants her as the bride for his son. We came to request the hand of your daughter

Dhanañcaya: Very well, men, your master is not our equal in wealth. However, he is of equal status by birth. It is a rare thing to meet one's equal, both in status and wealth. Go back and tell your master that his proposal for betrothal is accepted.

Migāra's representatives returned to Sāvatti and reported to him: "O householder, we have obtained the consent of Dhanañcaya the householder of Sāketa, to have his daughter betrothed to Puṇṇavaḍḍana." Migāra was overjoyed to find a bride from such a great family for his son. He sent an urgent message to Dhanañcaya to the effect that he would come and fetch the bride in a few day's time, and would Dhanañcaya made suitable arrangements? Dhanañcaya replied that he would make every arrangement and requested Migāra to do the needful.

The Kosalan King honoured The Betrothal

Migāra the householder went to the Kosalan King and sought permission to go to Sāketa to attend the wedding ceremony of his son, Puṇṇavaḍḍana, a trusted servant of the King, to Visākhā, daughter of Dhanañcaya the householder of Sāketa.

The King said: "Very well, householder, need we go with you?"

"Great King," Migāra said, "how could we expect the presence of such an important personage as yourself?" The King wanted to honour both parties to the betrothal with his presence and said: "So be it, householder, I will go with you." And so the King went to Sāketa together with the householder.

When Dhanañcaya was informed of the arrival of Migāra and the Kosalan King, he greeted the King personally and escorted him to his house. He made careful arrangements to host the King and his army, Migāra and his entourage. Food, lodging, flowers, perfumes and every item of comfort was provided to all, everyone according to their need and status. He attended to these details personally so that every guest had the impression that Dhanañcaya the householder was doing a special favour to them.

Later on, one day, the Kosalan King said to Dhanañcaya through a messenger: "Householder, we are here in too big a crowd. We might be causing a burden to you if we were to stay long. Maybe, you should think of the time for sending the bride to Sāvatti." To which, Dhanañcaya replied through the messenger: "Great King, now is the raining season. Your army will find it difficult to make a journey. Let the provision of every need of your army be my responsibility. I would request your Majesty to return to Sāvatti only when I make the send-off."

From the time of the arrival of Migāra and his party, the whole of Sāketa was in a festive atmosphere. Three months passed in gaiety. The rain-retreat period had ended. It was

October. The great ornamental dress for the bride was still in the goldsmith's hand, nearing completion. Dhanañcaya's executives reported to him that although every item needed in hosting the big gathering from Sāvattthi was no problem but they had met with a shortage of fuel for cooking. Dhanañcaya ordered that all the stables for his horses and sheds for his elephants be dismantled for fuel. But these structure lasted only fifteen days as fuel and the matter was conveyed to Dhanañcaya again, who said: "Wood fuel would be hard to get during the raining period. So, open all my textile stores, make strips of rough cloth into ropes, soak them in oil vats and use them as fuel." In this expedient way another fifteen days supply of fuel for cooking was made available, by which time the great ornamental dress for the bride was completed too.

The bride was sent to the bridegroom on the next day, after the great bridal dress was completed. On the day of her departure, Dhanañcaya called his daughter, Visākhā, to his side and gave this admonition:

"Dear daughter, a housewife, who is to serve her husband faithfully in his household, should know these principles and practise them accordingly:

(At that time Mīgāra was listening in the next room.)

"Dear daughter, a daughter-in-law living in the parents-in-law's house:-

- (1) should not take out the fire from the inside of the house;
- (2) should not take the fire from outside into the house;
- (3) should lend only to those who returned what they borrowed;
- (4) should not lend to those who do not return what they borrowed;
- (5) should give to those whether they give you or not;
- (6) sit peacefully;
- (7) eat peacefully;
- (8) sleep peacefully;
- (9) tend to the fire respectfully;
- (10) worship the deities of the house.

(The implications of these ten points have been discussed in Chapter 35: Story of Cūlasubbhaddā.)

On the following day, Dhanañcaya had all his guests assembled together and in the midst of the Kosalan army appointed eight learned householders to be patrons of Visākhā at Sāvattthi, with the request that they, as a body, gave hearing and settled any disputes that might arise concerning her daughter. Then, he had the bride garbed in the great bridal dress of gold lace and jewels, worth nine crores. He gave her a hundred and fifty-four cartloads of money for her toiletry, five hundred maid servant, five hundred coaches which were drawn by thoroughbred horses and a variety of useful items in one hundred pieces for each kind. Having bequeathed these things, as his wedding present, in front of the assemblage, he first made a send-off for the Kosalan King and Mīgāra the householder.

When it was time for Visākhā to start her journey, Dhanañcaya called the controller of his cattle yards and gave these instructions: "My men, my daughter will need in her new home milk cows and thoroughbred bulls for harnessing to her carts. Let a herd of cattle that will fill the road to Sāvattthi for an area of eight *usabhas* (140 spans) in breadth and three *gāvutas* in length (i.e. 3/4 *yojana*) be let out from the pens. The landmark for three *gāvutas* is from the pens to a certain ravine. When the foremost cattle in the herd reached that ravine, let a drum signal be made so that the pens can be closed in time." And the responsible persons complied faithfully. As soon as the pens were opened, the stoutest milk-cows only came out. But when the pens were closed, strong draught oxens and bulls jumped over the fence and followed Visākhā. This was the result of Visākhā's past merit, (more particularly, during the time of Buddha Kassapa, whenever she made offering of food to the Sangha, she used to persuade the offerees to take various delicacies even after they had taken their fill.)

Visākhā entered Sāvattthi

When Visākhā's carriage arrived at the City of Sāvattthi, she considered whether she should enter the City seated in her coach or stand up, exposing herself to public view. When she remembered the great bridal dress (*mahālatā*) that she was wearing, she thought it wise to expose herself by standing in her carriage so that the greatness of her unique bridal dress would be seen by all. As she did so, every citizen of Sāvattthi, who saw her was excited, saying among themselves: "Here she is! The famous Visākhā! How exquisitely beautiful! And look at that gorgeous bridal dress she wears! How becoming she looks in that wonderful dress!" Thus, Visākhā's entry into her new residence at Mīgāra's house was a flying success.

Right from the moment of her presence in Sāvattthi, the citizens were fresh with the memories of their long stay in Sāketa as guests of honour to Dhanañcaya, who had so lavishly and caringly treated them. So they started sending gifts to Visākhā according to their means. Visākhā distributed the gifts to various other citizens of Sāvattthi, ensuring that all houses received them. In this way, the citizens of Sāvattthi were soaked in charity from her first day there.

On the first night of her arrival at her father-in-law's house, as soon as the first watch of the night had passed, (and it was bedtime) a thoroughbred female ass in Mīgāra's house gave birth to a foal. She had her maid servants hold up the lamps and she attended to the delivery of the foal. She had the mother ass bathed in hot water and then had oil applied onto her body. After seeing through these operations, she went back to her chamber.

Wedding Reception at Mīgāra's House

Mīgāra held a reception for seven days in his house, on the occasion of his son's wedding. Even though the Buddha was staying in the Jetavana monastery, Mīgāra, being a follower of different faiths, disregarded the Buddha for the occasion of his son's wedding, but, instead, he invited a household of naked ascetics. He called Visākhā to make obeisance to the 'Arahants'. When Visākhā heard the word 'Arahant', she, being an *ariya* herself, a Stream-Enterer, eagerly went to see the so called 'Arahant'. She was greatly disappointed to see the naked ascetic. "How could these shameless fellows be 'Arahant'?" she made her judgment and wondered why her father-in-law asked her to pay respect to them. "Fie! Fie!" she uttered in disgust and turned away.

The naked ascetics, on their part, were angry at Visākhā's behaviour. "Householder," they said to Mīgāra, "can't you get a better daughter-in-law? Why have you made this detestable woman, a follower of Samaṇa Gotama, a member of your household? Cast away the demon of a woman!" But Mīgāra thought that he could not expel his daughter-in-law on the advice of the naked ascetics, for she came of a high class status. So, he had to palliate his teachers by saying: "Teachers, young people are reckless and say things intentionally or otherwise. Would you kindly keep your patience?"

Mīgāra was touched to The Quick

Being a good daughter-in-law, Visākhā attended on her father-in-law respectfully. She made him sit on a high seat, and served him with milk-rice in which undiluted milk was used. She ladled it out of gold spoon into a vessel and gave it to Mīgāra who relished the meal. At that time, a *bhikkhu*, on his alms-round, stood at Mīgāra's door. Visākhā saw the *bhikkhu* but, knowing her father-in-law as a follower of naked ascetics, she thought it wise not to tell him about the presence of the *bhikkhu* but merely moved herself aside so that the *bhikkhu* would stand in direct view of Mīgāra. Foolish as he was, Mīgāra did see the *bhikkhu* but pretended not to notice him with his face turned down to his meal only.

Visākhā knew that her father-in-law was purposely ignoring the *bhikkhu*, so she went to the *bhikkhu* and said: "Empty-handed, I pay homage to you, Venerable Sir. My father-in-law lives only on old food."

Hearing this, Mīgāra was irritated to wit. When Visākhā derided the naked ascetics, he

could bear it. But now that his daughter-in-law said that he was eating excreta (which he interpreted Visākhā's word "old food"), he could not bear it. He held away his hand from the vessel he was eating from and said angrily to his attendants: "Keep this milk-food! Expel Visākhā from this house. Look, while I am eating this auspicious milk-food in my auspicious house, Visākhā says: 'I am eating human excreta!'" However, the whole of the household staff were Visākhā's servants, and who would take Visākhā by the hand or by the feet and expel her? Far from doing physical violence against her, nobody in the house dared even to offend her by word.

Visākhā asserted Her Right

When Visākhā heard her father-in-law's angry words, she spoke to him cordially and respectfully: "Father, I am not obliged to go away from this house by your command, which is not right and proper. You have not brought me to this house like a water carrier girl. A good daughter, whose parents are still living, does not obey this kind of unlawful command. To see to righteous behaviour on all sides, my father had, on the day of my departure, appointed a panel of eight wise householders, saying: "If there should arise any problem concerning my daughter, you would be pleased to hear the case and settle it." These eight people are my father's trustees in whom my security lies. Would you refer my case to them now?"

How The Problem was resolved

Mīgāra thought Visākhā's words were sensible. He sent for the panel of eight learned householders and laid his complaint, saying: "Gentlemen, this girl Visākhā has not been in this house for a week and she insulted me, who lived in an auspicious house as someone who eats excreta."

Elders: Now, daughter, did you say as the householder has alleged?

Visākhā: Fathers, my father-in-law might like to eat excreta. I never referred to him as an eater of excreta. The fact is that as he was eating milk-rice cooked with undiluted milk, a *bhikkhu* stood at his door for alms-food. My father-in-law ignored the *bhikkhu*. So, I went up to the *bhikkhu* and said: 'Empty handed, I pay homage to you, Venerable Sir. My father-in-law lives only on old food.' By this, I meant to say that my father-in-law does no deed of merit in his present existence but is living only on the fruit of his past merit.

Elders: Householder, in this case, our daughter is not at fault. She has spoken reasonably. Why should you be angry?

Mīgāra: So be it, gentlemen. But his young girl had from the very first night in this house ignored her husband and absented herself from the house.

Elders: Dear daughter, did you absent yourself as alleged?

Visākhā: Fathers, I did not go to any other place but the fact is that I was attending to the birth of a foal by a thoroughbred ass at the stable that night. I considered it my duty to do so. I had my maid servants held the lamps and I supervised the proper delivery of the foal.

Elders: Householder, our daughter had been dutiful and done what even your maid servants could not do. She had done it for your good only. And should you take it as an offence?

Mīgāra: So be it gentlemen. But I wish to complain about her father, Dhanañcaya's admonition to her on the day of her departure from her house. She was told (1) 'not to take out the fire from the inside of the house.' How would it be possible for us not to give the fire when needed by our next door neighbours?

Elders: Dear daughter, were you told by your father as said by the householder?

Visākhā: Fathers, my father did not mean 'fire' in the ordinary sense. What is meant is that the affairs of my parents-in-law and his family should not be divulged to the servants who are outsiders. If I were to do that, I would be causing

unnecessary trouble at home. My father uses the expression, ‘the fire from the inside of the house’ in this sense only.

Mīgāra: So be it, gentlemen. But then her father also said that (2) ‘she should not take the fire from outside into the house.’ How would it be possible for us not to take the fire from another house (i.e. outside our house), in case all the fire had gone out in our home?

Elders: Dear daughter, is that true?

Visākhā: Fathers, my father did not mean ‘fire’ in the ordinary sense. What is meant here is that what the servants say in criticising the family should not be reported to the members of the family. If I were to do so, I would be causing unnecessary trouble at home. My father used the expression, ‘the fire from outside’ in this sense only. Also when my father said:

(3) ‘You should lend only to those who return what they borrow.’ This is not to let those defaulters, who fail to return the things they borrow from me, get the better of me.

(4) ‘You should not lend to those who do not return what they borrow.’ This is not to let the defaulters exploit my goodness.

(5) ‘You should give to those whether they repay you or not.’ This meant to be liberal to the poor relatives or friends who come to see me. I should make gifts to them regardless whether they can repay me or not.

(6) ‘You should sit peacefully.’ means I should show deference to my father-in-law and mother-in-law. When they approach, I should stand up.

(7) ‘You should eat peacefully.’ means I should not eat before my parents-in-law and my husband have eaten. Only when they have had sufficient to eat, then I should eat.

(8) ‘You should sleep peacefully.’ means I should not go to bed before my parents-in-law and my husband have gone to bed. Only after I have tended to their needs and they have retired, then I should go to bed.

(9) ‘You should tend to the fire.’ means I should consider my parents-in-law and my husband as the fire or the dragon that are to be always held in reverence. They should be attended on with respect.

Mīgāra: So be it, gentlemen. But what about her father’s admonition, ‘to worship the deities of the house’?

Elders: Dear daughter, what is it that your father-in-law wants to know?

Visākhā: Father, it is true that my father told me (10) ‘to worship the deities of the house.’ By these words, my father admonished me that when I become a housewife, I should give alms-food to *bhikkhus* who stand at my door for alms. Only after offering alms-food to them, should I eat.

Elders: Householder, you seem to please yourself by ignoring *bhikkhus* who come to you for alms-food.

Mīgāra found no word to retort this sarcastic remark and held down his face.

Visākhā’s Triumph

Then the eight learned householders said to Mīgāra the householder: “Householder, is there any other fault with our daughter?” Mīgāra admitted that there was none. They continued: “Householder, in spite of her innocence, why did you expel her from your home?” Then Visākhā stood up and said: “Fathers, I did not deem it wise to obey to my father-in-law’s rash command in expelling me. For my father had entrusted me to your care and to settle my problem concerning myself. Now that I am cleared of my fault, I am happy to go.”

Visākhā then returned to her private chamber and ordered her male and female servants to prepare coaches and do other things for travel. Thereupon, Mīgāra called the eight-men

panel of trustees and apologised to Visākhā for his fault in their presence: “Dear daughter, I had been reckless. Forgive me.” Visākhā, seeing her opportunity, said to her father-in-law: “Dear father, I really forgive you for what is forgivable. Only that I wish to lay down a condition, which is, I, as an unshakeable devotee of the Buddha, cannot stay away from the Sangha, if only I be allowed to make offering to the Sangha freely, I shall stay here. Otherwise, I leave.”

To which Mīgāra promptly replied: “Dear daughter, you are at liberty to do so.”

Mīgāra The Householder attained Stream-Entry Knowledge

Thereafter, Visākhā invited the Buddha to her house the next day for an offering of food. On the following day, the Buddha went to her house, accompanied by a big number of *bhikkhus*, who filled the house and were given seat. Naked ascetics, on learning the visit of the Buddha to Mīgāra’s house, took a keen interest and sat watching around it.

Visākhā made her food offerings and poured the libation water. After that she sent her assistant to inform her father-in-law that everything was ready to serve the meal to the Buddha and His Sangha, and invited him to attend to the Buddha personally. Mīgāra, who was under instructions by his teachers, the naked ascetics, replied to Visākhā: “Let my daughter herself attend on the Buddha.” Visākhā proceeded to do so, offering the Buddha with various kinds of delicious food and beverages. After that, she informed her father-in-law that the offering of food to the Buddha had finished and she invited him to join in listening a discourse by the Buddha.

Mīgāra’s past merit now began to tell on him, for he thought to himself: “If I were to refuse the invitation it would be very wrong.” He got an inner urge to listen to the Buddha’s discourse, and went to where He was sitting. However, his teachers, the naked ascetics, advised him to be screened off from the Buddha if he were to listen to His discourse. His servants therefore drew a curtain around the place where he was to sit.

The Buddha preached His discourse as if asserting His own power of letting any listeners to hear Him well, however hidden or far away from Him, whether divided by a wall or as distant as the whole extent of a world-system. As if a big mango tree laden with its golden ripe fruit was shaken from its trunk, the Buddha directed His sermon beginning with alms-giving, through morality and the celestial forms of existence, culminating in *pagga hala*.

(Note here that when the Buddha made a discourse, everyone among the audience, whether in front of Him or at His back, whether thousands of world-systems away, or even in the topmost Brahmā realm of Akaniṭṭha, feels that the Buddha is addressing him alone, face to face. It is like one’s relationship with the moon, which rides on the sky in her own course, but which seems to you to be always above your head. This unrivalled power of the Buddha is the result of His fulfilling the Perfections, more particularly, His supreme sacrifices in giving away His head or limbs, His eyes or heart, or His freedom by serving others as a slave, or as in Vessantara’s existence when He gave His young son and daughter to an old Brahmin, or His own wife, Maddī devī.)

— Commentary on the **Dhammapada**, Book 1 —

At the end of the discourse, Mīgāra was established in the fruition of Stream-Entry Knowledge. He lifted the screen and laid prostrate at the Buddha’s feet in five-fold contact, and extolled Visākhā before the Buddha’s presence, with these words: “Dear daughter, from this day on, you are my mother!” Since then Visākhā came to be known as ‘Mīgāra’s mother’. (This is what is mentioned in the Commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**. In the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**, which follows the reciters of the text, it is mentioned thus: ‘Mīgāra came out of the screen, came to his daughter-in-law, and putting her breast in his mouth, exclaimed: ‘From today on, you are my mother!’ Since then Visākhā came to be known as ‘Mīgāra’s mother’. Later, when a son was born to her, he was called ‘son of Mīgāra, the householder’.)

In this connection, the commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** gives only a brief account of Visākhā, but for the benefit of the reader, the events connected with her will now be

related based on the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**.)

Mīgāra's Wife also attained Stream-Entry

After recognizing his daughter-in-law as his mother, Mīgāra went to the Buddha and prostrating himself at His feet, holding them adoringly and kissing them with his mouth, said: "Venerable Sir, previously I had not known as to making gifts to what type of person is of great benefit. Now I have come to know it, thanks to my daughter-in-law. Now I am saved from the wretched destinations, the miserable states of a *aya*. The arrival of my daughter-in-law, Visākhā, has brought me my welfare and happiness." Further, he uttered this verse in elation:

"(Venerable Sir,) Today I have come to understand as to making gifts to what type of person is of great benefit. My daughter-in-law, possessor of noble characteristics, has indeed (due to any past merit) come to my house to my benefit."

On the next day also, the good Visākhā invited the Buddha for another offering of food. Then, on the following day, her mother-in-law also became a Stream-Enterer. From that day onwards, Mīgāra's house was an open door for all needs related to the Teaching.

(A Myanmar rhyme translated in prose:)

*"The arrival of noble person at a house,
Opens up the door to the Eightfold Path
For its many residents,
Facilitating their entry to Nibbāna."*

Visākhā was honoured by Her Father-in-law

Then Mīgāra thought to himself: "My daughter-in-law, Visākhā, is my great benefactor. I should repay my debt of gratitude to her. The *pahālatā* bridal gown is too cumbersome for her to wear daily. I shall give her a suitable dress of distinction which may be worn by her by day or by night and in all her bodily postures." So thinking, he had a solid but flexible and easy-to-wear garment worth a hundred thousand ticals of silver, called *Ghanamaṭṭhaka*, made for Visākhā. When the dress was ready, he invited the Buddha and His Saṅgha to an offering of food. He let his daughter-in-law bathed in sixteen pots of scented water, and put on the special dress in the presence of the Buddha, in which she was to pay homage to the Buddha. The Buddha spoke words in appreciation of the offering and returned to the monastery.

From that time onwards, Visākhā's life was one of meritorious deeds such as giving charity in which she took great delight, and which she could afford to do much as she like. She won wide recognition as the great female lay supporter after she obtained eight special privileges as boon from the Buddha¹. Her story was comparable to that of the moon in the sky. Her reputation as the head of a big family also was noteworthy, for she had ten sons and ten daughters who had, (like herself) ten sons and ten daughters each. These four hundred grand-children had also ten sons and ten daughters each. Thus making a total of eight thousand great grand-children.

The ancient Theras versified this fact thus:

1. The eight privileges as boons:

- (i) lifelong privilege of donating robes to the Saṅgha for use in the raining season,
- (ii) the privilege of offering food to visiting bhikkhus,
- (iii) the privilege of offering food to travelling bhikkhus,
- (iv) the privilege of offering food to sick bhikkhus,
- (v) the privilege of offering food to the bhikkhus who were nursing the sick ones,
- (vi) the privilege of offering medicine to sick bhikkhus,
- (vii) the lifelong privilege of offering gruel (for breakfast),
- (viii) the privilege of offering under lower robes to bhikkhunīs.

(See details in **Vinaya Mahāvagga**)

“For having twenty children, four hundred grand-children and eight thousand great-grand-children, Visākhā is renowned throughout the Southern Island Continent.”

Some Distinctive Qualities of Visākhā

Visākhā lived up to 120 years of age. Not having a single grey hair, she looked always as if the age of a sixteen year old. When she went to the Buddha’s monastery, accompanied by her children, grand-children and great-grand-children, she was undistinguishable from them.

When people saw Visākhā walking, they never felt satisfied with watching her walk. But when she stood, she looked as graceful; when she sat or when she was lying down, people thought her very graceful in that posture.

She had physical might equivalent to five great elephant bulls. On one occasion, the King of Kosala, wishing to test her reputed strength, let loose a great elephant bull in her direction. The beast ran towards her menacingly with its trunk uplifted. (Visākhā’s five hundred companion girls ran away in fear. Some of her five hundred companions hugged her, (as if to safeguard her). This is a Sri Lankā version.) “What’s up?” she asked them. They said: “Maiden, the King wants to test your strength and sent an attacking elephant bull at you!”

Visākhā thought: “What use with running away from this beast? And if I were to handle it squarely, it would be crushed.” So thinking, she gently took the beast’s trunk in her two fingers and turned him off, which sent him reeling. The out lookers cheered Visākhā coolly and then proceeded home.

The Construction of The Pubbārāma Monastery

Visākhā was widely known as the auspicious lady, not only for her perennial beauty, but also for the health and robustness of her children and grand-children for none of them died before the end of their life span. The citizen of Senath would invite Visākhā as the guest-of-honour whenever they held ceremonial offerings. One day, after attending such a function and was proceeding to the Buddha’s monastery, she thought it lacking in modesty if she went before Him, attired in her gorgeous *mahālata* dress. So, at the entrance to the monastery, she entrusted it to her maid servant who was reborn into the world due to Visākhā’s past great deed, for she had to be, like Visākhā, as strong as the equivalent of five great elephants bulls.

(She left the great gown with her to be kept with her until she came back from the Buddha’s presence after hearing a discourse.)

Leaving the *mahālata* dress with her maid-servant and putting on the *Ghanamaṭṭhaka* dress instead, Visākhā went before the Buddha and listened to a discourse. After the discourse, she made obeisance to Him and left the monastery. The maid-servant left the *mahālata* dress at the place where she was listening to the Buddha’s discourse and forgotten to collect it when she left. It was Venerable Ānanda’s routine duty to collect things left through forgetfulness of visitors to the Buddha’s monastery. On that day, when he found Visākhā’s *mahālata* dress, he reported it to the Buddha who asked him to store it away in a suitable place. The Venerable Ānanda picked it up and hung it at one end of the flight of stairs.

Visākhā then went around the various places in the Jetavana monastery together with Suppiya², a well-known female lay-disciple, to find out the needs of the guest *bhikkhus*, the

2. Suppiyā the female lay disciple was the wife of Supiyā the Householder of Bārāṇasī. This couple were highly devoted to the Triple Gem. They were regular supporters of the Saṅgha with regard to the four bhikkhu requisites. The female disciple Suppiyā once sacrificed her own flesh from the thigh to cook a soup for a sick bhikkhus. Due to her intense devotion to the Buddha, the spot, where her flesh was cut, was miraculously restored without leaving a scar. Read **Vinaya Mahāvagga**.

sick *bhikkhus*, and *bhikkhus* who were on a journey. It was usual for junior *bhikkhus* and novices who needed ghee or honey or oil to bring containers to be filled by the two visiting ladies on such rounds.

After she had visited the sick *bhikkhus*, the junior *bhikkhus* and *sāmaṇeras* and attended to their needs, she left the Jetavana monastery by another gate. Before leaving the monastery compound, Visākhā asked her maid-servant to bring the *mahālata* dress for her to wear. Then only the maid remembered about it and said: “My lady, I have forgotten to pick it up.”

“Then, go and fetch it,” instructed Visākhā. “But,” she continued, “in case the Venerable Ānanda were to have moved it to another place himself, say to him that the dress is to be considered as donated to him.” She said this because she knew that the Venerable Ānanda always kept in his custody all articles left by forgetful visitors of all the four classes to the Jetavana monastery.

When the Venerable Ānanda saw Visākhā’s maid-servant, he asked her why she returned. And being told of the *mahālata* dress, the Venerable Ānanda said to her: “I have hung it at one end of the stairway. Go and get it.” Then she said: “Venerable Sir, my lady has instructed me that if the dress had been held in the hand of your reverence, she would not take it back because she would deem it already donated to you.” The maid went back to Visākhā and reported the matter to her.

Then, Visākhā said to her: “My girl, I consider it donated to the Venerable Ānanda. I have no desire to wear it after the Venerable had handled it. However, keeping it in his custody would be troublesome to him. I will donate something that is proper for the Sangha to use. Go and get it.” And the maid did as she was bidden. Visākhā sent for the goldsmith and let them appraise the value of the *mahālata* dress. The goldsmith said: “This dress worths nine crores in material value plus a hundred thousand in workmanship.” Visākhā let the *mahālata* dress being displayed on an elephant and put it for public sale.

But there was no one who could afford to buy a dress worth a fortune. Moreover, there were no women who could withstand the sheer weight of that bejewelled great gown. As a matter of fact, there were only three women on earth who could afford and wear this kind of dress. They were:

- (1) Visākhā.
- (2) Mallikā (i.e. a native of Malla province) wife of Bandula the Commander-in-Chief.
- (3) the daughter of the King of Bārāṇasī.

Since there was no buyer of the great dress, Visākhā herself bought it at the appraised price (of nine crores and a hundred thousand). She put the money in a cart and took it to the Jetavana monastery where, after making obeisance to the Buddha, she said to Him: “Venerable Sir, the Venerable Ānanda, in keeping my *mahālata* dress in his custody, had handled it. From that time onwards, it is not proper for me to wear it. Therefore, I have sold it out for the benefit of the Sangha and in such a way the Sangha might properly put it to use. Since there was no one who could buy it, I have now bought it at its sales value of nine crores and a hundred thousand. In which way, out of the four requisites should this money be utilised?” The Buddha said: “It would be fitting if you build a monastery for the Sangha near the eastern gate of this city (Sāvatthi).” Visākhā was very glad to hear this. She bought a piece of land for the site of the monastery for the price of nine crores. The building was to cost her another nine crores. Construction soon began.

Venerable Moggallāna supervised The Construction of The Monastery

One morning, the Buddha reviewed the world for beings deserving of Enlightenment and he saw Bhaddiya, the son of the householder of Bhaddiya, who had had his former existence in the deva realm. So, after His meal in the house of Anāthapiṇḍika, the Buddha went in the direction of the northern gate of Sāvatthi.

(It may be noted that the Buddha usually received offering of alms-food at Visākhā’s house. After which, He would go through the city’s southern gate to Jetavana monastery as His residence. If, He received His alms-food from

Anāthapiṇḍika, He would go through the city's eastern gate to the Pubbārāma monastery as His residence. When He left the city by the northern gate, people understood that He was taking a journey.)

When Visākhā heard the news of the Buddha taking the northern gate, she went to see Him and said: "Venerable Sir, are you making a journey?" The Buddha replied: "Yes, Visākhā, it is so." Visākhā said: "Venerable Sir, I have sacrificed such big fortune (of nine crores) to build a monastery for your use. Would you wait till the building is complete?" "Visākhā, my present trip cannot be postponed." Then, Visākhā understood that the Buddha had in mind some prospective disciple whose past merit having ripened, was due for *pagga hala*, and said: "Venerable Sir, in that case, would you leave behind some *bhikkhus* who would supervise the construction?" Thereupon, the Buddha said: "Visākhā, take the alms-bowl of the *bhikkhu* of your choice."

Visākhā had a natural liking for the Venerable Ānanda. However, she thought that the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna, with his great powers, would be a real help in the expeditious completion of her monastery. So, she took the alms-bowl of the Venerable Moggallāna, who glanced towards the Buddha. The Buddha said to the Venerable: "Moggallāna you and your followers of five hundred *bhikkhu* will stay behind." And so the Venerable Moggallāna became the *bhikkhu* to supervise Visākhā's monastery construction.

By the great power of the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna, big distances as much as fifty or sixty *yojanas* were made every day by the people who collected building materials. In carrying them too, they could do it without great hardship. No mishaps such as broken axles in the carts ever occurred. Soon, the two-storey seven-tier monastery was completed on a clear and level site of eight *karisas* wide. The seven-tier monastery had five hundred chambers on the ground floor and five hundred chambers on the first floor. Around the main building, she added, for better perspective and practical usefulness, five hundred meditation cubicles, five hundred smaller tiered monastic dwellings and five hundred stairways.

The Donation Ceremony that lasts for Four Months

The Buddha returned from His tour after nine months. By that time, the construction of the Pubbārāma monastery had been completed, thanks to the supervision of the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna. Visākhā had a broad gold plate, about the size that might contain sixty water pots, fashioned for the pinnacle of the monastery. When she heard that the Buddha was returning to the Jevatana monastery, she invited Him to stay in her new monastery, known as the Pubbārāma (the eastern) monastery, together with His Sangha, because she wanted to hold ceremonies marking the donation of the monastery. She said: "Venerable Sir, I would request the Bhagavā to stay in this monastery for the four raining months." The Buddha having acceded to her request, she made great offerings of food to the Buddha and His Sangha. Then, a female friend of Visākhā went to her and requested a favour: "Friend Visākhā, I would like to donate a piece of floor cover worth a hundred thousand ticals to your monastery. Kindly show me where I should put it." Visākhā replied: "Very well, friend, look for the place yourself, for if I were to say: 'There is no place for your floor cover, you might misunderstand me.' " Her friend went about the great monastery, inspecting very part of it, at both the two storeys, but could not find a spot which was not already covered with flooring material of the same quality or better than the one she had brought. She was greatly disappointed and wept in a corner.

The Venerable Ānanda saw her weeping and asked her the reason. She told him her story. The Venerable Ānanda then consoled her: "Do not worry, I will show you the spot where you may spread your flooring material," and he pointed to her an uncovered spot at the end of the stairway which was the place for the Sangha to wash their feet. She was told that all the *bhikkhus* would step over that flooring before the monastery, after washing their feet and that would be a really meritorious thing for her as the donor. (That was the only spot which Visākhā's attention missed.)

Offerings of The Four Bhikkhu Requisites to The Sangha

For four raining months, Visākhā made offerings of the four *bhikkhu* requisites to the Buddha and His Sangha. On the full moon of Tazaungmon (i.e. November) she donated robe material of superior quality. The lowest quality received by a newly admitted *bhikkhu* was worth one thousand. All the *bhikkhus* also received the four-foods concoction, *catu padhu*, to fill their alms-bowl full. The four months long offerings that marked her donation of the Pubbārāma monastery cost her nine crores.

Thus, the site costing nine crores, the building, nine crores, and the ceremonial offering, nine crores, made a total of twenty-seven crores which Visākhā incurred in her donation towards the Pubbārāma monastery, a sum of money which very few women did on such a scale, and more remarkable for her since she lived in the house of a non-believer.

Exultation of Visākhā on Her Good Deed

On the evening of the end of the four month long ceremony, Visākhā amidst her big company of offerings was very happy in her thought that her lifelong ambition had been fulfilled. In sheer exultation, she sang the following five stanzas in a wonderfully melodious voice while going round the big monastery:

- (1) “Ah! My cherished ambition with the thought: ‘When would I (having made my earnest wish and acquiring merit over a hundred thousand world-cycles) be able to build a monastery of fine cement concrete structure that would delight every visitor, (*bhikkhu* and layman alike)? It is fulfilled now!
- (2) “Ah! My cherished ambition with the thought: ‘When would I be able to donate monastic living place for the Sangha, complete with couch, reclining chair, cushion, pillow, etc.?’ This thought that had occupied my mind, setting Nibbāna as my goal, since the time of Buddha Padumuttara. It is fulfilled now!
- (3) “Ah! My cherished ambition with the thought: ‘When would I be able to make offerings of food to the Sangha, (the merit whereof accomplishing long life, personal charm (beauty), happiness, strength and intelligence), comprising the seven types of food offering, such as food offering by casting lots, etc.; rice cooked in meat, etc.?’ This thought that had occupied my mind, setting Nibbāna as my goal, since the time of Buddha Padumuttara. It is fulfilled now!
- (4) “Ah! My cherished ambition with the thought: ‘When would I be able to donate robes to the Sangha, that is robes made of costly Kāsi cloth, cloth made from cotton fibre, etc.?’ This thought that had occupied my mind, setting Nibbāna as my goal, since the time of Buddha Padumuttara. It is fulfilled now!
- (5) “Ah! My cherished ambition with the thought: ‘When would I be able to donate to the Sangha the physician’s formula as medicine, that is, the four-food concoction comprising ghee, honey, sesame oil and molasses?’ This thought that had occupied my mind, setting Nibbāna as my goal, since the time of Buddha Padumuttara. It is fulfilled now!”

— Commentary on the **Dhammapada** —

Visākhā was named The Foremost

In the morning, Visākhā’s house was aflame with the colour of the saffron robes of *bhikkhus* coming and going freely, and the atmosphere was vibrating with the movement of *bhikkhus* whose robes filled the air with the odour of the dye-stuff. As in the house of Anāthapiṇḍika, Visākhā’s house had meals cooked for offering to *bhikkhus* of varying needs, namely, the travelling ones, the sick ones, the visiting ones.

In the morning, Visākhā offered food to these *bhikkhus*. In the afternoon, she would go to the Buddha’s monastery with her maids, carrying medicinal properties, such as ghee, butter-milk, honey and molasses, and also eight kinds of beverages made from Eugenia, mango, the Indian butter fruit, the *Urania lagopoides*, the madhuka drink, two kinds of banana, and nectar of the lotus and offered them according to the needs of the *bhikkhus*.

Then she would listen to a sermon by the Buddha before returning home. (This is a typical day for Visākhā, replete with meritorious actions.)

Therefore, on one occasion, the Buddha was naming foremost female lay-disciple according to their merit, He declared:

“Bhikkhus, among My female lay disciples who delight in charity, Visākhā is the foremost.”

3 & 4. KHUJJUTTARĀ and SĀMĀVATĪ

(a) Their Past Aspirations

The future Khujjuttarā and the future Sāmāvatī were reborn into the families of rich men in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. As they went to the Buddha’s monastery to listen to a sermon given by the Buddha, the future Khujjuttarā saw a female lay disciple being named by Him as the foremost among female lay disciples in learning. She had a strong desire to become one herself. After making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, she expressed her aspiration to Him, who predicted the fulfilment of her aspiration.

The future Sāmāvatī saw a female lay disciple being named by the Buddha as the foremost in abiding in universal goodwill. She had a strong desire to be so designated by a Buddha in future time. After making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, she expressed her aspiration to that designation to Him, who predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

These two ladies spent their whole lives in deeds of merit. At the end of their respective life span, they were reborn in the deva-world. After being reborn in the either the deva-world or human world for a hundred world-cycles, the present world-system with five Buddhas arrived.

During the time of Buddha Gotama, in the city of Kosambī, Ghosaka the householder and his wife made a routine alms-give of one thousand ticals everyday. (For details of this illustrious couple, read Chapter 27).

(b) Khujjuttarā and Sāmāvatī in Their Existence

It was during the time in which the Ghosaka couple was practising their routine charity that the future Khujjuttarā passed away from her deva existence and was conceived in the womb of the governess in the house of Ghosaka. She was humpback at birth and was called Khujjuttarā. (As to her destiny of being born a humpback and a slave in spite of her great past merit, we shall discuss later.)

Sāmāvatī The Daughter of The Householder

About that time, the future Sāmāvatī passed away for her deva existence and was reborn as the daughter of Bhaddhavatiya the householder in Bhaddiya, in the province of Bhaddiya. She was named as Sāmā by her parents.

At one time, the town of Bhaddhiya suffered from famine and the people left the town for other towns for their own survival. Bhaddiya the householder said to his wife: “Dear wife, we cannot know when this famine will end. We too must leave this place. Our friend Ghosaka the householder of Kosambī will recognise us if he sees us. Let us go to him.” He told his wife about going to Ghosaka but the two Householders had known each other by their reputations only and had never met. They decided to go, leaving behind their servants. The three members of the family (father, mother and daughter) went in the direction of Kosambī, travelling by stages. After going through much hardship on the way, they at last reached Kosambī and stayed in a public rest house which was outside the city.

Sāmāvatī’s Woes

Ghosaka the householder was making his daily alms-giving to all the needy who called at

his door. Destitute travellers and mendicants thronged to his house every day. Bhaddhaviya the householder and his family were looking haggard after a hard journey. They decided they should not present themselves before Ghosaka in the present unsightly state but should rest and recoup themselves first. So, they remained at the rest-house while their daughter Sāmā was sent to the alms-giving station of Ghosaka to beg for food.

Sāmāvatī, as a daughter of a householder, was reluctant to jostle through her way in the unruly crowds of alms-seekers. As she stood apart in a hesitant manner, her dignified demeanour was noticed by the superintendent of alms distribution. He thought to himself: “While everyone else is making loud noise and trying to reach out ahead of others like in a fisherman’s fish distribution place, this young maiden is keeping back. She must be of some worthy family. And she has a fine personality.” And so he addressed Sāmāvatī: “Dear girl, why don’t you step up and beg?” She replied: “Dear father, how could a decent girl like me elbow through in such a jammed packed crowd?”

“How many persons are there in your family (group)?”

“There are three, father.”

The man doled out three food packages to her.

Sāmāvatī gave the food to her parents. Her father who had not eaten for some time, ate it greedily and died of overeating on that every day. On the next day, Sāmāvatī went to the food distribution point and asked for only two food packages. Her mother who was not used to poor food as this and who also was bereaved for the loss of her husband was taken ill that evening and died after midnight. Then, on the next day, Sāmāvatī went and asked for only one food package.

The superintendent asked her: “Dear girl, on the first day, you asked the food package for three persons; on the second day, you asked only for two and now on the third day, you are asking for only one. Why is this?” Sāmāvatī told him about the death of her father on the first day, her mother on second day, after midnight and that she alone survived.

“Where do you come from?” the man inquired. Sāmāvatī told him how her family had fled famine in Bhaddhiya and the consequent information. “In that case,” the superintendent said, “you should be deemed as a daughter of Ghosaka the householder. I have no daughter of my own. So you will henceforth be my daughter.”

Sāmāvatī, the adopted daughter of the superintendent of the alms-distribution place, asked her adopted father: “Father why is there such a din at the place?”

“When there is such a huge crowd, there has to be a big noise,” he replied.

“But, father, I have an idea!”

“Then, say it.”

“Father, let there be a barbed wire fencing around the place, keep only one entrance; let the people go in, receive their alms, and go out on the other end, the only exit.”

The father took her advice and in following her instruction, the distribution centre had then become as quiet and dignified as a lotus pond.

Sāmāvatī was adopted by Ghosaka The Householder

Soon after that Ghosaka noted the silence that prevailed in the alms distribution place which was usually full of noise and asked his superintendent:

“Are you not giving alms today?”

“Yes, I do, Master.”

“But why is it so silent at the centre which used to be so much of a din?”

“Ah! that is true, indeed, Master. I have a wise daughter, I have been able to maintain quiet at the place on the advice of my daughter.”

“But, I never knew you had a daughter. Where have you got one?”

The superintendent had to confess the truth. He related to his master the circumstances under which Sāmāvatī became his adopted daughter. Thereupon, Ghosaka said to him: “O

man, why did you do that? You are doing a very improper thing indeed. You have kept me in the dark about this girl who is my daughter in this circumstance. Bring her to my house immediately.” The superintendent had to obey his master’s order. From then onwards, Sāmāvātī became the adopted daughter of Ghosaka who cherished her as his own daughter and found for her five hundred companions, who were of her own age and from worthy families.

Sāmāvātī became Queen of King Udena

One day when King Udena of Kosambī went round the city, he happened to see Sāmāvātī and her five hundred maid companions, romping (in the garden) and fell in love with her. On inquiring her parentage, he was told that she was the daughter of Ghosaka the householder. The King enquired whether she was married or not, and learning that she was not married, he sent his royal messengers to Ghosaka to ask for the hand of Sāmāvātī for marriage to him. Ghosaka thought to himself: “Sāmāvātī is our only daughter. We cannot put her life at risk in the King’s court which is full of intriguing women.” So he bluntly refused the King’s request. The King was furious and ordered that Ghosaka and his wife be evicted from their house which was to be sealed off.

When Sāmāvātī and her playmates returned and met her parents sitting miserably outside the house, she asked them what had happened. On hearing the story, she said to them: “Dear parents, why did you not tell the King’s men that your daughter would go and live at the palace on the condition that her five hundred maid-companions were allowed to remain with her there? Now, dear parents, give your reply to the King as I suggest.” Her parents said to her: “Very well, daughter, we did not know how you would take it (the King’s proposal).”

King Udena was greatly pleased to hear the message from Ghosaka. He said: “Let all the maid-companions come and stay with Sāmāvātī, even if they number a thousand!” Afterwards, on an auspicious day, at the auspicious hour when the planets were favourable, Sāmāvātī, together with her five hundred maid-companion, were conveyed to the palace of King Udena. The King appointed all the five hundred maids as ladies-in-waiting to his wife Sāmāvātī when he made her Queen with ceremonial anointing, and put her in a golden terraced mansion of her own, with full state of a Queen.

About this time, Ghosaka and his two householder friends, Kukkuta and Pāvārika of Kosambī, learning the news of the appearance of the Buddha and His residence at Sāvattthi, went to Him. After listening to a discourse by the Buddha, they were established in Stream-Entry Knowledge. Later, they returned to Kosambī after making great offering to the Buddha and His Sangha for fifteen days. They obtained the assurance from the Buddha that He would visit Kosambī when they would invite Him later. They built a monastery each and on completion of which, they sent messages to the Buddha, inviting Him to visit Kosambī. Hence, the Buddha began His journey to Kosambī but seeing the ripeness of past merit in a brahmin couple by the name of Māgaṇḍiya, He made a detour to Kammāsadamma, a market town in the Province of Kuru, where He caused the Māgaṇḍiyas to comprehend the Ariya Truth and then proceeded to Kosambī.

Travelling by stages, He reached Kosambī and accepted the gift of three monasteries which were donated by three (Ariya) householders. When He entered the town on an alms collecting round, He and His procession of *bhikkhus* were reviled by a gang of drunken men who were instigated by Queen Māgaṇḍiya, who held a grudge against the Buddha. The Venerable Ānanda suggested to the Buddha that they leave the town which appeared so inhospitable. Instead, the Buddha gave a discourse to the Venerable Ānanda on the importance of taming oneself, which was recorded in Attadaṇṭa vatthu in the **Dhammapada** verses 320, 321 & 322. The Buddha stayed on for some time in Kosambī in the three monasteries in towns.

(For details of this episode, read Chapter 27.)

Khujjuttarā attained Stream-Entry

The three householders of Kosambī attended on the Buddha and His Sangha in turns, making big offerings for a month. Then they extended the privileges of honouring the Buddha and His Sangha, in making great offerings, to other people of Kosambī by organizing them into localities or association.

One day, the Buddha and His company of large number of *bhikkhus* were at the house of a florist, to receive his offerings. At that time, Khujjuttarā, the personal attendant to Queen Sāmāvatī, went to buy flowers, which was her routine duty. The florist said to her: “Ah, dear Uttarā, I have no time to serve you this morning. I am busy attending on the Buddha and His Sangha. Will you lend a hand in our food offering? This good deed of yours will lead to your emancipation from bondage.” Khujjuttarā ate her portion of food given by the florist and joined him and his people in serving food to the Buddha. She learnt by heart the Buddha’s discourse, which was preached to those who came near Him. At the end of the discourse, she was established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry.

Sāmāvatī and Her Five Hundred Companions attained Stream-Entry Knowledge

Khujjuttarā, in her daily purchase of flowers for Queen Sāmāvatī, usually bought only four ticals worth of flowers and pocketed four ticals out of the Queen’s daily allowance of eight ticals for flowers. But on the day she became an *ariya* (as Stream-Enterer), Khujjuttarā had no mind to steal the money entrusted to her, and bought eight ticals worth of flowers, which now filled her basket. Queen Sāmāvatī, seeing an unusually large quantity of flowers in Khujjuttarā’s basket, asked her: “Why dear Uttarā, you have such a big basket of flowers today, unlike the previous days! Did the King increase my allowance for flowers?”

Khujjuttarā, as an *ariya*, was now incapable of telling lies, and so confessed her previous misconduct. The Queen asked her: “Why, then, have you brought such a big quantity of flowers today?” And Khujjuttarā replied: “Because I do not steal the money today. I cannot do so because I have realized Nibbāna. I have comprehended the Deathlessness, after hearing the Buddha’s discourse.”

Thereupon, Queen Sāmāvatī and her five hundred ladies-in-waiting spread out their hands and asked Khujjuttarā: “Dear Uttarā, give us a share of that Deathless Nibbāna!”

“Dear friends, Nibbāna is not something that can be apportioned to others. I will re-echo the words of the Buddha. If you are endowed with past merit you may gain Nibbāna, the Deathless, on hearing them.”

“Dear Uttarā, do go ahead!”

“But, I have to remain seated on a higher level than your seats before I start making the discourse.”

Queen Sāmāvatī arranged a higher seat for Khujjuttarā and listened to the latter’s discourse, sitting at a lower level. Khujjuttarā, exercising the Analytical Knowledge pertaining to an *ariya*, still teaching herself for arahatship (i.e. *sekha*), gave a discourse to Sāmāvatī and her five hundred ladies-in-waiting. At the end of which, all of them were established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry. From that time onwards, Khujjuttarā was relieved of her all-round service duties and was given the task of going to the Buddha’s monastery to hear His sermon and, in turn, to teach Queen Sāmāvatī and her ladies-in-waiting what she had learnt from the Buddha. In this way, Queen Sāmāvatī and her company of ladies-in-waiting were given regular discourses in the palace by Khujjuttarā.

Khujjuttarā’s Past Merit and Demerit

Why was Khujjuttarā reborn into a slave family? It was due to her past evil deed. She had, during the time of Buddha Kassapa, made a female novice assist her in odd jobs (i.e. running errands for her). On account of that misdeed, she was reborn into a slave family for five hundred existences in succession. Why was she born with a hump-back? When she was a lady at the court of the King of Bārāṇasī before the advent of Buddha Gotama, she saw a Paccekabuddha with a hump-back who went to the palace to collect alms-food. Then she mimicked the Paccekabuddha in the presence of other court ladies. For that evil deed, she was born hump-back in the present existence which was her last existence.

What merit did she earn in the past to be endowed with inmate wisdom in her last existence? When she was a lady at the court of the King of Bārāṇasī before the advent of the Buddha, she saw eight Paccekabuddha carrying alms-bowls which were filled with milk-rice and were piping hot. To relieve the heat on the hands of these revered ones, she removed eight gold bangles which she was wearing and offered them for use as buffers underneath the alms-bowls. That thoughtful deed was the merit she earned.

Queen Māgaṇḍī intrigued against Queen Sāmāvatī

Although Queen Sāmāvatī and her five hundred ladies-in-waiting had become *ariyas*, they never had the opportunity of meeting the Buddha because King Udena was a non-believer. Since they were Stream-Enterers, they had a great longing to see the Buddha in person. All they could hope for was to get a glimpse of the Buddha whenever He was passing through the city. As there were no sufficient trellis windows to peep through, the ladies bore holes in the walls of their sleeping quarters, through which they peeped to gain precious glimpses of the Buddha.

One day, as Queen Māgaṇḍī was strolling outside when she noticed the small holes on the walls of the ladies-in-waiting of Queen Sāmāvatī and asked the maidens what the holes were for. They did not know that Queen Māgaṇḍī was holding a grudge against the Buddha and honestly divulged their secret arrangement that had enabled them to watch the Buddha passing by and to honour Him by standing in their own rooms and peeping through the small holes on the wall. Queen Māgaṇḍī thought to herself, grinning, thus: “Now my time has come to avenge Samaṇa Gotama. These girls followers of Gotama will also have their deserts!”

Then, when Māgaṇḍī was alone with King Udena, she said to him: “Great King, Queen Sāmāvatī and her ladies-in-waiting have given their hearts to someone else besides you. They are plotting against your life in a few days. They have no affection for you. They have such great interest in Samaṇa Gotama that they peep at him whenever He goes in the city. They have made holes in the wall of their rooms to get a view of Samaṇa Gotama. The King did not believe her at first but Māgaṇḍī repeated her story another time, yet the King still did not believe her. For the third time, she repeated it, and when the King refused to believe her, she suggested that the King go to the private quarters of the ladies-in-waiting and inquired. The King did as she had suggested and saw small holes. He asked the ladies-in-waiting about the holes and they honestly and truly told him the purpose of holes. The King was not angry with them but merely ordered that the holes be closed. He let a trellis windows fixed on the upstairs of the ladies’ quarters. (This was the first malicious report on the part of Queen Māgaṇḍī).

Queen Māgaṇḍī then hatched another plot. She said to the King: “Great King, let us put to the test the loyalty of Sāmāvatī and company towards you. Send them eight living hens and ask them to cook a meal with them for Your Majesty. “ The King did as Māgaṇḍī advised. Queen Sāmāvatī, being an *ariya* disciple of the Buddha, was above killing and so replied to the King that it would not be proper to kill the hens.

But Māgaṇḍī was crafty enough. She said to the King: “Great King, say to Sāmāvatī to cook a meal with the hens for Samaṇa Gotama.” The King did as he was told. This time, Māgaṇḍī had the hens killed, on the way before they reached Queen Sāmāvatī, who, on receiving the lifeless hens, had no suspicions about them in her simple mind. She had them cooked and send the cooked dish to the Buddha. Queen Māgaṇḍī then pointed the fact of Sāmāvatī’s behaviour to the King, saying: “Now, do you see where Sāmāvatī’s interest lies?” However, the King did not take offence against his beloved Sāmāvatī. (This was the second malicious plot on the part of Queen Māgaṇḍī.)

The Third Malicious Plot of Queen Māgaṇḍī

King Udena had three queens, viz., (1) Queen Sāmāvatī, (2) Queen Vāsuladattā, daughter of King Caṇḍapaccota of Ujjeni and (3) Queen Māgaṇḍī. Each Queen had five hundred ladies-in-waiting. The King spent seven days with each of his three queens in turn, in their respective palatial mansions. Queen Māgaṇḍī kept a small cobra by her side in a bamboo

container which she stealthily transferred into the King's harp and sealed the small hole in it, when the King visited her. The King always carried his harp wherever he went. He was so fond of it because its music could cast a spell on elephants which would become attracted to it player, the King.

When the King was about to go to Queen Sāmāvātī, Queen Māgaṇḍī said to him (as if she had real concern for the King's safety): "Great King, Sāmāvātī is a follower of Samāṇa Gotama. She does not value your life as much as a blade of grass. She is always intent on doing harm to you. So, please beware."

After the King had spent seven days with Queen Sāmāvātī, he went to stay with Queen Māgaṇḍī for another seven days. She said to him: "How was it, Great King, did Sāmāvātī find no opportunity to harm you?" Then, taking the harp from the King's hand, and shaking it, she exclaimed: "Why? There's some living thing moving about inside the harp!" And after stealthily opened the small hole in the harp, she exclaimed: "O! death unto me! There is a snake in the harp!" She dropped the harp and ran away from it. The snake's coming out from the harp was enough to arouse the King's anger. Like a bamboo forest on fire, the King was hissing with fury. "Go and bring Sāmāvātī and all her ladies-in-waiting!" he shouted. The King's men obeyed promptly.

(A Maxim:)

If you control yourself, retaining righteousness and maintaining a loving heart, when someone get angry with you, how could you be the worse for it?

Queen Sāmāvātī knew that the King was angry with them. She advised her ladies-in-waiting to diffuse loving-kindness towards the King for the whole day. When they were brought before the King, Sāmāvātī and her ladies-in-waiting were made to line up facing the King who stood with bow and poisoned arrow. They remained diffusing loving-kindness towards the King, who found himself unable to shoot and at the same time unable to put down the bow and arrow. Perspiration flowed properly from his body which was trembling. His mouth was discharging saliva. He resembled a man who had suddenly lost his faculties.

Queen Sāmāvātī said to him: "Great King, are you feeling exhausted?"

The King replied: "My dear Queen, I do feel exhausted. Be my support."

"Very well, O King," she said. "direct your arrow towards the ground."

The King did as he was told. Then Sāmāvātī wished: "May the arrow be released." And the poisoned arrow were into the ground.

At that moment, King Udena went and dipped himself in water and in his wet cloths and hair, he fell at Sāmāvātī's feet, saying: "Forgive me, my dear Queen. I had foolishly acted under the instigation of Māgaṇḍī."

"I forgive you, O King," said Sāmāvātī.

"Very well, O Queen, you are full of forgiveness towards me. From now on, you are free to make offerings to the Buddha. Do make offerings and do go to the Buddha's monastery in the afternoons and attend His sermons. From now on you shall be well protected."

Sāmāvātī, seizing the opportunity, made this request: "If so, Great King, would you ask the Buddha to arrange for a *bhikkhu* to come to the palace and teach us the Good Doctrine every day?" King Udena went to the Buddha and made the request, whereupon the Buddha assigned Venerable Ānanda the task. From that time, Sāmāvātī and her ladies-in-waiting invited Venerable Ānanda to the palace and made daily food offerings, after which, they learnt the Doctrine from him.

(The Venerable Ānanda had in one of his past existences offered a needle and a small piece of robe material of a palm's width to a Paccekabuddha. For that good deed, in his present existence, he was endowed with innate wisdom, and also received gifts of robe material on five hundred occasions.)

Sāmāvātī and Her Ladies-in-waiting were burnt to Death

Māgaṇḍī was at her wit's end in her attempts to estrange King Udena and Sāmāvātī. She became desperate and made a desperate attempt. She persuaded the King to go on a picnic in the park. She detailed her uncle to commit arson at the palace during the absence of the King. Queen Sāmāvātī and her ladies-in-waiting were to be ordered to remain indoors, using the King's authority. Then their mansion was to be burnt. Queen Māgaṇḍī's uncle, the foolish brahmin, executed the plot successfully.

As their past evil deed had now fructified, Sāmāvātī and her five hundred ladies-in-waiting could not dwell in the attainment of their Fruition of Stream-Entry on that fateful day and lost their lives in the flames, like lumps of bran in a storehouse. The guards, at Queen Sāmāvātī's mansion reported the calamity to the King.

The King made discreet inquiries into the prime mover in this horrible case of arson, and knew that it was none other than Māgaṇḍī. However, he did not reveal his true intention. Instead, he sent for Queen Māgaṇḍī and said to her: "Dear Māgaṇḍī, you have done for me what I ought to have done by myself. You have done away with Sāmāvātī who had made various attempts on my life. I adore you for this act. I am going to reward you amply. Now, call your kinsmen."

Queen Māgaṇḍī was delighted to hear the King's words. She gathered all her relatives and also her friends, whom were as if they were her relatives. When all of Māgaṇḍī's associates were gathered, the King had deep pits dug in the palace ground, where all the culprits were put with only their heads showing above the ground. Their heads were then severed and then iron plough shares were driven across their broken skulls. As for Queen Māgaṇḍī, her body was cut into pieces and cooked in oil.

The Past Evil Deeds of Sāmāvātī and Her Ladies-in-waiting

The death of Sāmāvātī and her ladies-in-waiting by being burnt alive had its root in their past evil deeds. In one of their existences before the advent of Buddha Gotama, the five hundred maidens were standing on the river bank at the Gaṅgā after having a long frolicking bath. As they were shivering with cold, they saw a small thatched hut nearby, which was the dwelling of a Paccekabuddha. They rashly burnt it for warming themselves without first seeing whether there was any occupant inside or not.

At that time, the Paccekabuddha was dwelling in the attainment of Cessation. Only when the little hut was reduced to ashes that they found, to their horror, the sitting Paccekabuddha in a motionless state. Although in setting fire to the hut, they had no intention to kill the Paccekabuddha, the thought of killing him now entered their frightened mind because they recognized him as the Paccekabuddha who went to the King's palace for daily alms-food. To avoid the King's wrath, they must burnt the revered one and leave no trace of him. So, by way of cremation, they gathered more fuel and set fire to the sitting Paccekabuddha. This act being done with intention to kill, constituted a grave misdeed, carrying grave consequence.

(When the fuel which the maidens put to the fire had exhausted, the Paccekabuddha rose from dwelling in the attainment of Cessation, cleaned His robes of ashes and rising into the air, went away, even as they (maidens) were watching in great wonder. They suffered in *niraya* for that evil deed, and as a remaining resultant thereof, they were burnt alive.)

(c) Designating the Foremost Female Lay Disciple

After the utter destruction of Queen Sāmāvātī and her five hundred ladies-in-waiting, there arose words of praise among the four types of assembly, viz. (1) the assembly of *bhikkhus*, (2) that of *bhikkhunīs*, (3) that of male lay disciples and (4) that of female lay disciples, such that:

"Khujjutarā was learned and although a woman, she could expound the Doctrine that resulted in five hundred ladies of the court attaining Stream-Entry."

“Sāmāvatī was accomplished in the practice of dwelling in universal goodwill that she was able to avert the arrow of King Udena through her diffusion of goodwill towards the King.”

Later on, when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery and was naming female lay disciples, He declared, in respect of Khujjutarā:

“*Bhikkhu*, among My female lay-disciples who are learned, Khujjutarā is the foremost.”

(Khujjutarā earned the distinction because she was given by Queen Sāmāvatī and her ladies-in-waiting, after their attaining Stream-Entry, the task of learning further about the Buddha’s Doctrine by listening from Him, His sermons daily. This privilege of hers made her so immersed in the Doctrine that she learnt the Three Piṭakas by heart. This was why the Buddha named her the “foremost in learning.”

As a *sekkha*, an ariya still learning by herself for arahatship, Khujjutarā was endowed with the Four Analytical Knowledges pertaining to a *sekkha* which enabled her to bring Enlightenment to Sāmāvatī and her ladies-in-waiting. While the Buddha was staying in Kosambī, Khujjutarā went to the Buddha daily and listened to the sermons. On returning to the palace, she repeated what she had learnt to Sāmāvatī and her ladies-in-waiting. She would begin her discourses to them with these words: “Indeed had the Bhagavā said thus; I have heard the *arahat* say thus.” The 112 discourses she made to the ladies have been put on record by the elders at the Council as “the Buddha’s words,” under the title of **Itivuttaka**. (See Commentary on the **Itivuttaka**.)

On that occasion, the Buddha said in respect of Sāmāvatī thus:

“*Bhikkhu*, among My female lay-disciples who dwell in the *jhāna* of universal goodwill, Sāmāvatī is the foremost.”

5. UTTARĀ NANDAMĀTĀ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Uttarā Nandamātā was reborn into a rich family in the city of Hamsāvatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. As she was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a female lay disciple being named as the foremost among those who dwelt in *jhāna*. She had a strong desire for that distinction in some future existences. After making a great offering, she expressed her aspiration to the Buddha who predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) Her Last Existence as Uttarā, Daughter of Puṇṇasiha The Householder

The future Uttarā, after passing away from that existence, was reborn either in the deva realm or the human realm for a hundred thousand world-cycles. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of Puṇṇasiha and his wife Uttara, who were household servants to Sumana the householder in Rājagaha.

Puṇṇasiha’s Ascendancy

It was a festive occasion in Rājagaha on account of the auspicious day, according to the planets. Sumana the householder of Rājagaha called to Puṇṇasiha and said: “O man, Puṇṇa, attending the festivities on this auspicious day and keeping the Uposatha precepts are actually matters that should not concern poor folks (like you). Yet, I am going to give you an allowance for this festive day, and you may either go and enjoy yourself at the festival or do your ploughing as usual. Just let me know whichever you choose.”

Puṇṇasiha replied: “Master, let me first consult this matter with my wife.”

At home, Puṇṇasiha told his wife Uttara about what his master had said to him. She said

to him: “Dear husband, the householder is our master. Whatever the master says to you is to be taken as justified. But I think you ought not to miss a day’s work for him.”

And Puṇṇasiha, agreeing with his wife’s suggestion, yoked his oxen and went to the field to do the ploughing.

It so happened that on that great day for Puṇṇasiha, the Venerable Sāriputta, after rising from his absorption in the attainment of Cessation, reviewed the world as to who deserved his blessing. He saw the ripening of Puṇṇasiha’s past merit as sufficing condition for Enlightenment³ and taking his alms-bowl and great robe at the time for alms-round, he went to the place where Puṇṇasiha was ploughing. He stood at a short distance where he could be seen by Puṇṇasiha, who, on seeing him, stopped ploughing and went near him and made his obeisance with fivefold contact. The Venerable Sāriputta, wishing to do good to the poor man, looked at him and asked him where some good water might be available. Puṇṇasiha thought that the Venerable wanted to wash his face, and so he made a tooth-brush out of a creeper nearby and gave it to him. While the Venerable was brushing his teeth, Puṇṇasiha took the alms-bowl and water-strainer and fetched a bowl full of fresh clear water, which was properly strained.

After washing his face, Venerable Sāriputta went on his way to collect alms-food. Then, it occurred to Puṇṇasiha thus: “The Venerable had never come this way before. He came today probably to bring benefit to me. Oh, if my wife had brought my meal, how good it would be to offer it to the Venerable!”

Puṇṇasiha’s wife remembered that it was an auspicious day according to the planets. She had cooked a meal early in the morning with the ration which she received and carried it to her husband. On the way, she saw Venerable Sāriputta and thought to herself: “On the previous days, I did not have anything to offer to the Venerable although I saw him, or when I had something to offer I did not meet him. Today, I have both the gift and the donee at hand. I will cook another meal for my husband and offer this meal to the Venerable now.” Thinking thus, she put her cooked rice into the Venerable Sāriputta’s alms-bowl and made her wish, saying: “May we be free from this life of poverty.” The Venerable responded: “May your wish be fulfilled,” showing appreciation and returned to the monastery.

(Herein, it may be noted that in performing a deed of merit there arise many impulsion thought processes of great merit, each consisting of seven meritorious ‘impulsions’ or sub-moments of the thought process. If conditions are favourable, the first of these seven impulsions brings immediate result even in the very present existence.

Four present conditions must be there for such immediate resultant, namely, (a) the donee is an *arahat* or at least a Never-Returner, (b) the gift is something righteously obtained, (c) the donor has a strong will or volition in making the gift, i.e. his intention is intense before the act, during the act, and he feels glad for it after the act, (d) the donee has just arisen from dwelling in the attainment of Cessation. And above all, there must be sufficient past merit in the donor. In the case of Puṇṇasiha and his wife, all the required present and past conditions co-existed. His past merit to make him a rich man was ripe, so, on that very day, he reaped a harvest of solid lumps of gold from the field he was ploughing. This elevated him to the status of the Rich Man as conferred by the King.)

Puṇṇasiha’s wife returned to her home (without proceeding to her husband) and cooked

3. ‘Sufficing condition for Enlightenment’:

For gaining *magga-phala*, one must be endowed with past merit, for present favourable conditions by themselves cannot lead to one’s Enlightenment. Likewise, an action that brings its result in the very present existence also need the support of sufficing past merit to fructify. Therefore, being a virtuous person with the right reasoning, the fortunate present conditions need sufficing past merit for one to gain Enlightenment. (Sub-Commentary)

another meal for her husband, and brought it to him. Fearing that her husband might be angry, (and more so because his anger would nullify the good consequence of her good act), she began with some palliative words, saying: “Dear husband, I would request that you restrain yourself from anger for today.”

“Why?” asked her husband (wondering).

“Dear husband, I met the Venerable Sāriputta on my way and offered him your meal; I had to go home and cook another meal for you. That is why I am rather late today.”

Clods of Earth turn into Lumps of Gold

Puṇṇasīha said to her: “Dear wife, you have done the most pleasing thing. I myself had offered tooth-brush and fresh water for washing his face early this morning. So, for this day, every need of the Venerable has been supplied by us!” The couple was elated about their good deeds.

Puṇṇasīha then had had his meal. After that he took a nap with his head on his wife’s lap. On waking up, he saw all around him, where he had ploughed, a sea of yellow objects somewhat like the yellow flowers of the sponge gourd profusely scattered about. Surprised, he asked to his wife: “Dear wife, what are those things?” Directing his finger to those yellow objects (which were clods of earth): “Everywhere I had turned, the earth look like gold!” His wife said: “Dear husband, perhaps you are having a hallucination after your hard work.” But Puṇṇasīha insisted: “Look, look there yourself!” And she looked and exclaimed: “Dear husband, what you said is true. Those things do look like gold!”

Puṇṇasīha stood up and picking up a clod of the yellow earth, struck it against the shaft of his plough. It was a soft lump of gold and stuck to the shaft like a lump of molasses. He called and said to his wife, showing a sample of gold: “Dear wife, other people have to wait three or four months to reap what they sowed. For us, our meritorious deed, sown on the fertile soil, that is, the Venerable Sāriputta, had now brought us this harvest. Throughout this field of about one karisa (1 3/4 acres) there is not a piece of earth the size of a myrobalan fruit which has not turned into gold.”

“What should we do about this?” his wife asked.

“Dear wife,” Puṇṇasīha replied, “we cannot hide this amount of gold.” So saying, he picked up clods of earth, filled the vessel, which was used to carry his meal, with lumps of gold. He went to the palace and showed it to the King.

King: Where did you get these gold?

Puṇṇasīha: Great King, the field I ploughed today has been turned into clods of gold. May the King send his men to confiscate them.

King: What is your name?

Puṇṇasīha: Great King, my name is Puṇṇa.

Then the King ordered his men to yoke carts and go and collect the gold from Puṇṇasīha’s field.

The Family of Puṇṇasīha became A Rich Man Family and also attained Stream-Entry

The King’s men collected the clods of gold, saying: “This is what the great past merit of the King has brought into being.” The gold clods instantly changed back into clods of earth! Not a piece of gold was collected by them. They reported the matter to the King. King Bimbisāra told them: “In that case, O men, say: ‘This is what Puṇṇa’s great past merit has brought into being,’ when you pick up those clod.” The men went back, said the words as instructed by the King when collecting the gold and were successfully in obtaining the gold.

The clods of gold, taken in many cartloads, were piled on the main square of the palace. It heaped to the height of that of a Palmyra tree. The King summoned merchants and asked: “Whose house in the city holds a pile of gold as big as this?” The merchants answered: “Great King, there is no house that holds this much gold.” The King further asked: “What should we do with Puṇṇa, who is the owner of this gold?” The merchant

unanimously replied: “Great King, that Puṇṇa should be given the title of Royal Treasurer.” The King agreed. And so Puṇṇasiha became the Royal Treasurer. All the gold gathered was handed over to him. On that same day, Puṇṇasiha’s inauguration as Royal Treasurer was held in high ceremonial state.

Puṇṇasiha, now the Royal Treasurer, held a grand celebration on that auspicious acquisition of the royal title for seven days, when the Buddha and His Sangha were honoured with magnificent offerings. On the seventh day, after hearing the Buddha’s sermon in appreciation of his great charity, all the members of his family, i.e. Puṇṇasiha, his wife Uttara and their daughter Uttarā, were established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry.

This is the story of Puṇṇasiha, one of the five great rich men within the dominion of King Bimbisāra who had inexhaustible resources.

The Union of the Puṇṇasiha’s Family with The Sumana Family, who were Non-believers

Sumana the householder of Rājagaha, on learning that Puṇṇasiha had a grown-up daughter, sent messengers to ask for the hand of his daughter in marriage to his son. Puṇṇasiha gave a flat refusal. Sumana was furious. “That fellow who had been dependent on me now disdains me because he has become a great man,” he thought, conceited as he was of his own wealth. He sent this view of his to Puṇṇasiha through messengers. Puṇṇasiha was not to be outdone. He explained to Sumana’s messengers: “Your master is being arrogant. Even though what he says is a fact, he should remember that a man should not be expected to always remain poor because he was born poor. Now, I am wealthy enough to buy householders like Sumana as my slaves. But, I do not say this in derogation of his lineage. I still honour him as a worthy householder. My point is, my daughter is a Stream-Enterer, an *ariya* in the Buddha’s Teaching. She spends one tical every day on flowers in her offerings to the Triple Gem. I cannot send my daughter to the house of a non-believer like Sumana.”

When Sumana learnt the adamant stand taken by Puṇṇasiha, he changed his tone. He sent words to Puṇṇasiha, saying: “I do not wish to break old ties of friendship. I will see to it that my daughter-in-law gets flower worth of two ticals everyday.” Puṇṇasiha, being a man who knew the value of gratitude, agreed to Sumana’s proposition and sent his daughter in marriage to Sumana’s son.

Uttarā’s Great Faith in Religious Practice

One day, Uttarā said to her husband: “Dear husband, in my parents’ house I observe *uposatha* precept eight days every month. If you may agree, I would do that here too.” Although she made her proposition in gentle words, her husband bluntly refused it. She had to put up with the refusal meekly. At the beginning of the rains-retreat period, she sought his permission again to keep the *uposatha* during the three-month period. Again she received the blunt refusal.

When two and a half month had gone by and only fifteen days were left of the *vassa* (rain-retreat) period, Uttarā asked her parents to send her fifteen thousand ticals of money, letting them know that in the confines of wedlock, she had not had a day to observe the *uposatha*. She did not say how and why the money was needed. Her parents did not bother to ask why she needed the money but sent her the sum she asked, first.

Uttarā then sent for Sirimā, a courtesan in Rājagaha (who was the sister of Jīvaka the physician) and said to her: “Dear Sirimā, as I intend to keep the *uposatha* for fifteen days, I would request you to attend on my husband during these days for a fee of fifteen thousand ticals.” Sirimā accepted her offer. Uttarā’s husband was only too happy about this arrangement and allowed her to keep the *uposatha* for fifteen days.

Having obtained her husband’s permission, Uttarā went about her meritorious deeds freely. She prepared food offerings for the Buddha early in the morning, assisted by her servants. After making offerings to the Buddha, and when the Buddha returned to the monastery, she kept the *uposatha* and would stay upstairs alone, reflecting on her moral precepts. Fifteen days passed peacefully. On the morning of the first waning of the last

month of the three-month period, the day on which her observance of the *uposatha* was to end, she was preparing gruel and other items of food for offering to the Buddha. She was busy with the job since early morning.

(Moral: Such is the nature of sensual objects that, through their continued enjoyment, one tends to forget that they belong to another, and is tempted into thinking that they are one's own.)

At that time, the householder's son, having fun with Sirimā on the upper storey of the mansion, drew aside the lace curtain of the window and looked down into the inside of the house. At the same time, Uttarā happened to look up into the window and her eyes met those of her husband. The husband smiled with the thought: "This Uttarā is looking like a being from *niraya*. How odd of her to deny herself the luxury of her status and toil herself unnecessarily (in the kitchen) mingling with the servants." Uttarā also smiled with the thought: "This son of the householder, being forgetful, thinks that this life of ease and comfort is lasting."

Sirimā, who saw the couple smiled at each other, became furious with jealousy. "This slave, Uttarā, is flirting with my husband even in my presence," she thought to herself (for she had now an illusion that she and the householder's son were real husband and wife). She ran down the stairs, fuming. Uttarā understood that Sirimā had, after half a month of dominion of the house, considered it her own. So, she entered into the *jhāna* of universal goodwill and stood sedately. Sirimā, rushing through the servants, took hold of a ladle, filled it with boiling oil from a pot which was cooking over the fire, and suddenly poured it over Uttarā's head. But, since Uttarā was dwelling in the *jhāna* of goodwill, and her whole body being diffused with loving-kindness, she did not feel the heat of the oil which flowed over her body like water onto a lotus leaf.

At that moment, Uttarā's servant accosted Sirimā with abusive words, saying: "You slave woman, you are a mere hireling of our Mistress. Yet after staying in this house for just fifteen days you try to rival our Mistress." These words awakened Sirimā to her true position. She realized she had gone too far. She went to Uttarā, fell on her feet, and apologised to her, saying: "Dear Madam, I had been reckless in my behaviour. Do forgive me!" Uttarā replied: "Dear Sirimā, I cannot accept your apology now. I have my father in the Buddha. You must first obtain forgiveness from my father, the Buddha, before I can forgive you."

Just then, the Buddha and His company of *bhikkhus* arrived and sat in the seats prepared for them. Sirimā approached the Buddha and prostrating herself at His feet, said: "Venerable Sir, I have done some wrong against Uttarā. I apologised to her for it and she says that I must first obtain forgiveness from the Bhavagā before she would forgive me. May the Bhavagā forgive me." The Buddha said: "Sirimā, I forgive you." Then she went to Uttarā and made obeisance to her as a token of her apology.

The Buddha, in His discourse in appreciation of the food offering, uttered the following verse:

"Conquer the angry one by loving-kindness;
Conquer the wicked one by goodness;
Conquer the stingy one by generosity;
Conquer the liar by speaking the truth."

— Dhammapada, verse 223 —

At the end of the discourse, Sirimā was established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry. After the attainment of ariyahood, she invited the Buddha to her residence the next morning and she made great offerings to the Buddha and His Sangha.

Thus goes the story of Uttarā the householder's daughter, who also was known as Nanda's mother after she gave birth to a son by the name of Nanda.

(c) Uttarā as The Foremost Female Lay Disciple

On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery naming distinguished female lay-disciples, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My female lay-disciple who dwell in *jhāna*, Uttarā, the mother of Nanda, is the foremost.”

6. PRINCESS SUPPAVĀSĀ The Koliyan

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Suppavāsā was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While she was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a certain female lay disciple being named by Him as the foremost in offering superior articles. She thus had a strong desire to become such a disciple in the future. After making extraordinary offerings, she aspired to that distinction in front of the Buddha, who predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled in her future existence.

(b) As Princess Suppavāsā, The Koliyan, in Her Last Existence

The future Suppavāsā, after being reborn in either deva realm or human realm for a hundred thousand world-cycles, was reborn as a princess of the Sakyan clan, in the city of Koliya. She was named Suppavāsā. When she was of marriageable age, she was given in marriage to a Sakyan prince. As the housewife in the household of the prince, she had the occasion to listen to a discourse by the Buddha which resulted in her attaining Stream-Entry. Later, she gave birth to a son, named Sivali. (Details of the episode of the birth of Sivali has been described in Chapter 43: Sivali Mahāthera.)

(c) Princess Suppavāsā as The Foremost Female Lay Disciple

At one time, Princess Suppavāsā, the mother of the Venerable Sivali, offered choicest food to the Buddha and His Sangha. After finishing the meal the Buddha preached a discourse in appreciation of the special offering, He said:

“My female lay disciple Suppavāsā, in making this food offering, has in effect made five kinds of offering, namely, life, good appearance, happiness, strength and intelligence. Offering of life leads to longevity, either in the deva realm or in the human realm. Offering of good appearance, happiness, strength and intelligence leads to the blessing of good appearance, happiness, strength and intelligence (respectively) either in the deva realm or in the human realm.” This was the occasion that became the ground for the Buddha’s naming of foremost female lay disciple on Suppavāsā.

On another occasion, when the Buddha was residing in the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatti, and was naming distinguished female lay disciple, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My female lay disciple who make gifts of the choicest quality, Suppavāsā, the Koliyan Princess, is the foremost.”

7. SUPPIYĀ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Suppiyā was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, while listening to a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a certain female lay disciple being named as the foremost in looking after a sick *bhikkhu* in an exceptional way. She had a strong desire to become such a disciple in her future existence. After making a great offering, she made her wish in front of the Buddha who predicted that her wish would be fulfilled in her future existence.

(b) As Suppiyā in Her Last Existence

After faring for a hundred thousand world-cycles in the deva realm or the human realm, she was reborn into the family of a rich householder in the city of Bārāṇasī, during the time of Buddha Gotama. She was named Suppiyā. When she was of marriageable age she

became the wife of a son of a householder.

It was then that the Buddha visited Bārāṇasī in the company of many *bhikkhus* and was staying in the monastery at Isipatana Migadāvana. Suppiyā, the householder's wife, visited the Buddha and after listening to His discourse on her first visit, she was established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry.

Suppiyā's Astounding Zeal in Giving

One day, after listening to the Buddha's sermon, Suppiyā made a round of the monastic dwelling at Migadāvana to see to the needs of their residents. She came across a wan, enfeebled *bhikkhu* who had taken some purgative. She asked him what sort of food or medicine would do him good. He replied: "Lay female supporter, meat soup would do me good." Suppiyā said: "So be it, Venerable Sir, I will send some meat soup to you," and she left after making obeisance to the *bhikkhu*. On the next day, she sent her servant to buy some meat in the bazaar, hoping to get some meat for sales to unspecified buyers. The servant could not find such meat and reported to her.

Suppiyā thought to herself: "I have promised to the sick *bhikkhu* to send meat soup. If I do not make good my word, he would feel ill at ease because he is not likely to get meat soup from anywhere else. So, I must see that he gets the meat soup somehow." She went into her bedroom and cut a piece of flesh from her thigh, which she gave to her housemaid to cook some soup using the usual ingredient (such as chilli, onion and other condiments) and said: "Take this soup to the sick *bhikkhu* and offer it to him. If he asks about me, tell him that I am taken ill." The housemaid did as she was told.

The Buddha learned about the matter. On the next morning, at the time of making the daily alms-collecting, He went to Suppiyā's house (being invited by her husband) in the company of many *bhikkhus*. After having seated at the special seat prepared for Him, the Buddha asked the householder: "Where is Suppiyā?"

"She is unwell, Venerable Sir," answered the householder.

"Let her come to Me, even though she is unwell."

"She is unable to walk, Venerable Sir."

"Then carry her."

The householder went and carried his wife, Suppiyā, when, to her surprise, at the instant she looked at the Buddha, her big wound on her thigh suddenly disappeared and was restored to its normal flesh with body hair. Thereupon, the householder and his wife, Suppiyā, exclaimed: "Marvellous it is! Astounding it is! Friend, great is the power of the Bhagavā. At the very instant of seeing the Bhavagā, such a deep wound is restored to natural flesh!" Feeling elated, they served the Buddha and His Sangha with choicest food, specially prepared for offering.

After finishing the meal and preaching a discourse to the donor, the Buddha returned to the monastery. Then, at the congregation of *bhikkhus*, the Buddha asked:

"*Bhikkhus*, who asked for meat from Suppiyā the householder's wife?"

"I did, Venerable Sir," answered the sick *bhikkhu*.

"Did she send the meal (i.e. meat soup)? Did you enjoy it?"

"Yes, Venerable Sir, I did."

"Did you ask what meat it is?"

"No, Venerable Sir, I did not."

The Buddha reprimanded the *bhikkhu* showing many reasons and laid this rule of conduct for *bhikkhus*:

"*Bhikkhus*, lay supporters, who have conviction in the Triple Gem, even give up their own flesh to the Sangha. *Bhikkhus*, human flesh should not be consumed. Any *bhikkhu* who consumes human flesh is liable to a breach of the Thullasaya Rule. *Bhikkhus*, it is improper for a *bhikkhu* to

consume meat without inquiring about it. He who does so without inquiring about it incurs a breach of the Dukkaṭṭa rule.”

(For details, refer to **Vinaya Mahāvagga**.)

Thus took place the event leading to Suppiyā earning the title of foremost female lay-disciple.

(c) Suppiyā as The Foremost Female Lay Disciple

On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing in the Jetavana monastery naming distinguished female lay disciples, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My female lay disciples who look after the sick *bhikkhus*, Suppiyā is the foremost.”

8. KĀTIYĀNI

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Kātiyāni was born into a rich man’s family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She saw a certain female lay disciple being named as the foremost in unshakable conviction in the Teaching. She emulated that female lay disciple. After making extraordinary offerings, she aspired to that recognition in front of the Buddha, who predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled in her future existence.

(b) Her Last Existence as Kātiyāni The Householder

The future Kātiyāni, for a hundred thousand world-cycle was reborn either in the deva realm or human realm, before she was reborn into the family of a householder in the town of Kuraraghara, during the time of Buddha Gotama. She was name Kātiyāni by her parents. When she came of age, she became a close friend of Kālī the householder’s wife who was the mother of the Venerable Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa (refer to the Chapter 43: Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa Mahāthera).

The Unshakable Conviction of Kātiyāni

On one occasion, the Venerable Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa, on his return from the Buddha’s monastery, was requested by his mother to reproduce the Buddha’s words for her benefit. In compliance, he delivered a discourse in the community hall for Dhamma lectures at the Town Square. As he was starting his discourse from the raised platform, with his mother as the chief listener, Kātiyāni the householder, in the company of her friend Kālī, arrived and was reverentially listening to the discourse among the audience.

At that time a band of five hundred robbers who had dug a tunnel from the outskirts of the town to the house of Kātiyāni according to their secret markings made in the day, had reached the house. Their leader did not join them but was making personal inquiries into the activities of the townsfolk. He stood behind Kātiyāni in the assembly where the Venerable Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa was preaching a discourse on the Dhamma.

Kātiyāni said to her female assistance: “Go, girl, get some oil from my house for the lamps. Let us light up the lamps at this meeting hall. (According to the Sinhalese version: “We shall share the merit of our friend Kālī in this way.”) The servant went to the house but on noticing the robbers who were lurking in the tunnel, she was scared and returned to the assembly hall without bringing the oil. She reported the matter to her mistress, saying: “Madam, there is a tunnel dug in our compound by robbers!” The robber chief heard the girl’s urgent report to Kātiyāni and thought to himself: “If Kātiyāni were to go home in response to her maid’s report, I will cut her head immediately. If, on the other hand, she were to keep on listening to the discourse with attention, I will return her all the property which my men would have looted from her house.”

Kātiyāni said to her maid (in whispers): “Hush! The robbers will take only what they find in the house. I am listening to the Dhamma which is hard to be heard. Don’t disturb and

spoil it!” When the robber chief heard Kāṭiyāni’s words he pondered: “What a devout lady she is! If I were to take the property looted from the house of such a meritorious lady, we would be devoured alive by the great earth.” He hurried to Kāṭiyāni’s residence, ordered his followers to return everything they had looted and went back with them to the assembly hall to listen to the discourse, taking their seats at the end of the audience.

Kāṭiyāni was established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry at the end of the discourse by the Venerable Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa. When dawn came, the robber chief went to Kāṭiyāni and prostrating at her feet, said: “Dear Madame, kindly forgive us for our fault.” Kāṭiyāni asked: “What wrong have you done to me?” The robber chief admitted all their plot to her. “I forgive you all,” she said.

“Madam, your forgiveness does not exonerate us yet. As a matter of fact, we would request that your son, the Venerable Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa, admit all the five hundred of us into the Order as novices.” Kāṭiyāni took the gang to the Venerable Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa, and herself bore all the responsibilities regarding the four requisites for them. They were admitted into the order as novices by the Venerable Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa. They strove to gain the Path-Knowledge and ultimately became *arahats*.

This is the story of Kāṭiyāni the householder whose conviction in the Triple Gem was unshakable.

(c) Kāṭiyāni as The Foremost Female Lay Disciple

On a later occasion, during the Buddha’s residence at the Jetavana monastery, when He was naming distinguished female lay disciples according to their respective merits, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My female lay disciples who have unshakable conviction in the Teaching, Kāṭiyāni is the foremost.”

9. NAKULAMĀTU

The story of Nakulamātu is already been told, when dealing with the story of Nakulapitu. (Refer to Chapter 54: Nakulapitu the Householder.) Here we need only pay our attention mainly on Nakulamātu.

Nakulapitu and Nakulamātu were of the same aspiration in the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When the future Nakulapitu was a lay disciple, he witnessed a lay disciple being designated as the foremost among lay disciples who were close to the Buddha. He made great offering and aspired to that designation. Likewise, when the future Nakulamātu witnessed a female lay disciple being designated as the foremost among female lay-disciple who were close to the Buddha, she made great offerings and aspired to that title. (Since both stories are identical, the Commentary does not give a separate account of Nakulamātu.)

Nakulamātu, like Nakulapitu, was declared by the Buddha:

“*Bhikkhus*, among the female lay disciples who are close to Me, Nakulamātu is the foremost.”

10. KĀLĪ, The Female Disciple of Kararaghara

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Kālī was reborn into the family of a Rich Man in the city of Hamsāvathī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While listening to a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a female lay disciple being named by Him as the foremost in devotion to the Buddhas, even before meeting the Buddha. She strongly aspired to be such a person in her future existence. After making great offerings to the Buddha, she made her aspiration in front of Him. The Buddha predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled in her future life.

(b) Her Last Existence as Kālī, Daughter of A Householder

The future Kālī, after being reborn in either the deva realm or human realm for a hundred thousand world-cycles, was reborn as a daughter of a householder in Rājagaha, during the time of Buddha Gotama. She was named Kālī by her parents.

When she came of marriageable age, she was given in marriage to a son of a householder of Kuraraghara, which was a market town in Avanti Province (Southern India) and had to go and live with her parent-in-law in that town. After a time, she became pregnant from her wedlock.

When her pregnancy advanced, Kālī considered it unwise to have the child born at a place away from her own parents' home, and thus she went back to Rājagaha. Then, on one night (the full moon of Āsālhā (July), 103 Great Era, the day the Dhammacakka Sutta was taught), at midnight, she happened to overhear the devas, Sātāgira and Hemavata, discussing the salutary effects of the Triple Gems above her mansion, in mid-air. She was instilled with devotion for the Buddha so much so that even without having met Him, she was established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry. (For details, refer to Chapter 10.)

Kālī was the first among the females who attained *sotāpatti-magga* and became an *ariya* disciple so that she was the eldest among the Buddha's female disciples. That very night, she gave birth to a child (the future Venerable Sona Kutikaṇṇa) and after staying at her parents' house for as long as she liked, she returned to Kuraraghara.

(c) Kālī The Foremost Female Lay Disciple

On one occasion, when the Buddha sat in glory at the congregation of *bhikkhus*, in the Jetavana monastery and naming distinguished female lay disciples, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My female lay disciples who are devoted to Me, even without having met Me, Kālī of Kuraraghara is the foremost.”

LIFE STORIES OF RICH MEN WITH INEXHAUSTIBLE RESOURCES

(Supplementary Notes.)

1. JOTIKA The Rich Householder

His Past Existence as A Sugar Cane Planter

In times past, (prior to the time of Buddha Vipassī who appeared ninety-one world-cycles previous to the present world-cycle) there lived in the city of Bārāṇasī two rich brothers who were sugar cane planters and who had a number of workers in the plantation. One day, the younger brother went to the plantation and cut up two stems of cane, one for himself and the other for his brother. He carefully wrapped the ends with leaves so as to contain the juice.

(In those times, sugar-cane did not need to be crushed for its juice but by merely cutting up the stem and hanging it up on one end to let the juice flow down freely.)

On his way home, he met a Paccekabuddha who had just arisen from dwelling in the attainment of Cessation and who, on reviewing the world, saw the younger of the two brothers as the person deserving His blessing since he was in a position to make a meritorious gift. Accordingly, He stood in front of the sugar-cane planter, after having left His Gandmādāna abode by travelling through the air carrying His alms-bowl and great robe. The householder was delighted to see the Paccekabuddha and had great devotion to Him. He asked the revered One to wait a moment on his shawl which he placed carefully on a high spot. Then he requested Him to tilt the alms-bowl to receive the sugar-cane juice which he released by unwrapping the stem of the cane. The juice from one stem filled the alms-bowl.

The Paccekabuddha drank the sugar-cane juice. The householder, having enjoyed much satisfaction in his gift of the juice to the Paccekabuddha, now thought of making a second gift of the cane which he had carried for his elder brother. “I might pay its price to him, or if he refuses payment, perhaps I will share the merit with him,” he thought to himself. He said to the Paccekabuddha: “Venerable Sir, kindly tilt the alms-bowl to receive the juice from another cane.” He filled the alms-bowl with the juice by unwrapping the second cane. (Herein, the younger brother was carrying the cane for his elder brother who did not know about it. By using it as he liked (i.e. by giving it to the Paccekabuddha), it never occurred to him that his elder brother might cut another stem for himself. Such was his honest, simple nature.)

The Paccekabuddha, having taken the juice from the first cane, reserved that from the second one for His other fellow Paccekabuddha. As He remained still seated, the younger brother knew that the Paccekabuddha was not going to take another drink. He made obeisance to Him and said: “Venerable Sir, for this offering of sugar cane juice, may I enjoy sensual pleasure in the deva-world and the human world and ultimately realize the Dhamma that you have realized.” The Paccekabuddha said: “May your wish be fulfilled.” After saying words of appreciation for the offering in two stanzas beginning with these words, He rose into air in the presence of the householder and returned to the Gandamādāna Mountain where He offered the sugar-cane juice to the five hundred Paccekabuddhas. He willed that this good deed be seen by the donor.

After witnessing the miraculous power of the Paccekabuddha, the younger brother went to his elder brother who asked him where he had been. He told him that he had been inspecting the plantation. The elder brother said: “What use of your going on inspection (since you do not even bother to bring some sample.)” The younger brother replied: “Yes, brother, I did bring a cane for you but I met a Paccekabuddha on my way home and offered one cane, that is, the juice from it, to the Paccekabuddha. After that I had an urge to make a further offering with the other cane, which was meant for you. I thought that I would pay you the cost of it, or else I would share the merit with you and made another

offering of the juice out of the other cane to the Paccekabuddha. Now, brother, what do you say, would you take the cost of the cane meant for you, or would you share the merit?"

"What did the Paccekabuddha do with your offering?"

"He drank the first offering on the spot, and brought back the second one, which He offered to the five hundred Paccekabuddhas at the Gandamādāna Monastery where He returned by His psychic power."

The elder brother was thrilled to hear the meritorious deed of his younger brother. He said: "May my good deed, through my brother, results in the realization of the Dhamma which the Paccekabuddha had realized." And thus while the younger brother aspired to glorious existence in the deva-world and the human world, and then the realization of Nibbāna, the elder brother aspired to *arahatta-phala* straight away. These were the past aspirations of the two brothers.

Another Round of Existence as Householder Brothers.

The two brothers lived to the full life span of the times. After passing away from that existence they were reborn in the deva realm during the interim period of innumerable years, i.e. an infinite world-cycle between the time of Buddha Phussa and that of Buddha Vipassī. While they were still living in the deva realm, Buddha Vipassī appeared in the world. They passed away from that deva existence and were reborn as two brothers in the family of a householder in Bandumatī. The elder brother was reborn as the elder one and the younger as the younger again. The elder brother was named Sena, the younger, Aparājita, by their parents.

When they came of age, they succeeded to their family estate. As they were managing the family affairs, there arose a clangour of noises throughout the city of Bandumatī such as: "O virtuous persons, the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha have appeared in the world, like the sun and the moon! Give in charity! Perform deeds of merit! Today is the eighth day of the month, an *uposatha* day. Today is the fourteenth day of the month, an *uposatha* day. Today is the fifteen day of the month, an *uposatha* day. Keep the *uposatha* precepts. Listen to the expositions on the Dhamma." These exhortations were ringing through the city on the appropriate days. They were made by devout disciples of the Buddha. And the people would piously respond. In the morning, they would make alms-giving and in the afternoon they would go to the Buddha's monastery to listen His sermons. Sena joined the devotees in going to the Buddha's monastery to listen to His sermon. He sat at the end of the audience.

Buddha Vipassī knew the devout tendency of Sena the householder and taught a discourse in the (usual) graduated levels beginning from the merit in giving, the merit in morality, and so on. At the end of that discourse, Sena was so enthusiastic about taking up a religious life that he requested the Buddha to admit him into the Order. The Buddha said to him: "Lay supporter, are there relatives whose permission you need to obtain?"

"Yes, Venerable Sir, I have," replied Sena.

"If so, first get their permission."

Then, Sena went to his younger brother Aparājita and said: "Younger brother, you become the sole successor to our family estate from now."

"But what are you going to do?" Aparājita queried.

"I am going to become a *bhikkhu* under the Buddha."

"Dear brother, since the death of our mother, I have regarded you as my mother; since the death of our father, I have regarded you as my father. Our family estate is a vast one. You can do meritorious deeds living in the house. Do not go away (as a *bhikkhu*)."

"I have heard the Buddha's sermon. It is not possible to practice the Doctrine as a householder, I must be a *bhikkhu* now. Stay back, dear brother," Sena did not allow any further protestations and, leaving behind Aparājita, he went to Buddha Vipassī and was admitted into the Order, first as a novice, and later as a full-fledged *bhikkhu*. With

diligence in the *bhikkhu* practice, he soon attained arahatship.

Donation of A Private Chamber for Buddha Vipassī

Aparājita the householder celebrated his elder brother's going forth into bhikkhuhood with big offerings to the Buddha and His Sangha for seven days. Then making obeisance to his elder brother, he said: "Venerable Sir, you have renounced the world for the sake of liberation from the repeated existence. As for me, I have not been able to break the bonds of sense pleasures. Advise me as to what sort of meritorious deed should be performed in a big way."

"Good, good, you wise man," said the Venerable, "Build a private chamber for the Buddha."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," responded Aparājita.

He procured various kinds of choicest timber, from which he made posts for the building and seven kinds of precious metals were used to embellish each post for building. The roofing also was embellished with the seven kinds of precious metals.

Portico to The Buddha's Private Chamber donated by Aparājita, Junior

During the construction of the private chamber for the Buddha, Aparājita, Junior, nephew of Aparājita the householder, asked his uncle to allow him to participate in the construction so as to have a share of merit. Uncle Aparājita refused, saying that he could not share the merit with anyone.

Aparājita Junior, being repeatedly refused by his uncle to participate in the construction of the brick monastery, built a separate portico in front of the main building. That Aparājita, Junior, was reborn as Meṇḍaka the householder during the time of Buddha Gotama. (This story will be told fully later.)

The Grandeur of The Buddha's Private Chamber and The Landscape Gardening around It

Special features of the brick monastery for use as the Buddha's private chamber included three big windows ornately finished with seven precious stones. Directly against each of them, Aparājita the householder dug three square lotus ponds of concrete beds which were filled with scented waters, and planted with five kinds of lotus. The idea being to let the fragrant pollen from the lotus flowers to be constantly wafted through the air towards the Buddha.

The pinnacles were plated with gold sheets and its peak was finished in coral. Its roofing was of emerald glass tiles. The pinnacle had the appearance of a dancing peacock with its feathers in full display. The compound of the monastery was filled with seven precious stones to a thickness of knee-deep, some wrought as ornaments, some in their natural state.

Donating The Monastery to The Buddha

When the brick monastery was completed in all its grandeur, Aparājita the householder said to his elder brother, the Venerable Sena: "Venerable Sir, the brick monastery is finished. I would like to see it occupied by the Buddha as his private chamber. That would, I understand, bring me much merit." The Venerable Sena informed the Buddha about the wish of his younger brother.

Buddha Vipassī rose from His seat, went to the newly built monastery, and seeing the whole compound filled with precious stones up to knee-deep, stood at the entrance. Aparājita the householder invited the Buddha to enter the monastic compound but the Buddha did not move and remained standing at the entrance. Thrice, the householder requested the Buddha to go in, but to no avail. On the third time the Buddha glanced at the Venerable Sena. The Venerable Sena knew from that glance the Buddha's wish. So he said to his younger brother: "Go to the Buddha and say to the Buddha: 'Venerable Sir, these precious stones will be solely my responsibility. May the Bhagavā reside here without bothering about them.' " Hence, Aparājita the householder went to the Buddha, made obeisance to him, in fivefold contact, and said: "Venerable Sir, just as men would leave the shade of the tree unconcernedly, or ferry across a river without thinking about the ferry-

boat they have used, so also, may the Bhagavā enter and stay in the monastery unconcerned about these precious stones.”

(The Buddha refused to enter the monastic compound because of the precious stones. The Buddha's monastery was open door to all visitors, coming in the mornings as well as in the afternoon. The Buddha could not keep watch and ward over the precious stones. Hence the Buddha considered: “If visitors take them away and the Householder Aparājita might put the blame on me for the loss he would be incurring grave consequences leading to the four miserable states (*apāya*), These considerations made the Buddha refuse to enter.)

When Aparājita made it clear that precious stones should not bother the Buddha for they were the sole responsibility of the donor (Aparājita) only, the Buddha agreed and entered the monastery. The donor placed some watchmen at the monastic compound with the words: “O men, if visitors were to collect these precious stones inside pockets or baskets, or sacks, you must prevent them from doing so but, if they were to grab them in their hands only, let them do so.”

Aparājita let every household in the city know that he had strewn about precious jewels up to knee-deep inside the monastic compound of the Buddha's Private Chamber, and invited all and sundry who had listened to the Buddha's sermon to take them. The poor were expected to take two fist-full while the rich should take only one fistful. The householder's idea was to give incentive to those who had no natural inclination to go to the Buddha's monastery and attend the sermons and thus help them towards emancipation. He had also the good will to extend his gift to the naturally inclined devotees.

The people abided by the donor's stipulation about the gifts at the Buddha's monastery: The poor enjoying two fistfuls of the treasures, the rich only one fistful. When the precious stones were exhausted, a second round up to knee-deep, were strewn about. And when the second was exhausted, the third round followed.

An important event then occurred. Aparājita had a strong idea: he wanted visitors to the Buddha to take delight in watching the golden rays emitted by the Buddha, side by side with the glow emitted by a ruby of priceless quality, of the size of a bitter cucumber which he had placed at the Buddha's feet. The people enjoyed the wondrous sight of the two kinds of rays as desired by the householder.

The Ruby is stolen by A Brahmin amidst Everyone Present

One day, a brahmin, who was a non-believer in the Buddha, went before the Buddha with the intention of stealing the ruby. From the time he went close to the Buddha, past the audience, Aparājita had an inkling of the brahmin's evil intent. “O, how good it would be if this brahmin would not snatch away my ruby!” he thought to himself.

The brahmin pretended to make obeisance to the Buddha, stretching out his hands towards the Buddha's feet and suddenly snatched the ruby, hid it in the fold of his lower garment, and left. Aparājita the donor of the great monastery, could not stand the brazenness of the brahmin. When the Buddha had ended His discourse, he approached Him and said: “Venerable Sir, I had strewn the monastic compound with precious stones up to knee-depth for three times, and had no grudge against those people who took them away. In fact, I was pleased with my own gift-making. But today I had forebodings about the brahmin's visit to the Bhagavā and had wished that he would not steal the ruby. My foreboding have been proved correct. I cannot keep my mind calm and clear.”

Aparājita's Aspiration as suggested by The Buddha

Buddha Vipassī said to Aparājita: “Lay Supporter, it is possible for one to prevent pilferage of one's property, is it not?” Catching the meaning of the Buddha's broad hint, the householder made obeisance to the Buddha and made his aspiration in these terms:

“Venerable Sir, from today onwards, let no one, be they a hundred kings or robbers, be able to rob me, or in any way dispossess me of any of my property, be it as trifling as a strand of thread. Let no fire burn my property. Let no flood wash

away my property.”

And the Buddha said: “May all your wishes be fulfilled.” Aparājita held great celebrations to mark the donation of the grand monastery. For nine whole months he offered food to 6.8 million *bhikkhus* at the monastery. On the day of libation, he donated a set of three robes to each of the *bhikkhus*. The junior-most *bhikkhu* received, on that occasion, the robe-material worth a hundred thousand.

His Last Existence as Jotika The Householder

When Aparājita passed away afterlife time of meritorious deeds, he was reborn as a deva. And for ninety-one world-cycles he was never reborn in the four miserable states. During the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn in the family of a rich householder. After nine and a half months of conception in his mother's womb, on the day he was born, all weaponry in Rājagaha blazed like flames, and all jewellery worn on the person of the citizens gleamed like the glow of the sun, so that the whole city was glowing.

The householder, who was the father of the boy, went to see the King. King Bimbisāra asked him:

“Householder, today all weaponry are blazing and the whole city is glowing. Do you know what has caused this.”

“Yes, I do, Great King,” replied the householder.

“What is it?”

“A new Royal servant of your Majesty was born in my house. It is due to the great past merit of my infant son that this strange phenomenon has happened.”

“How is it, householder? Is your son going to become a robber?”

“No, Great King, he will not become a robber. He is endowed with vast past merit.”

“In that case, bring him up with care. Let him have a thousand ticals of money for his nursing.”

From then onwards, the King gave a thousand ticals every day towards the boy's upkeep. On the day of the boy's naming, he was given the name ‘Jotika (the Luminous Boy)’, signifying the glow that marked his birth.

Sakka's Creation of Jotika's House

When Jotika came of age, his parents cleared a site for building a house for him, At that moment, Sakka's crystal seat warmed up by way of signalling some event that called for his attention. He reviewed the world and saw that people were marking out a site for building a house for Jotika. Sakka thought to himself: “This man Jotika is no ordinary man who has to live in a house built by human hands. I must see to his proper residence,” and he descended to the human world in the guise of a carpenter. He asked the men at the site: “O men, what is this all about?”

“We are pegging out the house to be built for Jotika's residence.”

“Then, make way O men, Jotika is not the kind of man who has to live in a house built by human hands.”

So saying, he intently looked at a stretch of land that was sixteen *karisas* wide. (One *karisa* = 1 3/4 acre.)

- (1) The land became flat and smooth like a piece of meditation device for meditating on the Earth Element.
- (2) Then, Sakka, looking intently at the chosen site, willed in his mind: “Let there arise, opening up the earth, a seven-tiered mansion finished with seven kinds of precious stones,” and instantly a seven-tiered mansion complete with seven kinds of precious stones arose opening up the earth.
- (3) Next, Sakka, looking intently at the mansion, willed in his mind: “Let there appear seven walls finished with seven kinds of precious stones around the mansion,” and instantly the seven walls appeared around the mansion.

- (4) Next, Sakka, looking intently at the walls, willed in his mind: “Let there appear wishing trees inside each of the seven walls,” and instantly there appeared wishing trees inside each of the seven walls
- (5) Next, Sakka, looking intently at the mansion, willed in his mind: “Let there appear four gold jars full of precious stones at each of the four corners of the mansion,” and his wish materialized. (In this connection, Jotika's four treasure jars are different from the treasure jars that usually appeared for Bodhisattas, in that in the latter case, the four jars were of various sizes at their mouths varying from one *yojana* in diameter, three *gāvutas* (i.e. $\frac{3}{4}$ *yojana*), two *gāvutas* (i.e. $\frac{1}{2}$ *yojana*), and one *gāvuta* (i.e. $\frac{1}{4}$ *yojana*); they had their bottoms reaching down to the base of the great earth. In the former case, the size of the mouths of the jars is not mentioned in the old Commentaries, but they contained jewels about the size of Palmyra fruits whose faces were cut off.)
- (6) At the four corners of the great mansion, four sugar cane plants of solid gold appeared, each with a stem the thickness of a Palmyra tree. The leaves of the trees were emerald. These trees bore witness to Jotika's immense past merit.

The seven entrances to the seven walls were guarded by seven *yakkha* generals with their armies, namely, (i) at the first gate, Yāma Koḷī was in charge with one thousand *yakkhas* under him; (ii) at the second gate, Uppala was in charge with two thousand *yakkhas* under him; (iii) at the third gate, Vajira was in charge with three thousand *yakkhas* under him, (iv) at the fourth gate, Vajrabāhu was in charge with four thousand *yakkhas* under him; (v) at the fifth gate, Kasakanda was in charge with five thousand *yakkhas* under him; (vi) at the sixth gate, Katattha was in charge with six thousand *yakkhas* under him and (vii) at the seventh gate, Disāmukha was in charge with seven thousand *yakkhas* under him.

King Bimbisāra makes Jotika Royal Treasurer

When King Bimbisāra heard the news of the Jotika phenomenon comprising the arising through the earth of the bejewelled seven-storied mansion, the seven walls and its great gates, and the appearance of the four great gold jars, etc. he made him the Royal Treasurer, with all the paraphernalia of the office such as, the white Umbrella, etc. sent to him. From that time, Jotika was widely known as the Royal Treasurer.

Devas send Sakulakāyī of The Northern Island Continent as A Bride for Jotika

The lady who had been Jotika's partner in doing meritorious deeds in the past now happened to be reborn in the Northern Island Continent. The devas took the lady, named Sakulakāyī, from her native Island Continent and installed her at Jotika's seven-stories mansion. She brought with her a small measure of rice and three crystals with heat potential in them. This quantity of rice and the three stones provided all the cooked food throughout their lives. The small vessel that contained original rice could contain any quantity of fresh rice, even as much as a hundred cart-loads of them could be poured into it!

When the rice was to be cooked, it was put into a cooking pot and placed on the three crystals, which served as a fireplace and which glowed with heat until the rice became properly cooked and then the glow faded out. When curries and other dishes were cooked, the three crystals worked on the same purpose. Thus the Jotika couple never had the use of fire for cooking. For lighting as well, they never used fire because they had emerald and rubies that glowed and gave sufficient light.

The great opulence of Jotika became well-known throughout the whole of the Southern Island Continent and people thronged to his mansion to admire it. Some came from afar using carts and other vehicles. Jotika entertained them to the special quality rice that grew only in the Northern Island Continent which was cooked on the three crystals. He also asked his visitors to take away whatever they fancied at the Wishing Trees. Further, he would ask them to take away gold, silver and jewels from the gold jar whose mouth was one quarter of a *yojana* wide. All visitors from the Southern Island Continent enjoyed Jotika munificence. It is especially remarkable that the gold jar never deplete even for an inch but always remained full to its brim. This wonderful phenomenon was the result of

Jotika's munificence in his past life as Aparājita (during the time of Buddha Vipassī) when he let the visitors to the Buddha's monastery to take away seven types of precious metals and precious stones strewn about the precincts of the monastery at knee-depth repeatedly for three times.

King Bimbisāra visited Jotika's Mansion

King Bimbisāra wanted to go and see Jotika's mansion but, during the earlier period, when there were many visitors making their visits and enjoying the munificence of Jotika, the King did not go there. Only when most people had been there and there were only a few visitors, the King gave word to Jotika's father that he would pay a visit to Jotika's mansion. The householder told his son about the King's intention, and Jotika said the King would be welcome. King Bimbisāra went to Jotika's mansion with a big retinue. When he met a maid-servant who was a sweeper and refuse-thrower (scavenger) at the first entrance, she extended her hand to the King as a welcoming gesture, but the King mistook her to be the wife of the Treasurer Jotika and out of shyness did not hold her hand. At the later entrances too, although the maid-servants extended their hands to the King, the King did not hold their hands for the same reason. (Thus it is to be seen that at Jotika's residence even maid-servants had the appearance of the wives of the Treasurer.)

Jotika welcomed the King and after saluting him, followed him. The King dared not step on the emerald flooring which seemed to him like a deep chasm. He had doubts about Jotika's loyalty, for he thought that his Treasurer was plotting against him by digging a great pit. Jotika had to prove his innocence by saying: "Great King, this is no pit. Let me go ahead and would your Majesty come after me?" Then only the King found that everything was well. He inspected the mansion, from the emerald flooring upwards at the great mansion.

(Prince Ajātasattu's nefarious thoughts: At that time, the princeling Ajātasattu was by his father's side, holding to his hand. It occurred to young Ajātasattu thus: "How foolish my father is! For he lets his subject enjoy greater style of life than himself. The man of inferior caste is living in a jewelled mansion while the king himself lives in a palace built of timber. If I were king, I would never, for a day, allow this rich man to live in this mansion.")

Even while the King was inspecting the grandeur of the upper stories, his meal time arrived. He said to Jotika: "Treasurer, we shall have our morning meal here." Jotika replied: "I know Great King, I have made arrangements for it."

Then King Bimbisāra took a bath with sixteen potfulls of scented water. He sat on the seat usually used by Jotika. He was offered some water to wash his hands. Then a bowl of thick milk-rice was placed before him in a golden bowl, which was worth a hundred thousand ticals. The King thought it to be a course of his meal and prepared to take it. Jotika said to him: "Great King, this is not for eating. It is placed here to warm the rice that is to come." The attendants of Jotika brought the rice cooked from the special rice from the Northern Island Continent in another golden bowl, which was worth a hundred thousand ticals. They put the rice bowl above the bowl of milk-rice which provided constant steamy heat to the rice, thereby making it palatable throughout the meal.

The King relished the delicious rice brought from the Northern Island Continent so much so that he did not know when to stop eating. Jotika said to him after saluting him: "Great King, that should be enough. If you eat more you will not be able to digest it." The King said: "Are you making much of your rice?" Jotika replied: "Not at all, Great King. For I am feeding the same rice to all members of your retinue. I only fear disrepute."

"What kind of disrepute?"

"If due to much eating of this food, which is especially nutritious, Your Majesty would feel lethargic on the next day, then people might say that I had fed you with this food and that I might have drugged you in the food."

"In that case, clear the table. Give me the drinking water."

After the King had finished his meal, all the members his retinue were fed with the same

rice.

Sakulakāyī attended on The King

Then, a friendly exchange of pleasantries took place between the host and his King, whereupon the latter inquired after the wife of the host.

“Don't you have a wife in your household?”

“Yes, Your Majesty, there is my wife.”

“Where is she now?”

“She is sitting in our private chamber. She does not come out because she does not know that Your Majesty has come.” (This was a fact.)

Jotika thought it only proper that his wife should come and meet the King and went to his wife, saying: “The King is paying us a visit. Ought you not see him?”

Sakulakāyī in her reclining posture in their private chamber, replied: “My Lord, what sort of person is a king?”

“The King is the person who rules over us.” Sakulakāyī was not pleased to learn that and did not want to hide her displeasure. So she said: “We had done meritorious deeds in the past in a wrong way. That is why we are being ruled over by someone. Our volition in the past in doing good deeds was not genuine so that although we are wealthy we are born as subjects to someone. Our gifts must have been made without conviction about the law of action and its resultant. Our present state of being subjects of some ruler is the result of our practice of charity in a sham conviction. But now, what is expected of me?”

Said Jotika: “Bring the palm-leaf fan and fan the King.”

Sakulakāyī obediently did as she was told. As she sat fanning the King, the odour that wafted from the King's head-dress hurt her eyes and tears flowed from them. The King, seeing her tears, said to Jotika: “Treasurer, womenfolk are short of wisdom. She is weeping probably because she thinks the King was going to confiscate your property. Tell your wife that I have no design on your property. Let her mind be set at ease.”

Jotika made A Gift of A Big Ruby to The King

Jotika said to the King: “Great King, my wife is not weeping.”

“But, why, then do those tears flow from her eyes?”

“Great King, the odour coming from your Majesty's head-dress hurts her eyes, and so the tears come out. She has a most delicate constitution. She has never used fire in her everyday existence. She gets heat and light from crystals and gems. As for Your Majesty, you are used to the light of oil lamps, I presume.”

“That's true, Treasurer.”

“In that case, Great King, from now on, may Your Majesty live by the light of a ruby.” And he presented the King with a priceless gem, the size of a bitter cucumber. King Bimbisāra studies Jotika's mansion closely and, uttering his sincere comment: “Great indeed is Jotika's wealth,” and he departed.

Jotika's Emotional Religious Awakening and Arahatsip

Later on, Prince Ajātasattu, under the evil influence of Devadatta, imprisoned his own father, King Bimbisāra, and made him unable to walk inside his cell by cutting open his soles and exposing the wounds to burning charcoals, and starved him to death. This, he did to usurp the throne. No sooner had he ascended the throne, he took his big army to confiscate Jotika's mansion by force. But, as his army got in front of the jewelled wall, the reflection of his own forces on the wall looked as if the guards of Jotika were about to attack him, and he dared not go near the wall.

Jotika was observing the *uposatha* that day. He had finished his meal early in the morning and gone to the Buddha's monastery where he listened to the Buddha's sermon. Thus, while Ajātasattu was burning with greed, Jotika was enjoying the serenity of the

Buddha's company.

Moral:

“Just as foolish ones, ruffians blinded by inordinate greed, fret and fume and torment themselves, the wise one, cherishing the Dhamma, find mental happiness and physical ease.”

When King Ajātasattu's army approached the first wall of Jotika's mansion, Yamakoḷī, the guardian deva of the gate raised a fierce alarm: “Now, where will you escape?” and routed the King's army which fled in confusion in every direction. Ajātasattu ran towards the Buddha's monastery in a haphazard manner.

When Jotika saw the King, he rose and went to him and asked: “Great King, what's up?” The King said furiously: “You detailed your men to fight me while you come here and pretend to be attending to the Buddha's sermon. How is that?”

“Great King, did you go to my place to confiscate it by force?” inquired Jotika.

“Yes, I did,” said the King angrily.

Jotika coolly said to him: “Great King, (not to speak of yourself alone) a thousand monarchs will find it impossible to take my place by force without my consent.”

“Are you going to be the king?” He felt greatly insulted by Jotika's remarks.

But Jotika replied coolly: “No, no, Great King. No one can take any of my property, not even a strand of thread, without my consent. And that includes kings.”

“I am the King. I can take whatever you possess whether you consent or not.”

“In that case, Great King, here are twenty rings around my fingers. I do not give them to you. Now, try and take them.”

Ajātasattu was a man of great physical prowess. He could leap up, while sitting, to a height of eighteen cubits and while standing, up to a height of eighty cubits. He attempted to remove the rings from Jotika's fingers but was unable even to get one. His kingly dignity was thus gravely impaired. Jotika now said to him: “Great King, if you would spread out your dress, I will show you.” And he straightened his fingers towards the King's dress, which was spread in front of him, and all the twenty rings readily dropped onto it. He said: “Great King, you have seen for yourself that Your Majesty cannot confiscate my property against my wish.” He was greatly edified by the encounter with the King. An emotional awakening arose in him and he said to the King: “May Your Majesty allow me to become a *bhikkhu*.”

The King thought that if he renounced his home life and become a *bhikkhu*, his great mansion would easily fall to his hand; so he allowed the request promptly. Jotika was admitted into the Order at the feet of the Buddha. Not long afterwards, with due diligence, he became an *arahat* and became known as Thera Jotika. At the instant of his attaining arahatship, all his great mansion and other items of wealth suddenly disappeared. His wife Sakulakāyī was sent back by the deva to her native place, the Northern Island Continent.

One day, some *bhikkhus* asked the Venerable Jotika: “Friend, do you have attachment to the great mansion and Sakulakāyī?” The Venerable replied: “No, friend, I do not have any attachment.” The *bhikkhus* went to the Buddha and said: “Venerable Sir, Bhikkhu Jotika falsely claims arahatship.”

Then, the Buddha said: “*Bhikkhus*, it is true that there is no attachment to the great mansion and his wife in the mental state of Bhikkhu Jotika, an *arahat*.” Further the Buddha spoke this verse:

“He, who in this world has given up craving (that arises at the six sense doors) and has renounced the home-life to become a *bhikkhu*, who has exhausted craving for existence, and made an end of all forms of existence, him I call a *brāhmaṇa* (one who has rid himself of all evil).”

By the end of this discourse a large multitude of people attained Path-Knowledge at the various levels.

2. MEṄDAKA The Householder

His Past Aspiration

The future Meṇḍaka was a nephew of Aparājita the householder, who lived in the days of Buddha Vipassī, ninety-one world-cycles previous to the present world-cycle. His name also was Aparājita. His uncle Aparājita started construction of a brick monastery as a private chamber for the Buddha. Then, Aparājita, Junior, went to his Uncle Aparājita and asked that he be allowed as co-builder of the monastery. The uncle would not accept the idea, for he did not want to share the merit with anyone. Aparājita, Junior, then thought of building a portico in front of his uncle's main building. He put up the portico with timber. The post for the building were each finished in silver, in gold, in rubies, and in the seven kinds of precious stones. Likewise, the beams, rafters, roof-trusses, purlim, trellis-work, door-leaves and roofing tiles were finished in gold and silver and precious stones. He planned the portico to be used by the Buddha.

On the top of the portico were pinnacles made with gold sheet roofing and coral. (1) The centre portico was occupied by an assembly hall with a raised platform for the Buddha which had a floor frame and legs of solid gold. (2) The base of the legs were sculpted in the form of golden goats. (3) The leg-rest had, at its base, a pair of golden goats. (4) And there were also six golden goats placed around the assembly hall. (5) The flooring for the seating of the orator was woven with cotton thread at the base, golden thread in the middle, and finished with beads of pearl. (6) The back of the orator's seat was of solid sandalwood.

When the construction of the portico and all the appointments in it were finished to the satisfaction of the donor (Aparājita, Junior) a four month long ceremony, marking the donation was held, where the Buddha and 6.8 million *bhikkhus* were offered with alms-food. On the last day, sets of three robes were donated to the Sangha. The junior-most *bhikkhu* received robes worth a hundred thousand ticals. (The Sinhalese version says a thousand ticals.)

In His Past Existence as The Rich Man of Bārāṇasī.

Having performed those meritorious deeds during the time of Buddha Vipassī, the future Meṇḍaka was reborn in the present world-cycle as a rich man's son in Bārāṇasī. He succeeded to his father's estate as the 'Rich Man of Inexhaustible Resources'. One day, as he was going before the King at his audience, he discoursed astronomical readings with the King's Chief Counsellor. He asked the Purohita:

"How is it, Teacher, have you been studying the planets (recently)?"

"Of course, I have, what other pursuit do I have than a constant study of the planets?"

"If so, what do the planets presage about the general populace?"

"Some catastrophes is going to happen."

"What sort of catastrophes?"

"There will be famine."

"When is it going to happen?"

"Three years hence."

The 'Rich Man of Inexhaustible Resources' then expanded his cultivation. He invested all his wealth in rice grains which he stored in 1250 storehouses. The excess of his collection of rice were put in big jars, and then the excess were buried in the ground. The last portion of the excess were mixed with mud which was plastered onto the walls of his house. (A remarkably prudent way of forestalling famine).

When the famine broke out (as predicted by the Purohita), the Rich Man's household subsisted for some time on the hoarded grains of rice. When the granaries and the storage in big jars were exhausted, the Rich Man was perforce to send away his servants to go into the forest at the end of the mountains and find things to eat for their survival until such

time as things became normal, in which case, they might or might not choose to come back to him as they wished. They wailed and after seven days depending on their master, were obliged to leave.

There was only one servant, named Puṇṇa, who personally attended on the members of the Rich Man's family, comprising the Rich Man and his wife, their son, and their daughter-in-law. The five members of the household next subsisted on the rice grains which were buried in the ground. When that store was used up, they scraped off the mud plastered in the walls of the house, salvaged the few grains from it and managed to survive. But, the famine raged on. At last, the only source of seed grain was extracted from the base of the walls where the mud plaster held a few precious grains. The mud yield half measure of rice grain, which, when the husks were pounded off, a quarter measure of eatable grains was obtained. Being afraid of robbers who might loot whatever eatable available at their house, the family prudently hid the last meagre store of the grains in the ground, carefully shut up in a small pot.

One day, the Rich Man who had come home from attending on the King said to his wife: "Dear wife, I feel hungry. Is there anything to eat?" The wife did not say: "No," but answered: "My lord, we have a quarter measure of rice grain, (the last we have)."

"Where it it?"

"I have hidden it in the ground for fear of thieves."

"If so, cook that little rice."

"My lord, if I were to cook it into rice it would provide us a meal. If I were to make gruel, it would provide us with two meals. What shall I do with it?"

"Dear wife, this is our only and last source of food. Let us eat to the full and face death. Cook it into rice."

The Rich Man's wife obediently cooked the rice, and making five portions of the cooked rice, placed one in front of her husband. At that moment, a Paccekabuddha, who had just risen from dwelling in the attainment of Cessation at the Gandamādāna mountain, reviewed the world with His divine power of sight and saw that the Southern Island Continent was reeling under a grave and prolonged famine.

(An *arahat*, or a Paccekabuddha in this case, does not feel hunger during the (seven-day) dwelling in the attainment of Cessation. On rising from that state, the pang of hunger is felt inside the stomach. So the Paccekabuddha reviews the world, as is the natural thing, for a prospect of getting alms-food. A donor of some gift to a Paccekabuddha at that time (on that day) is usually rewarded by his or her own merit. If he were to wish for the post of Commander-in-Chief, he would get it.)

The Paccekabuddha knew that the Rich Man of Bārāṇasī had a quarter measure of rice grain which had been cooked to provide a meal for five persons. He also knew that the five persons in the rich man's household had sufficient conviction in the law of *kamma* to offer him the cooked rice. So he took His alms-bowl and great robe and stood at the Rich Man's door.

The Rich Man was intensely glad to see the Paccekabuddha who had come to his door for alms-food. He thought to himself: "In the past I had failed to make offering to alms-seekers, as the result of which I am falling under this catastrophe. If I were to eat my portion of rice I would live for one day. If I were to offer it to this Venerable One, it would lead to my welfare for millions of world-cycles." Thinking thus, he had the rice-vessel in front of him withdrawn, and, approaching the Paccekabuddha, and making obeisance to Him with fivefold contact, he invited Him to the house. After showing Him the seat, he washed the Paccekabuddha's feet, and wiped off the water. Then, letting the Paccekabuddha sit on a raised platform with golden legs; he put his rice into the Paccekabuddha's alms-bowl.

The Paccekabuddha closed the lid of His alms-bowl when the donor's vessel was left with half of its contents. But the donor said: "Venerable Sir, this rice is just one-fifth of a quarter measure of rice grain and can serve as only one meal for a person. It cannot be

divided into two for two persons. Do not consider my welfare for this present world but consider my welfare in the hereafter. I wish to offer the whole lot to your reverence.” Then he aspired thus: “Venerable Sir, may I never, in my faring in *samsāra*, meet with famine like this. From now on, may I be the provider of food and seed grains to all the population of the Southern Island Continent. May I be free from manual labour to earn my bread. May I have 1250 store-houses for storing rice grain, in which superior red rice grains falling from the sky, get filled up the moment I look up skyward as I sit there with my head washed.

“In all my future existences, may I have my present wife as my wife, my present son as my son, my present daughter-in-law as my daughter-in-law, and my present servant as my servant.”

The Deep Conviction of The Other Members of The Householder

The wife of the rich man thought to herself: “I cannot eat when my husband starves,” and offered her share of the rice to the Paccekabuddha. She made her wish thus: “Venerable Sir, may I never, in my faring in *samsāra*, meet with starvation. May I have a vessel of cooked rice which never gets depleted however much is taken from it by the populace of the Southern Island Continent, while I sit distributing the rice. In all my future existences, may I have my present husband as my husband, my present son as my son, and my present daughter-in-law as my daughter-in-law, and my present servant as my servant.”

The Rich Man's son also offered his share of the rice to the Paccekabuddha, and made his wish: “May I never, in my faring in *samsāra*, meet with starvation. May I have a bag of silver coins containing a thousand pieces out of which I may distribute the silver to everyone in the Southern Island Continent, and may the bag remain as full as ever. In all my future existences, may my present parents be my parents, may my wife be my wife, and may our present servant be our servant.”

The Rich Man's daughter-in-law also offered her share of the rice to the Paccekabuddha and made her wish thus: “May I never, in my faring in *samsāra*, meet with starvation. May I have a basket of rice grain, out of which I may distribute the rice to all the populace of the Southern Island Continent, and may that basket never get depleted. In all my future existences, may my present parents-in-law be my parents-in-law, may my present husband be my husband, and may our present servant be our servant.”

The servant Puṇṇa also offered his share of the rice to the Paccekabuddha and made his wish thus:

“May I never, in my faring in *samsāra*, meet with starvation. In all my future existences, may all the present members of my master's family be my master. When I plough a field, may there appear three extra furrows on the left and three extra furrows on the right of the main furrow in the middle, thereby accomplishing my work sevenfold, making a seed bed for sowing four baskets of seed grains.”

(Puṇṇa could have wished for and become Commander-in-Chief if he so aspired to it. However, his personal ties with the Rich Man's family were so strong that he wished that in all his future existences his present masters be his masters.)

When the five donors had made their respective wishes the Paccekabuddha said:

“May your wishes be fulfilled quickly. May all your aspirations come to full realisation like the full moon.

“May your wishes be fulfilled in every respect. May all your aspirations come to full realisation like the wish-giving gem.”

Having expressed His appreciation of the offerings, He made a wish that His donors, for enhancement of their convictions, see Him and His further actions, then He rose into the air and to the Gandamādāna mountain, and shared the alms-food He had collected with the five hundred Paccekabuddhas. The rice that was meant for the consumption of five persons were offered and satisfied the five hundred Paccekabuddhas, thanks to the supernatural powers of the original offeree. This was witnessed by the five donors whose devotion

increased by leaps and bounds.

The Result was experienced The Same Day

The remarkable thing now happened. At noon, the Rich Man's wife washed her cooking pot and put the lid on it. The Rich Man who was under the pang of hunger dozed off. When he woke up in the evening, he said to his wife: "Dear wife, I am starving. See if you could scrape out some bits of cooked rice from the pot." The wife was certain that not a tiny bit of cooked rice clung to the pot which she had washed clean. But she did not say so; instead, she thought of opening the lid of the pot first before reporting to her husband.

As soon as she removed the lid of the rice pot, she found the rice pot was filled with finely cooked rice, like a cluster of jasmine buds, that filled the pot to its brim and even causing the lid to rise. With joyous astonishment she breathlessly reported the strange phenomenon to her husband: "Look, my Lord, I had washed the rice pot clean and covered its lid. But now it is brimful with cooked rice, like a cluster of jasmine buds. Meritorious deeds are indeed worthwhile doing! Alms-giving is indeed worthwhile doing! Now, my lord, get up and eat it in joy."

The Rich Man's wife first served the rice to her husband and her son. When they had finished eating, she and her daughter-in-law ate it. Then she gave it to their servant Puṇṇa. The rice pot did not get decreased any further than the first spoonful taken out. On that very day, all the granaries and jars were filled with rice grain again. The Rich Man announced to all the citizens of Bārāṇasī that his house had sufficient rice grain and cooked rice for anyone to come and take them. And the people came and took them joyfully. The populace of the Southern Island Continent were saved from famine on account of the Rich Man.

His Last Existence as Meṇḍaka The Rich Man

After passing away from that existence, he was reborn in the deva realm. From then onwards, he fared in the deva-world or the human world until the time of Buddha Gotama when he was born into the family of a rich man in Bhaddiya. He married the daughter of another rich man.

How The Name Meṇḍaka was given to Him

As the result of his having donated statues of golden goats to Buddha Vipassī, the rich man's compound behind the house, about eight *karisas* in area, was tightly occupied by solid gold statues of the goat which rose up from the ground. The mouths of the statues of the goat were adorned with small cotton balls the size of marbles in five colours. By removing these ornamental stoppers at the mouth, one could take out from the goat any article one wished, such as clothes or gold or silver, etc. A single goat statue could yield all the needs of the whole population of the Southern Island Continent such as ghee, oil, honey, molasses, clothing, gold, silver, etc. As possessor of these miraculous goat statues, the rich man came to be called Meṇḍaka, "Owner of the Golden Goat".

Their son was the son in their previous existence (That son was Dhanañcaya who became the father of Visākhā). Their daughter-in-law was the daughter-in-law in their previous existence. (The wife of Meṇḍaka was named Candapadumā, the daughter-in-law, wife of Dhanañcaya, was named Sumanadevī, their servant was named Puṇṇa.)

(Reference may be made to the Chapter on the lives of Female Lay Disciples, on Visākhā, concerning the details about the Meṇḍaka's household up to the point where Meṇḍaka gained Stream-Entry.)

It is important to note here that Meṇḍaka the Rich Man, after attaining Stream-Entry, consequent to his listening a discourse by the Buddha, told the Buddha how he had been dissuaded by the ascetics of other faiths from visiting Him, and how they denigrated Him. Thereupon the Buddha said:

"Rich Man, it is the nature of people not to see their own faults but to fabricate other peoples faults and spread them about like a winnower winnowing chaff."

Further, the Buddha spoke this verse:

“(Householder), it is easy to see the faults of others, but difficult to see one’s own. Like the winnower winnowing chaff in the wind, one spreads the faults of others but hides his own faults like a crafty fowler covers himself.”

— **Dhammapada**, verse 252 —

By the end of this discourse a large multitude of people gained Enlightenment at the various levels.

3. JAṬILA The Rich Man

His Past Aspiration

The future Jail was a goldsmith during the time of Buddha Kassapa. After the passing away of the Buddha, when a shrine to store the relics of the Buddha was being built, an *arahat*, who went to supervise the construction asked the workers: “O men, why is the northern entrance not completed?” And the men replied: “Venerable sir, there is a lack of gold to complete it.”

“I will go to the town to find donors of gold. Meantime, you will do your work sincerely.” The *arahat* then went about the town and called for donors of gold, making them realize that their contributions were needed to complete the northern entrance to the big shrine they were building.

When he visited the house of the goldsmith, it so happened that the man was having a quarrel with his wife. The *arahat* said to the goldsmith: “Lay supporter, the big shrine that you have undertaken to build cannot be completed at its northern entrance due to a shortage of gold. So it would be well if you could contribute some gold.” The goldsmith who was angry with his wife said to the *arahat*: “Go and throw away your Buddha (image) into the water!” Thereupon his wife scolded him: “You have done a great wrong. If you are angry, you should have abused me, or beaten me as you please. Why do you vilify the Buddhas of the past, the future and the present?”

The goldsmith suddenly saw his mistake and emotional awakening having arisen in him, he apologised to the *arahat*: “Venerable Sir, pardon me my fault.” The *arahat* said: “You have not wronged me in any way. You have wronged the Buddha. So you ought to make restitution in front of the Buddha.”

“How should I do it, Venerable Sir?”

“Make three flower vessels of gold, enshrine them in the relic chamber of the great shrine, wet your clothes and your hair, and atone for your mistake.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” the goldsmith said and he started to make the gold flowers. He called his eldest son and said to him: “Come, son, I have vilified the Buddha, for which I am going to make restitution by making three bunches of gold flowers which are to be enshrined in the relic chamber of the great shrine. I would ask you to be a partner in this good work.” The eldest son replied: “I did not ask you to vilify the Buddha. You did it on your own accord. So you go alone.” The goldsmith then called his middle son and asked for his co-operation, who gave the same reply as the eldest brother. The goldsmith called his youngest son and sought his help. The youngest son said: “Whatever business is there to be discharged by you, it is my duty to help.” And so he helped his father in making the gold flowers.

The goldsmith made three gold flower vessels, about half a cubit high, put gold flowers in them, and enshrined them in the relic chamber of the great shrine. Then (as advised by the *arahat*.) he wetted his clothes and hair, and atoned for his grave blunder. (This is how the future Jail performed a meritorious deed.)

His Last Existence as Jail, The Rich Man

For his improper remarks concerning the Buddha, the goldsmith was sent adrift in the river for seven existences. As his last existence, during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn to the daughter of a rich man in Bārāṇasī under strange circumstances. The rich

man's daughter was extremely beautiful when she was about fifteen or sixteen years old. Her parents put her on the seventh floor of their house with a governess. They lived there alone in the private chamber. One day, as the girl was looking out through the window, a person with super-normal power (*vijjādhara*), travelling in the air happened to see her. He was deeply enamoured of her and came in through the window. The two fell in love with each other.

She became pregnant by the man. Her governess asked her how she became pregnant. She confided in her about her secret affair but forbade her to tell it to anyone. The governess dared not disclose the secret to anyone. On the tenth month of pregnancy, the child, a boy, was born. The young mother had the baby put inside an earthen pot, had its lid covered, and placing garlands and bunches of flowers over it, she detailed the governess to carry it on her head and sent it adrift in the river Gaṅgā. If anybody were to inquire about her action, the governess was to say that she was making a sacrificial offering for her mistress. This scheme was carried out successfully.

At that time, two ladies, who were bathing downstream, noticed the earthen pot floating down. One of them said: "That pot belongs to me!" The other said: "The contents of that pot belong to me!" So, they took the pot from the water, placed it on dry ground and opened it. On finding a baby in it, the first lady, who said the pot belonged to her, claimed the child as hers. The second lady, who said the contents of the pot belonged to her, also claimed the child as hers. They brought the dispute to the court of justice which was at a loss to give a judgment. They referred it to the King who decided that the child belonged to the second lady.

The lady who won the claim over the child was a female lay supporter who was a close attendant of the Venerable Mahākaccāyana. She brought up the child with the intention of sending him to the Venerable, to be admitted as a novice. Since the child at birth was not bathed, his hair was tangled with dried dirty matter from his mother's womb and on that account, he was given the name Jaṭila (knotted hair).

When Jaṭila was a toddler, Venerable Mahākaccāyana went to the lady's house for alms-food. She offered alms-food to the Venerable, who saw the boy and asked her: "Female lay supporter, does this boy belong to you?" And she replied: "Yes, Venerable Sir. I intend to send him to your reverence to be admitted into the order. May your reverence admit him as a novice."

The Venerable Mahākaccāyana said: "Very well," and took the boy with him. He reviewed the fortunes of the boy and saw by his supernormal knowledge that the boy had great past merit and was destined to enjoy a high status in life. And considering his tender age, he thought that the boy was too young for admission into the order and his faculties were not mature enough. So he took the boy to the house of a lay supporter in Taxila.

The lay supporter of Taxila, after making obeisance to the Venerable Mahākaccāyana, asked him: "Venerable Sir, does this boy belong to you?" And the Venerable answered: "Yes, lay supporter. He will become a *bhikkhu*. But he is still too young. Let him stay under your care." The lay supporter said: "Very well, Venerable Sir," and he adopted the boy as his son.

The lay supporter of Taxila was a merchant. It so happened that he had a considerable quantity of merchandise, which he found no buyers for twelve years. One day, as he was going on a journey, he entrusted these unsold merchandise to the boy, to be sold at certain prices.

Jaṭila sold The Unsold Twelve Years Old Merchandise in A Single Day

On the day when Jaṭila was in charge of the shop, the guardian spirits of the town exercised their power over the townsfolk, directing them to Jaṭila's shop for whatever needs they had, even as trifling as condiments. He was able to sell the unsalable twelve years old merchandise in a single day. When the merchant returned home and saw none of his unsalable goods, he asked the boy: "Son, have you destroyed all those goods?" Jaṭila replied: "No, I did not destroy them. I have sold them at the prices you stated. Here are the

accounts, and here is the money.” His adoptive father was highly pleased. “This boy has the making of a successful man. He is an invaluable asset of a man,” thus reflected the merchant. Accordingly, he married his grown up daughter to Jaṭiḷa. Then, he had a big house built for the couple. When the construction of the house was completed, he presented it to the couple for their residence.

Jaṭiḷa, Lord of the Golden Hill

When Jaṭiḷa took occupancy of his house, as soon as he put his foot at the threshold of the house, a golden hill eighty cubits high suddenly appeared through the earth at the back of the house. On learning the news of Jaṭiḷa's immense fortune, the King conferred him the Royal Treasurer, sending him the white umbrella and the paraphernalia of Treasurer's office. From then onwards, Jaṭiḷa was known as Jaṭiḷa, the Treasurer.

Jaṭiḷa made Inquiries about The Existence of His Peers in The Southern Island Continent

Jaṭiḷa had three sons. When they had grown up to adulthood, he had a desire to become a *bhikkhu*. But he also had the duty to the King as Treasurer. If there were to exist in the Southern Island Continent another Rich Man who was equal in wealth to him, he might be released by the King so that he could join the order. Otherwise, he had no chance to become a *bhikkhu*. So, he had a gold brick, a gold goad and a pair of gold slippers made, which he entrusted to his men, saying: “My men, go around the Southern Island Continent taking these articles with you and enquire about the existence or otherwise of a rich man whose wealth is equal to mine.”

Jaṭiḷa's men went around the country and reached the town of Bhaddiya where they met Meṇḍaka the rich man who asked them: “O men, what is your business in touring this place?”

“We are touring the country to find something,” said Jaṭiḷa's men. Meṇḍaka, seeing the gold brick, the gold goad and the pair of gold slippers which the visitors were carrying with them, rightly surmised that the men were making enquires about the wealth of the country. So he said to them: “O men, go and see at the back of my house.”

Jaṭiḷa's men saw at the back of Meṇḍaka's house an area of about fourteen acres (8 *karisas*) packed with golden goat statues of the sizes of a bull or a horse or an elephant. Having inspected all those gold statues, they came out of Meṇḍaka's compound. “Have you found the things you were looking for?” asked Meṇḍaka, and they said to him: “Yes, Rich Man, we have.” “Then you may go,” said Meṇḍaka.

Jaṭiḷa's men returned to their home town and reported to their master about the immense wealth of Meṇḍaka of Bhaddiya. “Rich Man, what is your wealth when compared to Medaka's?” they said to Jaṭiḷa and they gave the details of what they had seen at the backyard of Meṇḍaka's house. Jaṭiḷa was happy about the discovery. “We have found one type of rich man. Perhaps another type also exists,” he thought to himself. This time he entrusted his men with a piece of velvet, which was worth a hundred thousand ticals, and sent them around in search of another type of rich man.

The men went to Rājagaha and stationed themselves at a place not far from Jotika's great mansion. They collected some firewood and were making a fire when they were asked by the people what they were going to do with the fire. They answered: “We have a valuable piece of velvet cloth for sale. We find no one who can afford the price. We are returning to our hometown. This piece of velvet cloth would attract robbers on the way. So we are going to destroy it by burning it.” This was, of course, said as a pretence to probe the mettle of the people,

Jotika noticed the men and enquired what was afoot. On being told about the men's tall story, he called them up and asked: “How much is your cloth worth?” They answered: “Rich man, it is worth a hundred thousand.” Jotika ordered his men to pay the price of a hundred thousand to the sellers and said to them: “O men, give it to my maid-servant who is scavenging at my gate,” entrusting the cloth to them.

The scavenger came to Jotika murmuring (in the presence of Jaṭiḷa's men): “O Rich Man,

how is it? If I am at fault, you could chastise me by beating. But sending such a coarse piece of cloth to me is too much. How could I use it on my person?" Jotika said to her: "My dear girl, I did not send it for wearing. I meant it to be used as your foot rug. You could fold it up under your bed and when you go to bed you could use it for wiping your feet after washing them in scented water, couldn't you?"

"That I could do," said the maid servant.

Jatila's men reported back their experiences in Rājagaha and told their master: "O Rich man, what is your wealth when compared to that of Jotika?" They said thus to Jaṭila, and they described the marvellous grandeur of Jotika's mansion, his vast wealth, and his maid-servants remarks about the velvet piece.

Jaṭila tested The Past Merits of His Three Sons

Jaṭila was overjoyed to learn about the presence, in the country, of two great Rich Men. "Now I shall get the King's permission to enter the Order," he thought and went to see the King about it.

(Herein, the Commentary does not specify the name of the King. However, in the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**, in the story of Visākhā, it has been said: "It is important to remember that within the domain of King Bimbisāra, there were five Rich men of inexhaustible resources, namely, Jotika, Jaṭila, Meṇḍaka, Puṇṇaka and Kāḷavaḷiya." Hence the King here should be understood to mean Bimbisāra.)

The King said to Jaṭila: "Very well, Rich Man, you may go forth into bhikkhuhood." Jaṭila went home, called his three sons, and handing over a pick-axe with a gold handle and diamond bit, said to them: "Sons, go and get me a lump of gold from the golden hill behind our house." The eldest son took the pick-axe and struck at the golden hill. He felt he was striking at granite. Jaṭila then took the pick-axe from him and gave it to the middle son to try at it; and he met with the same experience.

When the third son was given the pick-axe to do the job, he found the golden hill as if it were mound of soft clay. Gold came off it in layers and lumps at his easy strokes. Jaṭila said to his youngest son: "That will do, son." Then he said the two elder sons: "Sons, this golden hill does not appear on account of your past merit. It is the result of the past merit of myself and your youngest brother. Therefore, be united with your youngest brother and enjoy the wealth peacefully together."

(Herein, we should remember the past existence of Jaṭila as the goldsmith. At that existence, he had angrily said to an *arahat*: "Go and throw away your Buddha (image) into the water!" For that verbal misconduct, he was sent adrift in the river at birth for seven successive existences. At his last existence also he met the with the same fate.

When the goldsmith was making golden flowers to offer to the Buddha at the shrine, which was built in honour of the deceased Buddha Kassapa, to atone for his verbal misconduct, only his youngest son joined in the effort. As the result of their good deed, the father, Jaṭila and his youngest son alone had the benefit of the golden hill that appeared.)

After admonishing his sons, Jaṭila the Rich Man went to the Buddha and entered bhikkhuhood. With due diligence in *bhikkhu* practice, he attained arahatship in two or three days.

Later on, the Buddha went on the alms-round with five hundred *bhikkhus* and arrived at the house of Jaṭila's three sons. The sons made food offerings to the Buddha and His Sangha for fifteen days.

At the congregation of *bhikkhus* in the assembly hall, *bhikkhus* asked Bhikkhu Jaṭila: "Friend Jaṭila, do you still have attachment today to the golden hill of eighty cubits in height and your three sons?"

Bhikkhu Jaṭila, an *arahat*, replied: "Friend, I have no attachment to the golden hill and my three sons."

The *bhikkhus* said: “This Bhikkhu Jaṭila claims arahatship falsely.” When the Buddha heard the accusations of these *bhikkhus*, He said: “*Bhikkhus* there is no attachment whatever in the mental state of Bhikkhu Jaṭila to that golden hill and his sons.” Further, the Buddha spoke this verse:

“He, who in the world has given up craving (that arises at the six sense-doors) and has renounced the home life to become a *bhikkhu*, who has exhausted craving for existence, and made an end of all forms of existence, him I call a *brāhmaṇa* (one who has rid himself of all evil.)” — **Dhammapada**, V-4 16.

By the end of discourse many persons attained Path-Knowledge such as *sotāpatti-phala*.
(This account is extracted from the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**, Book Two.)

4. KĀLAVALIYA The Rich Man

A brief account of Kālaṇḍiyya, the Rich Man, is found in Commentary on the **Upāṇiṣad** which is reproduced here.

During the time of Buddha Gotama, there lived in Rājagaha a poor man by the name of Kālaṇḍiyya. One day, his wife had cooked a meal of sour gruel mixed with some edible leaves, (for rice was not within their means). On that day, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, rising from dwelling in the attainment of Cessation, reviewed the world, contemplating on whom he should bring his blessing. He saw Kālaṇḍiyya in his supernormal vision and went to his door for alms-food.

Kālaṇḍiyya's wife took the alms-bowl of Venerable Mahā Kassapa and emptied her cooking pot into it. She offered her poor meal of sour gruel mixed with edible leaves to the Venerable, without keeping back anything for themselves - an offering at one's own sacrifice (*niravasesa dāna*). The Venerable Mahā Kassapa went back to the monastery and offered the gruel to the Buddha. The Buddha accepted just a portion of it, with which to satisfy himself and gave the remainder to the five hundred *bhikkhus* who had enough to eat for that meal. Kālaṇḍiyya happened to be at the Buddha's monastery to beg for the gruel.

The Venerable Mahā Kassapa asked the Buddha as to the benefit that would result to Kālaṇḍiyya on account of the brave deed of sacrificing the food completely. And the Buddha said: “Seven days hence Kālaṇḍiyya will get the white umbrella of the Treasurer's office, i.e. he will be made a Royal Treasurer by the King.” Kālaṇḍiyya heard these words of the Buddha and hastened home to tell his wife about it.

At that time, King Bimbisāra was on his inspection round and he saw a criminal tied on a stake outside the city. The man impudently said to the King in a loud voice: “Great King, I would request that a meal, which was prepared for Your Majesty, be sent to me.” The King replied: “Ah, yes, I would.” When dinner was being brought to the King, he remembered his promise to the criminal on the stake and ordered the officials concerned to find someone who would send his dinner to the criminal on the stake outside the city.

The outside of the city of Rājagaha was infested with demons so that very few people dared to go out of the city by night. The officials went around the city announcing that a thousand ticals would be awarded on the spot to anyone who would take the King's meal to a criminal on the stake outside the city. No one came out at the first round of announcement (with the beating of the gong); and the second round also was fruitless. But at the third round, Kālaṇḍiyya's wife accepted the offer of a thousand ticals.

She was brought before the King as the person undertaking the King's mission. She disguised herself as a man and wielded five kinds of weapons. As she fearlessly went out of the city carrying the King's meal, she was accosted by the Dīghatāla, guardian spirit of a palm tree who said: “Stop there, stop! You are now my food.” But Kālaṇḍiyya's wife was not afraid and said: “I am not your food. I am the King's messenger.”

“Where are you going?”

“I am going to the criminal on the stake.”

“Could you convey a message for me?”

“Yes, I could.”

“If so, cry aloud all along your way this message: ‘Kālī, daughter of Sumaṇa, the chief of celestial devas, wife of Dīghatāla, has given birth to a son!’ There are seven pots full of gold at the root of this Palmyra tree. Take them as your fee.”

The brave woman went her way crying aloud the message: “Kālī, daughter of Sumaṇa, the chief of celestial devas, wife of Dīghatāla, has given birth to a son!” Sumaṇa, the chief of celestial devas heard her cry while presiding over a meeting of celestial devas and said to his assistants: “There is a human being bringing happy tiding. Bring him here.” And so she was brought before Sumana who thanked her and said: “There are pots full of gold underneath the shade (at noon) of the big tree. I give them all to you.”

She went to the criminal on the stake, who had to be fed with her hand. After taking his meal, when his mouth was wiped clean by the woman, he felt the feminine touch and bit her knotted hair so as not to let her go. The woman being courageous, had presence of mind, she cut the hair-knot with her sword and freed herself.

She reported to the King that she had fulfilled her task. “What proof can you show that you have actually fed that man?” asked the King. “My hair-knot in the mouth of that villain should be sufficient proof. But I have further proof too,” replied Kāḷavaḷiya's wife and related her meeting with Dīghatāla and Sumaṇa. The King ordered the pots of gold described by her to be dug up. All were found. Kāḷavaḷiya couple became very rich at once. “Is there anyone as wealthy as Kāḷavaḷiya?” inquired the King. The ministers said: “There is none, great King.” So the King appointed him as Treasurer of Sāvatti and gave him all the paraphernalia, seal and title of office.

Here ends The Great Chronicle of the Buddhas.

Dated: the 13th waxing day of the 1st Wazo, 1331 M.E. (1969 A.D)

Completed at 11:00 am

U Vicittasārābhivamsa
Dhammanāda Monastery Mingun Hill

EPILOGUE

EPILOGUE

Nine Pāli stanzas and their Myanmar translations:

- (1 & 2) On Saturday, the thirteenth waxing day of the first Wazo, 1331 Myanmar Era, the 2513th year of the Sāsana, the month when the Alexandrian laurel *Calaphyllum* blooms forth in the forest and the traditional festival of admitting new entrants into the Order is being held throughout the land, at eleven a.m.
- (3) This work entitled 'The Great Chronicle of Buddhas', the tome that came into being under the sponsorship of the State Sāsana Council as a sequel to the Sixth Buddhist Council, portraying the life story of the Buddhas (and especially), that of Buddha Gotama from the fulfilling of the Perfections to the day-to-day events relating to Him, was completed for the edification of the followers of the Buddha who uphold righteousness - a most auspicious achievement indeed.
- (4) The Buddha, the Conqueror of the Five Māras or Evils, endowed with great diligence, who occupied Himself by day and by night with the five functions of the Buddha, lived for forty-five *vassa* (years) during which He ferried the multitudes of deva and humans across to the yonder shores of Nibbāna by means of the ship of the Eightfold Ariya Path.
- (5) To the Buddha, the Conqueror of the five Māras, I, acclaimed as the great, distinguished Thera who has memorized the Three Piṭakas, who, thanks to past merit, has been fortunate enough to live a life devoted to Buddhist studies since his novichood, pay homage behumbling myself in body, speech and mind, with this tome entitled 'The Great Chronicle of The Buddhas', arranged in forty-five chapters in respectful memory of the forty-five years of the Buddha's Noble mission, an exegetical work embodying erudite judgements on readings in the Text and the Commentaries.
- (6) As the result of this work of great merit done by me with diligence, knowledge and conviction, may all sentient beings benefit from it: may they clearly understand (through learning, reflecting and cultivation) the Dhamma, the Good Doctrine expounded by the Supreme Lord of Righteousness for the welfare of the multitudes, for their happiness pertaining to the human world and the deva-world, and the Peace of Nibbāna.
- (7) May the multitudes, by following the Middle Way (of eight constituents) which is purified by shunning the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification, which brings happiness by clearing away the hindrances to Path-Knowledge and its Fruition, realize with facility (through the ten stages of Insight), the supreme Peace of Nibbāna that liberates one from craving for all forms of existence, that is free from all sorrow (caused by five kinds of loss) and grief (that gnaws at the hearts of worldlings).
- (8) May the Buddha's Teaching (that consists of learning, training and penetration) last for five thousand years, shining forth like the sun, overriding the corroding influence of sophists or captious contenders. May all beings in all the human world, the deva-world and the Brahmā-world have firm conviction in, and deep respect for the Dhamma expounded by the Buddha. May the Rain God, benefactor of the human world, bless the earth with his bounteous showers at the proper time (i.e. at night, for fields of poor fertility once in five days, for fields of medium fertility once in ten days, and for fields of good fertility once in fifteen days).
- (9) May the rulers of the country give protection to the people like the good kings of yore. May they work for the welfare of the people just as they would for their own children, on the example of those benevolent rulers who extended their loving care to their subjects by upholding the ten principles of rulership,

The Venerable Buddhaghosa, the famous Commentator, in his Epilogue to the **Aṭṭhasālinī** (an exegesis on the **Abhidhamma**) and the **Pañcapakaraṇa** made his wish in four stanzas beginning with: “*Yam pattham kusalam tassa.*” We have adopted them here, respectfully endorsing his sentiments therein. (Stanzas 6 to 9 above).

In doing so, we are also endorsing the view of the Sub-Commentator, the Venerable Saṅgharakkhitamahāsāmi, author of the *Sāratthavilāsinī*, wherein it has been said: “For one who does not work for the benefit of others, no real benefit accrues to him. That is true. And true indeed it is a statement fit to be proclaimed with one's right arm raised.”

Such being the words of the wise, may all right-minded persons make a point of directing their efforts towards the good of others and thereby do good to themselves as well.

Here comes the completion of “The Great Chronicle Of Buddhas”.

May I be endowed with the three knowledges (*viññā*).

THE ANUDĪPAṆĪ

On The Great Chronicle of Buddhas

Foreword

The word, “*anudīpanī*” is purely Pāli, “*anu*” meaning “further” and “*dīpanī*”, “explanation”; hence “further explanation” of what is not explicit in the original writing is called “*anudīpanī*”. After the Venerable Ledi Sayadaw had written an exegetical work, *Paramatthadīpanī* on the *Abhidhammatthasangaha*, he composed another work, entitled, “**Anudīpanī**”, to explain again what is vague in the *Paramatthadīpanī*.

Similarly, an expository work under the title of “**Anudīpanī**”, on some words or passages of the Great Chronicle which deserve elaboration or explication, is written here separately as a supplement. Had the expositions been included in the original work, readers would find the textual expressions and their meanings confusing. This would be a distraction for readers. Therefore, it is deemed necessary to compile comprehensive notes on important points and topics in the Text as a supplement (*anudīpanī*), for the benefit of serious students of the Great Chronicle.

It is hoped that, by going through the *anudīpanī*, difficult subjects in the Chronicle would become more easily understandable and profound meanings of some usages would become clearer. Therefore, it is suggested that after reading the Chronicle, readers should study the *Anudīpanī* with greater interest. May they understand easily the deep and important meaning, which might otherwise remain unrevealed or overlooked.

Chapter I - III Anudīpanī on words and phrases

Definition of Pāramī

The set of ten virtues including *dāna* (alms-giving), *sīla* (morality), etc. is called *Pāramī* (Perfection).

A Bodhisatta (future Buddha), being endowed with these ten virtues, such as *dāna*, *sīla*, etc. is known as a *Parama* or Extraordinary Personality. On this basis, therefore, the etymology of *Pāramī* is: *Paramānam bhāvo* (state of Extraordinary Personalities), which is derived from two things: the knowledge of those who see and know them as such and the saying of those who see and know them that they really are. An alternative etymology is *Paramanam kamman* (work of Extraordinary Personalities); hence their course of conduct, consisting of *dāna*, *sīla*, etc. is called *Pāramī*.

The order of the ten Perfections should be known by the following verse:

*Dānam sīlaṃ ca nekkhammaṃ
paññā vīriyena pañcamam
khaṇṭī saccam adhiṭṭhānam
mett’ upekkhā ti te dasa.*

Alms-giving, Morality, Renunciation,
Wisdom, Energy as the fifth.
Forbearance, Truthfulness, Resolution,
Loving-kindness and Equanimity;
all these make ten (Perfections).

[Each perfection is of three categories, namely, **Pāramī** (Ordinary Perfection), **Upa-Pāramī** (Higher Perfection) and **Paramattha-Pāramī** (Highest Perfection). For instance, *dāna* is of three categories: (1) **Dāna-pāramī** (Ordinary Perfection of Alms-giving), (2) **Dāna upa-pāramī** (Higher Perfection of Alms-giving) and **Dāna paramattha-pāramī**

(Highest Perfection of Alms-giving). Likewise for the *Sīla* and each of the remaining virtues.] Thus there are thirty kinds of Perfection in its detailed enumeration.

Difference between Pāramī, Upa-pāramī and Paramattha-pāramī

With regard to these three categories, (1) properties, such as one's own gold, silver, etc. and family members, such as one's own children and wife, (2) limbs, big and small, such as one's own hands, legs, etc. and (3) one's own life, should be noted first. Then referring to *dāna*, (1) Gift of properties is *Dāna-pāramī*, (2) Gift of limbs, big and small, is *Dāna-upa-pāramī* and (3) Gift of life is *Dāna-paramattha-pāramī*.

Similarly, (1) observance of morality at the sacrifice of properties, (2) observance of morality at the sacrifice of limbs, big and small and (3) observance of morality at the sacrifice of life, are to be understood as *Sīla-pāramī*, *Sīla-upa-pāramī* and *Sīla-paramattha-pāramī* respectively. Likewise, for the remaining eight perfection, the same way of classification should be applied.

Different views held by different commentators may be looked up in the exposition of the word, “*ko vibhago*” in the Pakiṇṇaka Kathā of the **Cariyā Piṭaka Commentary**.

Adhimuttimarāṇa

Voluntary passing away by self-determination is called “**Adhimuttimarāṇa**”. It is the kind of death that takes place as soon as one resolves: “May death come unto me”. Such a death could happen only to future Buddhas and not to others.

Sometimes a future Buddha is reborn in a deva or a Brahmā-world where the span of life is extremely long. He is aware of the fact that, living in a celestial world, he has no chance whatsoever to fulfil and cultivate Perfections, Sacrifices and Practices and, therefore, he feels such a lengthy life in that celestial abode is boredom. Then, after entering his mansion, he shuts his eyes and no sooner has he resolved: “May my life-faculty ceases to be”, then he experiences the impact of death and passes away from that divine realm. His resolution materialises partly because he has little attachment to his body, as he has particularly conditioned the continuity of his body by attaining higher knowledge and partly because his resolution based on overwhelming compassion for beings is intense and pure.

As he has control of his mind, so has he control of his deeds. Accordingly, when he dies such voluntary death, he is reborn in the human world as a prince, a brahmin, etc. so that he can fulfil any Perfections he wishes to. That is why, though our future Buddha Gotama had lived in many existence in the Brahmā abode without losing his attainment of *jhāna*, he existed only for a short time in that Brahmā-world as he died voluntarily. He passed away from the Brahmā existence into the human existence and build up elements of Perfections.

Kappa or Aeon

What is called *Kambhā* in Myanmar is *Kappa* in Pāli. Therefore, it is said in the text of the Buddhavaṃsa: “*kappe ca satasahassee, caturo ca asankhiye*” etc.

The duration of a *kappa* cannot be calculated by the number of years. It is known only by inference. Suppose there is a big granary which is one *yojana* each in length, breadth and height and which is full of tiny mustard seeds. You throw out just one seed each century. When all the mustard seeds have been thrown out, the period called *kappa* have not come to an end yet. (From this, it is to be inferred that the word *kappa* in Pāli or the word *kambhā* in Myanmar is an extremely long time. But, nowadays, the word *kambhā* exactly means such a period is forgotten, and the word is used in the sense of the mass of the earth as in the expression *kambā-mye-pyin* (earth surface), *kambā-mye-lone* (the globe), etc.

Divisions of kappa

It should therefore be noted that *kambhā* and *kappa* are the same. The *kappa* is of six divisions: (1) **Mahā-kappa**, (2) **Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa**, (3) **Antara-kappa**, (4) **Āyu-kappa**, (5) **Hāyana-kappa** and (6) **Vaddhana-kappa**.

One **Mahā-kappa** is made up of four **Asaṅkhyeyya-kappas**, namely, (a) the *kappa* in the

process of dissolution (**Saṁvatta-kappa**), (b) the *kappa* in the state of dissolution (**Saṁvattatthāyi-kappa**). (c) the *kappa* in the process of evolution (**Vivatta-kappa**) and (d) the *kappa* in the state of evolution (**Vivattatthāyi-kappa**). That is to say, these four **Asaṅkheyya-kappas** called **Saṁvatta Asaṅkheyya-kappa**, **Saṁvattatthāyi Asaṅkheyya-kappa**, **Vivatta Asaṅkheyya-kappa** and **Vivattatthāyi Asaṅkheyya-kappa** make one **Mahā-kappa**).

Of these four **Asaṅkheyya-kappas**, the **Saṁvatta-kappa** is the period beginning from the falling of the great rain, which heralds the dissolution of *kappa* till the extinction of flames, if the *kappa* is to be dissolved by fire; or till the receding of floods, if the *kappa* is to be dissolved by water; or till the cessation of storms, if the *kappa* is to be dissolved by the air element.

The **Saṁvattatthāyi-kappa** is the period beginning from the moment of dissolution of the world by fire, water or the air element till the falling of the great rain which heralds the evolution of a new world.

The **Vivatta-kappa** is the period beginning from the falling of the great rain which heralds the evolution of the new world till the appearance of the sun, the moon, and the stars and planets.

The **Vivattatthāyi-kappa** is the period beginning from the appearance of the sun, the moon and the stars and planets to the falling of the great rain which heralds the dissolution of the world.

Thus there are two kinds of *kappa*-dissolving rain: The first kind is the great rain which falls in any *kappa* when it is nearing its dissolution either by fire, or by water, or by the air element. First, there is a great downpour of rain all over the universe which is to be dissolved. Then, taking advantage of the rain, people start cultivation. When plants, which are big enough for cattle to feed on, appear, the rain ceases completely. It is rain which heralds the dissolution of a *kappa*.

The second kind is also a great downpour but it falls when a *kappa* is to be dissolved by water. It is not an ordinary rain-fall, but a very unusual one, for it has the power to smash even a rocky mountain into smithereens.

(An elaborate description of the dissolution of a *kappa* by fire, water or the air element is given in the chapter on the Pubbenivāsānussati Abhiññā of the Visuddhimagga translation.) The above-mentioned four **Asaṅkheyya-kappas** are of the same duration, which cannot be reckoned in terms of years. That is why they are known as **Asaṅkheyya-kappas** (Aeons of Incalculable Length).

These four **Asaṅkheyya-kappas** constitute one **Mahā-kappa** (Great Aeon). The Myanmar word 'kambhā' is (sometimes) used in the sense of the Pāli **Mahā-kappa**. The Myanmar language has no separate word for **Asaṅkheyya-kappa**, but it adopts **Asaṅkheyya-kap** as a derivative from Pāli.

Antara-kappa, etc

At the beginning of the **Vivattatthāyi Asaṅkheyya-kappa** (i.e. the beginning of the world) people live for incalculable (*asaṅkheyya*) years. As time goes on, they are overcome by such mental defilement as *lobha* (greed), *dosa* (anger), etc. and consequently their life span gradually decreases until it becomes only ten years. Such a period of decrease is called **Hāyana-kappa** in Pāli or *hsuk-kap* or *chuk-kap* (aeon of decrease) in Myanmar.

On the contrary, owing to the occurrence and uplift of such wholesome principles as sublime states of mind, namely, *mettā* (loving-kindness), etc. the life span of generations of their descendants doubles up gradually until it becomes incalculable years. Such a period of increase in life span from ten years to incalculable years is called **Vaddhanap-kappa** in Pāli or *tat-kap* (aeon of increase) in Myanmar. (For further details of these two periods of increase and decrease in the human life span, refer to Cakkavatti Sutta of the Pāthika Vagga in the **Dīgha Nikāya**.)

Thus, the life span of human beings goes up and down between ten years and incalculable

as they develop meritoriousness or are overcome by their demeritoriousness. A pair of life span, an increasing one and a decreasing one is called an **Antara-kappa**.

Three Kinds of Antara-kappa

At the beginning of the world, when people's life span declines from incalculable years to ten years, a change of *kappa* takes place. If the decline is due to the particularly overpowering state of greed, then there occurs scarcity of food and all evil persons perish during the last seven days of *kappa*. Such a round of time is called **Dubbhikkhantara-kappa** or the aeon of famine.

If the decline is due to the particularly overpowering state of bewilderment, then there occurs an epidemic of diseases and all evil persons perish during the last seven days of the *kappa*. Such a round of time is called **Rogantara-kappa** or the aeon of diseases.

If the decline of life span is due to the particularly overpowering state of hatred, then there occur killings of one another with arms and all evil persons perish during the last seven days of the *kappa*. Such a round of time is called **Satthantara-kappa** or the aeon of weapons.

(According to the **Visuddhi-magga Mahatika**, however, the *Rogantara-kappa* is brought about by the particularly overpowering state of greed, the *Satthantara-kappa* by the particularly overpowering state of hatred and the *Dubbhikkhantara-kappa* by the particularly overpowering state of bewilderment; then evil persons perish.)

The naming of each pair of life spans — one increasing and the other decreasing as *Antara-kappa* may be explained thus: before all is dissolved either by fire, water or the air element at the end of *Vivaṭṭatthāyi-Asaṅkheyya-kappa* and whenever the life span becomes ten years, all evil persons are perished with famine, diseases or weapons. In accordance with this statement, here it refers to the intermediate period of decrease between one period of total destruction and another.

After the calamity that befalls during the final seven days of each *Antara-kappa*, the name *Rogantara-kappa*, *Satthantara-kappa* or *Dubbhikkhantara-kappa* is given to the period of misfortune which befalls before the ten years life span (not in the whole world but) in a limited region such as a town or a village. If there appears an epidemic of diseases, we say there is *Rogantara-kappa* in that region; if there is an outbreak of war, we say there is *Satthantara-kappa* in that region; if there occurs starvation, we say there is *Dubbhikkhantara-kappa* in that region. Such a saying is just figurative because the regional incident is similar to the cosmic. When in prayers, one mentions "three *kappas*" from which one wishes to be free, one usually refers to these three great disasters.

At the completion of 64 *Antara-kappas* (each *Antara-kappa* consisting of a pair of increasing and decreasing aeons), a *Vivaṭṭatthāyi Asaṅkheyya-kappa* comes to an end. Since there are no living beings (in human and celestial realms) during the *Samvatta Asaṅkheyya-kappa*, *Samvattaṭṭhāyi Asaṅkheyya-kappa* and *Vivaṭṭatthāyi Asaṅkheyya-kappa*, these *kappas* are not reckoned in terms of *Antara-kappa*, which consists of a set of increasing and decreasing aeons. But it should be noted that each of these *Asaṅkheyya-kappas*, lasting as long as 64 *Antara-kappas*, are of the same duration as a *Vivaṭṭatthāyi Asaṅkheyya-kappa*.

Āyu kappa

Āyu-kappa means a period which is reckoned in accordance with the span of life (*āyu*) of that period. If the life span is one hundred, a century is an *Āyu-kappa*; if it is one thousand, a millennium is an *Āyu-kappa*.

When the Buddha said: "Ānanda, I have developed the four *Iddhipadas* (bases of psychic power). If I so desire, I can live either a whole *kappa* or a little more than a *kappa*," the *kappa* therein should be taken as an *Āyu-kappa*, which is the duration of life of people living in that period. It is explained in the *Aṭṭhaka Nipāṭa* of the **Aṅguttara Commentary** that the Buddha made such a declaration meaning to say that He could live one hundred years on a little more if He so desired.

Mahāsiva Thera, however, said: “The *Āyu-kappa* here is to be taken as the *Mahā-kappa* called **Bhaddaka**.” (He said so because he held that the kamma, that causes rebirth in the final existence of a Buddha, has the power of prolonging His life span for incalculable years and because it is mentioned in the Pāli Texts that *Āyupālakaphalasamāpatti*, the fruition-attainment that conditions and controls the life-sustaining mental process called **Āyusankhara**, can ward off all its dangers.) But the Thera’s view is not accepted by commentators.

The Sanghabhedakkakkhandhaka of the **Vinaya Cūlavagga** states: “He who causes a schism of the Sangha is reborn in Niraya, realms of continuous suffering, and suffers there for a whole *kappa*.” “That *kappa* is the life span of Avīci, the lowest realm of continuous suffering,” explains the Commentary. The life span of Avīci inmates is equal to one eightieth of a *Mahā-kappa*, according to the Terasakaṇḍa-Tika, a voluminous Sub-Commentary on the Vinaya. In the same work, it is particularly mentioned that one eightieth of that duration should be reckoned as an *Antara-kappa* (of Avīci inmates). It, therefore, follows that one *Mahā-kappa* is made up of 80 *Antara-kappas* according to the reckoning of Avīci inmates.

It may be clarified that, as mentioned above, one *Mahā-kappa* has four *Asaṅkhyeyya-kappas*, and one *Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa* has 64 *Antara-kappa*. Therefore, one *Mahā-kappa* is equivalent to 256 *Antara-kappa* by human calculations.

If 256 is divided by 80, the remainder is $3(1/5)$ or 3.2. Therefore, $3(1/5)$ *Antara-kappa* of human beings make one *Antara-kappa* Avīci inmates. (In Avīci there is no evolving and dissolving *kappas* as in the human world. Since it is the place that knows suffering at all times, the end of each dissolving *kappa* is not marked with the three periods of misfortune. One eightieth of a *Mahā-kappa* which is the life span of Avīci inmates is their *Antara-kappa*. Therefore by one *Antara-kappa* of Avīci is meant $3(1/5)$ *Antara-kappa* human beings.)

In this way, it may be assumed that one *Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa* is equal to 64 *Antara-kappas* of human beings and 20 *Antara-kappas* of Avīci inmates. Therefore, when some Pāli Text (such as the Visuddhi-magga Mahā-Tika, the Abhidhammattha-vibhāvanī Tika, etc.) say that one *Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa* contains either 64 or 20 *Antara-kappas*, the figures do not contradict each other. The difference between the numbers (64 and 20) lies only in the manner of calculation. It should be noted that the two are of the same length of time.

A particularly noteworthy thing is a statement in the Sammohavinodanī, the Commentary on the Abhidhamma Vibhanga. In the exposition Nāna-vibhaṅga, it is said: “Only Sanghabhedaka-kamma (the act of causing schism in the Sangha) results in suffering a whole *kappa*. Should a man, owing to his such act, be reborn in Avīci at the beginning or in the middle of the *kappa*, he would gain release only when the *kappa* dissolves. If he were reborn in that realm of suffering today and if the *kappa* dissolves tomorrow, he should then suffer just one day and would be free tomorrow. (But) there is no such possibility.”

On account of this statement, there are some who opine that “The Sanghabhedaka-kamma leads to Niraya for the whole aeon (in the sense of *Mahā-kappa*); he who commits this kamma gains freedom only when the *kappa* dissolves. As a matter of fact, the expression “*kappaṭṭhitiyo*” (lasting for the whole *kappa*) is explained in the Vibhaṅga Commentary only in a general manner; it does not emphatically mention the word *Maha-kappaṭṭhitiyo* (lasting for the whole *Mahā-kappa*). The expression *kappaṭṭhitiyo* is based on a verse in the Vinaya Cūlavagga which reads to the effect that “having destroyed the unity of the Sangha, one suffers in Niraya for the whole *kappa*.” Therefore, the *kappa* here should be taken only as *Āyu-kappa* but not *Mahā-kappa*. In the 13th chapter of the **Kathvatthu Commentary**, it is said in dealing with *kappa* that the verse has been composed with reference to *Āyu-kappa* (of Avīci inmates) which is only one eightieth of *Mahā-kappa*.

Divisions of Mahā-kappa

Mahā-kappa is divided into two classes: (1) **Suñña-kappa** or Empty Aeon and (2) **Asuñña-**

kappa or Non-empty Aeon.

Of these two, the aeon in which Buddhas do not appear is *Suñña-kappa* or Empty Aeon; it means the aeon which is void of a Buddha.

The aeon in which Buddhas appear is *Asuñña-kappa* or Non-empty aeon; it means the aeon which is not void of a Buddha.

Though Buddhas do not appear in an Empty Aeon, that there can be appearance of Private Buddhas and Universal Monarchs, may be inferred from the Upāli Thera Sutta in the first Vagga of the **Apādāna**.

In the Upāli Thera Sutta and its Commentary, it is said two aeons prior to this one, Prince Khattiya, son of King Aujasa, on his departure from a park, committed an offence against Paccekabuddha Devīla. No text mentions the appearance of a Buddha in that aeon. In the Commentary on the Bhaddaji Thera Sutta of the **Apādāna**, too, it is stated that the Thera had given alms-food to five hundred Paccekabuddhas in a *Suñña-kappa*. It is clear from these texts that Paccekabuddhas appear in *Suñña-kappa*. Again the Kusumāsaniya Thera Sutta of the **Apādāna** mentions that “future Kusumāsaniya was reborn as Universal Monarch Varadassī in the aeon that immediately followed.” The Tiṇasanthara Thera Sutta of the same work also says that “future Tiṇasanthara Thera was reborn as Universal Monarch Migasammata in the second aeon prior to the present one” suggesting that there is the possibility of the appearance of Universal Monarchs in any empty aeon.

The Non-Empty Aeon in which Buddhas appear is divided into five classes:

- (a) the aeon in which a single Buddha appears is known as **Sāra-kappa**,
- (b) the aeon in which two Buddhas appear is known as **Maṇḍa-kappa**,
- (c) the aeon in which three Buddhas appear is known as **Vara-kappa**,
- (d) the aeon in which four Buddhas appear is known as **Sāramaṇḍa-kappa**, and
- (e) the aeon in which five Buddhas appear is known as **Bhaddha-kappa**.

The aeon that witnessed the existence of Sumedha, as mentioned in the Chapter on Sumedha the brahmin, is *Sāramaṇḍa-kappa* because there appear four Buddhas in that aeon. The city of Amaravati came into existence after the appearance of three Buddhas, namely, Taṇkaṅkara, Medhaṅkara, and Saranaṅkara, and before the appearance of Dīpaṅkarā.

The Name Amaravati

Amarā means “God” (immortal being) and *vati* means “possession”; hence, the great city which gods possess.

It is stated in the Bhesajjakkhandhaka of the **Vinaya Mahāvagga** and other places that, as soon as the Brahmins Sunidha and Vassakāra planned to found the city of Pāṭaliputta, gods arrived first and distributed among themselves plots of land. These plots of land occupied by gods of great power became residences of princes, ministers and wealthy persons of high rank; these plots of land occupied by gods of medium power became residences of people of medium rank and these plots of land occupied by gods of little power became residences of people of low rank.

From this statement it may be supposed that gods arrived in hosts to take up residences for themselves and occupied them where a great royal city was to be established. Amaravati was so named to denote the presence of gods who marked out their own locations in the city and protected them for their habitation.

The Pāli word ‘*vati*’ signifies possession in abundance. In this world, those who have just little wealth are not called wealthy men but those who possess wealth much more than others are called so. Therefore, the name Amaravati indicates that, as it was a great royal residential city, it was occupied and protected by a large number of highly powerful gods.

Ten Sounds

The Buddhavaṃsa enumerates only six sounds, not all ten. The Mahāparinibbāna Sutta of the Mahāvagga of the **Dīgha Nikāya** and the **Buddhavaṃsa Commentary** enumerates all ten. (This is followed by a comprehensive and critical survey of the ten sounds (*dasasadda*),

which come differently in different texts, namely, the **Buddhavaṃsa**, the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta of the **Dīgha Nikāya**, **Buddhavaṃsa Commentary**, the Myanmar and Sri Lankan versions of the **Jātaka Commentary**, and the **Mūla-Tikā**, for the benefit of Pāli scholars. We have left them out from our translation.)

Chapter IV. The Renunciation of Sumedha

The Five Defects of A Walkway

- (1) A walkway that is rough and rugged hurts the feet of one who walks on it; blisters appear. Consequently, meditation cannot be practised with full mental concentration. On the other hand, comfort and ease provided by a soft and even-surfaced walkway is helpful to complete practice of meditation. Roughness and ruggedness therefore is the first defect of a walkway.
- (2) If there is a tree inside or in the middle or by the side of a walkway, one who walks without due care on that walkway can get hurt on the forehead or on the head by hitting himself against the tree. The presence of a tree is therefore the second defect of a walkway.
- (3) If a walkway is covered by shrubs and bushes, one who walks on it in the dark can tread on reptiles, etc. and kill them (although unintentionally). The presence of shrubs and bushes, therefore, is the third defect of a walkway.
- (4) In making a walkway, it is important that it has three lanes. The middle and main one is straight and of 60 cubits in length and one and a half cubit in breadth. On either side of it are two smaller lanes, each a cubit wide. Should the middle lane be too narrow, say, only a cubit or half a cubit, there is the possibilities of hurting one's legs or hands through an accident. Being too narrow, therefore, is the fourth defect of a walkway.
- (5) Walking on a walkway which is too wide, one may get distracted; one's mind is not composed then. Being too wide, therefore, is the fifth defect of a walkway.

(Here follows the explanation of the Pāli word '*pañcadosa*' as contained in the **Buddhavaṃsa Commentary**. This is left out from our translation.)

The Eight Comforts of A Recluse

The eight comforts of a recluse (*samaṇasukha*), mentioned here are described as the eight blessings of a recluse (*samaṇabhadra*) in the Sonaka Jātaka of the **Satthi Nipāta**. The following is the Jātaka story in brief:

Once upon a time, the Bodhisatta was reborn as Arindama, son of King Magadha of Rājagaha. On the same day was born Sonaka, son of the King's chief adviser.

The two boys were brought up together and when they came of age, they went to Taxila to study. After finishing their education, they left Taxila together and went on a long tour to acquire a wider and practical knowledge of various arts and crafts and local customs. In due course, they arrived at the royal garden of the King of Bārāṇasī and entered the city the following day.

On that very day, the festival of Veda recitations known as Brāhmaṇavācaka was to be held and milk-rice was prepared and seats were arranged for the occasion. On entering the city, Prince Arindama and his friend were invited into a house and given seats. Seeing that the seat for the prince was covered with a white cloth while that for him was covered with red cloth, Sonaka knew from that omen that "Today, my friend Arindama will become King of Bārāṇasī and I will be appointed general."

After the meal, the two friends went back to the royal garden. It was the seventh day after the King's demise, and ministers were looking for a person who was worthy of kingship by sending the state chariot in search of him. The chariot left the city, made its way to the garden and stopped at the entrance. At that moment, Prince Arindama was lying asleep on an auspicious stone couch with his head covered and Sonaka was sitting near him. As soon as Sonaka heard the sound of music, he thought to himself: "The state chariot has come for Arindama. Today, he will become King and give me the post of his

Commander-in-Chief. I do not really want to have such a position. When Arindama leaves the garden, I will renounce the world to become an ascetic,” and he went to a corner and hid himself.

The chief adviser and ministers of Bārāṇasī anointed Prince Arindama, King, even on the very stone couch and with great ceremonial pomp and grandeur took him into the city. Thus Prince Arindama became King of Bārāṇasī. Lost in the sudden turn of events and attended upon by a large numbers of courtiers and retinue, he totally forgot his friend Sonaka.

When King Arindama had left for the city, Sonaka appeared from his hiding place and sat on the stone couch. At that time, he saw a dry leaf of *sāla* (shores robusta) falling right in front of him and he contemplated: “Like this *sāla* leaf, my body will certainly decay and oppressed by old age, I will definitely die and fall to the ground.” With his religious emotion thus aroused, he at once engaged himself in Vipassanā meditation, and, at the very sitting, there arose in him the enlightenment of a Paccekabuddha, and he became a Paccekabuddha himself. His lay appearance vanished and he assumed a new appearance of an ascetic. Making an utterance of joy: “Now I have no more rebirth!” he went to the cave of Nandamūlaka.

Prince Arindama, on the other hand, remained intoxicated with kingly pleasures. Only after some forty years, he suddenly remembered his childhood friend. Then, he yearned to see him and wondering where he would be staying then. But, receiving no news or clues about his friend’s whereabouts, he uttered repeatedly the following verse:

“Whom shall I give a hundred coins for hearing and bringing me good news about Sonaka? Whom shall I give a thousand coins for seeing Sonaka in person and telling me how to meet him? Who, whether young or old, would come and inform me of my friend Sonaka, my playmate with whom I had played in the dust?”

People heard the song and everybody sang the same, believing it to be his favourite.

After 50 years, a number of children had been born to the King, the eldest one being Dīghāvu. At that time, Paccekabuddha Sonaka thought to himself thus: “King Arindama is wanting to see me. I will go to him and shower upon him the gift of thought-provoking sermons on the disadvantages of sensuality and the advantages of renunciation so that he would incline to lead an ascetic life.” Accordingly, He by His psychic power, appeared in the royal gardens. Having heard a boy singing repeatedly the aforementioned song of King Arindama while chopping wood, the Paccekabuddha taught him a verse in response to the King’s.

The boy went to the King and recited the responding song, which gave the clue of his friend’s whereabouts. Then, the King marched in military procession to the garden and paid respect to the Paccekabuddha. But, being a man of worldly pleasures, the King looked down upon Him and said: “What a destitute you are, living a wretched lonely life as this.” The Paccekabuddha rejected the King’s censure by replying: “Never is he a destitute who enjoys the bliss of the Dhamma! Only he who dissociates himself from the Dhamma and practises what is not righteous is a destitute! Besides, he is evil himself and forms a refuge for other evil person.”

Then he informed the Paccekabuddha that his name was Arindama and that he was known by all as a King of Bārāṇasī, and asked if the holy man was living a happy life.

Then the Paccekabuddha uttered the eight verses in praise of the eight blessings of a recluse (*samanabhadra*):

- (1) Great King, a recluse, who has gone forth from a household life to a homeless state and who is free of the worries of wealth, feels happy at all places and at all times (not only in your gardens and at this moment). Great King, such a recluse does not have to keep grain in stores or in jars (unlike lay people who do the hoarding and whose greed grows for a long time). A recluse lives on food prepared in donor’s homes and obtained by going on alms-round; he partakes of such food with due contemplation. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from non-hoarding of wealth and grain.)

- (2) [There are two kinds of blameworthy food (*savajapinda*). As mentioned in the Vinaya, the first kind is the food obtained by one of the improper means, such as by healing the sick and so on, or by one of the five wrong manners of livelihood. The other blameworthy kind is food taken without due contemplation although the food may have been properly obtained.]

Great King, a noble recluse duly contemplates while eating the food that has been obtained blamelessly. He who has thus blamelessly eaten his blameless food is not oppressed by any form of sensuality. Freedom from oppression by sensuality is the second blessing of a recluse who has neither wants nor worries. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from seeking and taking of blameless food.)

- (3) (The food that has been sought properly and eaten with due contemplation by a worldling may be called “peaceful food” (*nibbutapinda*), that is to say, the food that does not incite craving. In reality, however, only an arahat’s food is “peaceful” i.e. it does not incite craving.)

Great King, a noble recluse takes peaceful food only. He is thus not oppressed by any form of sensuality. Freedom from oppression by sensuality is the third blessing of a recluse who has no wants nor worries. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from taking peacefully food only.)

- (4) Great King, a noble recluse, who goes on alms-round in towns or villages without attachment to donors of requisites, does not adhere to greed and hatred. (Clinging wrongly to sense object in the manner of a thorn is called *dosasaṅga*, faulty adherence.) Freedom from such clinging is the fourth blessing of a recluse who has no wants nor worries. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from non-attachment to male or female donor and from non-association with them.)
- (5) Great King, a recluse, who has extra requisites which are not used by him, entrust them to a donor for security. Later on when he hears such (and such) a donor’s house has been gutted by fire, he is greatly distressed and has no peace of mind. On the other hand, another recluse has only those requisites that are on his body or that he carries along with him, just like the wings of a bird that go with it wherever it flies. He suffers no loss when a town or a village is destroyed by fire. Immunity from loss of requisites through fire is the fifth blessing of a recluse. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from not being victimised by fire.)
- (6) Great King, when a town or a village is plundered by robbers, a recluse, who like Me wears or carries along his requisites, loses nothing (while others who have extra requisites suffer loss through plundering by robbers and know no peace of mind). Freedom from the trouble of looking after one’s possessions is the sixth blessing of a recluse. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from feeling secure against robbers.)
- (7) Great King, a recluse, who has only the eight requisites as his possession, moves freely without being stopped, interrogated or arrested on the road where robbers waylay or security officers patrol. This is the seventh blessing of a recluse. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from harmless travelling on the road where robbers or security men are waiting.)
- (8) Great King, a recluse, who has only the eight requisites as his possession, can go wherever he likes without taking a long look back (at his old place). Such possibility of moving is the eighth blessing of a recluse who has no possessions. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from freely going about without yearning for his old place.)

King Arindama interrupted Paccekabuddha Soṇaka’s sermon on the blessings of a recluse and asked: “Though you are speaking in praise of the blessings of a recluse, I cannot appreciate them as I am always in pursuit of pleasures. Sensual pleasures, both human and divine, I cherish. In what way can I gain human and divine existence?” Paccekabuddha Soṇaka replied that those who relish sensuality are destined to be reborn in unhappy

abodes, and only those who abandon it are not destined to be reborn there. By way of an illustration, He told the story of a crow that joyously rode on a dead elephant floating into the ocean and lost its life. Paccekabuddha then spoke of the blemishes of sensual pleasures and departed, travelling through space.

Being immensely moved by religious emotion as a result of the Paccekabuddha's exhortation, King Arindama handed over kingship to his son Dighavu and left for the Himalayas. After becoming a recluse, living on fruit and cultivating and developing *jhāna* through meditation on the four sublime modes of living (*Brahmavihāra-mettā*, *karuṇā*, *muditā* and *upekkhā*) he was reborn in the Brahmā realm.

The Nine Disadvantages of A Layman's Dress

They are:

- (1) Costliness of the garment.
- (2) Availability only through connection with its maker.
- (3) Getting soiled easily when used.
- (4) Getting worn out and tattered easily owing to frequent washing and dyeing.
- (5) Difficult in seeking a replacement for the old one.
- (6) Being unsuitable for a recluse.
- (7) Having to guard against loss through theft.
- (8) Appearing to be ostentatious when put on.
- (9) When taken along without being worn, it is burdensome and makes one appear to be avaricious.

The Twelve Advantages of The Fibre-robe

They are:

- (1) Being inexpensive but of fine quality.
- (2) Possibility of making it by oneself.
- (3) Not getting easily soiled when used and being easily cleaned.
- (4) Easily discarded, when worn out without a need for stitching and mending.
- (5) Having no difficulty in seeking a replacement for the old one.
- (6) Being suitable for a recluse.
- (7) Not having to guard against loss through theft.
- (8) Not appearing to be ostentatious when put on.
- (9) Not burdensome when taken along or put on.
- (10) Forming no attachment to the robe as a requisite for the user.
- (11) Made just by beating the bark from a tree; thus it is righteously and faultlessly gained.
- (12) Not being worthy of regret over its loss or destruction.

The Fibre-robe

The fibre-robe means the robe made of fibre, which is obtained from a kind of grass and fastened together. (This is described in the Aṭṭhasālīnī.)

According to the **Hsutaunggan Pyo**, fastening the fibres together itself is not the complete making of such garment. It must be beaten so as to make it soft and smooth. That is why it is called "beaten fibre" in Myanmar.

The "fibre-robe" has the name *vākacīra*, *vakkala*, and *tirīṭaka* in Pāli.

THE ANUDĪPAṆĪ

Vākacīra literally means “a robe made of grass”, and, therefore, it should actually be translated “grass-robe”. But traditional teachers translate the word as “fibre-robe”.

The remaining two names, *vakkala* and *tirīṭṭaka*, refer to a robe made of fibres that come from the bark of a tree. Though the word *vakka* of *vakkala* means “bark of a tree”, it does not denote pure, thick, outer crust of the bark, but the inner layers made up of fibres covering the wood-core. It should be noted that, because such fibres are taken off, fastened and beaten for softness and smoothness, the robe made thus is called fibre-robe. Though *vākacīra* has the meaning of “grass-robe”, the process of making the robe out of fibres taken off from trees is more common than that of making it out of grass and the name “fibre-robe” is better known than “grass-robess”. That is why the word “fibre-robe” is adopted in the **Hsutaunggan Pyo**.

The Wooden Tripod

The wooden tripod (*tidanda* or *tayosūlī*) is a requisite of a hermit. It is a stand with three legs, on which is placed a water jug or pot.

The Water Jug and The Yoke

The water jug (*kuṇḍikā*) is another requisite of a hermit. *Khārikāja* meaning a yoke, is taken by traditional teachers as a combination of *khāri* and *kāja*, both meaning the same: a pole which is curved. According to some, *Khāri* means a hermit’s set of requisites, which consists of a flint, a needle, a fan, etc. Taking these interpretations together, *khārikāja* may be taken as the pole on which are hung various requisites of a hermit.

The Hide of A Black Antelope (Ajinacamma)

The hide of a black antelope, complete with hoofs, called *ajinacamma* is also one of the requisites of a hermit, which may be elaborated somewhat as follows:

The Pāli *ajinacamma* has been unanimously translated “the hide of a black antelope” by ancient scholars. It is generally thought, therefore, that a beast which is black all over its body is called a “black antelope”. In the **Amarakosa Abhidhāna** (section 17 v, 47) the word, “*Ajina*” is explained as “hide” synonymous with *camma*. This explanation of the *Amarakosa* is worthy of note.

In the **Atthasālinī** and other commentaries, there is an expression meaning “the hide, complete with hoofs, of a black antelope, which was like a bed of *punnāga* flowers”. The phrase “complete with hoofs” (*sakhuram*) indicates that it is the hide of a hoofed animal. When it is said to be “like a bed of *punnāga* flowers”, we have to decide whether the likeness to a bed of *punnāga* flowers refers to its colour or to its softness. That the *punnāga* flowers is not particularly softer than other flowers is known to many. Therefore, it should be decided that the likeness refers to its colour. This suggests then that the hide could not be that of a black antelope.

Though *ajina* is translated “black leopard” by scholars of old, that it actually means an animal’s coat and is synonymous with *camma* is evident from such statement as “*ajinamhi haññate dīpi*,” (“a leopard is killed for its coat,”) in the Janaka and Suvannasāma Jātakas. The Commentary on the Janaka also explains *ajina* to be a synonym of *camma* by saying “*ajinamhīti cammatthaya cammkaraṇā* — for its coat mean for obtaining its hide”). There are only two words, *dīpi* and *saddūla*, in Pāli meaning leopard. *Ajina* is not found in that sense.

The Buddhavaṃsa Text also says, “*kese muñcitvā’ham tattha vākacīraṇ ca cammakam*”. When Sumedha lay prostrate before Buddha Dīpaṅkarā, offering himself as a bridge, he loosened his hair-knot and spread his fibre-robe and the animal hide on the bog. The Pāli word used here is *cammaka* which is the same as *ajinacamma* discussed above.

All these point to the fact that *ajinacamma* is not the coat of a beast with claws like a tiger, a leopard or a cat and the adjectival phrase “complete with hoofs” shows that it is the coat of an animal with hoofs like that of cattle or horses. The coat has the colour of a bed of *punnāga* flowers as mentioned in the **Atthasālinī**. It is also very soft to the touch.

Such animals like **enī** are found in the neighbourhood of the Himalayas. Because its coat is smooth and very beautiful and not easily available, people treasure it as a symbol of auspiciousness.

When Bodhisatta Siddhattha was born, the Cātumahārājika devas of the four quarters, received him from the hands of the saintly Brahmās of the Suddhāvāsa abode with a coat of this particular animal, i.e. the coat having a soft fur and commonly regarded to be auspicious. This is mentioned in the introduction of the **Jātaka Commentary** and in the **Buddhavaṃsa Commentary** as well.

(The author then acknowledges that all that has been discussed regarding the translation of *ajinacamma* as the hide of a black antelope is the view of the great scholar U Lin, the previous compiler of The Great Chronicle of Buddhas.)

Matted Hair (Jaṭā) and Round Head-dress made of Hair (Jatāmaṇḍala)

The difference between the matted hair and the round head-dress made of hair should be understood. The matted hair is something that is a part of the hermit. In order to save the trouble of keeping it well groomed, the hermit knotted his hair firmly and tightly. This is what is meant by “matted hair”.

One of the requisites created and left in the hut by Visukamma as mentioned in the **Aṭṭhasālīni** is the round head-dress made of hair called *jatāmaṇḍala*. This is a thing separate from the hermit’s person. It is not a part of him. From the sentence: “He put the head-dress on his topknot and fastened it with an ivory hairpin”, it is clear that the head-dress is a thing separate from Sumedha’s hair-knot. It evolved into a hermit’s head-dress of later times and protects the hair from dust and litter.

(The author here mentions the opinions of the Monywa Zetawun Sayadaw and Mahāsilavamsa who stated that the “matted hair” and “head-dress” are the same thing. But the author concludes his discussion by quoting the **Catudhammasāra (Kogan) Pyo**, **Magadha Abhidhāna**, and certain Jātaka stories which say that they are two different things. By quoting the **Catudhammasāra Pyo** and the **Maghadeva Laṅka**, the author finally says that just as a snare is used to catch a bird, so also the matted hair in the form of a snare is worn by a hermit to catch the great bird of “the Eightfold Noble Path” as soon as it alights in the forest that is “his mind”.

Eight Kinds of Hermits

(The author first explains the derivation of the Myanmar word (hermit) from Pāli and Sanskrit.)

The word “hermit” refers to those who are outside the Buddha’s Teaching. Nevertheless, they should be regarded as holy persons of the time.

The commentary on the Ambattha Sutta of the **Sīlakkhandā Vagga** enumerates eight kinds of hermits as follow:

- (1) **Saputtabhariya**. A hermit who piles up wealth and lives a house-holder’s life. (Here the author mentions Keṇiya of the Buddha’s lifetime as an example.)
- (2) **Uṇḍhacariya**. A hermit who does not pile up wealth and who does not live a householder’s life, but who collects unhusked grain from lay people at threshing grounds and cook his own food.
- (3) **Anaggipakkika**. A hermit who collects husked grain from lay men in villages and cooks his own food. He thinks husking grain by pounding is not worthy of one who lives a hermit’s life.
- (4) **Asāmapāka**. A hermit who enters a village and collects cooked rice. He thinks cooking is not worthy of one who lives a hermit’s life.
- (5) **Ayamuttika (Asmamuttika)**. A hermit who takes off the bark of a tree for food by means of a metal or stone implement. He thinks to collect food each day is wearisome.
- (6) **Dantavakkalika**. A hermit who takes off the bark of a tree with his teeth for food. He thinks to carry metal or stone implements is wearisome.

- (7) **Pavattaphalabhojana**. A hermit who lives on the fruits that fall by throwing stone or a stick at them. He thinks to remove the bark is wearisome.
- (8) **Pandupalasika**. A hermit who lives only on leaves, flowers and fruits that fall naturally from trees.

The **Paṇḍupalāsika** are divided into three types:

- (1) **Ukkatṭha-paṇḍupalāsika**, he who remains seated without arising and who lives on leaves, flowers and fruits that fall within his reach.
- (2) **Majjhurū-paṇḍupalāsika**, he who moves from tree to tree and subsists only on leaves, flowers and fruits that fall from a single tree.
- (3) **Mudurū-paṇḍupalāsika**, he who moves from tree to tree in search of leaves, flowers and fruits that fall naturally from trees, to maintain himself.

This is the enumeration of the eight kinds of hermits as given in the commentary on the Ambaṭṭha Sutta.

In addition, the author gives a somewhat different enumeration that is mentioned in the commentary on the Hirī Sutta of the **Sutta Nipāta**:

- (1) **Saputtabhariya**. A hermit who leads a householder's life earning his living by farming, trading, etc., like Keṇiya and others.
- (2) **Uṇḍhacarika**. A hermit who, living near a city gate and teaching children of Khattiya and brahmin families, accepts only grain and crops but not gold and silver.
- (3) **Sampattakālīka**. A hermit who lives only on food that is obtained at the meal time.
- (4) **Anaggipakka**. A hermit who lives only on uncooked fruits and vegetables.
- (5) **Ayamuttika**. A hermit who wanders from place to place with metal or stone implements in hand to remove the bark from trees for food whenever he feels hungry and who observes precepts, and cultivating meditation on the four sublime illimitables.
- (6) **Dantalūyyaka**. A hermit who wanders from place to place without metal or stone implements in hand and who removes the bark from trees with his teeth whenever he feels hungry and who observes precepts and cultivating meditation on the four sublime illimitables.
- (7) **Pavattaphalika**. A hermit who lives depending upon a natural pond or a forest and who, going nowhere else, subsists on the lotus stems and stalks from the pond or on the fruits and flowers from the forest grove or even on the bark of trees (when other kinds of sustenance are not available) and who observes precepts and cultivating meditation on the four sublime illimitables.
- (8) **Vaṇṭamuttika**. A hermit who subsists on leaves that fall naturally and observes precepts and cultivating meditation on the four sublime illimitables.

In these two lists of eight kinds of hermits, each type is nobler than the preceding type.

Again in these lists, excepting the first type, namely, Saputtabhariya, all are holy persons, observing precepts and cultivating meditation on the four sublime illimitables.

Sumedha came under the fourth category (of the list given in the **Sīlakkhandha Commentary**), namely, Asamapaka, for one day, i.e. a hermit who collects and lives only on cooked food; for the following days, he remained as a hermit of the eighth type, namely, Paṇḍupalāsika, one who lives only on leaves, flowers and fruits that fall naturally from trees. According to the list given in the **Sutta Nipāta Commentary**, he came under the eighth category, namely, Vaṇṭamuttika, i.e. a hermit who subsists only on leaves that fall naturally from trees and who observes precepts and cultivating meditation on the four sublime illimitables.

Three Kinds of Persons addressed as “Shin¹” in Myanmar

The Pāli “pabbajjā” has been translated “going forth as a recluse” by teachers of old.

1. A respectful religious title, more or less equivalent to Pāli Sāmi.

That is to say “giving up a worldly life”, which is of three kinds:

- (1) **Isi-pabbajjā**, giving up of worldly life and becoming an *isi* (hermit).
- (2) **Samana-pabbajjā**, giving up of worldly life and becoming a *samaṇa* (monk).
- (3) **Sāmaṇera-pabbajjā**, giving up of worldly life and becoming a *sāmaṇera* (novice).

Accordingly, there are three kinds of persons worthy of veneration and addressed as “shin” in Myanmar. They are *isi* (hermit), *samaṇa* (monk) and *sāmaṇera* (novices).

The Eight Disadvantage of A Leaf-hut

- (1) The hut requires the dweller to make efforts to acquire timber and other materials for its construction.
- (2) It requires the dweller to take constant care and to provide maintenance or reconstruction when the grass roof and mud of the walls decay and fall into ruins.
- (3) It requires the dweller to make room at any time for a visiting senior elder, who is entitled to suitable accommodation, so that he fails to get concentration of mind.
- (4) Being sheltered from sun and rain under its cover, the dweller tends to become soft and feeble.
- (5) With a roof and surrounding walls to provide privacy, it serves the dweller as a hiding place for committing blameworthy, evil deeds.
- (6) It creates attachment for the dweller, who then thinks: “It is my dwelling place.”
- (7) Settling down in it makes the dweller appear to be living a householder’s life with family.
- (8) It requires the dweller to deal with nuisance created by domestic pests, such as fleas, bugs, lizards, etc.

These are the disadvantages of a leaf-hut which Sumedha discerned and which prompted him to abandon the hut.

The Ten Advantages of The Foot of A Tree

- (1) The foot of a tree does not require the dweller to acquire building materials because it is already a dwelling place provided by nature.
- (2) It does not require the dweller to take constant care and to provide maintenance.
- (3) It does not require the dweller to make room for visiting senior elders.
- (4) It does not provide privacy nor serves the dweller as a hiding place for committing evil deeds.
- (5) Its dweller is free from stiffness of limbs unlike those dwelling in the open space who suffers from such a discomfort.
- (6) The dweller does not have to take possession of it as his own property.
- (7) The dweller is able to abandon it without an attachment saying: “It is my dwelling place.”
- (8) The dweller does not have to request others to vacate the place for purpose of cleaning.
- (9) It makes a pleasant place for the dweller.
- (10) Since the dweller can easily find similar dwelling places wherever he goes, he does not cling to it as “my dwelling place”.

(Then the author quotes the Hsutaunggan Pyo which gives the same list of disadvantages in verse.)

Chapter V. The Prophecy

As has been said, Sumedha reflected: “What is the use of selfishly escaping the cycle of births alone,” and this is mentioned in the **Buddhavaṃsa Text**: “*Kim me ekena tinnena*”.

Quoting this Pāli sentence people are fond of saying with a tinge of contempt: “One

THE ANUDĪPAṆĪ

should not be selfish in this world. A selfish one is a person who seeks only his good. One who seeks only his welfare is a useless person.”

But, if one continues to read the same sentence, one would come across “*purisena thamadassina*”, implying, “in spite of the fact that I am a superior person, fully aware of my prowess of wisdom, faith and energy”, which explicitly qualifies the foregoing sentence. All this indicates that only those who, despite their ability, are selfish and not willing to work for others should be blamed. And those, who have no such ability but who say: “I will work for others” and are not true to their words, should be despised, for they do not know the limits of their own capability.

As a matter of fact, those, who have no ability to work for others, should look after their own interest. That is why it is taught in the *atta-vagga*, the twentieth chapter of the **Dhammapada**:

*Attadattham paratthena bahunā’ pi na hāpaye
attadattham abhiññāya sadatthapasuto siyā.*

Let him not sacrifice his own interest
by willing to work much for others.
Knowing full well his own limited ability
he should work for his own welfare.

This teaching of the **Dhammapada** means: “He, who is incompetent to work for others but speaks as though he were competent, cannot do good for other, nor can he do for himself; thus he suffers a double loss. Therefore, he, who is incompetent to work for others, should seek his own good and work only for himself. He, who knows the true extent of his own capability and works only for himself (should not be blamed as a selfish person but), should be spoken of as a good person who works within the limits of his capability. On the contrary, he, who is qualified like Sumedha to render service to others, runs only after his own interest, ignoring others’ should truly be censure as a purely selfish person.

In short, let him work for others, if he is competent. If not, let him look after himself so that he may not miss his interest. He, who seeks his own interest but pretends to be working for others’ welfare, is surely a dishonest, cunning, evil person.”

Nerañjarā

Nerañjarā, as the name of a river, is derived from *nelajala*, ‘*nela*’ meaning ‘faultless’ and ‘*jala*’, ‘water’; hence ‘the river with pure clean water’.

Another derivation is from ‘*nīlajala*’, ‘*nīla*’ meaning ‘blue’ and ‘*jala*’, ‘water’. ‘Blue water’ signifies ‘clear water’. Hence, ‘the river with clear blue water’.

Yet another derivation is from ‘*nari jarā*’ meaning a kind of musical instrument which produces the sound similar to that of the flowing waters in a stream.

Notes on Prophecy

Under the heading, the author discusses not only the Myanmar word for prophecy but also other Myanmar words or phrases. The word prophecy in Myanmar language, is commonly held to be derived from the so called Pāli word ‘**byādita**’. But there is no such word as ‘*byādita*’ in Pāli. It appears to have been formed by ancient scholars in imitation of the Pāli words, ‘**byākaraṇa**’ or ‘**byākata**’, says the author.

With reference to the phrases ‘stepping out with his right foot’ and ‘honouring him with eight handfuls of flowers’, the author has the following to say:

‘Stepping out with his right foot’ is the translation of the Pāli phrase *dakkhiṇam pādam uddhari*. Buddha Dīpaṅkarā departed not only stepping out with his right foot first but also keeping Sumedha on his right. This mode of departure from the presence of an honourable person is a very ancient Indian custom of showing high esteem.

“Honouring him with eight handfuls of flowers” in Pāli is *aṭṭahi pupphamuṭṭhi pūjetvā* which occurs in the **Jātaka Commentary** and the **Buddhavaṃsa Commentary**. Over this phrase there has been a controversy whether a living Buddha should pay respect to a Bodhisatta who would become a Buddha only many aeons later. Even if one argues that Buddha Dīpaṅkarā was paying homage not to the person of Sumedha the Hermit but only to the *Sabbāññuta-ñāṇa* (Supreme Wisdom), that he would attain, this argument also is unacceptable as it is inappropriate that the present possessor of Omniscience should pay respect to the Omniscience yet to be attained by a Bodhisatta.

The whole controversy rests on the translation of the word *pūjetvā* which is connected with *pūjā*. The **Khuddaka-pāṭha Commentary** explains that *pūjā* means *sakkāra* (treating well), *mānana* (holding in esteem) and *vandanā* (salutation, homage, or obeisance). The author gives his view that in honouring Hermit Sumedha with eight handfuls of flowers, the Buddha was not saluting or paying homage or obeisance (*vandanā*), but He was merely giving good treatment (*sakkāra*) to Sumedha and showing the high esteem (*mānana*) in which He held him.

The text mentions the prophetic phenomenon which took place on the day the planet Viśākhā conjoined with the full moon. That day is reckoned in the Myanmar Calendar as full-moon day of Kason (April-May). The day is regarded usually to be auspicious being the full-moon day of the first month of the year.

All the previous Buddhas received their prophecies of becoming a Buddha on the full-moon day of Kason. So when Sumedha received the prophecy on the same auspicious day, devas and Brahmas were quite positive in their proclamation that Sumedha would definitely become a Buddha.

The author further mentions that, the full-moon day of Kason is not only the day on which the prophecy was received but also the day on which Bodhisattas took their last birth in the human world; it is also the day on which they attained Perfect Self-Enlightenment and the day on which they passed away into Nibbāna.

The full-moon of Kason is so auspicious in the traditional customs of Myanmar that kings of the past have had themselves anointed and crowned on this particular day.

Devas proclaimed 32 Prophetic Phenomena

These thirty-two prophetic phenomena occurred on the day Sumedha received the Prophecy. These phenomena were different from those that took place on the days of Buddha’s Conception, Birth, Enlightenment and Teaching the First Sermon. They will be dealt with in the chapter on Gotama Buddhavaṃsa.

Notes on Prophetic Phenomena

‘Prophetic phenomena’ is the rendering into English of the Pāli word *nimitta*, ‘*nimit*’ in Myanmar which means a phenomenon foretelling a good or evil event that is likely to take place.

The author then gives a mine of information on the Myanmar synonyms, quoting various sources from Myanmar literature. We have left them out from our translation.

End of Anudīpanī on the Prophecy.

Chapter VI. On Pāramitā

(a) The Perfection of Generosity or Generous Offering (Dāna-Pāramī)

With regard to the Perfection of Generosity, it is clearly stated in the Pāli Canon concerning the Chronicle of Buddhas that the Bodhisatta Sumedha admonished himself to start forth with the practice of Perfection of Generosity since the Bodhisattas of the past had done so. It is clearly seen, therefore, that amongst the Ten Perfections, Perfection of giving of offering or generosity demands the highest priority for fulfilment.

But, in the Sangāthā Vagga of the **Saṃyutta Nikāya**, we find the verse, “*Sīle patiṭṭhāya naro sapañño*” in which the Buddha explains that when a person of mature wisdom,

born with three root-conditions², well established in morality, ardently develops concentration and insight wisdom, he can unravel the tangled network of craving. Here, the Buddha mentions only the three trainings, viz. Morality (*sīla*), Concentration (*samādhi*) and Insight Wisdom (*paññā*); there is not even a hint about the practice of Generosity.

Furthermore, as the **Visuddhi-magga** (The Path of Purification) Commentary which is the expository treatise on the single verse of Sagāthāvagga Saṃyutta quoted above does not touch upon the subject of Generosity and as the Noble Path of Eight Constituents which leads to Nibbāna includes the paths concerning morality, concentration and wisdom only, and there is no path including generosity, some people misconstrue that generosity is not regarded by the Buddha as essential, that it is not conducive to attainment of Nibbāna, that it generates more rebirths in the cycle of existence and as such generosity should not be cultivated.

The well-known Minister of King Mindon, U Hlaing of Yaw, went so far as to write in his book, 'The Taste of Liberation' (**Vimuttirasa**) that the Buddha taught generosity only for the sake of very ordinary people such as the rich man's son, Siṅgāla.

There are many Buddhists who are offended by such observation as 'generosity should not be cultivated' and who are indignant at Yaw minister's writing that 'the Buddha taught generosity only for the sake of very ordinary people'. But mere dislike of such views and indignation with them serves no purposes. What is more important and helpful to oneself is to understand correctly what the Buddha means by His Teaching.

Concerning the aforesaid verse of the Sagāthāvagga Saṃyutta, what one should understand as the true meaning of the Buddha's discourse is as follows: This discourse was taught by the Buddha for the benefit of those superior persons who are capable of striving hard for complete eradication of defilements, for the attainment of arahatship in the present life, with no more rebirth. If such a superior person actually strives hard for the attainment of arahatship in this very life and if, as a consequence of his strenuous efforts, he becomes an arahat, there is no need for him to set up a new life. Generosity is an act which generates new life, new pleasures; for the person who will break the circle of the existence in this very life, there will be no more rebirths. Since there will be no new life for him to reap the benefits of generosity, acts of giving by him are unnecessary. That is why the Buddha, for the benefit of superior persons, dwells in this discourse of the Saṃyutta mainly on morality, concentration and insight wisdom which are more important than generosity for the purpose of eradication of the defilements. The Buddha does not say at all that generosity should not be cultivated.

Generosity has the quality of making the mind and heart pliable. When someone makes a generous offer of some gift, the very act of giving serves as a decisive support³ to make the mind more pliable and ready for observance of precepts, for cultivation of concentration and for development of insight wisdom through practice of Vipassanā meditation. It is within the experience of every Buddhist, that a feeling of awkwardness and embarrassment arises in him whenever he visits, without an offering, monasteries or temples for the purpose of keeping precepts, of listening to Dhamma talks or for the practice of meditation. Therefore, it was customary for the noble disciples like Visākhā to bring an offering, such as rice, sweets or fruits in the morning and beverages and medicinal preparations in the evening, whenever she visited the Buddha.

Everyone, who does not become an *arahat* in this life, will go through more rounds in the cycle of existence. In doing so, it will be difficult for them to attain favourable states of existence without practising generosity in the present life. Even if they happen to gain a good rebirth, they will find themselves lacking in material possessions, without which they cannot do meritorious deeds. (In such a case, it may be argued that they could devote themselves to the practice of morality, concentration and insight wisdom. But this is easier

2. Three root-conditions (*Tihetu-patisandhika*) - a being whose consciousness of the moment of rebirth is accompanied by three root-conditions of greedlessness, hatelessness, undeludedness.

3. *Upaṇissaya-Paccaya*: life immediate support.

said than done. Indeed, it is only with the support of the beneficial results of past acts of generosity that the three training of morality, concentration and insight wisdom can be cultivated successfully.) Therefore, it is most important for those who still have to go on this long journey of *saṃsāra* (the cycle of existence), to cultivate generosity. Only when one is equipped with 'provisions for the long journey', namely, generosity, then only one can reach good destination; and while there, possessing material wealth as the fruits of generosity of past lives, one can devote oneself to the pursuit of whatever meritorious deeds one wishes to.

Among the travellers in the round of this cycle of *saṃsāra*, Bodhisattas are the greatest individuals. Among receiving a definite prophecy from a Buddha of his gaining Buddhahood, a Bodhisatta continues to fulfil the Perfections for the attainment of Omniscience (*sabbāññuta-ñāṇa*) for four incalculable world-cycles plus a hundred thousand aeons. A Paccekabuddha, i.e. a non-teaching Buddha, had to fulfil His Perfections for two incalculable world-cycles plus a hundred thousand aeons; an *agga-sāvaka*, a Chief Disciple of a Buddha, for one incalculable world-cycle plus a hundred thousand aeons; and a *mahā-sāvaka*, one of the Leading Disciples, for one hundred thousand world-cycles. Therefore, for Bodhisattas, who are great travellers on the long journey of *saṃsāra*, Perfection of Generosity is of primary importance and as such, a place of prominence is given to steadfast fulfilment of the Perfection of Generosity in the Pāli Text concerning the Chronicle of the Buddhas.

Thus, as the discourse in the Saṃyutta Pāli, mentioned above, was addressed to individuals who are ripe for attainment of arahatship, those, who have not yet fulfilled the Perfections, should not say that Perfection of Generosity is not essential.

Those are some who ask if it is possible to attain Nibbāna by practising only generosity. It may be replied that, practising only one Perfection by itself, neither generosity, nor morality, nor meditation will result in attainment of Nibbāna. For practising generosity alone implies that it is not accompanied by morality nor by meditation. Similarly, practising meditation alone means that it is practised without the support of morality and generosity. When not restrained by morality, one is liable to indulge in evil acts. If such a person of evil habits attempts to practise meditation, his efforts will be futile like a good seed which, when put on red-hot iron, does not produce a sprout but turns to ashes. Thus, it should be noted that it is improper to speak of 'practising generosity alone.'

In the chapter on generosity in the Chronicle of the Buddhas, it is clearly stated that alms should be given irrespective of the recipient's status, whether high, medium or low. In view of such a firm statement, it is neither desirable nor necessary to pick and choose the recipient when one makes an offering.

But in the Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta of the **Uparipannāsa, Majjhima Nikāya**, the Buddha taught seven kinds of gifts to be made to Sangha, the Community of Bhikkhus, and fourteen kinds of gift to be made to individual recipients. It is pointed out with regard to fourteen kinds of gifts made to individual recipients, the merit gained increases according to the recipient going up from the lowliest animals to the highest beings; the most meritorious gift is, of course, that made to the Community of Bhikkhus.

Again in the Ankura Peta story of **Peta Vatthu**, we find the story of two devas. When the Buddha taught the Abhidhamma while being seated on the Sakka's throne in the abode of Tāvātimsa, two devas, Indaka and Ankura, went to listen to the discourse. Whenever powerful devas arrived, Ankura had to make way for them and move back until he was ten *yojanas* away from the Buddha.

But Indaka remained in his seat; he did not have to move. The reason is as follows: At the time when the life span was ten thousand years, Ankura was a human being and was very rich. Throughout that life he made offerings of meals to large numbers of ordinary people, cooking the meals on fireplaces which stretched for twelve *yojanas*. Because of the merit gained, he had taken rebirth as a deva. Indaka, however became a deva because he had offered a spoonful of rice to Arahāt Anuruddha.

Although the offering Indaka had made was just a spoonful of rice, the recipient was an

arahat and the merit he thus acquired was great and noble. Thus, as an equal of the powerful devas, he did not have to make way for them. On the other hand, although Ankura had made large amounts of gifts over a very long period of time, the recipients were worldlings and consequently the beneficial result that accrued was not a high order. And he had to move back every time a powerful deva arrived. Therefore, we find in the Pāli text the exhortation: ‘*Viceyya danam databbam yattha dinnam mahapphalam*’ which means ‘When an offering is to be made, one who can bring the greatest benefit should be chosen as the recipient.’

There seems to be a contradiction between the Pāli Text of the Chronicle of the Buddhas and the discourses, such as the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta*, etc., of other Pāli Texts. The seeming contradiction is easily resolved when one remembers that the discourses such as the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta* are meant for ordinary people or devas, whereas the discussions in the Chronicle of Buddhas are directed exclusively to the Bodhisattas whose goal is attainment of Omniscience (*sabbāññuta-ñāṇa*), or the Buddha-Wisdom. This Wisdom is only one kind and not to be classified into low, medium or great order wisdom. A Bodhisatta has only to give away whatever he has to offer to whoever comes along to receive them, irrespective of his status whether high, medium or low. He does not have to consider thus: “This recipient is of low status, by making an offering to him, I shall gain only a low order of Omniscience. This recipient is only of medium status, by making offer to him, I shall gain Omniscience merely of medium order.” Therefore, giving of alms to whoever comes along to receive them without any discrimination is the habitual practice of Bodhisatta who are bent on attainment of *sabbāññuta-ñāṇa* (Omniscience). On the other hand, the aim of ordinary worldlings, devas or humans, in practising generosity is to gain worldly comforts of their liking, and as such, it is natural that they would choose the best recipient for their alms.

It may be concluded, therefore, that there is no contradiction between the texts in the Chronicles of the Buddhas, which are intended for the great Bodhisattas and the discourse such as *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta* which are meant for ordinary people and devas.

Meaning of Pāramī

The possible meanings of the word ‘*pāramī*’ have been variously explained in the **Cariyā-Piṭaka Commentary**. Just to let the reader have an idea:

Pāramī is the combination for “*parama*” and “*ī*”. *Parama* means ‘most excellent’, which is used here in the sense of future Buddhas who are the most excellent ones.

Or *pāramī* derives from the root, ‘*para*’ with the suffix ‘*ma*’. The root, ‘**para**’ means ‘to fulfil’ or ‘to protect’. Because they fulfil and protect such virtues as *dāna* (alms-giving), etc., future Buddhas are called **parama**.

Or *para*, a prefix, is attached to the root, ‘**mava**’, meaning ‘to bind’. Because future Buddhas behave as though they bind on and attract other beings to them by means of special virtues, they are called **parama**.

Or *paramī*, a prefix is attached to the root, ‘**maja**’ meaning, ‘to be pure; *param* means ‘more’. Because future Buddhas are free of mental impurities and far purer than others, they are called **parama**.

Or *paramī*, a prefix, is attached to the root, ‘**maya**’ meaning ‘to go’; ‘*param*’ means ‘superior’. Because future Buddhas go to the superior state of *Nibbāna* in a special manner, they are called **parama**.

Or *param*, a prefix, is attached to the root, ‘**mu**’ meaning ‘to determine’. Because future Buddhas determine their next existence as they do in the case of the present, they are called **parama**. (What this means to say is that as future Buddhas are able to ascertain precisely what should be done to make the present existence pleasant and faultless, so are they able to do with regard to their next existence. That is, they have the ability to improve their existences.)

Or *paramī*, a prefix, is attached to the root, ‘**mi**’ meaning ‘to put in’; *paramī* means

‘more’. Because future Buddhas ‘put in’ more and more such virtues as *sīla* (morality), etc., in their mental process, they are called **parama**.

Or *param* means ‘different from’ or ‘opposed to’; the root is ‘**mi**’ meaning ‘to crush’. Because future Buddhas crush all their enemies, which in the form of impurities, are different from and opposed to all virtues, they are called **parama**.

Or *pāra*, a noun, is attached to the root, ‘**maja**’ meaning ‘to purify’; *pāra* means ‘the other shore’. Here *saṃsāra* is to be taken as ‘this shore’ and Nibbāna ‘the other shore’. Because future Buddhas purify themselves as well as others on the other shore of Nibbāna, they are called **pāramī**.

Or *pāra*, a noun, is attached to the root ‘**mava**’ meaning ‘to bind’ or ‘to put together’. Because future Buddhas bind or put beings together in Nibbāna, they are called **pāramī**.

Or the root is *maya*, meaning ‘to go’. Because future Buddhas go to the other shore of Nibbāna, they are called **pāramī**.

Or the root is *mu*, meaning ‘to understand’. Because future Buddhas fully understand the other shore of Nibbāna as it really is, they are called **pāramī**.

Or the root is *mi* meaning ‘to put in’. Because future Buddhas put in and convey being to the other shore of Nibbāna, they are called **pāramī**.

Or the root is *mi*, meaning ‘to crush’. Because future Buddhas crush and eradicate in Nibbāna the impurities which are enemies of being, they are called **pāramī**.

(These are the various meanings presented in accordance with *sabhavanirutti* (natural etymology). They are not random attempts.)

Paramāṇaṃ ayaṃ paramī: **Pāramī** means property in the form of practices of future Buddhas; (or) *paramāṇaṃ kammaṃ paramī*; **paramī** means duties of future Buddhas; *Paramissa bhāvo pāramitā paramissa kammaṃ pāramitā*: duties that bring about knowledge that such a person is a future Buddha.

All this means: A series of duties such as *dāna* and others to be fulfilled by future Buddhas is called **paramī** (or **pāramitā**).

In the **Jinālaṅkāra Sub-commentary**, it is said: “*Pāraṃ nibbānaṃ ayaṃ ti gacchanti etāhi ti pāramiyo, nibbānasādhakā hi dānacetanādayo dhammā paramī ti vuccanti*,” meaning to say that “*Dāna cetanā* or the volition of alms-giving, etc. which forms the way to Nibbāna, the other side of *saṃsāra*, should be called *paramī*.”

In the **Cariyāpitaka Commentary**, it is said: *taṇhāmānadiṭṭhī anupahatā karuṇā upāyakoṣalla-pariggahita dānādayo gunā pāramiyo*, **Pāramī** is constituted by virtues, such as *dāna*, etc. that are to be grasped by means of compassion and cleverness. Compassion is shown towards beings who are not spoiled (overwhelmed) by craving, pride and wrong view. Cleverness means wisdom in seeking ways and means. *Dāna*, etc. (that are to be guided by compassion and wisdom) are to be named *pāramī*. (This explanation is made with special reference to *pāramī* of Sambuddhas.)

Perfections

The Ten Perfections are:

- (1) Generosity (*dāna*, translated sometimes as charity, liberality or just alms-giving)
- (2) Morality or Virtue (*sīla*)
- (3) Renunciation (*nekkhamma*)
- (4) Wisdom (*paññā*)
- (5) Energy (*vīriya*)
- (6) Forbearance or Patience (*khaṇṭī*)
- (7) Truthfulness (*sacca*)
- (8) Determination or Resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*)

(9) Loving-kindness (*mettā*)

(10) Equanimity (*upekkhā*)

(The full meaning of these Perfections will become clear in the following passages.) Concerning these Perfections, it has been mentioned in the Chapter: The Rare Appearance of a Buddha, that there are four kinds of cultivation of mind. One of these cultivations deals with the fact that from the time Bodhisattas receive definite assurance from a Buddha about their Buddhahood till the last rebirth when they actually become a completely Self-Enlightened Buddha, there is no period in this very long interval in which they do not practise for fulfilment of the Ten Pāramīs (Perfections) at the very least, they do not fail to fulfil the Perfection of Generosity. It fills us with devotional inspiration to reflect on these noble practices pursued by the Bodhisattas.

The Characteristics, Functions, Manifestations and Proximate Causes of The Perfections

A person practising Vipassanā Meditation must come to know the nature of *nāma* and *rūpa* by means of their characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes. Then only will he come to possess a clear view of them. Similarly, it is only when one knows the characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause of the Perfections then one will have a clear understanding of them. Therefore, we find in the Commentary to the Cariya Piṭaka a separate chapter on the characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause of the Perfections.

A feature common to all the Ten Perfections is that they have the characteristic of serving the interest of others. Their function is (a) providing assistance to others (*kicca-rasa*); (b) being endowed with steadfastness (prosperity, success), fulfilment (*samāpattirasa*). Their manifestation is (a) the recurring phenomenon of the quest for the welfare and benefits of being; or (b) the recurring phenomenon of appearing in the mind (of Bodhisatta) that it is useful means of bringing about Buddhahood. Their proximate cause is (a) great compassion or (b) great compassion and skilfulness as to means and ways.

It is necessary to provide a few explanations on the above definitions. Characteristic (*lakṣhaṇa*) has two aspects: (i) **Samannasabhāva**, the ordinary feature of each thing, i.e. the feature applicable to others also and (ii) **Visesasabhāva**, the peculiar feature which is not applicable to others. For example, amongst the material qualities, the Earth-element of the Four Great Elements has two characteristics, namely, impermanence and hardness. Of these, the characteristic of impermanence is a feature applicable to other elements and is thus an ordinary feature only, whereas, the characteristic of hardness is the unique feature of the Earth-element only, is not shared by others and is thus its special feature.

Function (*rasa*) has also two aspects to it: (i) **Kiccarasa**, function that which is to be performed; (ii) **Sampattirasa**, fulfilment, attainment. For example, when meritoriousness arises, it does so after counteracting or obliterating demeritoriousness. Thus, it is said that the function of meritoriousness is the counteracting of demeritoriousness. The final fulfilment of a meritorious act is production of beneficial results; thus the function of meritoriousness is the attainment of beneficial results.

Whenever a person ponders deeply on certain mind-objects, what usually appears in his mind relates to the nature of the mind-object under consideration; relates to its function; relates to its cause; relates to its effect. The manifestations which thus appear in his mind concerning the mind-object he is thinking about is called its manifestation. For example, when a person starts to investigate ‘what is meritoriousness?’, it would appear in his mind, ‘meritoriousness is of the nature of purity’ regarding its nature; ‘meritoriousness is that which counteracts or obliterates demeritoriousness’ regarding its function; ‘meritoriousness is possible only when one associates with the good and virtuous’ regarding its cause; ‘meritoriousness is that which enables production of desirable results’ regarding its fruition.

The immediate, and the most powerful contributory factor for its arising is called the proximate cause. For example, of many factors which cause the arising of meritoriousness, proper attitude of mind is the immediate and the most powerful contributory factor for its arising and is therefore termed its proximate cause, **Padatthāna**, in the Texts.

Some Notable Features concerning **Dāna** (Generosity, Charity)

The essential thing to know concerning the word '**Dāna-pāramī**' (the Perfection of Generosity) is that anything which is given away or any act of giving is **Dāna** (charity or generosity). There are two kinds of giving:

- (1) Giving as an act of merit (**puññavisayadāna**).
- (2) Giving in conformity with worldly practices (**lokavisayadāna**).

Acts of giving out of pure faith are acts of merit (**puññavisayadāna**) and only such givings constitute the Perfection of Generosity.

But gifts given in pursuit of love or out of anger, fear, or foolishness etc. and even giving punishment, giving a sentence of death are worldly giving. They do not form part of Perfection of Generosity.

Dāna (Generosity) and **Pariccāga** (Abandonment)

In connection with giving which would amount to an act of merit, it is helpful to understand the differences and similarities between what is termed **Dāna**, translated as 'Generosity', and what is termed as **Pariccāga**, translated as abandonment, renunciation through charity.

In the Mahāhamśa Jātaka of **Asītinipāta**, it is given an enumeration of the ten duties of a king, viz. generosity, morality, abandonment, uprightness, gentleness, self-control, freedom from anger, mercy, forbearance and absence of obstruction. We see therein that generosity and abandonment are listed separately.

According to the **Jātaka Commentary**, there are ten objects which may be offered as alms: food, drink, transportation (including umbrellas, slippers or shoes, which are for travelling), flowers, perfumed powder, scented unguent or ointment, bed, dwelling places, and facilities for lighting. The volition that prompts the giving of these alms constitutes generosity (*dāna*). The volition that accompanies the giving away of any other objects of alms is to be regarded as abandonment (*pariccāga*). Thus the differentiation here rests on the different kinds of the objects of alms.

But the Sub-commentary of the Jātaka, quoting the views of many teachers, says that 'giving of offerings with the prospect of enjoying good results in future lives is *dāna*; giving rewards to servants and service personnel, etc. in order to reap the benefits in the present life is *pariccāga*.'

A story that gives another illustration of the difference between generosity and abandonment is described in the Commentary to the Cariyāpitaka Pāli Text and in the Commentary to Terasanipata Jātaka. Briefly, Bodhisatta was once a learned brahmin by the name of Akitti. When his parents passed away, he was left with a vast accumulation of wealth. Deeply stirred by religious emotion, he reflected thus: "My parents and ancestors who have accumulated this great wealth have abandoned them and left, as for me, I shall gather only the substance of this accumulation and depart." Then having obtained permission from the King, he had a drum beaten all over the country to proclaim the great charity he was going to make. For seven days, he personally gave away his riches but there still remained more.

He saw no point in presiding himself over the ceremony of distribution of his wealth, so leaving the doors of his mansion, treasure houses and granaries wide open, so that whoever wished might go and helped themselves to whatever they liked, and he renounced the worldly life and went away.

It may be said that in the above story, distribution of wealth personally by the Bodhisatta during the first seven days is an act of generosity (*dāna*), whereas abandoning of the remaining wealth after seven day's personal distribution is an act of abandonment (*pariccāga*). The reason for such distinction is that, for an offering to be an act of generosity (*dāna*) four conditions must be fulfilled: (1) a donor, (2) objects to offer, (3) a recipient actually present to receive and (4) the volition to give. The wise man, Akitti's distribution of wealth during the first seven days fulfils all these conditions. Hence, it is an

act of generosity (*dāna*). After seven days had passed, he went away leaving his wealth before any recipient went near or arrived to actually receive the gifts. Hence, it is said that such offering should be regarded as abandonment.

In every day practice which is not an act of merit, when we give something to some one, we just say we ‘give’; the Pāli word is ‘*deti*’. But when we part with our property with the thought let ‘whoever wants it take it; if no one wants it, then let it be’ it is not giving away but discarding or abandoning; in Pāli, it is not ‘*dāna*’, but ‘*cāga*’.

In short, when we hand over possession of our property to another person, it is said to be given away or an act of charity. When we relinquish the wish to possess the property which is one’s own, it is termed abandoning or discarding (as one would cast aside anything which is of no more use).

Another method of differentiation is: giving to noble persons is *dāna*; giving to persons of lower status is *pariccāga*. Thus, when a king, in performance of the ten duties of a king, makes an offering to noble *bhikkhus*, brahmins, etc. it would be generosity (*dāna*); when he offers alms to lowly beggars, it would be *pariccāga*.

In this way, it should be noted how generosity (*dāna*) is taught distinctly from abandonment (*pariccāga*).

When Dāna and Pariccāga are similar

Although *dāna* and *pariccāga* are treated separately as in the list of the ten duties of a king, shown above, in ultimate truth, the two terms cannot be different from each other. When there is *dāna*, there could be *pariccāga*; when there is *pariccāga*, there could be *dāna*. The reason is that when an offering is made to a recipient, whether he is near or far, it is an act of generosity (*dāna*). When the sense of ownership is banished from the mind (at the time of giving), this relinquishment is *pariccāga*. Thus, whenever someone makes a gift, it is always preceded by the thought: “I will not make use of it any more” which implies abandonment. Therefore, with acts of merit, there is *pariccāga* always accompanying generosity.

In the Chronicles of Buddhas of the Pāli Canon also, in dealing with the Ten Perfections, the Buddha mentions only the Perfection of Generosity, not the ‘Perfection of Abandonment (*cāga*)’, because (as explained above) abandonment is included in an act of generosity. As the Text of the Chronicle of Buddhas deals only with the ultimate truth (without considering the conventional usages), it mentions that making an offering to any recipients, whether of high, medium or low status, is generosity (*dāna*). It is irrelevant to say that it is *dāna* when offering is made to a noble person and *pariccāga* when the recipient is of low status.

Similarly, in the **Āṅguttara Nikāya** and other Pāli Texts, we find the enumeration of the seven niches of a noble person as follow: faith, morality, knowledge, liberality (*cāga*), wisdom, moral shame (at doing evil) and moral dread (for doing evil). There is only *cāga* in the list; there is no mention of *dāna* here, because it is understood that generosity is included in liberality (*cāga*).

These are examples where *dāna* and *cāga* are mentioned without any distinction, with identical meaning.

Where ‘Dāna’ is termed ‘Pariccāga’

Although any act of giving may generally be described as Perfection of Generosity, great offerings (of extraordinary nature) are described in the Text as Great Abandonings (**Mahāpariccāga**). The Great Abandonings which consist of five kinds of relinquishing of possession are listed differently in different Commentaries.

Commentaries on the **Sīlakkhandā**, **Mūlapaṇṇāsa** and **Āṅguttara** (in explaining the meaning of the word ‘**Tathāgata**’) list the Great Abandonings as follows:

- (i) Relinquishing of the limbs.

- (ii) Relinquishing of the eyes.
- (iii) Relinquishing of wealth.
- (iv) Relinquishing of kingdom.
- (v) Relinquishing of wife and children.

The Commentary to the **Mūlapaṇṇāsa** (in the exposition on the Cūḷasihanāda Sutta) gives another list:

- (i) Relinquishing of the limbs.
- (ii) Relinquishing of wife and children.
- (iii) Relinquishing of kingdom.
- (iv) Relinquishing of one's body (life).
- (v) Relinquishing of eyes.

The Sub-commentary to the **Visuddhimagga** gives the list:

- (i) Relinquishing of one's body (life).
- (ii) Relinquishing of the eyes.
- (iii) Relinquishing of wealth.
- (iv) Relinquishing of kingdom.
- (v) Relinquishing of wife and children.

The Sub-commentary to the Mahāvagga of the **Dīgha Nikāya** (in exposition on the Mahāpadana Sutta) gives the list:

- (i) Relinquishing of the limbs.
- (ii) Relinquishing of the eyes.
- (iii) Relinquishing of one's body (life).
- (iv) Relinquishing of one's kingdom.
- (v) Relinquishing of one's wife and children.

The Commentary to the **Itivuttaka** (in its exposition of the first sutta of the Dūkanipāta, Dutiyavagga) gives the list:

- (i) Relinquishing of the limbs.
- (ii) Relinquishing of one's body (life).
- (iii) Relinquishing of wealth.
- (iv) Relinquishing of wife and children.
- (v) Relinquishing of kingdom.

The Commentary to the **Buddhavaṃsa** gives the list:

- (i) Relinquishing of the limbs.
- (ii) Relinquishing of one's life.
- (iii) Relinquishing of wealth.
- (iv) Relinquishing of kingdom.
- (v) Relinquishing of wife and children.

The Commentary to the **Vessantara Jātaka** gives the list:

- (i) Relinquishing of wealth.
- (ii) Relinquishing of the limbs.

- (iii) Relinquishing of children.
- (iv) Relinquishing of wife.
- (v) Relinquishing of one's life.

The same list is found in the Sub-commentary to the **Jinālaṅkāra** but arranged in a different order.

Although each of the above lists is made up of slightly different items, it should be noted that the essentials are the same in all of them, namely, external objects and one's own body. Under external objects, we find material things apart from one's own body, viz. relinquishing of wealth; relinquishing of wife and children, very dear to oneself; relinquishing of kingdom, a most important treasure of one's own. With regard to the relinquishing of one's own body, it falls under two modes: one that does not endanger life, that is relinquishing of the limbs (*angapariccāga*) and the other endangers life, that is relinquishing of the eyes (*nayanapariccāga*), or relinquishing of life (*jivitapariccāga*) and relinquishing of one's own body (*attapariccāga*). Here, it is explained giving one's own eyes or giving one's own body involves the risk of losing one's life, so these are considered to be essentially the same as giving one's life.

The great ceremony of offering performed by King Vessantara when he gave away seven kinds of objects, one hundred each in number, is described by the Commentary as *Mahādāna* and not *Mahāpariccāga*. But one can argue that this great offering can be considered as one of the Five Great Abandonings, namely, great relinquishing of wealth.

Miscellaneous Notes on Different Aspect of Dāna

For the edification of those aspirants who ardently strive for attainment of perfect Self-Enlightenment of a Buddha, or for Self-Enlightenment of a Paccekabuddha, or for the Enlightenment of a disciple of a Buddha, we provide herewith miscellaneous notes on different aspects of Generosity, which forms a part of the conditions for obtaining Enlightenment. These notes are given in the form of answers to the following questions:

- (i) What things are called **Dāna**?
- (ii) Why are they called **Dāna**?
- (iii) What are the characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes of **Dāna**?
- (iv) How many types of **Dāna** are there?
- (v) What are the elements that strengthen the beneficial results of **Dāna**?
- (vi) What are the elements that weaken the beneficial results of **Dāna**?

(This form of treatment will be adhered to when dealing with other Perfections too.)

1. WHAT THINGS ARE CALLED DĀNA?

In brief, it should be answered that 'the volition to give a suitable thing' is called **Dāna**. The meaning will become clearer in the following passages.

2. WHY ARE THEY CALLED DĀNA?

The volition is called **Dāna** because it is responsible for an act of generosity to take place. There can be no generosity without the volition to give; an act of generosity is possible only when there is the volition to give.

In this connection, by volition is meant:

- (i) the volition that arises at the time of donation. It is called '*muñca-cetanā*', 'relinquishing' volition, '*munca*' meaning relinquishing. It is only this volition, which accompanies the act of relinquishing, that forms the true element of generosity.
- (ii) The volition that arises in anticipation before one makes the donation is called

‘*pubba-cetana*’. This type of volition can also be considered as *Dāna*, provided that the object to be given is at hand at the time the intention, “I shall make an offering of this object”, occurs. Without the object to be given being actually in one’s possession, cherishing the thought of giving may be called ‘*pubba-cetana*’ but cannot qualify as *Dāna*: it can only be a benevolent thought of ordinary merit.

How volition comes to be taken as synonymous with *Dāna* is based on the grammatical definition of *Dīyati anenāti dānam*, that which prompts giving is generosity (*dāna*). (Volition, here, is definitely the determining cause of giving).

Things to be given are also called *Dāna* from the grammatical definition of **Dīyatiti dānam** which means objects which could be offered as alms.

Following these grammatical definitions, Text of the Canons mention two kinds of *dāna*, namely, volitional *dāna* and material *dāna*. In this connection, questions have been asked why objects to be offered are called *dāna*, since only volition is capable of producing results and material object is not. It is true that only volition is productive of results because volition is a mental action but, as explained above, volition can be called *dāna* only if it arises when there exist suitable things to be given. Therefore, material object for giving is also an important contributory factor for an act of giving to qualify as generosity (*dāna*).

For example, we say ‘rice is cooked because of the firewood’. Actually, it is the fire that cooks the rice. But there can be no fire without firewood. So fire burns because of firewood and rice is cooked because of fire. Thus, taking into consideration, these connected phenomena, it is not incorrect to say ‘rice is well cooked because of good firewood’. Similarly, we can rightly say ‘beneficial result is obtained because of objects of offering’.

Because things to be given away feature importantly in acts of generosity, the Canonical Text mention different types of *Dāna*, depending on different objects to be offered. Thus, in expositions on the Vinaya, we find four kinds of *dāna*, since the Buddha allows four kinds of requisites to the Sangha, the offerings made to the Sangha are naturally listed under these four kinds. Hence, this classification in the Vinaya expositions of four types of *dāna*, which is primarily based upon different kinds of object of offering.

According to the classification in the exposition on the Abhidhamma, everything in the world comes under six categories, which correspond to the six sense objects, there are six kinds of *dāna* depending upon whether it is a gift of visible object, of sound, of smell, of taste, of touch or of mind-object or dhamma. Here also, although there is no direct mention of six kinds of *dāna* in the Abhidhamma Teachings, if gifts were to be made of each of the sense objects, there would be six kinds of offering; hence this classification in the Abhidhamma expositions of six types of *dāna*.

In the Suttanta classification, there are ten kinds of *dāna*, namely, offering of various kinds of food, of drink, of transportation, of flowers, of perfumed powder, of scented unguent or ointment, of bed, of dwelling places and of facilities of lighting. Here again, the actual teaching in the Suttas relates only to the ten classes of objects which may be offered as alms. But when these ten objects are offered as alms, there would be then ten kinds of offering; hence this classification in the Suttanta expositions of ten types of *dāna*.

Maintaining that the Buddha teaches only these ten objects of offering, one should not consider that these are the only gifts to be given and that other gifts are not allowable. One should understand that the Buddha merely mentions the ten things most commonly offered as alms in practice; or as any material thing can be classified as belonging to one or the other of the ten types of gifts, one should take it that by these ten objects are covered also any object which is in daily use by the noble recipient.

From what has been said above, it should be well noted how a material object is an important contributory factor (for the arising) of volitional generosity. It will be seen that the various types of generosity which will be described henceforth include many that relate to objects of offering.

As a resume of this chapter, it should be remembered that volition is *dāna* because it

prompts giving; the material thing is *dāna* because it is suitable thing to give.

3. WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS, FUNCTIONS, MANIFESTATION AND PROXIMATE CAUSES OF DĀNA

- (a) *Dāna* has the characteristic of abandoning (*lakkhaṇa*).
- (b) Its function (*kiicca-rasa*) is destruction of attachment to objects of offering; or it has the property of faultlessness (*sampatti-rasa*).
- (c) Its manifestation is absence of attachment i.e. a sense of freedom from attachment that appears in the mind of the donor, or knowing that *dāna* is conducive to good destination and wealth, i.e. on thinking of the effects of giving, the donor senses that his act of generosity will result in attainment of rebirth in the human or deva-world and attainment of great wealth.
- (d) The proximate cause of giving is having objects of offering in one's possession. Without having anything to give, there can be no act of charity, only imagining that one gives. Thus objects to be offered are the proximate cause of *Dāna*.

4. HOW MANY TYPES OF DĀNA ARE THERE

The subject to be dealt with under this topic is quite vast as it entails considerable exercise of mental alertness and intelligence to study them.

Types of *Dāna* in Groups of Twos

1. *Āmisa/Dhamma Dāna*

Offering of material things (*Āmisa-dāna*) and the gift of the Teaching (*Dhamma-dāna*).

(a) Offering of material things, such as alms-rice, etc., is known as *Āmisa-dāna*. It is also called *Paccaya dāna* (when the things offered are the requisites of *bhikkhus*).

Teaching the Buddha Dhamma in the form of talks, lectures, etc. is giving the gift of Dhamma. The Buddha said that this is the noblest of all types of *dāna*. (This classification of *dāna* into two types is made according to the objects of offering.)

In relation to this division of types of *dāna*, it is necessary to look into the question of what type of *dāna* accrues to one who erects pagodas and statues of Buddha.

There are some who maintain that although erecting of pagodas and statues of Buddha involves relinquishing of large amount of wealth, it cannot be an act of generosity (*dāna*), because they say, for an act of giving to become *dāna*, three conditions must be fulfilled: (1) there must be a recipient, (2) there must be an object for offering and (3) there must be a donor. In erecting pagodas and statues of Buddha, there is obviously the donor, but who receives his gift, they asked. In the absence of anyone to receive the gift, how can it be an act of generosity (*dāna*).

From their point of view, the pagodas and Buddha statues are not objects to be given as an act of *dāna* but rather, they serve as aids to recollection of the attributes of the Buddha. A builder of pagodas and Buddha statues has no particular receiver in mind to give them away. He builds them to help produce vivid visualization of the Buddha in the mind of the devotees so as to enable them to practise the Recollection of the Virtues of the Buddha. It should, therefore, be considered, they maintain, that erecting pagodas and Buddha statues is related to the Buddhānussati Meditation, cultivation of the Recollection of the Virtues of the Buddha, and is not act of generosity.

There are, again, some people who maintain that as the person, who builds pagodas and installs Buddha statues, undertakes these works in order to honour, to make homage to the most Homage-Worthy Buddha, his act must be considered as an act of honouring the Buddha (*apacāyana*), one of the ten qualities contributing to merit (*puñṇakiriya-vatthu*). They further say that since this kind of merit, namely, honouring those who are worthy of honour, is a practice of morality (*cāritta-sīla*), it should come under (observance of) *sīla* and not under (cultivation of) Buddhānussati Meditation.

But neither the merit of Buddhānussati Meditation nor the merit of honouring

(*apacāyana*) involves relinquishing of objects of offering; whereas building a pagoda and installing Buddha statues require an expenditure of a large sum of money. Hence, these works of merit must be considered to come under *Dāna*.

Here the question may be asked: 'If it comes under *dāna*, will it be an act of *dāna* when there is no recipient for it?' According to the Texts, whether an offering should be regarded as an act of *dāna* may be decided by an analysis of its features, viz. characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause. We have already provided above what these four features are, for a true act of *dāna*. Now applying this test to the present problems, we find the characteristic of abandoning, since the person, who builds the pagoda and installs the Buddha statues, relinquishes a large sum of money; as for function, there is destruction of attachment to the objects of offering by the donor; as its manifestation, the donor senses that his act of generosity will result in attainment of rebirth in the human or deva-world and attainment of great wealth; and finally, as the proximate cause, there is the object to be offered. Thus, all the four features necessary for an offering to be truly an act of *dāna* are present here and we may, therefore, conclude that building a pagoda and installing Buddha statues is a true act of generosity.

As to the question of who receives the gift, it will not be wrong to say that all the devas and human beings, who worship at the pagodas and Buddha statues in memory of the virtues of the Buddha, are the recipients of the *dāna*. At the same time, as they serve as objects of worship for the devas and human beings in their recollection of the virtues of the Buddha, they also form the objects of offering. All the various material things in the world are utilized in different ways depending on their nature; food materials are utilized for consumption; clothing materials are utilized for wearing; material for religious devotion and adoration are utilized as objects of veneration.

If wells and tanks are dug near public highways, the general public could use them for drinking water, washing, etc. The donor would have no particular recipient in mind when he dug the wells and tanks. When, as he intended, the wayfarers, passing by the road, make use of his gifts, no one could say that his gift is not an act of *dāna*; even if he did not finalize it with a libation ceremony. (See below).

Now to wind up the discussion, it is quite proper to say that builder of a pagoda with Buddha statues is a donor, the pagoda and Buddha statues are objects of *dāna*, and devas and human beings who pay homage to them in adoration are the recipients of the *dāna*.

An additional question may be asked: "Is it really proper to refer to pagodas and Buddha statues as objects of *dāna*; may it not be sacrilegious to classify them as such?" Just as bookcases and shelves are used in the monasteries for holding Canonical Texts which are looked up as sacred (*Dhamma-cetiya*), so also pagodas and Buddha statues form storehouses for keeping sacred relics and objects of veneration. So it may be answered that it is quite appropriate to designate them as objects of generosity (*dāna*).

Whether A Libation Ceremony is Essential for An Offering to qualify as An act of Generosity

The point to consider here is what constitutes an act of *dāna* when it is not finalised with a libation ceremony. Actually there is no mention of this requirement in the Texts. The practice is, however, or long standing tradition.

In the Commentary on Chapter: *Cīvarakkhandhaka* of the **Vinaya Mahāvagga**, we find the following reference to this tradition of libation ceremony. "There was a split among the *bhikkhus* of a monastery prior to the time of offering of robes after the Buddhist *Vassa*. When the time arrived, lay devotees came and offered robes, piled up in a heap, to one group of *bhikkhus*. The devotees then went to the other group of *bhikkhus* and performed the ceremony of libation, saying: "We offer to the other group of *bhikkhus*." As to how the robes should be distributed among the Sangha, the **Great Commentary** says that if it was a region where the ceremony of libation is of no importance, the robes belonged to the group (of *bhikkhus*) which had been directly offered the robes. The group which received only 'the libation' had no claim to the robes. But if it was in a region where the libation ceremony is of importance, the group which received only 'the libation' had a claim to the

robes because the ceremony of libation was performed with them; the other group to which the robes were offered directly had also a claim on them since they had the robes already in their possession. Therefore, the two groups must divide the robes equally among themselves. This method of distribution is a practice followed by tradition in regions on the other side of the Ocean.”

“Regions on the other side of the Ocean,” from Sri Lanka implies “the Jambudīpa”, i.e. India. Therefore, it should be noted that the ceremony of libation is a practice traditionally followed by the people of India.

Considering that there are regions where they set a great store by ceremony of libation and there are regions where they set no great store by the ceremony of libation, it cannot be said that an offering constitutes an act of generosity only when it is finalised by a ceremony of libation. The ceremony is important only for those who follow the tradition of libation; it is clear that no significance is attached to it by those who do not follow the tradition. It should be noted, therefore, that a libation ceremony is not a primary factor for the successful completion of an act of generosity.

(b) With respect to the gift of the Teaching (*dharmā-dāna*), there are, nowadays, people who are unable to teach the Dhamma, but who, bent on making a gift of the Teaching, spend money on books, palm-leaf scripts, etc. (of Canonical Texts) and make a gift of them. Although such a donation of books is not truly a gift of the Teaching, since a reader will be benefitted by reading in the books, practices and instructions which will lead one to Nibbāna, the donor may be regarded as one who makes a gift of the Teaching.

It is like the case of one who has no medicine to give to a sick person, but only a prescription for a cure of the illness. When the medicine is prepared as prescribed and taken, the illness is removed. Although the person does not actually administer any medicine, because of his effective prescription, he is entitled to be regarded as one who has brought about the cure of illness. Likewise, the donor of books on Dhamma who personally cannot teach the Dhamma enables the readers of his books to attain knowledge of the Dhamma and thus is entitled to be called the donor of the gift of Dhamma.

Now, to conclude this section, the pair of gifts mentioned above, namely, **Amisa-dāna** and **Dhamma-dāna** may also be called **Amisa-pūjā**, honouring with material things and **Dhamma-pūjā**, honouring with the Teaching; the terms means the same thing.

The word ‘*Pūjā*’ means ‘honouring’ and is generally used when a younger person makes an offering to an older person or a person of higher status. Depending on this general usage, some people have stated that *dāna* should be divided into ‘*pūjā-dāna*’ and ‘*anuggaha-dāna*’; ‘*pūjā-dāna*’, honouring with an offering when the gift is made by a younger person or a person of lower status to an older person or person of higher status; and ‘*anuggaha-dāna*’ offering to render assistance out of kindness when a gift is given by an older person or a person of higher status to one who is younger or of lower status.

But as we have seen before in the Chapter on ‘Prediction’, the word ‘*Pūjā*’ can be used for both the high or the low and the word ‘*Anuggaha*’ is likewise applicable to both cases. It is true that generally, ‘*anuggaha*’ is used when the giving is made by the high to the low or by the old to the young. But we must, however, remember the usages of ‘*amisānuggaha*’ and ‘*dhammānuggaha*’ to describe the assistance rendered and support given, for the progress and development of the Buddha’s Teaching. Here the word ‘*anuggaha*’ is employed even though the gift is being made to the highest and the noblest Teaching of the Buddha. Thus, it should be noted that the division into *pūjā-dāna* and *anuggaha-dāna* is not an absolute division into two aspects of *dāna*, but rather a classification following common usage.

2. Ajjhattika/Bāhira Dāna

Offering of one’s own person (**Ajjhattika-dāna**) and offering of external properties (**Bāhira-dāna**).

Offerings of one’s own person means giving away of one’s own life and limbs. Offerings

of external properties include giving of all the external material possessions of the donor.

Even in this modern time, we read sometimes in the newspapers of offerings of one's own limbs at the pagoda or of 'honouring with the gift' of burning oneself after wrapping the whole body with cloth and pouring oil on it. Some comments have been made on such kinds of *dāna* involving one's limbs. According to them, such offerings of one's life and limbs are deeds to be performed only by great Bodhisattas and are not the concern of ordinary persons. They doubt if such offerings made by ordinary persons produce any merit at all.

Now to consider whether such views are justified or not. It is not as if a Bodhisatta can suddenly make his appearance in this world. Only after gradually fulfilling the required perfections to the best of his ability, an individual grows in maturity and develops himself stage by stage to become a Bodhisatta. Ancient poets have written thus: Only by gradual venture, one ensures continuous improvement in rebirths to come. Therefore, we should not hastily condemn those who make offerings of parts of their body or the whole of their body. If a person, through unflinching volition and faith, very courageously makes an offering of his own body, even to the extent of abandoning his life, he is actually worthy of praise as a donor of the gift of one's own person, **Ajjhattika-dāna**.

3. Vatthu/Abhaya Dāna

Offering of property (**Vatthu-dāna**) and granting of safety (**Abhaya-dāna**).

Vatthu-dāna is concerned with offering of material things. **Abhaya-dāna** means granting of safety or security with respect to life or property. This is usually an exercise of mercy by kings.

4. Vattanissita/Vivattanissita Dāna

Vattanissita-dāna is offering made in the hope of future worldly wealthy and pleasures, which means suffering in the cycle of existence. **Vivattanissita-dāna** is concerned with offering made in aspiration for Nibbāna which is free of the suffering of rebirth.

5. Sāvajja/Anavajja Dāna

Dāna tainted with fault (**Sāvajja-dāna**) and **dāna** untainted with fault (**Anavajja-dāna**).

Offering of meals with meat obtained from killing of animals is an example of *dāna* tainted with fault. Offering of meals which does not involve killing of animals is *dāna* untainted with fault. The first type is an act of generosity accompanied by demeritoriousness and the second type is *dāna* unaccompanied by demeritoriousness.

We see the case of some fishermen, who, having accumulated wealth from fishing, decided to give up the business thinking: "I shall abandon this demeritorious fishing work and adopt a pure mode of livelihood." Engaging in other occupations, they find their prosperity declining and, therefore, had to revert to their old vocation, and their wealth grew. This is an example of *dāna* tainted with fault (**Sāvajja-dāna**) done in previous lives coming to fruition in the present life. Since that act of *dāna* was associated with the act of killing, at the time of its fruition too, success is achieved only when associated with act of killing (fishing). When not associated with an act of killing, the previous *dāna* tainted with fault cannot come to fruition and his wealth declines.

6. Sāhatthika/Anattika Dāna

Offering made with one's own hand (**Sāhatthika-dāna**) and offering made by agents on one's behalf or made by other under one's instruction (**Anattika-dāna**).

(That **Sāhatthika-dāna** brings more beneficial results than the **Anattika-dāna** can be read in the Pāyāsi Sutta of Mahā Vagga, Dīgha Nikāya, of the Pāli Canon).

7. Sakkacca/Asakkacca Dāna

Offering made with proper and careful preparation (**Sakkacca-dāna**) and offering made without proper and careful preparation (**Asakkacca-dāna**).

As an example, offering of flowers may be cited. Having gathered flowers from trees, a donor creates garlands of festoon with them, and arranges them to look as beautiful and as pleasant as possible, and makes his offering of flowers, then it is a *sakkacca-dāna*, offering made with proper and careful preparations. Without such careful preparations, when flowers are presented as they have been gathered from trees, thinking that the mere gift of the flowers is sufficient in itself, then it is *asakkacca-dāna*, offering made without proper and careful preparations.

Some ancient writers have translated ‘*sakkacca-dāna*’ and ‘*asakkacca-dāna*’ into Myanmar to mean ‘offering made with due respect’ and ‘offering made without due respect’. This rendering has, as often as not, misled the modern readers to think that it means paying due respect or without paying due respect to the receiver of the offering. Actually, ‘paying due respect’ here means simply ‘making careful preparations’ for the offering.

8. Nānasampayutta/Naṇavippayutta Dāna

Offering associated with wisdom (**Nānasampayutta-dāna**) and offering unassociated with wisdom (**Naṇavippayutta-dāna**).

Offering made with clear comprehension of volitional acts and the results they produce is said to be an offering associated with wisdom. When an offering is made without such comprehension and awareness, by just following examples of others making donation, it is *naṇavippayutta-dāna*. It must be mentioned that just awareness of cause and its ensuing effect, while an offering is being made, is sufficient to make it an offering which is associated with wisdom. In this connection, an explanation is necessary with respect to some exhortations which run like this: ‘Whenever an offering is made, it should be accompanied by Insight Knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*), in this manner, I, the donor of the gift, am *anicca*, of impermanent nature; and the recipient of the gift is also *anicca*, of impermanent nature. The impermanent I am offering the impermanent gift to the impermanent recipient. Thus, you should contemplate whenever you make an offering of gifts.’

This exhortation is made only to encourage the practice of developing Insight Knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*). It should not be misunderstood that an act of generosity is not one associated with wisdom, if the donor does not practise contemplation as exhorted.

As a matter of fact, whoever wants to develop real *vipassanā-ñāṇa* should first of all discard the notion of I, he, man, woman, i.e. the illusion of I, the illusion of Self, to discern that they are merely material aggregates and mental aggregates. Then one has to go on contemplating so as to realise that these aggregates of mind and matter are of the nature impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and insubstantiality. Without differentiation into aggregates of mind and matter, if one were to contemplate on conventional concepts of ‘I am *anicca*; the object of offering is *anicca*; the recipient is *anicca*’, no real insight Knowledge would be possible.

9. Sasaṅkhārika/ Asaṅkhārika Dāna

Offering made hesitatingly and only after being urged is **Sasaṅkhārika-dāna** and offering made spontaneously without being urged is **Asaṅkhārika-dāna**.

Here urging means prompting or entreating earnestly someone to give when he is hesitating or reluctant to do so. Such offering is made only with prompting. But, a simple request should not be taken as urging. For example, a person, who has not made any decision whether he will or he will not make a donation, is requested to make some alms contribution and he gives willingly without any hesitation. This is a spontaneous gift in response to a simple request. Such is an *asaṅkhārika-dāna* (one without prompting), and should not be called a *sasaṅkhārika-dāna* (just because it is made after a request). Another

person is similarly approached and similarly requested to make a contribution but he is reluctant at first and refuses to do so. But when the request is repeated with a prompting “Do make a gift, don’t flinch” and he makes a contribution. His *dāna* is made as consequence of urging is of *sasaṅkhārika-dāna* type (one with prompting). Even in the case where no one has made an approach to request for *dāna*, if one first thinks of making an offering, and then shrinks away from the idea, but after much self persuasion, self-inducement, finally makes the gift, his *dāna* is *sasaṅkhārika* type too.

10. Somanassa/Upekkhā Dāna

Offering made while one is in a joyful mood with a happy frame of mind is **Somanassa-dāna**. Offering made with a balanced state of mind, neither joyous nor sorrowful but equipoise is **Upekkhā-dāna**.

(When the act of giving is accompanied by pleasure, it is **Somanassa-dāna**; when it is accompanied by equanimity, it is **Upekkhā-dāna**.)

11. Dhammiya/Adhammiya Dāna

Offering of property earned in accordance with Dhamma by just means is **Dhammiya-dāna**. Offering of property earned by immoral means, such as stealing, robbing, is **Adhammiya-dāna**.

Although earning of property by immoral means is not in accord with dhamma, offering as alms of such property is nevertheless an act of merit, but the good results accruing from this type of *dāna* cannot be great as those obtained from the first type, the *dhammiya-dāna*. A comparison can be made of these two different results with types of plant that will grow from a good seed and from a bad seed.

12. Dāsa/Bhujissa Dāna

Offering made with hopes of gaining worldly pleasures is Enslaving *dāna* (**Dāsa-dāna**), the offering that will enslave one. Being a slave to craving for sense-pleasures, one makes this kind of *dāna* to serve one’s Master, the Craving to fulfil its wishes. Offering made with aspiration for attainment of the Path and Fruition, the Nibbāna, is *dāna* for freedom, **Bhujissa-dāna** (offering made in revolt against the dictate of the Master, the Craving).

Sentient beings in the endless round of existences desire to enjoy the delightful pleasures of the senses (visible objects, sounds, smells, tastes, touch). This desire to revel in the so called pleasures of the senses is called Craving. Every moment of their existence is devoted to satisfying that Craving; fulfilling the needs of that Craving, they have become its servants. Continuous striving, day and night throughout their life for wealth is nothing but fulfilment of the wishes of the Craving which demands the best of food, the best of clothing and the most luxurious way of living.

Not content with being a slave to Craving in the present life, working to fulfil its every need, we make acts of *dāna* to ensure luxurious living in future. This type of offering accompanied by a strong wish for enjoyment of worldly pleasures continuously for lives to come, is definitely an enslaving *dāna* (*dāsa-dāna*).

This type of *dāna* in fulfilment of the wishes of Craving and which ensures servitude to Craving throughout the endless round of existence is performed, thinking it to be the best, before one encounters the Teachings of the Buddha. But once we are fortunate enough to hear the Buddha Dhamma, we come to understand how powerful this Craving is, how insatiable it is, how much we have to suffer for fulfilling the wishes of this Craving. Then resolving, “I will no longer be a servant of this terrible Craving, I will no longer fulfil its wishes, I will rebel against it, I will go against it and in order to uproot, to eradicate this evil Craving, one makes offerings with aspiration for attainment of the Path and Fruition, the Nibbāna. This *dāna* is called *dāna* made for freedom, **Bhujissa-dāna** (offering made in revolt against the dictates of the Master, Craving).

13. Thāvara/Athāvara Dāna

Offering of things of permanent, immovable nature, such as pagodas, temples,

monasteries, rest houses and digging wells, tanks, etc., is **Thāvara-dāna**. Offering of things of movable nature meant for temporary use, such as food, robes, etc. movable gifts, is **Athāvara-dāna**.

14. Sāparivāra/Aparivāra Dāna

Offering made with accompaniment of supplementary material that usually go along with such an offering is **Sāparivāra-dāna**. For example, in offering robes as main item of gifts, when it is accompanied by suitable and proper accessories and requisites, it is a *sāparivāra-dāna*; when there are no other objects of offering besides the main item of robes, it is a gift without accompanying thing, **Aparivāra-dāna**. The same differentiation applies to offerings made with other forms of gifts.

The special characteristic marks on the body of Bodhisattas, who have large retinue attending upon them, are the benefits that result from *sāparivāra* type of *dāna*.

15. Nibaddha/Anibaddha Dāna

Offering made constantly or regularly such as offering of alms-food to the Sangha everyday is Constant *dāna*, (**Nibaddha-dāna**). Offering made not constantly, not on a regular basis but only occasionally when one is able to so, is occasional offering (**Anibaddha-dāna**).

16. Paramattha/Aparamattha Dāna

Tarnished offering (**Paramattha-dāna**). Untarnished offering (**Aparamattha-dāna**).

Offering which is tarnished by craving and wrong view is **Paramattha-dāna**. Offering which is not corrupted by craving and wrong view is **Aparamattha-dāna**.

According to Abhidhamma, one is corrupted when led astray by wrong view alone; but wrong view always co-exists with craving. When wrong view corrupts and leads one astray, craving is also involved. Therefore, both craving and wrong view are mentioned above. And this is how craving and wrong view bring about corruption. Having made an offering, if one expresses an ardent, wholesome wish: “May I attain speedily the Path and Fruition (Nibbāna) as a result of this act of merit”, the offering becomes one of Vivatthanissita type (see type 4 above), and it could serve as a strong sufficing condition for attainment of the Path and Fruition (Nibbāna). But instead of making such a wholesome wish for Nibbāna, when one, corrupted and led astray by craving and wrong view, aspires a result of this act of merit: “May I become a distinguished deva such as Sakka, the King of Tāvātimsa abode, or just a deva of the durable divine realms, his *dāna* cannot serve as a sufficing condition for attainment of Nibbāna and is classed as mere *paramattha-dāna*, the *dāna* which is bereft of the sufficing condition for attainment of Nibbāna, being tarnished by craving and wrong view. The *dāna* which is not tarnished by craving and wrong view but is made with the sole purpose of attaining Nibbāna is classed as *aparamattha-dāna*.

Much charity can also be practised outside the Teaching of the Buddha; but *dāna* of *paramattha* type is only possible then. It is only within the Teaching of the Buddha that *dāna* of *aparamattha* type can be practised. So while we are blessed with the rare opportunity of meeting with the Teachings of the Buddha, we should strive our utmost to ensure that our offering are the *aparamattha* type.

17. Ucchiṭṭha/Anucchiṭṭha Dāna

Offering made with what is leftover, what is inferior, wretched is **Ucchiṭṭha-dāna**. Offering made with what is not leftover, what is not inferior, wretch is **Anucchiṭṭha-dāna**.

Suppose, while preparations are being made for a meal, a donee appears and one donates some of the food that has been prepared before one has eaten it; it is considered to be ‘the highest gift’ (*agga-dāna*) and it is also an *anucchiṭṭha-dāna* since the offering is not the

leftover of a meal. If the donee arrives while one is eating the meal, but before eating is finished, and one makes an offering of the food taken from the meal one is eating, that is also considered to be an *anucchiṭṭha-dāna*; it can even be said to be a noble gift. When the offering is made of the food leftover after one has finished eating, it is a gift of the leftover, an *ucchiṭṭha-dāna*; a wretched, inferior one. It should be noted, however, that the humble offering made by one who has nothing else to give but the leftover meal could well be called an *anucchiṭṭha-dāna*. It is only when such an offer is made by one who can well afford to make a better gift that his gift is regarded as a wretched, inferior one, *ucchiṭṭha-dāna*.

18. Sajjiva/Accaya Dāna

Offering made while one is still alive is **Sajjiva-dāna**. Offering which is meant to become effective after one's death: "I give such of my property to such and such a person. Let him take possession of them after my death and make use of them as he wishes" is **Accaya-dāna**.

A *bhikkhu* (Buddhist monk) is not permitted to make an *accaya* type of *dāna*, i.e. he cannot leave his properties as gifts for others after death. Even if he should do so, it does not constitute an act of *dāna*; the would-be recipient also has no right of possession to them. If a *bhikkhu* gives from his properties to another *bhikkhu* while he still living, the receiver is entitled to what is given to him; or while the *bhikkhu* is still alive, some *bhikkhu*, who is on intimate terms (*vissāssagaha*) with him, can take it and come to possess it; or if he owns something jointly (*dvisantaka*) with another *bhikkhu*, when he dies the surviving *bhikkhu* becomes the sole owner. Unless these conditions are fulfilled, namely, giving his property during his lifetime, taking possession of it by reason of intimacy while he is still alive, or possessing it through dual ownership, the *bhikkhu*'s property becomes the property of the Sangha, the Order of Bhikkhus, when he dies. Therefore, if a *bhikkhu* makes an *accaya-dāna*, saying: "I give such of my property to such and such a person when I die. Let him take possession of them", it amounts to giving a property which by then belongs to the Order of Bhikkhus. His giving does not form an act of *dāna* and the would-be recipient is also not entitled to it's ownership. it is only amongst the laymen that such kind of gift, *accaya-dāna*, is possible and legal.

19. Puggalika/Saṅghika Dāna

Offering made to one or two separate individual persons is **Puggalika-dāna**. Offering made to the whole Order of Bhikkhus (the Sangha), is **Saṅghika-dāna**.

Sangha means group, assemblage or community; here, the whole community of the *ariya* disciples of the Buddha is meant. In making an offering intended for the Sangha, the donor must have in his mind not the individual *ariya* disciples that constitute the Order, but the community of the *ariya* disciples as a whole. Then only his offering will be of the *saṅghika* type.

Dakkhināvibhanga Sutta (of **Majjhima Nikāya** Pāli Canon) give an enumeration of the 14 kinds of gifts to individuals (*puggalika-dāna*) and 7 kinds of gifts to the Sangha (*saṅghika-dāna*). It is useful to know them.

14 Kinds of Gift to Individuals

- (1) Offering made to a Buddha.
- (2) Offering made to a Paccekabuddha, a non-teaching Buddha.
- (3) Offering made to an *arahat* or to one who has attained the *arahatta-phala* stage.
- (4) Offering made to one who is striving to realise *arahatta-phala* or one who has attained the *arahatta-magga* stage.
- (5) Offering made to an *anāgāmin* or to one who has attained the *anāgāmī-phala* stage.
- (6) Offering made to one who is striving to realise *anāgāmī-phala* or one who has

attained the *anāgāmi-magga* stage.

- (7) Offering made to a *sakadāgāmin* or to one who has attained the *sakadāgāmi-phala* stage.
- (8) Offering made to one who is striving to realise *sakadāgāmi-phala* or one who has attained *sakadāgāmi-magga* stage.
- (9) Offering made to a *sotāpanna* or to one who has attained the *sotāpatti* stage.
- (10) Offering made to one who is striving to realise *sotāpatti-phala* or one who has attained *sotāpatti-magga*.
- (11) Offering made to recluses (outside the Teaching of the Buddha or when the Teaching is not in existence) who are accomplished in *jhāna* or Supernormal Power attainment.
- (12) Offering made to ordinary lay person who possesses morality.
- (13) Offering made to ordinary lay person who is devoid of morality.
- (14) Offering made to an animal.

Of these 14 kinds of offering made to individuals, giving one full meal to an animal will bring wholesome results of long life, good looks, physical wellbeing, strength, and intelligence for one hundred lives. Then in an ascending order, giving one full meal to a lay person of poor morality will bring these wholesome results for one thousand lives; to lay person of good morality at a time when the Buddha's Teaching is not in existence and he has no opportunity to take refuge in the Triple Gem, for a hundred thousand lives; to recluses and ascetics accomplished in *jhāna* attainment, for ten billion lives; to lay men and novitiates (during a period when the Teachings of Buddhas are extant) who take refuge in the Triple Gem, and up to the Noble person who has attained the *sotāpatti-magga*, for an innumerable period (*asaṅkhyeyya*) of lives; and to persons of higher attainment up to the Buddha, for countless periods of lives. (According to the Commentary, even one who only takes refuge in the Triple Gem may be considered as a person who is practising for realisation of *sotāpatti-phala*).

There is no mention of *bhikkhus* of loose morality in the above list of 14 kinds of recipient of offerings made to individuals. The Buddha's enumeration of offering made to a person devoid of morality concerns only the period when the Buddha's Teaching is not in existence. For these reasons, there is a tendency to consider that offerings made to *bhikkhus* of impure morality while the Buddha's Teaching are still not in existence are blameworthy. But one should remember that anyone, who has become a Buddhist, at the very least, takes refuge in the Triple Gem; and the Commentary says that whoever takes refuge in the Triple Gem is a person who is practising for realisation of *sotāpatti-phala*. Furthermore, when an offering made to an ordinary lay person, who is devoid of morality (while the Teaching of Buddha is not in existence), could be of much benefit, there is no doubt that offerings made to an ordinary lay person devoid of morality while the Teaching of the Buddha is still existing could be beneficial too.

Again, the **Milinda-Pañha** Text, Nāgasena Thera explains that an immoral *bhikkhu* is superior to an immoral lay person in ten respects, such as reverence shown to the Buddha, reverence shown to the Dhamma, reverence shown to the Sangha, etc. Thus, according to the **Milinda Pañha**, an immoral *bhikkhu* is superior to an immoral lay person; and since he is listed by the Commentary as one who is practising for realisation of *sotāpatti-phala*, one should not say that it is blameworthy and fruitless to make an offering to a *bhikkhu* who is devoid of morality.

There is yet another point of view in connection with this matter. At a time when there is no Teaching of the Buddha, immoral *bhikkhus* cannot cause any harm to the Teaching; but when the Teaching is in existence, they can bring harm to it. For that reason, no offering should be made to *bhikkhus* who is devoid of morality during the period when there is the Buddha's Teaching. But that view is shown by the Buddha to be untenable.

At the conclusion of the discourse on seven kinds of offering to the Sangha (*saṅghika-dāna*)(see below), the Buddha explains to Ānanda:

“Ānanda, in times to come, there will appear vile *bhikkhus*, devoid of morality, who are *bhikkhus* only in name, who will wear their robes round their necks. With the intention of giving up the Sangha, offerings will be made to these immoral *bhikkhus*. Even when offered in this manner, a *saṅghika-dāna*, an offering meant for the whole Sangha, I declare, will bring innumerable, inestimable benefits.”

There is still another point to take into consideration. Of the Four Purities of Generosity (*Dakḥiṇā Visuddhi*), the first Purity is: Even if the donee is of impure morality, when the donor is moral, the offering is pure by reason of purity of the donor. For these reasons also, one should not say that an immoral *bhikkhu* is not a donee, and that no benefit will accrue by making an offering to him.

It should be well noted, therefore, it is blameworthy only when we make an offering with bad intentions of approving and encouraging an immoral *bhikkhu* in his evil practices; without taking into considerations his habits, if one makes the offering with a pure mind, thinking only ‘one should give if someone comes for a donation’, it is quite blameless.

Seven Kinds of Gifts to The Sangha (Saṅghika-dāna)

- (1) Offering made to the community of both *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* led by the Buddha, while He is still living.
- (2) Offering made to the community of both *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* after the Parinibbāna of the Buddha.
- (3) Offering made to the community of *bhikkhus* only.
- (4) Offering made to the community of *bhikkhunīs* only.
- (5) Offering made (with the whole Sangha in mind) to a group of *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* as nominated by the Order. Such an offering is made when the donor could not afford to give offerings to all the *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* and requests the Order to nominate a certain number (he could afford to give) of *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* to receive the offerings. The Sangha nominates the required number of *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* and the donor makes the offerings to that group of *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* (with the whole Sangha in mind).
- (6) Offering made to a group of *bhikkhus* only (with the whole Sangha in mind) after requesting the Sangha to nominate the number he could afford to give.
- (7) Offering made (with the whole of Sangha in mind) to a group of *bhikkhunīs* only after requesting the Sangha to nominate the number he could afford to give.

Of these seven kinds of *saṅghika-dāna*, it may be asked, if it is possible to make an offering of the first kind, namely, an offering made to the community of both *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* led by the Buddha, after the Parinibbāna of the Buddha. The answer is “Yes, it is possible” and the offer should be made in this manner: after placing a statue of the Buddha containing relics in front of the community of both *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* who have gathered for the ceremony, the offering should be made, saying: “I make this offering to the community of both *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* led by the Buddha”.

Having done an offering of the first kind, the question arises as to what happens to the objects of offering which was intended for the Buddha. Just as the property of the father customarily goes to the son, so too should the offerings intended for the Buddha go to the *bhikkhu* who does devotional duties to the Buddha or to the community of *bhikkhus*. Especially, if the objects offered include such materials as oil, ghee, etc. which should be utilized in offering of lights by oil lamps to the Buddha; pieces of cloth included in the offering should be made into banners and streamers to be offered in worship.

During the Buddha's lifetime, people were generally not disposed to form attachment to, or concerning themselves with individual personalities; they had their mind bent on the Order of *Bhikkhus* as a whole, and thus were able to make much offering of the noble *saṅghika-dāna* kind. Consequently, the needs of the members of the Order were mostly met by the distributions made by the Order; they had little need to rely on lay man and lay

woman donors and, therefore, had little attachment to them as ‘the donors of my monastery, the donors of my robes, etc.’ Thus, the *bhikkhu* could be free of bonds of attachments.

Brief Story of The Householder Ugga

Those desirous of making offerings of pure *Saṅghika-dāna* type should emulate the example set by the householder Ugga. The story of the householder Ugga is found in the second discourse of the Gahapati Vagga, Aṭṭhakanipāta of **Aṅguttara Nikāya** Pāli Canon.

At one time when the Buddha was residing at Elephant Village in the country of Vajjī, He addressed the *bhikkhus*, saying: “*Bhikkhus*, you should regard the householder Ugga of Elephant Village as a person endowed with eight wonderful attributes.” Stating thus briefly, without giving any elaboration, He went inside the monastery.

Then a *bhikkhu* went in the morning to the house of the householder and said to him: “Householder, the Bhagavā has said that you are a person endowed with eight wonderful attributes. What are these eight wonderful attributes which the Bhagavā said you are endowed with?”

“Venerable Sir, I am not exactly sure what specific eight wonderful attributes the Buddha said I am endowed with, but, please listen with proper attention to an account of the eight wonderful attributes which I actually possess.” Then he gave the following full description of the eight wonderful attributes as follows:

- (1) The first time I saw the Buddha was when I was drinking and enjoying myself in the forest of Ironwood flowers. As soon as I saw the Buddha coming in the distance, I became sober and devotional piety and faith in the virtues of the Buddha rose in me. This is the first wonder.
- (2) At that very first meeting with the Buddha, I took refuge in the Buddha and listened to His discourse. As a result, I became a *sotāpanna* (a ‘Stream-winner’), and established in the observance of *Brahmacariya-paṇḍama-sīla*. This is the second wonder.

(*Brahmacariya-paṇḍama-sīla* is similar to the five precepts habitually observed by lay people except that, instead of the precept, ‘I abstain from sexual misconduct’, it has the precept, ‘I abstain from any form of sexual intercourse’. With the usual formula of the five precepts, and one abstains from sexual intercourse with anyone other than one’s own wife; but the *Brahmacariya-paṇḍama-sīla* requires total abstinence of sex, not even with one’s own wife.)

- (3) I had four wives, as soon as I arrived back home, I said to them: ‘I have vowed to observe the precept of total abstinence. Whoever wishes to remain living in this house may do so enjoying my wealth as you like and doing meritorious deeds with it; whoever wants to go back to her parents home is also free to do so; and whoever wants to get married to another man may just tell me to whom I should give you.’ The eldest of my four wives expressed her wish to be married to a certain person whom she named. I sent for the man and holding my eldest wife with my left hand and a jug of water in my right hand, I gave away my wife to the man. In making this gift of my wife to the man, I remained completely unmoved, unaffected. This is the third wonder.
- (4) I have resolved to use all my wealth jointly with people of good moral character. This is the fourth wonder.
- (5) I always approach a *bhikkhu* with all due respect, never without reverence; if the *bhikkhu* gives me a talk on Dhamma, I listen to his discourse with respect only, never without reverence; if the *bhikkhu* does not give me a talk on Dhamma, I give him a discourse. This is the fifth wonder.
- (6) Whenever I invite the Sangha to my house to make some offerings, devas would come ahead of them and inform me: ‘Householder, such and such *bhikkhus* are

enlightened, noble persons (*ariyas*); such and such *bhikkhus* are ordinary persons of morality; such and such *bhikkhus* are devoid of morality.' That the devas come and give me this prior information about the *bhikkhus* is nothing surprising to me; the wonder is that when I make offering of meals or material things to the Sangha such thoughts as 'I will offer much to this individual because he is an enlightened noble person, of good morality; or I will offer little to this individual since he is of poor morality' would never occur to me. As a matter of fact, without differentiation as to who is noble, who is moral or who is immoral, I make my offerings impartially to each and everyone. This is the sixth wonder.

- (7) Venerable sir, devas come and tell me that the doctrine of the Buddha is well-taught, it has the merit of being well-taught. This news conveyed to me by the devas is nothing surprising to me. The wonder is that, on such occasions, I reply to the devas: 'Devas, whether you tell me so or not, verily, the doctrine of the Buddha is well-taught.' (He believes that the doctrine of the Buddha is well-taught, not because the devas tell him, but because he himself knows it to be so). Although I hold such communications with devas, I feel no pride in that the devas come to me and that I have conversations with them. This is the seventh wonder.
- (8) There is nothing surprising too, if I should pass away before the Bhagavā did and He would foretell: 'The householder Ugga has completely destroyed the lower Five Fetters which lead to rebirth in the lower sensuous realms; he is an *anāgāmin*. Even before the Buddha's prediction, I have become an *anāgāmin* and I have already known this. This is the eighth wonder.

Of these eight wonders described by the householder Ugga, the sixth is concerned with making impartial offerings to the noble, the moral or the immoral alike. It is necessary to know how one can be impartially minded in such circumstances. The impartial attitude can be understood to be brought about in this manner, 'As I have made the invitation with intention to give to the Sangha, the whole Order, when I make the offering to a noble one, I will not recognise him as such; I will not consider that I am making the offering to a noble one; I will keep in mind only that I am making my offering to the Sangha, the noble disciples of the Buddha as a whole. And when I make the offering to an immoral person, I will not recognise him as such; I will not consider that I am making the offering to an immoral person; I will keep in mind only that I am making an offering to the Sangha, the noble disciples of the Buddha, as a whole. In this manner, impartiality may be maintained.'

Emulating the example set by the householder Ugga, when making an offering one should ignore the status of the recipient, keep aside personal feelings towards him, and strive to keep firmly in mind only on the Order of Bhikkhus as a whole, so that his *dāna* may be of the noble *saṅghika-dāna* type. As taught explicitly by the Buddha in the Dakkhinā-Vibhaṅga Sutta mentioned above, when an offering is of *saṅghika* type, that is with the whole community of *bhikkhus* in mind when making it, it could bring innumerable, inestimable benefits to the donor, even if the recipient is an immoral person devoid of virtues.

An offering is of *saṅghika-dāna* type when it is made with full reverence to the Sangha; but it is not always easy to do so. Suppose a person decides to make a *saṅghika* type of offering, having made the necessary preparations, he goes to a monastery and addresses the *bhikkhus*: "Reverend Sirs, I wish to make a *saṅghika* type of offering; may you designate someone from amongst the Sangha as its representative'. Should the *bhikkhus* nominate a novice whose turn it is to represent the Sangha, the donor is likely to be displeased; should they choose an elderly *thera* of long standing to represent them, he is likely to be overwhelmed with intense delight, exulting: "I have an elderly *thera* of long standing as my donee." Such generosity, affected by the personality of the donee, cannot be a perfect *saṅghika* type of offering.

Only if one can accept the representative nominated by turn by the Sangha without any misgiving and without concerning oneself about whether the recipient is a novice or a *bhikkhu*, a young *bhikkhu* or an elderly *bhikkhu*, an ignorant *bhikkhu* or a learned *bhikkhu*, and makes one's offering, thinking only: "I make my offering to the Sangha." with full

reverence to the Sangha, one makes a truly *saṅghika-dāna*.

Story concerning A Donor of A Monastery

This incident happened on the other side of the ocean, i.e. in India. A rich householder, who had already donated a monastery, intended to make an offering to the Sangha. After making necessary preparations, he went to the Order of Bhikkhus and addressed them: “Venerable Sirs, may you designate someone to receive my offering for the Sangha?” It happened that it was the turn of an immoral *bhikkhu* to represent the Sangha for alms. Although the man knew well that the designated *bhikkhu* was immoral, he treated him with full respect: the seat for the *bhikkhu* was prepared as for a ceremonious occasion, decorated with a canopy overhead, and scented with flowers and perfumes. He washed the feet of the *bhikkhu* and anointed them with oil very reverentially as if he were attending upon the person of the Buddha Himself. He then made his offering to the *bhikkhu* paying full homage to the Sangha.

That afternoon, the immoral *bhikkhu* went back to his house and standing at the doorway asked for a hoe, which he needed to make some repairs in the monastery. The donor of the monastery did not even bother to get up from his seat, he simply pushed the hoe towards the *bhikkhu* with his feet. The members of his family then asked him: “Respected Sir, this morning you had heaped upon this *bhikkhu* so much veneration; now you have shown him not even a small part of that deference. Why is this difference between the morning and the afternoon in your attitude towards the *bhikkhu*?” The man replied: “My dear ones, the respect I was showing this morning was towards the Sangha not to this immoral *bhikkhu*.”

Some Considerations about Puggalika-dāna and Saṅghika-dāna

There are some people who maintain that if some person should approach one for alms and if one knew beforehand that the person was of bad morality, one should not make any offering to that person; if one should do so, it would be like watering a poisonous plant.

But it could not be said that every act of offering made knowingly to immoral persons is blameworthy. It is the volition of the giver that must be taken into account here. If the donor should approve of the bad habits of the recipient and give with a view to give him support and encouragement for continuance of his immoral practices, then only his gift would be like watering a poisonous plant. If the donor does not approve of the bad habits to the recipient and has no mind to encourage him to continue with his bad practices, but emulating the example of the monastery donor described above, if he makes his gift in such a way that it becomes a true *saṅghika-dāna*, then no blame can be attached to such an offering.

Again there are some who maintain that whether the recipient is of good moral character or bad moral character is no concern of the donors; it only concerns the recipient. Therefore, remaining indifferent to the character of the recipient, whether good or bad, the donor should bear in mind: “This is a noble person, an *ariya* (or an *arahat*).” They maintain that this act of offering is blameless and as fruitful as making an offering to an *arahat*. This point of view is also untenable.

Disciples of other teachers, who are not in a position to know whether a person is an *ariya* or an *arahat*, wrongly believe their teachers to be Noble Ones, *arahats*. This sort of belief, called ‘*Micchādhimokkha*’, making the wrong decision or conclusion, is demeritorious. Surely it would be demeritorious and would be making a wrong decision if one were to bear in mind ‘these are noble, *arahats*’ when one knew full well that they were not. It is not proper, therefore, to hold such views.

When faced with such recipients in making one's offering, the proper attitude to bear in mind should be “Bodhisattas, in fulfilment of Perfection of Generosity, make their offering without discriminating between persons of high, medium or low status of development. I will also emulate the examples of the Bodhisattas and make my offerings to whoever comes for them, without discrimination.” In this way, one would not be giving support and

encouragement to the practice of bad habits and would not be “making wrong decisions or conclusions about the recipient’s” development; the act of offering would thus be free from blame or fault.

Controversies and difficulties arise only in the case of offerings made to individuals, *puggalika-dāna*, because there exist various kind of individuals, good or bad. In the case of offerings made to the Sangha, *saṅghika-dāna*, there exists only one kind of Sangha, not two i.e. good and bad. (Here the noble disciples of the Buddha, the *ariyas*, are meant). There is no distinction amongst the Ariya Sangha as high, medium or low status of development, as they are all equally noble. Therefore, as explained above, whenever a donee appears before one, without taking into consideration his character, one should make the offering with the thought: “I make my offering to the disciples of the Buddha, the noble community of *bhikkhus*.” Then this offering is of *saṅghika-dāna* type and the recipient is the Sangha; the person who appears before him to receive the offering is merely the representative of the Sangha. However low that person may be in his morals, the true recipient of the offering is the noble Sangha and therefore this is truly a noble gift.

Some people consider that it is very difficult to put into actual practice the advice to ignore the personal character of the immoral recipient, who has appeared before one, and to make one's offering with the mind directed not to him but to the noble Sangha, regarding him only as a representative of the Sangha. The difficulty arises only because of lack of habitual practice in such matters. In making reverential vows to the images and statues of the Buddha, regarding them as the Buddha's representatives, one is so accustomed to the practice of projecting one's mind from the images or statues to the person of the living Buddha, that, no one says it is difficult. Just as the householder Ugga during the Buddha's time and the monastery donor of Jambu Dipa had habituated themselves to make offerings to an immoral *bhikkhu* as a representative of the Buddha, so also Buddhists of modern times should discipline their mind to become accustomed to such an attitude.

Four Kinds of Offerings to The Sangha as described in The Vinaya Piṭaka

The Vinaya Piṭaka, the Book of Discipline for members of the Order gives a description of the four categories of offerings made intentionally for the Sangha. But these four categories of *saṅghika-dāna* do not concern the lay donor; only the seven types of *saṅghika-dāna* mentioned above concern them. The Vinaya distinctions are made for the Order only so that they would know how to distribute the offerings amongst themselves. The four categories are: -

(a) **Sammukhībhūta Saṅghika**. Offerings to be distributed amongst the Sangha who are actually present at the time and place. Suppose an offering of robes is made at a certain place in towns or villages where some *bhikkhus* have gathered together, and the offering is made to the noble Sangha as a whole by the donor saying: “I give to the Sangha.” It will be difficult to reach all the noble Sanghas in the town or the village concerned. The distribution is, therefore, to be made amongst the Sangha present at the place at the time. Hence it is called ‘**Sammukhībhūta Saṅghika**’ (*Sammukhībhūta* - present at the time and place; *Saṅghika* - belonging to the Sangha.)

(b) **Ārāmaṭṭha Saṅghika**. Offerings to be distributed amongst the Sangha residing in the whole compound of the monastery. Suppose a donor comes to a monastery where a solitary *bhikkhu* resides and makes an offering of robes to a *bhikkhu* or *bhikkhus* whom he meets, saying: “I give to the Sangha.” As the offering is made within the compound of the monastery, it belongs to all the Sangha residing in that whole compound of the monastery, not just to the *bhikkhus* who are in the vicinity. Hence it is called ‘**Ārāmaṭṭha Saṅghika**’ (*Ārāmaṭṭha* - residing in the compound; *Saṅghika* - belonging to the Sangha.)

(c) **Gatagata Saṅghika**. Offerings which belong to the Sangha of whichever place they (have gone to) have been taken to. Suppose a donor comes to a monastery where a solitary *bhikkhu* resides and makes an offering of one hundred robes, saying: “I give to the Sangha.” If the residing *bhikkhu* is well-versed in the Disciplinary rules, he can take possession of all the offerings for himself by simply remarking: “At the present moment, in this monastery, I am the sole Sangha; all these one hundred robes, therefore, belong to

me and I take possession of them.” He has the right (according to the Vinaya rules) to do so; he cannot be faulted for monopolising the offering made to the Sangha. If the *bhikkhu* is not proficient in Vinaya rules, he would not know what to do. And without resolving, determining: “I am the sole owner. I take possession of them,” and suppose he left for another place taking the robes with him, and the *bhikkhus* he met there should ask him how he came by the robes. Suppose, on learning how he had come by them, these *bhikkhus* claimed their share of the robes, saying: “We also have the claim on them,” and consequently all the robes were divided equally with them. Then this sharing of the robes is deemed to be a good one. But suppose, without sharing the robes, he should continue on his way and encounter other *bhikkhus*, these *bhikkhus* would also be entitled to receive their share of the robes. In this way, wherever the *bhikkhu* would go, taking the robes with him, the *bhikkhus* of those places would be entitled to the robes. Hence it is called ‘**Gatagata Saṅghika**’ (*Gatagata* - wherever one has gone; *Saṅghika* - belonging to the Sangha.)

(d) **Catuddisā Saṅghika**. Offerings which belong to all *bhikkhus* who come from the four directions. Such offerings include gifts which are weighty and important, which are to be treated with deference, for example, monasteries. They are not to be apportioned but for use by Sangha coming from all directions. Hence it is called ‘**Catuddisa Saṅghika**’ (*Catuddissā* - from four directions; *Saṅghika* - belonging to the Sangha.)

Not being mindful of the fact that these four categories are mentioned in the Vinaya rules to provide measures for distinction of ownership and distribution of the offerings made to the Sangha, some (*bhikkhus*) make use of these Vinaya provisions when lay people make offerings. To give an illustration, suppose a donor, actuated by pious devotion to a certain *bhikkhu*, builds a monastery, though not intending for him, but for the whole Sangha. For the libation ceremony, he invited ten *bhikkhus* including the *bhikkhu* to whom he has so much devotion. After recitation of the Parittas⁴, when the time comes for actual announcement of the offer, the *bhikkhu* wants to be offered the monastery as a *puggalika-dāna*; offering made to a particular individual because he feels that living in a monastery meant for the whole Sangha entails so much liabilities and responsibilities. But the donor prefers to make it a *saṅghika-dāna* because, he believes, such *dāna* is superior and of much merit. The congregation resolves the disagreement between the donor and his preceptor by asking the donor to make the offering saying: “I give this monastery to the Sangha who is present here now” (*Sammukhībhūta Sangha*). Then nine *bhikkhus* of the congregation, saying to the remaining one: “We relinquish all our right of possession of the monastery to your reverence,” hand over the new monastery to him and leave.

In this manner, such procedures are liable to be followed, believing that by so doing the donor's wish for a *saṅghika-dāna* is fulfilled and the recipient who prefers individual ownership is also happy since the nine co-owners have relinquished their right of possession of the monastery making him the sole owner.

But, in reality, such a procedure is not proper and should not be followed. The gift of a monastery is a weighty, important one; the ten *bhikkhus* to whom the monastery has been offered cannot make any kind of apportionment of the offering between them; and the donor's gift amounts to be only a gift to the ten *bhikkhus* present on the occasion only and not to the Sangha as a whole.

20. Kāla/Akāla Dāna

Offerings to be made on specific occasions (**Kāla-dāna**); offerings which may be made at any time (**Akāla-dāna**).

Offering of Kaṭhina robes at the end of the Buddhist *vassa* for the duration of one month, offering of robes at the beginning of the Buddhist *vassa*, offering of dietary food to the sick, offering of food to visiting *bhikkhus*, offering of food to *bhikkhus*, who is setting out on a journey, are gifts made at a specific time for a specific purpose and are called timely

4. *Parittas*: lit. protection; it is a Buddhist custom to recite certain *suttas* such as Maṅgala, Ratana, Metta, etc. to ward off evil influences.

gifts, *kāla-dāna*; all other gifts made as one wishes without reference to any particular time are called *akāla-dāna*.

Kāla-dāna is of greater merit than the **akāla** type because the offering is made to meet the specific needs at a specific time. The *kāla* type of *dāna*, at the time of its fruition, brings specific good results at the time they are needed. For example, if the donor wishes for something special to eat, his wish is immediately fulfilled; likewise if he wishes to have some special clothes to wear, he will receive them. These are examples of special merit that accrues from offerings made at specific times to meet specific needs.

21. Paccakkha/ Apaccakkha Dāna

Offerings made in the presence of the donor, (**paccakkha-dāna**). Offerings made in the absence of the donor, (**apaccakkha-dāna**).

The Pāli word, '**paccakkha**' is made up of '*pati*' and '*akkha*'. '**Pati**' means towards; '*akkha*' means five senses, viz. eye, ear, nose, tongue, body. Although '*paccakkha*' is generally "before the eye", its complete meaning should be "perceptible to the senses". Thus *paccakkha-dāna* has wider scope, not just the kind of offering which can be seen by the donor but also those which can be perceived by his other senses, i.e. by sound, by smell, by taste and by touch. In this connection, it should be noted that offerings made in the presence of the donor, *paccakkha-dāna*, is not exactly the same as *sāhatthika-dāna*, that made with one's own hands. Offerings made in one's presence at one's instance but not actually with one's own hands are of the *anattika-dāna* type, offerings made at one's request or command.

22. Sadisa/Asadisa Dāna

Offerings which can be matched by someone else (**Sadisa-dāna**). Offerings which cannot be matched by anyone, unrivalled alms-giving, (**Asadisa-dāna**.)

When offerings are made in a spirit of competition, donors make efforts to excel their rivals in the scale and magnificence of charity. In such competitions, the offerings that prove to be incomparable, inimitable is called unrivalled alms-giving, *asadisa-dāna*.

According to the **Dhammapada Commentary**, as explained in the story of Unrivalled alms-giving in the Loka-vagga, only one donor appeared during the time of each Buddha to make an unrivalled offering. The story runs as follows:

At one time, the Buddha, after going on a long journey followed by five hundred *arahats*, arrived back at the Jetavana monastery. King Pasenadi of Kosala honoured the Buddha and His five hundred disciples by inviting them to the palace and offering them alms on a magnificent scale. The King invited also the people of Sāvatti to his ceremony of offering so that they could watch and rejoice in his meritorious deed. The next day, the people of Sāvatti, rivalling the King, organized the resources of the whole city and gave offerings which surpassed those of the King, to the Buddha and His disciples. They invited the King to their ceremony to observe their deed and rejoice in it.

Catching on the spirit of competition, the King accepted the challenge of the citizens by conducting a more magnificent ceremony of offering the following day. The citizens in turn organized again another grand ceremony of offering to outdo the efforts of the King. In this manner, the keen contest between the King and his citizens went on until either side had made six offerings. (The contest still remained indecisive.)

As the seventh round came along, the royal donor was feeling despondent: "It will be very difficult to surpass the efforts of the citizens in this seventh round; and life would not be worth living, if I, the sovereign ruler of the land, were to lose to the people over whom I rule, in this round." (To console him), his Queen, Mallikā, thought out a plan by which the King could make a truly majestic offering which the people would find impossible to match. She had a grand pavilion built, in which, five hundred great disciples of the Buddha, the *arahats*, were to sit in the pavilion with five hundred princesses fanning them and spraying perfumes and scented water in the pavilion. At the back of the five hundred *arahats*, there would be five hundred elephants, kneeling down and holding a white

umbrella over each of the great *arahats*.

As the arrangements were being made according to the above plan, they found one tame elephant short of five hundred; so they had a wild, unruly elephant, which was notorious for its savagery, placed at the back of the Venerable Angulimala and made it hold a white umbrella like other elephants. People were amazed to find this savage beast taking part in the ceremony and holding an umbrella over the head of the Venerable Angulimala in a docile manner.

After the meal had been offered to the congregation, the King declared: "I made an offering of all the things in this, pavilion, allowable things as well as unallowable things. On this declaration, the people had to admit defeat in the contest, because they had no princesses, no white umbrellas, no elephants.

Thus the donor of the unrivalled *dāna* at the time of 'the Supreme Being of the three Worlds, the Buddha Gotama', was King Pasenadi of Kosala. It should be noted that each of the other Buddhas also had a donor who presented him with an incomparable, unrivalled *dāna*.

Type of Dāna in Groups of Threes

(1) *Dāna* can also be divided into three categories, namely, Inferior (**Hīna**), Medium (**Majjhima**), and Superior (**Paṇīta**). The degree of benevolence of an act is dependent upon the strength of intention (*chanda*), the conscious state (*citta*), energy (*vīriya*), and investigative knowledge (*vimamsā*) involved in the act. When these four constituent elements are weak, the *dāna* is said to be of inferior type; when they are of medial standard the *dāna* is regarded as of medium type; when all are strong, the *dāna* is considered to be of the superior order.

(2) When the act of *dāna* is motivated by desire for fame and acclaim, it is of inferior type; when the goal of *dāna* is for attainment of happy life as a human being or a deva, it is of medium type; if the gift is made in reverence to the *ariyas* or Bodhisattas for their exemplary habits of offering, it is an excellent gift of superior order.

(In the various discourses of the Pāli Texts are mentioned parks and monasteries which were given the names of the individual donors, for example, Jetavana, the garden of Prince Jāti; Anāthāpiṇḍikārāma, the monastery donated by the rich man Anāthapiṇḍika; Ghositārāma, the monastery donated by the rich man Ghosita. This system of nomenclature was adopted by the First Council Elders with the intention of encouraging others to follow the examples and thus acquire merit. So, donors today, when making such gifts, inscribe their names on marble or stone. In doing so, they should keep under control, by exercise of mindfulness, any desire for fame, bearing in mind that they make the gift in order to set an example to those who wish to acquire merit.)

(3) When the donor aspires for happy life as a human or celestial being, his gift is of inferior type; when the aspiration is for attainment of enlightenment as a disciple (*sāvaka* *bodhi-nāṇa*), or as a silent Buddha (*pacceka* *buddha-nāṇa*), the gift is a medium one; when one aspires for Perfect Self-Enlightenment (*sammā* *sambodhi-nāṇa* or *sabbaññuta-nāṇa*), one's gift is of superior order.

(By Bodhi or Enlightenment is meant knowledge of one of the four Paths. The sages of past had advised that, in order for the gift to serve as a means of escape from the round of rebirths (*vivatta* *niissita*), one should never make a gift in a haphazard or casual manner, one should seriously (positively) aspire for one of the three forms of Enlightenment while making an offering.)

(4) Again, gifts may be of three types, viz. **Dāna-dāsa**, gift fit for a servant; **Dāna-sahāya**, gifts fit for a friend, and **Dāna-sāmi**, gifts fit for a master.

Just as in everyday life, one uses materials of good quality while offering the servants inferior quality, so also if one makes a gift of materials which are poorer in quality than those enjoyed by oneself, the gift is of inferior type (*dāna-dāsa*), fit for a servant. Just as

in everyday life, one offers one's friends things which one uses and enjoys, so also if one makes a gift of materials which are of the same quality as used by oneself, then the gift is said to be of medium type (*dāna-sahāya*). Just as in everyday life, one makes present of gifts to one's superior of things better in quality than those enjoyed by oneself, so also if one gives *dāna* of superior quality materials, then the gift is said to be of superior order (*dāna-sāmi*).

(5) There are three types of **Dhamma-dāna** (the division being based on the meaning of the word '*Dhamma*' for each type). In the first type of **Dhamma-dāna**, '*dhamma*' is the one associated with the **Āmisa dhamma-dāna**, mentioned above under *dāna* categories by Twos. Therein, it was stated that **Āmisa dhamma-dāna** is the gift of palm-leaf scriptures or books of the Scriptures. In this classification, the '*dhamma*' is the scriptures themselves, the *Pariyatti Dhamma*, that was taught by the Buddha and recorded on palm leaves or books as texts. The *dhamma-dāna*, therefore, means, here, teaching the Scriptures or giving the knowledge of the Buddha's Teachings to others. The *Pariyatti* is the gift-object, the material that is given; the listener is the recipient and one who teaches or expounds the *dhamma* is the donor.

(In the second type of *dhamma-dāna*, the '*dhamma*' refers to the '*dhamma*' included in the Abhidhamma classification of *dānas* into six classes, namely, **rūpa-dāna**, **sadda-dāna**, **gandha-dāna**, **rasa-dāna**, **phoṭṭhabba-dāna** and **dhamma-dāna**. The *dhamma* in this particular case is explained as all that forms the object of the mind or mental objects.) The mental objects are: (1) the five sense organs (*pasāda rūpas*); (2) the sixteen subtle forms (*sukhuma rūpas*); (3) the 89 states of consciousness (*citta*); (4) 52 mental factors (*cetasikas*); (5) Nibbāna and (6) Concepts (*paññatti*). Whereas in **Pariyatti dhamma**, the '*dhamma*' means 'noble'; here it has the sense of 'the truth concerning the real nature of things'.

Dhamma-dāna of this type is made through rendering assistance to those afflicted with (organic) disabilities, for example, weak eye-sight, trouble in hearing, etc. Helping others to improve their eye-sight is *cakkhu (dhamma) dāna*; helping them to improve their hearing is *sota (dhamma) dāna*, etc. The most distinctive *dāna* of this type is *jīvita-dāna*, the promotion of longevity of others. In a similar manner, the remaining *dānas* of the type, namely, *gandha*, *rasa*, *phoṭṭhabba* and *dhamma* may be understood.

In the third type of **dhamma-dāna**, the '*dhamma*' refers to the *Dhamma* of the Triple Gem, namely, the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. As in the second type of *dhamma-dāna*, the Dhamma here means the Scriptures or the Teaching of the Buddha. Whereas in the second type the '*dhamma*' is a gift-object for offering, while the listener is the recipient. In this third type, the Dhamma, which is a part of the trinity of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, itself forms the recipient to which offerings are to be made. When the Buddha and the Sangha become recipients, the associated Dhamma also becomes a recipient of offerings.

To give an illustration: The Buddha was residing in the Jetavana monastery in Savatthi. At that time, a rich householder who had faith in the Teaching, thought to himself thus: "I have had opportunities to honour the Buddha and His Sangha constantly with offerings of food, robes, etc. But I have never honoured the Dhamma by making offerings to it. It is time now that I should do so." With this thought, he approached the Buddha and asked Him how to do about it.

The Buddha replied: "If you wish to honour the Dhamma, you should give food, robes etc. to the *bhikkhu* who is well cultivated in the Dhamma, but with the clear intention of honouring the Dhamma which he has realized."

When the householder asked Him which *bhikkhu* would be appropriate to receive such an offering, the Buddha told him to ask the Sangha. The Sangha directed him to give his offerings to the Venerable Ānanda. So he invited the Venerable Ānanda and made a generous offering of food, robes, etc. to him, keeping in mind that he was honouring the Dhamma which the Venerable Ānanda had realized. This story is described in the introduction to the Bhikkhāparampara Jātaka, the thirteenth Jātaka of the **Pakinnaka Nipāta**.

According to the story, the householder is the donor; food, robes, etc. are material objects

of offering, and the body of the Dhamma which lies embedded in the person of the Venerable Ānanda is the recipient of the gift.

This householder was not the only one who made such offerings at the time of the Buddha, keeping in mind the Dhamma as the recipient of offering. The Text clearly mentions that the great ruler, Siri Dhammāsoka (Asoka), with much pious reverence for the Dhamma built monasteries, 84,000 in all, one in honour of each of the 84,000 groups of Dhamma (Dhammakkhanda) which form the complete Teaching of the Buddha.

(Note of Caution) Many have heard of this great *dāna* of Asoka and have desired to imitate him in such giving. But it is important to follow his example in a proper manner. The real motive of the great King Asoka was not merely giving of monasteries, but the paying of respect to the groups of Dhamma individually. Building of monasteries serves only to provide him with materials for offering. Later generations of donors, who wish to follow the example of Siri Dhammāsoka, should understand that they build monasteries not just as objects for offering, not with the intention of acquiring the fame of being a monastery donor, but with the sole aim of paying homage to the Dhamma.

The significance of these *dhamma-dānas* may be appreciated when one remembers the importance of the Teaching (the Dhamma). The great Commentator, the Venerable Mahā Buddhaghosa concluded his work **Atthasālinī**, the **Commentary** to the **Dhammasaṅgaṇī**, the first book of the **Abhidhamma**, with the wish “May the true Dhamma endure long. May all beings show reverence to the Dhamma. — *Ciram tiṭṭhatu saddhammo, dhamme hontu sagāravā, sabbepe sattā.*” He made this wish because he was fully aware of the important role of the Dhamma. He realised that as long as the Dhamma endures, the Teachings of the Buddha cannot decline and everyone who honours the Dhamma will show reverence to the Teachings and follow them. And the Buddha had said: “Only those who see the Dhamma, see me.” And nearing the end of His life, the Buddha had said that “The Dhamma will be your teacher after I am gone. — *So vo mamaccayena satthā.*”

Therefore, one should strive to cultivate this third type of **Dhamma-dāna** which plays such an important role.

(6) Another three types of *dāna* are classified as **Dukkara-dāna**, gift which is difficult to be given; **Mahā-dāna**, awe inspiring gift of great magnificence; and **Sāmañña-dāna**, common forms of gifts, which are neither too difficult to make, nor too magnificent.

An example of the first type, **Dukkara-dāna**, may be found in the story of *dāna* given by Dārubbhaṇḍaka Tissa. This story is given in the commentary to the 28th vaggā of Ekadhammajhāna, Ekakanipata of the **Āṅguttara Nikāya**.

The Story of The Dāna given by Dārubbhaṇḍaka

There was a poor man who lived in Mahāgāma of Sri Lanka, and who earned his living by selling firewood. His name was Tissa, but because his livelihood was selling firewood, he was known as Darubhaṇḍaka Tissa (Tissa who has only firewood as property).

One day he had a talk with his wife: “Our life is so humble, wretched, lowly, although the Buddha had taught the benefits of **nibaddha-dāna**, the observance of the duty of regular giving, we cannot afford to cultivate the practice. But we could do one thing; we could start giving alms-food regularly, twice a month, and when we could afford more, we will try for the higher offering of food by tickets⁵ (*salākabhatta*).” His wife was agreeable to his proposal and they started giving whatever they could afford as alms-food the next morning.

That was a very prosperous time for the *bhikkhus* who were receiving plenty of good food. Certain young *bhikkhus* and *sāmañeras* accepted the poor alms-food offered by the Darubhaṇḍaka’s family, but threw it away in their presence. The housewife reported to her husband: “They threw away our alms-food,” but she never had an unpleasant thought over

5. According to I.B.Horner (Book of the Discipline), food tickets were issued at times when food was scarce. But the story of Dārubbhaṇḍaka suggests that the same is adopted also when food is abundant as a higher form of *dāna*.

the incident.

Then Darubhaṇḍaka had a discussion with his wife: “We are so poor, we cannot offer alms-food that would please the Noble Ones. What should we do to satisfy them.” “Those who have children are not poor,” said his wife in order to give him solace and encouragement and advised him to hire out the services of their daughter to a household, and with the money so acquired, to buy a milch cow. Darubhaṇḍaka accepted his wife's advice. He obtained twelve pieces of money with which he bought a cow. Because of the purity of their wholesome volition, the cow yielded large quantities of milk.

The milk, they got in the evening, was made into cheese and butter. The milk, they got in the morning, was used by the wife in the preparation of milk porridge, which together with the cheese and butter, they offered to the Sangha. In this manner, they were able to make offerings of alms-food which was well accepted by the Sangha. From that time onwards the *salākabhadda* of Darubhaṇḍaka was available only to the Noble Ones of high attainments.

One day, Darubhaṇḍaka said to his wife: “Thanks to our daughter, we are saved from humiliation. We have reached a position in which the Noble Ones accepted our alms-food with great satisfaction. Now, do not miss out on the regular duty of offering alms-food during my absence. I shall find some kind of employment and I shall come back after redeeming our daughter from her bondage.” Then he went to work for six months in a sugar mill where he managed to save twelve pieces of money, with which, to redeem his daughter.

Setting out for home early one morning, he saw ahead of him the Venerable Tissa on his way to worship at the Pagoda at Mahāgāma. This *bhikkhu* was one who cultivated the austere practice of *piṇḍindāpāta*, that is, he partakes only alms food, which is offered to him when going on alms round. Dārubhaṇḍaka walked fast to catch up with the *bhikkhu* and strolled along with him, listening to his talk of the Dhamma. Approaching a village, Darubhaṇḍaka saw a man coming out with a packet of cooked rice in his hand. He offered the man one piece of money to sell him the packet of meal.

The man, realising that there must be some special reason for offering one piece of money for the food packet when it was not worth the sixteenth part of it, refused to sell it for one piece of money. Darubhaṇḍaka increased his offer to two, then three pieces of money and so on until he had offered all the money he possessed. But the man still declined the offer (thinking Darubhaṇḍaka had still more money with him).

Finally, Darubhaṇḍaka explained to the man: “I have no money with me other than these twelve pieces. I would have given you more if I had. I am buying this meal packet not for myself but, wishing to offer alms-food, I have requested a *bhikkhu* to wait for me under the shade of that tree. The food is to be offered to that *bhikkhu*. Do sell me the packet of food for this twelve pieces of money. You will also gain merit by doing so.”

The man finally agreed to sell his food-packet and Darubhaṇḍaka took it with great happiness to the waiting *bhikkhu*. Taking the bowl from the *bhikkhu*, Dārubhaṇḍaka put the cooked rice from the packet into it. But the Venerable Tissa accepted only half of the meal. Darubhaṇḍaka made an earnest request to the *bhikkhu*: “Venerable Sir, this meal is sufficient for only one person. I will not eat any of it. I bought the food intending it only for you. Out of compassion for me, may the Venerable One accept all the food.” Upon this, the Venerable permitted him to offer all the food in the packet.

After the Venerable had finished the meal, they continued the journey together and he asked Dārubhaṇḍaka about himself. Darubhaṇḍaka told everything about himself very frankly to the Venerable. The Venerable was struck with awe by the intense piety of Darubhaṇḍaka and he thought to himself: “This man has made a **dukkara-dāna**, an offering which is difficult to make. Having partaken of the meal offered by him, under difficult circumstances, I am greatly indebted to him and I should show my gratitude in return. If I can find a suitable place, I shall strive hard to attain arahatship in one sitting. Let all my skin, flesh and blood dry up. I will not stir from this position until I attain the goal.” As they reached Mahāgāma, they went on their separate ways.

On arriving at the Tissa Mahāvihāra Monastery, the Venerable Tissa was allotted a room

for himself, where he made his great effort, determined not to stir from the place until he had eradicated all defilements and become an arahat. Not even getting up to go on the alms round, he steadfastly worked on until at the dawn of the seventh day, he became an Arahāt fully accomplished in the four branches of Analytical Knowledge (*Patisambhidā*). Then he thought to himself thus: “My body is greatly enfeebled. I wonder whether I could live longer.” He realised, through exercise of his psychic powers, that the phenomenon of *nāma-rūpa*, which constituted his living body, would not continue much longer. Putting everything in order in his dwelling place and taking his bowl and great robes, he went to the Assembly Hall at the centre of the monastery and sounded the drum to assemble all the *bhikkhus*.

When all the *bhikkhus* had gathered together, the head *thera* enquired who had called for the assembly. The Venerable Tissa, who had cultivated the austere practice of taking only alms food, replied: “I have sounded the drum, Venerable Sir.” “And why have you done so?” “I have no other purpose, but if any member of the Sangha has doubts about the attainments of the Path and Fruition, I wish them to ask me about them.”

The head *thera* told him there were no questions. He then asked the Venerable Tissa why he had persevered so arduously sacrificing even his life for the attainment. He related all that had happened and informed him that he would pass away the same day. Then he said: “May the catafalque, on which my corpse would be supported, remains immovable until my alms-food donor, Dārubaṇḍaka, comes and lifts it with his own hands.” And he passed away that very day.

Then King Kākavannatissa came and ordered his men to put the body on the catafalque and take it to the funeral pyre at the cremating grounds, but they were not able to move it. Finding out the reason for this, the King sent for Dārubaṇḍaka, had him dressed in fine clothes and asked him to lift up the catafalque.

The text gives an elaborate account of how Darubaṇḍaka lifted the catafalque with the body on it easily over his head and how, as he did so, the catafalque rose in the air and travelled by itself to the funeral pyre.

Dārubaṇḍaka's *dāna* involving the sacrifice ungrudgingly of twelve pieces of money which were needed for redeeming his own daughter from servitude and which had taken six whole months to earn is indeed a very difficult one to give and thus is known as **Dukkara-dāna**.

Another example of such gifts is found in the story of Sukha Sāmaṇera given in the tenth *vagga* of the Commentary to the **Dhammapada**. Before he became a *sāmaṇera*, he was a poor villager who wanted to eat the sumptuous meal of a rich man. The rich man Gandha told him that he would have to work for three years to earn such a meal. Accordingly, he worked for three years and obtained the meal he so earnestly longed for. When he was about to enjoy it, a Paccekabuddha happened to come by. Without any hesitation, he offered the Paccekabuddha the meal, which he had so cherished and which had taken him three years to earn.

Another example is provided by the Ummādanī Jātaka of **Paññāsa Nipāta**, which gives the story of a poor girl who worked for three years to get the printed clothes, which she wanted to adorn herself. When she was about to dress herself in the clothes, which she had so yearned for, a disciple of the Buddha Kassapa came by (who was covered only with leaves because he had been robbed of his robes by the dacoits). The giving away of clothes, which she so cherished and for which she had to work for three years, is also a *Dukkara* type of *dāna*.

Awe-inspiring gifts of great magnificence are called **Mahā-dāna**. The great Siri Dhammāsoka's (Asoka's) gifts of 84,000 monasteries in honour of 84,000 passages of the Piṭaka are great *dānas* of this type. On this account, the Venerable Mahā Moggaliputta Tissa said: “In the Dispensation of the Buddha, or even in the life time of the Buddha, there is no one equal to you as a donor of the four requisites. Your offering is the greatest.”

Although Venerable Mahā Moggaliputta Tissa said so, the gifts of Asoka were made on

his own initiative, without anyone to compete and, therefore, there is no need to classify them as **Sadisa** or **Asadisa** type of *dāna*. Passenadi Kosala's gifts were made in competition with those of the citizens (of Savatthi) and are, therefore, termed '**Asadisa-dāna**', the Matchless gift.

All other gifts of ordinary nature which are neither difficult to make nor of great magnitude are just common gifts, **Sāmañña-dāna**.

In addition to these, there is another classification of three **Dhamma-dānas** described in the Vinaya Parivāra Texts and its commentary, viz.:

- (1) Giving to the Sangha gifts which were verbally declared to be offered to the Sangha,
- (2) Giving to the Pagoda gifts which were verbally declared to be offered to the Pagoda, and
- (3) Giving to the individual gifts which were verbally declared to be offered to the individual.

These are called **Dhammika-dāna**, gifts offered in connection with the Dhamma. (Further details of these types of gifts will be found below in accordance with the nine gifts of **Adhammika-dāna**).

Type of Dāna in Groups of Fours

The texts do not mention any type of gifts by fours. But Vinaya lists four kinds of requisites which may be offered as gifts. They are:

- (1) Gift of robe or robe-materials (**civara-dāna**).
- (2) Gift of alms food (**pindapāta-dāna**).
- (3) Gift of dwelling places (**senāsana-dāna**).
- (4) Gift of medicinal materials (**bhesajja-dāna**).

Gifts may also be classified into four types depending on the purity of the donor and the receiver, viz:

- (1) *Dāna* whose donor has morality but the recipient has not.
- (2) *Dāna* whose recipient has morality but the donor has not.
- (3) *Dāna* whose both the donor and the recipient are immoral.
- (4) *Dāna* whose both the recipient and the donor have morality.

Type of Dāna in Groups of Fives

The Kāladāna Sutta in the Sumana Vagga, Pañcaka Nipāta, **Aṅguttara Nikāya** mentions the following five types of gifts which are to be given at an appropriate time:

- (1) Gift made to a visitor.
- (2) Gift made to one starting on a journey.
- (3) Gift made to one who is ill.
- (4) Gift made at the time of scarcity.
- (5) Gift of newly harvested grains and crops made to those endowed with virtue.

The fifth type has direct reference to farmers and cultivators, but it should be understood that it also includes the first fruits of labour of any one who offers them as *dāna* before using them for oneself.

Five Kinds of Asappurisa-dāna

There are five kinds of gifts made by men of no virtue:

- (1) *Dāna* made without seeing carefully that the gift to be offered is properly prepared, fresh, wholesome and clean.

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

- (2) *Dāna* made without due reverence or considerations.
- (3) *Dāna* made without offering it with one's own hands; (For example, the *dāna* of King Pāyāsi⁶, who instead of presenting the gifts with his own hands, had his attendant Uttara do so for him.)
- (4) *Dāna* made in the manner of discarding one's leftovers.
- (5) *Dāna* made without the knowledge that the good deed done now, will surely bring good results in the future (*kammassakatā-ñāṇa*).

Five Kinds of Sappurisa-dāna

There are five kinds of gifts made by men of virtue:

- (1) *Dāna* made after seeing carefully that the gift to be offered is properly prepared, fresh, wholesome and clean.
- (2) *Dāna* made with due reverence, with the mind firmly placed on the material for offering.
- (3) *Dāna* made with one's own hands. (Throughout the beginningless cycle of existences, the beginning of which we have no knowledge, there have been many existences in which one is not equipped with hands and feet. In this existence, when one has the rare fortune of being equipped with complete limbs, one should avail oneself of this rare opportunity of offering gifts with one's own hands, reflecting that one would work for liberation making use of the hands one is fortunate enough to be born with).
- (4) *Dāna* made with due care, and not as if one is discarding one's own leftovers.
- (5) *Dāna* made with the knowledge that the good deed done now, will surely bring good results in the future.

These two groups of five kinds of gifts are described in the seventh *sutta* of the Tikanda Vagga, Pañcaka Nipāta, **Aṅguttara Nikāya**.

Another five kinds of gifts made by men of virtue (**Sappurisa-dāna**).

- (1) *Dāna* made with faith in the law of cause and effect (**saddhā-dāna**).
- (2) *Dāna* made after seeing carefully that the gift to be offered is properly prepared fresh, wholesome and clean (**sakkacca-dāna**).
- (3) *Dāna* made at the right time, on the proper occasion (**kāla-dāna**). (When it is the meal-time, alms food is offered; when it is the Kāṭhina season, robes are offered).
- (4) *Dāna* made with a view to rendering assistance to the recipient or to show kindness to him (**anuggaha-dāna**).
- (5) *Dāna* made without affecting, in any way, one's dignity and the dignity of others (**anupaghāta-dāna**).

All of these five kinds of gifts give rise to great wealth, riches and prosperity. In addition, *saddhā-dāna* results in fair, handsome appearance. As a result of *sakkacca-dāna*, one's followers and attendants are attentive and obedient. Resulting from *kāla-dāna* are benefits that come at the right time and in abundance. As a result of *anuggaha-dāna*, one is well disposed to enjoy the fruits of one's good deeds and is able to do so in full. As a result of *anupaghāta-dāna*, one's property is fully protected against the five destructive elements (water, fire, king, thieves and opponents. This classification of five kinds of *Dāna* comes in

6. Pāyāsi, a chieftain at Setavya in the kingdom of Kosala, was reborn in Catumaharajika as a result of his alms-giving in the human world. He related his past experiences to the visiting *Mahāthera* Gavampati. He said he had given alms without thorough preparation, not with his own hand, without due thought, as something discarded. Hence his rebirth in that lowest of the six celestial planes. But Uttara, the young man who supervised his alms-giving at his request, was reborn in a higher abode, Tāvātimsa, because he gave with thorough preparation with his own hand, with due thought, not as something discarded. The story teaches the right way of alms-giving.

the eighth sutta of the above Text).

The opposites of these five kinds of *Dāna* are not mentioned in the Texts; but it may be assumed that the five corresponding *dāna* made by men of no virtues would be as follows:

- (1) *Dāna* made without believing in the law of cause and effect (**asaddhiya-dāna**), just to imitate others' *dāna* or to escape from being censured or reviled. (Such *dāna* will produce wealth and riches for the donor but he will not be bestowed with fine appearance.)
- (2) *Dāna* made without seeing carefully that the gift to be offered is properly prepared, fresh, wholesome and clean (**asakacca-dāna**). (Wealth and riches will accrue from such *dānas*, but the donor will not receive obedience and discipline from his sub-ordinates.)
- (3) *Dāna* made at inappropriate time (**akāla-dāna**). (It will produce wealth but its beneficial results will not be in great abundance and will not come at the time needed.)
- (4) *Dāna* made perfunctorily (**ananuggaha-dāna**) without intention of assisting or doing honour to the recipient. (One may reap riches and wealth out of such deeds, but he will not be disposed to enjoy his wealth or he may be denied the occasion to enjoy them.)
- (5) *Dāna* made in such a way that it will affect, in some way, one's dignity or the dignity of others (**upaghāta-dāna**). (Wealth and riches may accrue from such *dānas* but they will be subject to damage or destruction by the five enemies.)

In view of the **Kala-dāna** and **Akāla-dāna** types of offering mentioned above, i.e. offerings made at appropriate or inappropriate times, it should be well noted that it is improper to make offerings, even with the best of intentions, of light to the Buddha during the day when there is light, or of food when it is afternoon.

Five Kinds of Immoral Gifts

The Parivāra (Vinaya Piṭaka) mentions five kinds of giving which are commonly and conventionally called by people as acts of merit, but which are nothing but harmful, demeritorious forms of offering.

They are:

- (1) Gift of intoxicants (**majja-dāna**).
- (2) Holding of festivals (**samajja-dāna**).
- (3) Provision of prostitutes for sexual enjoyment of those who wish to do so (**itthi-dāna**).
- (4) Dispatch of bulls into a herd of cows for mating (**usabha-dāna**).
- (5) Drawing and offering of pornographic pictures (**cittakamma-dāna**).

The Buddha described these forms of offering as immoral, demeritorious gifts because they cannot be accompanied by good intentions, wholesome volitions. Some people think that by providing opium to an addicted person, who is nearing death because of the withdrawal of the drug, they are doing a meritorious deed of life-giving (*jivita-dana*). As a matter of fact, this does not constitute an act of merit, because it is unwholesome consciousness that motivates one to offer opium which is not suitable for consumption. The same consideration holds good in the case of offering of intoxicants.

The Commentary to the Jātaka mentions the inclusion of intoxicating drinks in the display of materials to be given away by the Bodhisatta King Vessantara as a great offering, *mahā-dāna*.

Some people try to explain this inclusion of intoxicants as materials for offering by the King Vessantara by saying that the King had no intention of providing liquor to the drunkards; that it is only the volition that determines the merits of an offering; that King Vessantara did not want anyone to drink the intoxicants; there is no wrong intention involved. He merely wanted to avoid being criticised by those who would say that the King's great *dāna* has no offerings of intoxicants.

(But such rationalization is untenable.) Great persons, like King Vessantara, do not worry about criticism levelled at them by others, especially when the criticism is unjustified. The fact of the matter is that it is only in drinking that the guilt lies; using it as a lotion or for

medicinal preparations in a proper manner is not demeritorious. We should take it, therefore, that it is for such purposes that King Vessantara included intoxicants as materials for offering in his great *dāna*.

Five Kinds of 'Great Gifts' (Mahā-Dāna)

In the ninth Sutta of the fourth Vagga of the Aṭṭhaka Nipāta, **Aniguttara Nikāya**, are given comprehensive expositions of the Five Precepts beginning with the words: “*Pañcimāni bhikkhave dināni mahādānāni*,” describing the Five Precepts as the Five Kinds of Great Gifts (*Mahā-dāna*). But it should not be wrongly understood that *sīla* is *dāna* just because the Five Precepts are described as the Five Great Dāna in the Text mentioned above. The Buddha does not mean to say that *sīla* is not different from *dāna* or the two are exactly the same. *Sīla* is proper restraint of one's physical and verbal actions and *dāna* is offering of a gift, and the two should not be taken as identical.

When a virtuous person observes the precept of non-killing and abstains from taking life of other beings, that virtuous person is actually giving them the gift of harmlessness (*abhaya-dāna*). The same consideration applies to the remaining precepts. Thus, when all the Five Precepts are well observed by a moral person, he is, by his restraint, offering all beings gifts of freedom from harm, from danger, from worries, from anxiety, etc. It is in this sense that the Buddha teaches here that observance of the Five Precepts constitutes offering of the Five Great Gifts (*Mahā-dāna*).

Types of Dāna in Groups of Sixes

Just as the Texts do not mention any list of gifts in groups of Fours as such, so there is no direct mention of types of gifts in groups of six in the Texts. But the **Atthasālinā**, the Commentary to Dhammasangani, the first volume of Abhidhamma, gives an exposition of six types of gifts in which the six sense objects provide materials for offerings, viz. the gift of colour, of sound, of odour, of taste, of objects of touch, and of mind-objects.

Types of Dāna in Groups of Sevens

Similarly, there is no mention of types of *dāna* in groups of sevens as such; but the seven kinds of **Saṅghika-dāna**, described above under the heading ‘Types of gifts in pairs’, sub-heading ‘Gifts to the Saṅgha’ may be taken to represent this type of *dāna*.

Types of Dāna in Groups of Eights

- (A) The Buddha teaches the group of eight *dāna* in the first Sutta of the Fourth Vagga, Aṭṭhaka Nipāta, **Aṅguttara Nikāya**. The Eight *dānas* are:
- (1) *Dāna* made without delay, without hesitation, as soon as the recipient arrives.
 - (2) *Dāna* made through fear of censure or of being reborn in the realms of misery and suffering.
 - (3) *Dāna* made because the recipient had in the past given him gifts.
 - (4) *Dāna* made with the intention that the recipient of the offering will make a return offering in future.
 - (5) *Dāna* made with the thought that making a gift is a good deed.
 - (6) *Dāna* made with the thought: “I am a householder who prepares and cooks food to eat; it would not be proper if I partake of the food without making offerings to those who are not allowed (by their disciplinary rules, i.e. Buddhist monks) to prepare and cook their own food?”
 - (7) *Dāna* made with the thought: “The gift I am offering will bring me a good reputation which will spread far and wide.”
 - (8) *Dāna* made with the idea that it will serve as an instrument to help one attain concentration when one fails to achieve it while practising Concentration and Insight Meditation.

Of the eight kinds of *dāna*, the last one is the best and the noblest. The reason is that this

last type of *dāna* is unique, one which promotes joy and delight in one who is practising Concentration and Insight meditation, and renders great assistance to his endeavours in meditation. The first seven modes of giving do not arouse and encourage the mind in the work of Concentration and Insight Meditation and of them, the first and the fifth are superior ones (*panita*). The seventh type is an inferior one (*hīna*), while numbers 2, 3, 4, 6 are of medium status.

The eight categories of *dāna* may be divided into two groups: **Puññavisaya-dāna**, *dāna* which belongs to the sphere of meritorious giving and **Lokavisaya-dāna**, *dāna* which belongs to the sphere of worldly gifts. The first, the fifth and the eighth are **Puññavisaya-dāna** and the remaining five belong to the **Lokavisaya** type.

(B) Again, the third sutta in the Dāna Vagga, Aṭṭhaka Nipāta, **Aṅguttara Nikāya** provides another list of eight **dānas**.

- (1) *Dāna* made out of affection.
- (2) *Dāna* made under unavoidable circumstances, made reluctantly and showing resentment.
- (3) *Dāna* made through bewilderment and foolishness without understanding the law of cause and effect.
- (4) *Dāna* made through fear of censure, through fear of rebirth in the realms of misery and suffering, through fear of harm that may be caused by the recipient.
- (5) *Dāna* made with the thought: "It has been the tradition of generations of my ancestors and I should carry on the tradition".
- (6) *Dāna* made with the objective of gaining rebirth in the deva realms.
- (7) *Dāna* made with the hope of experiencing joy and delight with a pure mind.
- (8) *Dāna* made with the idea that it will serve as an instrument to help one attain concentration when one fails to achieve it while practising Concentration and Insight Meditation.

Of these eight categories of *dāna* also, only the eighth kind is the noblest; the sixth and the seventh are **Puññavisaya** type of *dāna* and are quite meritorious. The remaining five are of inferior type belonging to the **Lokavisaya** types.

(C) Again, in the fifth sutta of the Dāna Vagga, Aṭṭhaka Nipāta, **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, the Buddha had taught comprehensively on the subject of gaining rebirths as a result of giving alms, *danupapatti*. According to the eight kinds of destination to be gained as future births, the *dānas* are divided into eight categories:

- (1) Seeing the happy circumstance of rich and prosperous people in this life, one makes the *dāna* wishing for such wealth and comfortable life in the future and at the same time taking care to lead a life of morality. After death, his wish is fulfilled; he gains rebirth in the human world in happy, comfortable, wealthy circumstances.
- (2) Hearing that the Catumahārājika devas are **(p1:)** *powerful beings leading a life of comfort and pleasures, one makes the dāna wishing for such powerful, comfortable life full of pleasures in the Catumahārājika deva-world (p2:)* and at the same time taking care to lead a life of morality. After death, his wish is fulfilled; he is reborn in the Catumahārājika deva-world.
- (3) Hearing that the Tāvātimsa devas are **(repeat p1:)** in the Tāvātimsa deva-world **(repeat p2:)** in the Tāvātimsa deva-world.
- (4) Hearing that the Yāma devas are **(repeat p1:)** in the Yāma deva-world **(repeat p2:)** in the Yāma deva-world.
- (5) Hearing that the Tusitā devas are **(repeat p1:)** in the Tusitā deva-world **(repeat p2:)** in the Tusitā deva-world.
- (6) Hearing that the Nimmānarati devas are **(repeat p1:)** in the Nimmānarati deva-world

(repeat p2:) in the Nimmānarati deva-world.

- (7) Hearing that the Paranimmitavasavattī devas are (repeat p1:) in the Paranimmitavasavattī deva-world (repeat p2:) in the Paranimmitavasavattī deva-world.
- (8) Hearing that the Brahmās live a long life, having beautiful appearance and enjoying happy, blissful lives, one makes the *dāna*, wishing to be reborn in the Brahmā-world and at the same time taking care to lead a life of morality. After death, one gains rebirth in the Brahmā-world as one has wished.

It should not be concluded from the above statement that giving of alms alone is a sure guarantee for a happy life in the Brahmā-world. As stated under the eighth type, in the above two categories, it is only by making the mind soft and gentle through offering of alms and through development of concentration up to the Absorption stage, *jhāna*, by practising meditation on the four illimitables, namely, Loving-Kindness (*Mettā*), Compassion (*Karūṇā*), Sympathetic Joy (*Muditā*) and Equanimity (*Upekkhā*) that one can gain rebirth in the Brahmā-world.

(D) Again in the seventh *sutta* of the same **Dana Vagga** is given the following list of eight *dānas* given by a moral person (*sappurisa-dāna*):

- (1) Giving of gifts which have been made clean, pure and attractive.
- (2) Giving of gifts of choice materials and of excellent quality.
- (3) Giving of gifts at proper and appropriate times.
- (4) Giving of gifts which are suitable for and acceptable by the recipient.
- (5) Giving of gifts, after making careful selection of the recipient and the objects to be offered (*viceyya-dāna*). Excluding persons of immoral conduct, the selected recipients should be moral persons who follow the Teachings of the Buddha. As to the materials to be offered, when possessing things of both good and bad quality, better quality materials should be selected for making a gift
- (6) Giving of gifts according to one's ability in a consistent manner.
- (7) Giving of gifts with a pure, calm mind.
- (8) Giving of gifts and feeling glad after having done so.

(E) A separate list of eight types of gifts made by persons of immoral conduct (*Assappurisa-dāna*) is not given as such in the Texts, but one could surmise that they would be as follows:

- (1) Giving of gifts which are unclean, impure and unattractive.
- (2) Giving of gifts of inferior quality.
- (3) Giving of gifts at improper and inappropriate times.
- (4) Giving of gifts which are unsuitable for the recipient.
- (5) Giving of gifts without making careful selection of the recipient and the objects to be offered.
- (6) Giving of gifts only occasionally although one is capable of doing so in a consistent manner.
- (7) Giving of gifts without calming the mind.
- (8) Giving of gifts feeling remorse after having done so.

Types of Dāna by Groups of Nines

The Vinaya Parivāra Pāli Text mentions the Nine types of giving which were taught by the Buddha as not valid as a deed of offering (**Adhammika-dāna**). The Commentary on the Text explains these nine types of gifts as follows:

Causing the gift which has been intended by the donor for a certain group of the Sangha:-

- (1) to be given to another group of the Sangha,
- (2) to be given to a shrine,
- (3) to be given to an individual,

Causing the gift which has been intended by the donor for a certain shrine:-

- (4) to be given to another shrine,
- (5) to be given to the Sangha,
- (6) to be given to an individual,

Causing the gift which has been intended by the donor for a certain individual:-

- (7) to be given to another individual.
- (8) to be given to the Sangha, and
- (9) to be given to a shrine.

Here the gift which has been intended by the donor means the four requisites of robes, food, dwelling place and medicines and other small items of necessities which the donor has already committed verbally to give to the Sangha, or a shrine, or an individual.

The story of why the Buddha taught these nine types of **Adhammika-dāna** is given in the Pārajika kaṇḍa and Pācittiya Pāli Texts of the **Vinaya Piṭaka**.

Once the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana Monastery in Sāvatti. Then a certain group of people decided to make offerings of food and robes to the Sangha. Accordingly, they made necessary preparations and had the robes and food ready for the offering. A group of immoral *bhikkhus* went to the would-be donors and forcibly urged them to make the offering of robes to them instead. Being thus forced to give away the robes to the immoral *bhikkhus*, the people had only food left to offer to the Sangha. Hearing of this, the modest *bhikkhus* denounced the immoral *bhikkhus* and reported what had happened to the Buddha. It was then that the Buddha laid down the rule: "Whoever *bhikkhu* should knowingly appropriate for himself the gift which has been declared to be intended for the Sangha, there is an offence of expiation involving forfeiture (*Nissaggiya Pācittiya Āpatti*)."

In the explication that accompanies the rule, the Buddha explains: "If the gift already committed by word of mouth to be given to the Sangha is appropriated for oneself, there is the offence of expiation involving forfeiture (*Nissaggiya Pācittiya Āpatti*); if it is caused to be given to the Sangha other than the intended one or to a shrine, there is an offence of *Dukkata Āpatti*. Knowing the gift is intended for a certain shrine, if it is made to be given to another shrine or to the Sangha or to an individual, there is an offence of *Dukkata Āpatti*. Knowing the gift is intended to be given to a certain individual, if it is caused to be given to another individual, or to the Sangha, or to a shrine, there is an offence of *Dukkata Āpatti*."

The above story is given to illustrate how one's well intentioned deed of merit could become vitiated through intervention and interference of undesirable intermediaries and how, due to their intervention, it could be turned into an *adhammika-dāna*. The Buddha also explained the nine unrighteous acceptances (*adhammika paṭiggaha*) of the nine *adhammika-dāna* and the nine righteous uses (*adhammika paribhoga*) of righteously offered requisites.

It should be noted, however, that not every transfer of gifts from the recipient originally intended by the donor to another results in an *adhammika-dāna*. The donor himself may change his original intention for some good reason or may be persuaded by a well-wisher to transfer the gift for acquiring more merit.

An illustration of such transfer of gifts is found in the story of Mahā Pajāpati who had made a new robe intending it to be offered to the Buddha. The Buddha advised her to offer the robe to the Sangha instead. If it were an offence, the Buddha would not have given the advice. As a matter of fact, the Buddha knew that Mahā Pajāpati would gain much greater merit by offering the robe to the Sangha headed by Himself.

In another instance, the Buddha persuaded King Pasenadī of Kosala to change his mind about permitting a monastery for ascetics of another faith to be built close by the Jetavana monastery. The King had been bribed by the ascetics for granting land to build their monastery. Foreseeing endless disputes that would later arise, the Buddha first sent the Venerable Ānanda and other *bhikkhus* and later the two Chief Disciples, the Venerable Sāriputta and the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna, to dissuade the King from taking the bribe and granting the land to the ascetics. The King gave some excuse to avoid seeing the great Disciples. Consequently, the Buddha Himself had to go to the King and told him the story of King Bharu, mentioned in the Duka Nipāta, who, in a similar situation, had caused much suffering through taking bribes. Fully convinced of his wrong doing, King Passenadi made amends by withdrawing the grant of land and appropriating the building materials gathered on it by the ascetics. The King then had a monastery built with those materials on the very site and donated it to the Buddha.

As stated above, there is no offence when a donor changes his first intention for a good reason and makes the offer to another person. This has direct reference to one of the attributes of the Ariya Sangha. If a donor prepares gifts for *bhikkhus* who would be visiting him, and if, in the meantime, *bhikkhus* who are well-established in the higher Dhammas and who are members of the Ariya Sangha come into the scene, he may change his mind and offer the gifts to the newcomers to his better advantage. And they may also accept such gifts. They may also make use of the gifts so received. Being worthy of accepting such gifts originally intended for visitors is known as the *pāhuneyya* attribute of the Ariya Sangha.

Type of Dāna in Groups of Tens and Fourteens

As in the case of *dāna* in Groups of Fours, Sixes, or Sevens there is no direct mention of type of *dāna* in groups of Tens in the Texts. But the Commentaries provide a list of ten material things which may be offered as *dāna*.

Likewise the Dakkhina Vibhanga Sutta gives a list of *dānas* which come under the category of fourteen kinds of gifts by individuals (see item 19 of types of *dānas* in groups of Twos).

5. WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS THAT STRENGTHEN THE BENEFICIAL RESULTS OF DĀNA

6. WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS THAT WEAKEN THE BENEFICIAL RESULTS OF DĀNA

The Dāna Sutta, the seventh discourse of the Devatā Vagga, in the Chakka Nipāta, **Āṅguttara Nikāya**, explains the elements that strengthen the beneficial results of *dāna* and those that weaken them.

At one time, the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana Monastery in Sāvattthi. At that time, He saw, by His supernormal psychic power of divine sight, that a certain female follower of His Teaching by the name of Nandamātā, was making an offering to the two Chief Disciples and the Sangha, in the distant town of Velukandaki. He said to the *bhikkhus*:

“*Bhikkhus*, Nandamātā of Velukandaki is right now making a great offering to the Sangha headed by the Venerables Sāriputta and Moggallāna. Her offering has the distinguished feature of the donor possessing three special qualities of volitional purity, namely, (a) feeling happy before the act of offering; (b) having a clear, pure mind while making the offering and (c) rejoicing after having made the offering, and of the recipients possessing three special qualities of mental purity, namely, (a) being free of attachment (*rāga*) or practising to be liberated from it; (b) being free of ill will (*dosa*) or practising to be liberated from it, (c) being free of bewilderment (*moha*) or practising to be liberated from it.

“*Bhikkhus*, just as the water in the ocean is immeasurable, the benefit that will accrue from an offering distinguished by those six features is also immeasurable.

As a matter of fact, you speak of the water in the ocean as an immeasurably huge mass of water, likewise you say of such an offering, which is unique with these six features, as one that will bring an immeasurably huge accumulation of merit.”

According to this Pāli Text, it may be seen that the three qualities possessed by the donor and the three qualities possessed by the recipients form the elements that strengthen the beneficial results of *dāna*. It follows from it that, to the extent that the donor and the recipients are lacking in their respective qualities, to that extent will the act of *dāna* fall short of the full possible beneficial results.

Again, in the ninth birth story of Mahadhammapāla, in the Dasaka Nipāta of the **Jātaka**, it is mentioned that King Suddhodāna was a brahmin in a past life. The great teacher of the Textila, to whom he had entrusted his son for education, asked him why members of his clan did not die young but lived to a ripe old age.

He replied in verse:

*Pubbeva dānā sumanā bhavāma
dadampi ve attamanā bhavāma
datvāpi ve nānutappāma pacchā
tasmā hi amham dahara na mīyare.*

We feel very happy before we ever make an offering, We are delighted and satisfied while making the offering; And we rejoice after having made the the offering, never feeling remorseful. For these three reasons people never die young in our clan.

From this story one can surmise that when an offering is made with fulfilment of these three volitional conditions, the benefit that accrues from it, is enjoyment of long life in the present existence.

Again, in the **Attahasālini** and the **Dhammapada** Commentary are mentioned four conditions that bring beneficial results in the present life from an act of offering:

- (a) The materials to be offered as gifts have been acquired legitimately and equitably (**Paccayānam dhammikata**).
- (b) They are given with faith and confidence and with fulfilment of three volitional conditions. (**Cetanāmahattā**).
- (c) The recipient is one of high attainment, an *arahat* or an *anāgāmin* (**Vatthusampatti**).
- (d) The recipient has just arisen from ‘the unconditioned state’ (*nirodhasamāpatti*) (**Guṇatirekatā**).

Offerings of this kind, which bring beneficial results in the present life, were made by people, such as Puṇṇa, Kākavaliya and the flower girl Sumana, who reaped great benefits from their *dānas* which met these four conditions completely.

In the **Attahasālini**, these four conditions for a gift are termed, ‘the four purities of gifts (*dakkhinā visuddhi*)’; in the **Dhammapada** Commentary, they are called ‘the Four Accomplishments (*Sampadā*)’.

Again, there is a list of four kinds of purity (*dakkhinā visuddhi*) connected with an act of *dāna* given in the Dakkhinā Vibhaṅga Sutta of the Uparipannāsa Pāli. They are:

- (1) A gift made pure by the donor but not by the recipient. (Even if the recipient is of no moral virtue (*dussīla*), if the donor is virtuous and makes an offering of what has been acquired legitimately and equitably, with pure and good volition before, during and after giving the *dāna* and does it with full faith in the law of cause and effect, then the *dāna* is pure because of the donor and will bring great benefit.)
- (2) A gift made pure by the recipient but not by the donor. (Even if the donor is of no moral virtue, and makes an offering of what has been acquired illegitimately and unequitably, and does not have pure, good volition before, during and after giving the *dāna*, and without faith in the law of cause and effect, if the recipient is morally

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

virtuous, then the *dāna* is pure because of the recipient and will bring great benefits.)

- (3) A gift not made pure either by the donor or the recipient. (When the donor of no moral virtue makes an offering of ill-gotten wealth to an immoral recipient with no pure, good volition before, during and after the act of offering and without faith in the law of cause and effect, the *dāna* will bring no great beneficial result, just as a poor seed planted on poor soil will not grow properly to produce good crops.)
- (4) A gift made pure both by the donor and the recipient. (When the donor of moral virtue makes an offering of what has been acquired legitimately and equitably, with pure and good volition before, during and after the act of offering to a morally virtuous recipient, the *dāna* will bring great beneficial result, just as a good seed planted in good soil produces good crops.)

The third type, of course, is not concerned with purity at all, but it is mentioned to include all the cases involved. To summarise all that we have considered, there are five elements that strengthen the beneficial results of *dāna*:

- (1) The donor observes the precepts and is of good moral conduct.
- (2) The recipient is also morally virtuous.
- (3) The materials offered have been acquired justly and rightly.
- (4) The offering is made with happiness before, with pure satisfaction and delight during and with rejoicing after making the offer.
- (5) The donor has complete faith in the law of cause and effect.

These five elements should accompany the *dāna* so that it will be of greatest purity and benefit; when they are lacking when offerings are made, to that extent will the *dāna* be deficient in beneficial results.

Some Remarks on 'Saddhā'

It is important to understand clearly the complete meaning of the fifth element, namely, 'faith in the law of cause and effect'. Here, faith is the rendering into Myanmar of the Pāli word '*saddhā*'. Grammatically it would mean 'that which holds and keeps well'.

Just as clear water in which all sediment and impurities have settled down to the bottom can hold the image of the moon, of the sun and keep it well, so also faith, which is devoid of mental defilements, can firmly hold the virtues and attributes of the Buddha (to serve as object for contemplation).

To give another illustration, if a man is not equipped with hands, he would not be able to help himself to jewels lying about him although he sees them. If he does not possess wealth, he would not be able to provide himself with a variety of goods and materials.

Without seeds, there would be no crops nor grains. Similarly, without faith, we cannot acquire the jewels of generosity, morality and development of concentration and insight; (and there can be no enjoyment of the pleasures of the human or deva-world or the bliss of Nibbāna). Hence, the Buddha in His Teaching compared faith to possessing hands, wealth or seeds.

In the **Milindapañha Pāli** and **Atthasālinī Commentary**, faith is compared to the crown jewel, ruby, of a Universal Monarch, which has the property of instantly purifying and clearing the water into which it is put, no matter how dirty the water is. In a similar manner, faith dispels instantly all that is defiling the mind and make it pure and clear at once. If the mind is filled with faith, there is no room in it for defilements, such as grief, worry, etc.

How difficult it is to keep the mind steadfastly contemplating on the attributes of the Buddha is within the experience of all good Buddhists. In other words, it is not a simple matter to keep the mind filled with only faith devoid of all defilements. But with practice, one can maintain a pure, clear mind through faith for short periods until, with steadfast effort, one can do so continuously for long periods.

As regards having faith in the law of cause and effect, mentioned above, we should reflect thus: “I will have spent a certain amount of my wealth by offering this *dāna*, but it will not be spent in vain. Through this act of *dāna*, I will have developed volitions which is much more precious than the wealth I will have spent. My wealth is liable to be destroyed by five kinds of enemies, but this mental action of volition is indestructible and will follow me through rounds of existence till I attain Nibbāna. Ability to keep the mind clear and pure in this manner is having faith in the law of cause, the mental action of volition.”

And considering the results that would accrue from the mental action, we will come to a very clear, definite conclusion: “Because of this mental action of volition, I will reap beneficial results throughout the rounds of existence, there is no doubt about it”. Reflecting thus and experiencing the exhilarating purity of the mind is having faith in the law of effect.

Thus, it is important to develop, through reflecting on the law of cause or the law of effect, faith which is conducive to purity of mind, for it is the fifth element that strengthens the beneficial results of *dāna*.

(b) The Perfection of Morality (Sīla-Pāramī)

The Game Animal Cāmarī

The author gives an elaborate description of the animal, *cāmarī*, which we have translated as ‘yak’. He quotes various authorities to dispel the notion of many people that *cāmarī* is a kind of winged animal. Far from it, the author says on the authority of Abhayarama Sayadaw of Mandalay, and Taung Pauk Sayadaw of Mawlamyine that it is a yak, a Tibetan beast of burden, useful also for its milk and flesh. The fan made of its tail is one of the emblems of royalty.

Wishing to prevent damage, the yak will sacrifice its life rather than making any effort to release it, when even a single hair of its tail happens to be caught in the branches of a bush. Sumedha admonished himself to take the example set by a yak and preserve the purity of morality even at the risk of his life.

Miscellaneous Notes on Different Respects of Morality

As with Perfection of Dāna, these notes are given in the form of answers to the following questions; quoting the authority of the **Visuddhi-magga**, the Path of Purification:

- (1) What is Morality?
- (2) Why is it called Morality ?
- (3) What are the characteristics, functions, manifestations, and proximate cause of Morality?
- (4) What are the benefits of Morality ?
- (5) How many types of Morality are there ?
- (6) What are the defiling factors of Morality ?
- (7) What are the purifying factors of Morality ?

Exposition of Morality

1. WHAT IS MORALITY?

Various factors, which may be defined as Morality, are mental volition (*cetanā*) which arises in the person who abstains from wrong physical actions, such as killing, etc., or which arises when performing duties towards one's elders, teachers, etc.; the three mental factors of abstinence (*viratī*), i.e. right speech, right action, and right livelihood; greedlessness (*alobha* or *anabhijjhā*), absence of ill-will (*adosa* or *abyāpāda*), right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi* or *amoha*); the five restraints (to be described in full later) and the mental factor of *avittikama*.

Thus morality may be conveniently studied as follows:

- (1) Volition that accompanies one when abstaining from wrong physical or verbal action or when performing duties towards one's elders or teachers, etc.;
- (2) the three mental factors of abstention from wrong action, wrong speech and wrong livelihood;
- (3) the three right mental actions of *anabhijjhā*, *abyāpāda* and *sammā-diṭṭhi*;
- (4) the five restraints (*samvara*); and
- (5) the mental factor which arises when avoiding transgressions.

(a) Morality of Volition (Cetanā-sīla)

(b) Morality of Abstinence (Virati-sīla)

The three wrong physical actions are taking the life of other beings, taking what is not given and sexual misconduct. The four wrong verbal actions are telling lies, gossiping or backbiting, using harsh, abusive words and indulgence in vain, frivolous talks. These two categories of wrong actions may be committed in association with earning a livelihood (like that of a fisherman or a hunter), or may not be associated with earning livelihood (like game hunting for sport).

Likewise, abstaining from these two categories of wrong actions may or may not be associated with earning a livelihood. Abstaining from three wrong physical actions, when not associated with earning a livelihood, is known as abstention through right action (*sammā kammanta viratī*); abstaining from the four wrong verbal actions, when not associated with earning a livelihood, is known as abstention through right speech (*sammā vaca viratī*); abstaining from these two categories of wrong actions, when associated with earning a livelihood, and from various kinds of wrong livelihood (especially those kinds which bhikkhus are enjoined against), is known as abstention through right livelihood (*sammā ajiva viratī*).

The three mental factors of abstention mentioned above are known as morality of abstention (*viratī-sīla*) and the mental factor of volition that accompanies them is known as morality of volition (*cetanā-sīla*). The volition that arises when performing acts of great merit of attending upon one's teacher is also known as morality of volition (*cetanā-sīla*).

(c) Morality of Non-covetousness, etc. (Anabhijjhādi-sīla)

The greed that prompts one to covet others' property, harbouring the thought: "It would be good if these were mine", is known as the wrong mental action of covetousness (*abhijjhā manoduccarita*). When one dispels such thoughts, there arise in one the mental factors of dispelling volition (*cetanā*) and greedlessness (*alobha*) or non-covetousness (*anabhijjhā*). These mental factors are called Morality.

Wishing harm to someone, there arises in a person the mental factor of hatred which is known as wrong mental action of ill will (*byāpāda manoduccarita*). When one dispels such thoughts of ill-will, there arise in him the mental factors of dispelling volition and hatelessness (*adosa* or *abyāpāda*). These mental factors are called Morality.

When someone holds that there is no such thing as generosity and that there are no beneficial results accruing from it, he holds a wrong view which is called wrong mental action of wrong view (*micchā diṭṭhi manoduccarita*). When he dispels such beliefs, there arise in him the dispelling volition and non-delusion (*amoha*) or right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*). These mental factors are called Morality.

When three wrong mental actions (*abhijjhā*, *byāpāda*, and *micchā-diṭṭhi*) are present, a person is liable to commit such demeritorious deeds as killing, etc. which ruin one's *sīla*. When volition and the three right mental actions arise in one, it is impossible for one to commit deeds, such as killing, etc. which are ruinous to one's *sīla*. Therefore, the three right mental actions of *anabhijjhā*, *abyāpāda* and *sammā-diṭṭhi* are called Morality.

When consciousness arises, it is always accompanied by volition. That volition is

responsible for prompting the mind to take notice of an object; it serves as a link between the mind and an object. Without its prompting, there would be no mind-object linkage; the mind will not rest on the object; it will not be aware of the object. It is only through the services of volition that a mind-object linkage is possible at all. Thus, every volition accompanying consciousness that arises for each moral act is called Morality.

(d) **Morality of Restraints (Saṁvara-sīla)**

(e) **Morality of Avoiding Transgression (Avitikkama-sīla)**

The kinds of morality, as described, apply to laymen and bhikkhus equally. But there are other forms of morality which are concerned with bhikkhus only, viz.: morality of restraints (*saṁvara-sīla*) and morality of avoiding transgressions (*avitikkama-sīla*).

(d) **Morality of Restraints (Saṁvara-sīla):**

- (i) **Paṭimokkha Saṁvara:** Restraint through the Fundamental Precepts for bhikkhus, observance of which liberates the observer from the dangers of rebirths in the realms of miseries and continuous suffering.
- (ii) **Sati Saṁvara:** Restraint through Mindfulness, which means keeping close guard over the doors of the five senses, viz. eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, so that no 'thief of demeritoriousness' can gain entry into one.
- (iii) **Ñāṇa Saṁvara:** Restraint through Wisdom, which means control of the mind with Insight, so that the current of mental defilements of craving, wrong view and ignorance which normally flows incessantly, stops flowing. Under this type is also included *Paccayasānissita Sīla*, exercise of proper care over the use of requisites.
- (iv) **Khanti Saṁvara:** Restraint through Forbearance, which means controlling the mind, so that no defiling thoughts disturb it when enduring extreme heat or cold.
- (v) **Vīriya Saṁvara:** Restraint through Development of Energy, which means strenuous mental exertion, to prevent the arising of demeritorious thoughts, such as sensuous thought (*kāma-vitakka*), thought of ill-will (*byāpāda-vitakka*), thought of cruelty (*vihiṁsā-vitakka*). Purification of livelihood (*ājīva-pārisuddhi-sīla*) is also included under this type.

(e) **Morality of Avoiding Transgression (Avitikkama-sīla)**

This is the morality cultivated through avoidance of physical and verbal transgression of precepts which one has undertaken to observe.

From the above descriptions of five kinds of **Saṁvara Sīla** and **Avitikkama Sīla**, it could be inferred that, in essence, **Paṭimokkha Saṁvara Sīla** means a group of mental factors (*cetasikas*) including volition and the three abstentions of non-greed (*alobha*), non-hate (*adosa*) and non-delusion (*amoha*): **Sati Saṁvara** means the mental factor of *Sati*, mindfulness (which is also accompanied by volition); **Ñāṇa Saṁvara** means the mental factor of wisdom (which is also accompanied by volition); **Khanti Saṁvara** means a group of moral consciousness and mental factors headed by non-hate which has the characteristic of not losing temper, in other words, the mental factor of non-hate; **Vīriya Saṁvara** means mental factor of energy (which is also accompanied by volition).

As for *avitikkama-sīla*, in ultimate sense, it is a group of moral consciousness and mental factors which lead one to avoid transgression of precepts which one is observing. In the case of generosity (*dāna*), volition forms its basis. For morality too, volition serves as a main factor, but in addition to it, the group of moral consciousness and mental factors led by the three abstentions, the three mental factors of non-greed, non-hate, non-delusion and the three mental factors of mindfulness, wisdom, energy also play their respective roles.

2. WHY IS IT CALLED MORALITY?

The Pāli word 'sīla' is translated as 'morality' or 'virtue'; it is adopted in toto in the Myanmar language. 'Sīla' has two meanings: first, it is employed to convey the sense of

natural character, behaviour or habit. We find it used in this sense in such expression as ‘*pāpakarana-silo* — one who is in the habit of doing evil’; ‘*dubbhāsa-silo* — one who is in the habit of speaking evil’; ‘*abhivādana-silo* — one who is in the habit of showing reverence to those worthy of homage’; ‘*dhammakathana-silo* — one who is in the habit of teaching the doctrines’. It is also employed to describe natural phenomena: ‘*vassāna-samaye rukkha ruhana-sila* — trees usually grow during the rainy season’; ‘*gimhasamaye patta patana-sila* — leaves usually fall in summer’. In this first sense, *sila* is employed to describe the habits of both moral and immoral persons; and also natural events which are outside the domain of moral, good or bad.

Secondly, it has the meaning of good practice which implies only that practice which is noble, moral, ethical. This is the sense employed in this chapter on the ‘Perfection of Morality’. And in this sense also, there are two meanings, namely, (a) orientating and (b) upholding.

(a) ‘Orientating’ means controlling one’s physical and verbal actions and steering them towards the right direction so that they do not get out of hand. In a person, who does not observe the precepts, physical and verbal actions take place in a haphazard manner, like loose yarn, not properly wound in a roll, is uncontrolled and undirected. But a person, who observes the precepts, watches closely over his physical and verbal actions to see that they take place in an orderly manner under his proper control. Even a person of ill-humour, who is easily irritated and loses temper at the slightest provocation, can manage to keep his physical and verbal actions under control when he is observing the precepts.

(b) *Sila* is ‘upholding’ because no act of merit can be accomplished without accompaniment of moral virtue. Meritorious acts can arise only in persons of morality; thus *sila* serves as the basis or foundation of all acts of meritoriousness; it facilitates the arising of meritoriousness through performance of meritorious deeds that would lead to rebirths in the four planes of existence (*catubhūmaka*), viz. the sensuous world, the fine material world, the non-material world and the supra-mundane states.

In this chapter on the Perfection of Morality, it is mentioned that the hermit Sumedha, having received the definite prophecy that he would become a Perfectly Self-Enlightened One, admonished himself to establish first in the Perfection of Alms-giving. But this does not imply that he should practise generosity first without observance of precepts. In his investigation of the Buddha-making factors, by the exercise of Perfection Investigating Wisdom (*Pāramī pavicaya ñāṇa*), it was the Perfection of Alms-giving that appeared first in his mind’s eye, followed, in succession, by Perfection of Morality, Perfection of Renunciation, etc. The order of Perfection given in the Text is the order in which they appeared in the mind’s eye of Hermit Sumedha. It was not possible for him to discern all the ten *pāramīs* simultaneously; they were investigated one after another and were mentioned accordingly. The first Perfection reviewed happened to be the Perfection of Alms-giving; hence it heads the list of the *pāramīs*, but this does not mean that the order in the list is the order in which *pāramīs* are to be fulfilled.

In actual practice, an act of giving is pure only when the donor is established in morality; alms-giving is made more fruitful when it is preceded by observance of precepts. That is the reason why when bhikkhus are invited by lay people to accept robes and other gifts, they see to it that the lay people are first established in the precepts (even though taking of precepts is not mentioned when making the invitation).

Thus to the question “Why is it called **Sila**?” The plain, clear-cut answer is: It is called *Sila* because (1) it does not permit physical and verbal actions to take place in a violent, disorderly manner; it controls and directs them to become quiet and gentle, (2) it serves as a foundation for the arising, by stages, of four classes of moral consciousness, namely, the moral consciousness pertaining to the sensuous world, the moral consciousness pertaining to the material world, the moral consciousness pertaining to the non-material world and the supra-mundane

consciousness.

Out of these discussions may arise the following questions:

(1) If both morality (*sīla*) and concentration (*samādhi*) are orientating, how do they differ in their functions? *Sīla* promotes calm and peace by keeping physical and verbal actions under proper control; whereas concentration prevents the mind and mental factors that are associated with it from distraction by directing them to converge on a single object. In this manner, morality differs from concentration in its function of orientating.

(2) If both Morality and the Element of Solidity (*pathavī*) are ‘upholding’, what is the difference in their functions? Morality is the fundamental cause of the arising of the four classes of moral consciousness; hence it is said to serve as the foundation for the arising of the moral consciousness pertaining to the sensuous world, the moral consciousness pertaining to the material world, the moral consciousness pertaining to the immaterial world and the supra-mundane consciousness.

Just as a royal wet-nurse holds the infant prince in her arms to keep him from crawling all over the royal chamber, so also the Element of Solidity holds together other elements that arise along with it, preventing them from dispersing and scattering in all directions. In this manner, Morality and the Element of Solidity differ in their respective functions of upholding and facilitating. (**Visuddhi-magga Sub-commentary**-Chapter on Morality).

The **Visuddhi-magga** mentions only two grammatical meanings as explained above. But there are different views expressed by other teachers. According to them, the Pāli word, ‘*sīla*’, for morality, is derived from the words, ‘*sira*’ or ‘*sisā*’, both meaning ‘head’. When the head is cut off, the whole body of a being is destroyed; so also when morality is ruined, all forms of meritoriousness come to ruins. Thus morality is like the head of the body of meritoriousness and termed ‘*sīla*’, a derivative of ‘*sira*’ or ‘*sisā*’ by replacing the letter ‘r’ or ‘s’ with ‘l’.

But the author opines that this alternative view is far-fetched since it draws only upon the similarity of the sounds produced by uttering the words ‘*sira*’, ‘*sisā*’ and ‘*sīla*’ and does not deal with the intrinsic meaning of the word *sīla* as defined in the **Abhidhānappadīpikā** verse no. 1092.

He concludes that morality is called *sīla* because, according to the **Abhidhānappadīpikā**, it conveys two meanings of (1) natural characteristic, and (2) good practice.

Although natural characteristic may mean both good and bad ones, as explained above, since we are dealing with the habit and practices of ancient sages or of future Buddhas, Arahats, etc. we should take that *sīla* refers only to good aspects. For instance, although *dhamma* may be meritorious or demeritorious when we say: ‘I take refuge in the Dhamma,’ the *dhamma* here can only be the meritorious *dhamma*. So also, although *sangha* means ‘a group’, ‘an assemblage’ in such words as ‘*manussa-sangha* — a group of people’, ‘*sakuna-sangha* — a flock of birds’, when we say: “I take refuge in the Sangha”, it implies only the Order of Bhikkhus.

Considering in this manner, *sīla* should also be taken in the sense of the **Abhidhānappadīpikā** definition of ‘natural characteristic’. Thus, it should be stated that it is called Morality because it is the natural characteristic of ancient sages, future Buddhas, arahats, etc.

3. WHAT ARE ITS CHARACTERISTIC, FUNCTION, ETC.?

Morality has the characteristic of controlling one's physical and verbal actions and orientating them towards right direction; it also serves as a basis or foundation of all meritoriousness.

Its function is to prevent one from becoming immoral through uncontrolled physical and verbal actions. It helps one to remain spotless in conduct, free from blame by the wise.

Morality is manifested as purity in thought, word and deed. When the wise reflect on the nature of morality, they come to realise that it is the purity of physical action, the purity of

verbal action and the purity of mental action.

The proximate cause for arising of morality is moral shame for doing an immoral act (*hirī*) and moral dread for doing an immoral act (*ottappa*). Although listening to the Dhamma promotes arising of morality, it serves only as a remote cause. It is only through *hirī* and *ottappa* the precepts are observed.

(4) WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MORALITY?

A man of virtuous conduct enjoys many benefits such as a gladdening heart which leads to joy and happiness (*pāmojja*). This in turn results in delightful satisfaction (*pīti*). In one who enjoys delightful satisfaction, there arises calmness of mind and body (*passaddhi*) followed by bliss (*sukha*). The tranquil state of mind and body brings about development of concentration (*samādhi*) which enables one to see things as they really are (*yathābhūta-ñāṇa*). When one gains this knowledge of things as they really are, one gets wearied of and detached from the ills and suffering of the cycle of rebirths. In him arises powerful insight into reality (*balava vipassanā-ñāṇa*). With this insight, he becomes detached from craving and achieves the knowledge of the Path, which leads to full liberation (*vimutti*) through the knowledge of Fruition. After gaining the Path and Fruition knowledge, he develops reflective knowledge (*paccavekkhanā-ñāṇa*) which enables him to see that the cessation of phenomena of the aggregates of *nāma* and *rūpa* has taken place in him. In other words, he has realised the Perfect Peace, Nibbāna. Thus morality has many benefits including the realisation of Nibbāna. (*AN III, P. 615*).

In several discourses, the Buddha mentions the following five benefits gained by one who observes precepts and who is established in morality:

- (1) based on mindfulness through *sīla*, he acquires great wealth;
- (2) he gains fame and good reputation;
- (3) he approaches and enters any assembly of nobles, brahmins, householders or recluses with complete self-assurance (born of his morality), without any indication of inferiority complex;
- (4) he lives the full span of life and dies unconfused. (An immoral person repents on his death bed that he has not done meritorious deeds throughout his life; a man of moral habits never suffers from any remorse when death approaches him; instead, memories of good deeds previously performed by him flashed past his mind's eye making him fearless, mentally lucid, unconfused to face death even as someone who is about to acquire a golden pot gladly abandons an earthen pot.)
- (5) he is reborn after that in happy realms of devas and human beings.

— (DN II, p. 73; AN II, p. 22 I; Vin III, p. 322) —

In the Ākaṅkheyya Sutta of the **Majjhima Nikāya**, the Buddha enumerates 13 benefits which come from practising morality; such benefits range from reverence and respect shown by fellow followers of the Teaching to realization of *arahatta-phala*, that is, attainment of arahatship.

(5) HOW MANY TYPES OF MORALITY ARE THERE?

Morality in Groups of Twos:

- (1) Precept involving performance of certain action (*cāritta*); Precept of abstentions (*vāritta*).

Of these two kinds, the precept laid down by the Buddha saying, “This should be done” is **Cāritta-sīla**. For example, performance of duties towards a preceptor (*upajjhāya vatta*); or duties towards a teacher (*ācariya vatta*), is fulfilment of *cāritta sīla* through practice.

Not doing what is prohibited by the Buddha saying, “This should not be done” is fulfilment of **Vāritta-sīla**. For example, observance of *Parajika* rules of the Vinaya (which

prohibits *bhikkhus* from indulgence in sexual intercourse, from stealing, from killing and from falsely claiming attainments to *magga* and *phala* Insight) is observance of *vāritta-sīla* through avoidance.

Some people casually misinterpret these disciplinary rules saying that *cāritta-sīla* is the precept which would lead to no offence if it is not fulfilled, but its observance contributes to purifying one's morality. In interpreting thus they make no distinction between *bhikkhus* and lay men.

Actually, the Buddha has laid down definite disciplinary rules concerning duties to be performed by a pupil towards his preceptor or teacher. Any co-resident pupil, who fails to abide by these rules, not only fails to fulfil the *cāritta-sīla* but is also guilty of breaking the disciplinary rules concerning performance of duties (*vatta bhedaka dukkata āpatti*).

Thus, for *bhikkhus*, it cannot be said that non-fulfilment of *cāritta-sīla* would lead to no offence; for them, *cāritta-sīla* is the mandatory observance of the precepts laid down by the Buddha.

As for lay person, it may be said that avoidance of wrong deeds, which would definitely give rise to rebirths in lower planes of existence, falls under the category of *cāritta-sīla*. On the other hand, abstinence from wrong deeds, which may or may not result in such rebirths, *varitta*, showing reverence to the aged, should be classified as *cāritta-sīla*.

For example, there are five precepts to be observed by lay men: abstinence from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and taking intoxicants. Indulgence in these deeds, instead of avoiding them, leads definitely to lower planes of existence. Therefore, abstaining from these five wrong deeds which will certainly result in such rebirths constitutes *vāritta-sīla*.

A lay person can also observe the eight precepts which are the avoidance of killing, stealing, lying and taking intoxicants, (these four precepts, falling under the category of *vāritta-sīla* and the additional four precepts of total sexual abstinence, abstaining from eating in the afternoon, abstaining from dancing, singing, playing music, and enjoying to them, and abstaining from using high and luxurious beds.

Actions included in these four additional precepts do not necessarily lead to the lower planes of existence. Lay noble persons, such as 'Stream Winners' (*Sotāpanna*), 'Once Returners' (*Sakadāgāmin*), enjoy lawful sexual relations with their own spouses, eat in the afternoon, dance, sing, etc. and sleep on high and luxurious beds. But, since they do so with mind unassociated with wrong view (*diṭṭhi-vippayutta citta*), their action will not result in rebirths in the lower planes of existence.

But an ordinary worldling may do these acts with mind either accompanied by wrong view (*diṭṭhi-sampayutta*) or unaccompanied by wrong view (*diṭṭhi-vippayutta*). These actions may or may not lead to rebirths in the lower plane of existence. Therefore, the four precepts, namely, total sexual abstinence, abstaining from eating in the afternoon, abstaining from dancing, singing, playing music, etc. and abstaining from using high and luxurious beds should be called *Cāritta-sīla*.

When a person, who has taken refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, observes the Five Precepts with meticulous care, he would be a lay disciple of the Buddha, an *upāsaka*. If he makes further efforts to observe the Eight Precepts, it is for the purpose of practising holy life at a higher level of endeavour. But, the Buddha has not said that the observance of the Eight Precepts will save one from the lower destinations and that observance of the Five Precepts alone is not enough to secure safety from the danger of falling into the lower planes of existence.

In this sense, therefore, the four additional observances included in the Eight Precepts should be considered to belong to the category of *Cāritta-sīla*. For *bhikkhus*, however, the Buddha has strictly forbidden them from indulging in these four acts; hence, for *bhikkhus*, avoidance of these acts constitutes definitely *Vāritta-sīla*.

Note for Special Consideration

A cursory reading of the above distinction between *Cāritta-sīla* and *Vāritta-sīla* or a superficial consideration of the fact of indulgence by noble disciples such as Visākhā in

lawful sexual relation, eating in the afternoon, dancing, singing, playing music, etc. in using high and luxurious beds could lead one to wrong conceptions. One could easily take the wrong view that all such acts are faultless, blameless and, therefore, one is then liable to indulge in them more and more with the accompaniment of wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*). It is most important that one should not fall into such error of conception.

Killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and taking intoxicants, being demeritorious wrong deeds, invariably lead to the lower planes of existence. There is no escape from their ill consequences. That is why noble persons (*ariyas*), will never do such acts, even if they are under the threat of death to do so. They will willingly give up their lives rather than acquiesce to do such acts, because they have uprooted, through *maggā* Insight, all traces of latent tendency (*anusaya*) to do demeritorious acts. Just because *ariyas*, such as the 'Stream Winners', 'Once-Returners' and 'Non-Returners', indulge in taking food in the afternoon, etc. just as ordinary persons do, it is not correct to say that they do so with identical mental attitudes in their various acts.

The *ariyas* do not look upon objects of sense pleasure in the same way an ordinary worldling does; their manner of indulgence in sense pleasure is also different from that of worldlings.

The Commentary to the **Āṅguttara Nikāya** (*AN I, p.350*) says that the *ariya's* attitude towards pleasurable sense objects is like that of a clean brahmin, who, pursued by an elephant in rut, seeks refuge with loathing and much reluctance in a dumping ground of excreta. When oppressed by craving for sensual pleasures, the defilement that has not been eradicated by the knowledge of the Path, the 'Stream Winner' or the 'Once Returner' deals with objects of sensual pleasures with mind unaccompanied by wrong view, just to pacify, subdue the burning heat of the defilement.

This exposition deserves careful consideration. Citing the example of *ariya* persons such as Visākhā, the worldling is liable to say wrongly that the *ariyas* indulge in sense-pleasures exactly in the same way as he does. As pointed out in the **Āṅguttara Commentary**, the *ariyas* enjoy sense pleasures, with mind unaccompanied by wrong view, just to calm the burning desire, which is the defilement they have not yet destroyed with the knowledge of the Path, whereas the worldling indulges in sense pleasures generally with mind associated with wrong view.

To summarise, one may have sex relation with one's spouse, take meal in the afternoon, dance, sing, play music, etc. and use high and luxurious beds, etc. with mind accompanied by wrong view resulting in rebirths in the lower planes of existence, or with mind unaccompanied by wrong view, not resulting in the lower planes of existence. Therefore, abstinence from these four actions (which may not lead to the lower planes of existence) should be classed as *Cāritta-sīla* and not as *Vāritta-sīla*.

The division of the Eight Precepts into four *Cāritta-sīla* and four *Vāritta-sīla* is tenable only when the vow of abstinence is made, separately for each individual precept as is current now. Should the vow be taken for the whole group of the Eight Precepts, saying: "I observe the Eight precepts," it would simply be observance of *Cāritta-sīla*, because the Eight Precepts constitute a code of morality which one may or may not observe.

As for the Five Precepts, whether the vow is taken for the Five Precepts as a whole or as separate individual precepts, its observance is practice of *Vāritta-sīla* definitely. (More detailed treatment of *Vāritta* and *Cāritta-sīlas* is given in the Chapter on Miscellany below).

Of the two categories of *Sīla*, observance of *Cāritta-sīla* can be accomplished only when one is endowed with faith and energy. Faith is believing that good results will follow good deeds of practising morality; and energy means the relentless effort with which one observes the precepts in keeping with his faith.

No special effort is needed to become accomplished in the observance of the *Vāritta-sīla*. It requires only faith. Mere refrain through faith from doing deeds which the Buddha has taught to be demeritorious is sufficient for the fulfilment of *Vāritta-sīla*.

(2) Group of moral practices (**Abhisamācārika-sīla**) which promote good conduct and

which include all forms of virtuous acts other than those classed as a set of eight precepts with right livelihood as the eighth, *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*. All forms of moral practices which are taught for fulfilment of the Path and the Fruition come under this classification.

Since it forms the beginning of the life of purity consisting in the Path, the set of eight precepts consisting of the practices of the right livelihood. (*Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* is also termed *Ādibrahmacariyaka-sīla*).

Precepts with right livelihood as the eighth, *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*, include three moral physical actions: abstaining from killing, from stealing, from indulging in wrongful sexual intercourse; four moral verbal actions: abstaining from lying, from malicious speech, from using harsh and abusive words, from frivolous talks; and finally abstaining from wrong livelihood.

The **Visuddhi-magga** states that the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* may also be termed *Ādibrahmacariyaka-sīla* as it includes precepts which are to be fulfilled in the initial stage of developing the Noble Path.

This Commentary statement is likely to be misinterpreted by some as to mean that only *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* is the precept which should be observed first for the attainment of the Path. There have even appeared some groups which maintained that the Five Precepts, the Eight Precepts and the Ten Precepts, which are generally observed at present, are not the initial precepts which should be observed for the attainment of the Path.

On the other hand, there are some people who say that they have not even heard of this strange code of morality called *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*; it could not have been taught by the Buddha; it may be a later accretion of no particular worth.

As a matter of fact, *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* is certainly the precept taught by the Buddha himself. The **Visuddhi-magga** quoted the **Uparipannasa Pāli** (5 Vagga, 7 Sutta): “*Tenāha pubbeva kho panassa kāyakammam vacikammam ājivo suparisuddho hoti ti*” to show that the Buddha taught the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*, the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth.

The Buddha made His appearance in the world at a time when it was enveloped in the dark mass of evil forces. People were depraved, bereft of morality, steeped as they were in evil thoughts, words and deeds. When the Buddha wanted to inculcate in those wild, debased beings a sense of gentle civility through practice of morality, He had to select a moral code from amongst various sets of precepts which would best suit their coarse minds. He thus taught them at the initial stages the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*. When the grosser forms of evil had been removed from the habits of the untamed beings by teaching them the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*, the Buddha no longer made use of it; instead he taught the Five Precepts and the Eight Precepts in his further civilizing endeavours.

Having thus been set aside by the Buddha when a certain stage of moral purification has been reached by the people, successive teachers from the time of the Buddha till the present time have not given much attention to the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*; lay people also have not made special effort to observe it (because *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* was originally meant for people of debased morality only).

A question arises here: Since *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* forms the initial practice for the Path and since it had been used at the time when the Buddha first appeared, would it not be even more suitable to observe it at the present time?

The term ‘initial practice for the Path’ is applicable only when the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* is observed by those who have no code of morality whatever at the start to serve as the precept for the Path. Those who have only recently given up wrong views and begun to embrace Buddhism should no doubt start to purify themselves by observing this *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* but when they have become well established in the Buddhist belief after being well trained in the *Sīla*, it should no longer be

termed 'the initial practice for the Path'.

Even children of Buddhist parents have been taught to understand the dire consequences of gross misdeeds such as taking the life of sentient beings and they refrain from doing so. Accordingly, when they grow up and begin to observe precepts, there is no need for them to keep the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*. They should gradually advance in their training from the Five Precepts to the Eight Precepts and on to the Ten Precepts.

In other words, observance of *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* is the necessary step which those steeped in immorality should take to rid themselves of debased habits; but for those who have been well brought up under the guidance of Buddhist parents, it is clear that they already possess a modicum of moral conduct. Therefore, there is no special need for them to observe the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*. What has been said above applies to the present time when the Buddha's Teaching is widely extant.

Although brought up in a Buddhist environment and taught to refrain from gross misdeeds, if one judges oneself to be deficient in moral conduct and to have committed all kinds of grave transgression, one has no alternative but to start with the initial purification process of observing the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* for the practice of the Noble Path.

Those inclined to follow the line of least resistance are likely to find this *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* attractive if someone points out that in observing this *Sīla*, one does not have to refrain from indulging in intoxicating drinks and drugs, one does not have to refrain from dancing, singing, enjoying shows, that it is easily observed, being free from difficult restraints and that it serves as the basis for the attainment of the Path and the Fruition.

It is a weakness of human nature to look for easy means of acquiring wealth. People forget or ignore the fact that even with hard labour and diligent work, it is not always possible to have one's dream of riches fulfilled. Many of them have become a prey to fraudulent villains who claim to possess magical secrets of multiplying one's wealth. By seeking an easy way of becoming rich, people have fallen a victim to their own avarice.

Just as there are deceivers in worldly affairs, there are also frauds in religious matters, especially concerning the attainment of the Path and the Fruition which is, of course, not easy at all to come by. Many are those who, inclining to seek short cuts, have followed to their great loss the spurious teachings of self-acclaimed masters who promise them the stage of a 'Stream-Winner' within seven days of practising their technique or that of a 'Once-Returner' if one has adequate intellectual development. After finishing their seven days' course of practice, the master announces pseudo-attainments of his pupils as a 'Stream-Winner' or a 'Once-Returner' who consequently are delighted with their illusory achievements.

Here, we would like to sound a note of caution. The copper metal, if it could be converted into the precious metal of gold, through practice of alchemy, would become possessed of the properties of gold which are vastly different from those of the original base metal of copper. Likewise a noble person known as an Ariya who has achieved the First Path and Fruition only as a 'Stream-Winner' is easily distinguished from an ordinary worldlyling by means of his physical, verbal, mental demeanour. Instead of placidly accepting the announcement of the master as having attained the stage of a 'Stream-Winner' or a 'Once-Returner', one should, by self-inspection, examine one's true nature to see if one has changed for the better and has truly benefited by the seven days' course of practice. Only by self-evaluation in this manner could one save oneself from being misled by dubious teachers of religion.

Thus, in matters of observing the precepts or in other pursuits there is no short cut or easy way to achieve one's cherished object. A person addicted to drinks will not

be able to observe even the Five Precepts, not to speak of the higher practices such as the Eight Precepts.

The group of moral precepts other than the said *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* is classified as *Abhisamācārika-sīla*, precepts which promote good conduct. Even the Five Precepts are to be considered as superior to the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*.

It may be questioned: 'How could the Five Precepts, which have only one restraint (i.e. not to speak lies) out of the four verbal restraints, be superior to the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* which requires the observance of all the four verbal restraints (lying, gossiping, using abusive language and engaging in frivolous talks)?'

The answer lies in the fact that of the four verbal restraints, lying forms the basis of breach of all the verbal restraints. The Buddha teaches that for one who commits falsehood, there is no misdeed which he is not liable to perpetuate; and one who can abstain from lying can easily observe the remaining precepts.

How could one, who does not speak lies, engage himself in slandering, abusing and frivolous talks? This explains why only the restraint of falsehood is included as the main verbal restraint in the Five Precepts. Question arises, therefore, that the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* is superior to the Five Precepts.

Again, it may be asked: 'Since the precept to refrain from wrong livelihood, which does not feature in the Five Precepts, forms the Eighth Precept of the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*, surely it should be deemed superior to the Five Precepts.'

The answer in brief to this question is: For one who observes the Five Precepts, no special effort is needed to refrain from wrong livelihood. After all, wrong livelihood means earning one's living through wrong means of killing, stealing and lying. By observing the Five Precepts meticulously, one is automatically avoiding the misdeeds of killing, stealing and lying. Thus, the precept to refrain from wrong livelihood as an additional observance in the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* does not justify the claim of its superiority over the Five Precepts. What has been discussed above applies only to lay devotees.

For members of the Sangha, the rules of discipline laid down by the Buddha for them as expounded in the Vinaya Piṭaka are known as **Sikkhāpadas**. The offences, for which penalties are imposed, may be classified under seven categories depending on their nature:

- (i) **Pārājika**, (ii) **Sanghādisesa**, (iii) **Thullaccaya**, (iv) **Pācittiya**,
(v) **Patidesaniya**, (vi) **Dukkata**, (vii) **Dubbhāsita**.

An offence in the first category of offences (*Pārājika*), and one in the second category (*Sanghādisesa*), are classified as grave offences (*Garukāpatti*).

The remaining five categories which consist of light offences are called '**Lahukāpatti**'.

The group of moral precepts observed by bhikkhus so that there is no breach of lesser and minor offences classified under *lahukāpatti* is known as *Abhisamācārika-sīla*; that observed by them to avoid transgression of grave offences (*garukāpatti*), is known as *Ādibrahmacariyaka-sīla*.

Of the five volumes of the Vinaya Piṭaka, **Pārājika Pāli** and **Pācittiya Pāli**, also known as **Ubhato Vibhanga** deal with codes of morality which belong to *Ādibrahmacariya* category of *sīla*; **Mahā Vagga Pāli** and **Cūla Vagga Pāli** which are collectively termed **Khandhaka Vagga** describe the group of morality which has been classified *Abhisamācārika-sīla*. (The last volume, **Parivāra**, gives a summary and classification of the rules in the four previous volumes).

(Bhikkhus become accomplished in *Ādibrahmacariyaka-sīla* only after completing observance of *Abhisamācārika-sīla*. When a bhikkhu meticulously avoids transgression of even a minor fault, a light offence, it goes without saying that he will take the greatest care not to be guilty of grave offences).

(3) **Virati-sīla** and **Avirati-sīla**

- (a) **Virati-sīla** means the mental concomitants of three abstinences, that is, right speech, right action and right livelihood as explained under the subtitle “What is morality?”
- (b) **Avirati-sīla** consists of precepts associated with various mental concomitants, such as volition, etc., other than the mental factors of three abstinences (*virati*).

(4) **Nissita-sīla** and **Anissita-sīla**

- (a) **Nissita-sīla** is morality practised depending upon craving or upon wrong view. When one observes precepts with the aim of achieving a happy existence in the future abounding in wealth and property, one's *sīla* is called morality of dependence upon craving. Observance of precepts or rituals (such as imitating cows or dogs) in the wrong belief that they are conducive to spiritual purification is called morality of dependence upon wrong view.
(Those who have embraced Buddhism are not likely to practise the morality of dependence upon wrong view; but they should guard themselves against practising the morality of dependence upon craving which they are liable to do).
- (b) **Anissita-sīla** is morality practised without depending upon craving or upon wrong view with the sole aim of cultivating the noble practice. This means practice of mundane morality which is prerequisite for that supramundane morality.

(5) **Kālapariyanta-sīla** and **Āpānakotika-sīla**

- (a) **Kālapariyanta-sīla** is morality observed for a limited period.
- (b) **Āpānakotika-sīla** is morality observed for life.

In describing **Kālapariyanta-sīla**, the **Visuddhi-magga** mentions only in a general way the limit of the observing period (*kālaparicchedam katvā samādinnaṃ sīlaṃ*). But its *Tikā* is more specific in prescribing the time limit: whole day or whole night, etc. (*kālaparicchedam katvā ti imaṃ ca rattim imaṃ ca divaṃ ti ādinā viya kālavasena paricchedam katvā*).

Nowadays, many people take the precepts without mentioning any time limit; so it seems for life. But as the intention is to observe a certain precept for a day or a limited period only, it is certainly a temporary morality. As the formulae in the Commentary and the Sub-Commentary for taking the vow of precept, mentioned above, require the stating of the period of observance, one should mention the period during which one would observe the precept. However, neglecting to do so constitutes no fault; it would still be a temporary practice of morality.

The intention, though unspoken, is generally assumed to be for the whole period of a day, or a night, or a whole day and night. But it is not necessarily so, according to the **Commentary** on the **Patisambhidā Magga**, which states that one may observe the precepts for one sitting, like lay devotees who, having established themselves in the Triple Gem, observe a set of Precepts while making a donation to an invited *bhikkhu* in their home. They observe the Precepts only for the duration of the ceremony of alms-giving. Or they may undertake to observe a set of precepts during their sojourn at a monastery for a day or two or more. These are all observances of temporary morality.

Thus, according to this Commentary, it is beneficial to observe precepts even for a very short period. Therefore, teachers explain that it is quite proper to encourage children, who are not used to go without an evening meal, to take the eight precepts on *uposatha* days and observe them all throughout the morning only. One always gains merit for doing the good deed of observing precepts. however short the duration of the observance may be.

Two stories in the *Cula Vagga* of the **Peta Vatthu** illustrate this point. During the time of the Buddha, there was, in Rājagaha, a hunter who earned his living by killing deer day and night. A friend of his was a disciple of the Buddha, being established in the Triple Refuge. The friend advised the hunter to refrain from the evil act of killing game animals. But his

advice fell on deaf ears. Undaunted, he suggested to the hunter to refrain from killing at least during night time and instead to engage himself in the meritorious act of observing precepts. The hunter finally gave in to his friend's persistent persuasion, and abandoning all acts of preparations for killing during night time, he spent his time observing precepts.

After his death, the hunter gained rebirth near Rājagaha as a Vemanika *peta*, who was subjected to great suffering during the day, but lived a happy life at night enjoying fully the pleasures of the senses.

The Venerable Nārada Thera, encountering this *peta* in the course of his wanderings, enquired of him as to what kind of meritorious acts he had performed in his previous lives. The *peta* recounted his life as a hunter, how he earned his living by killing; how his friend, who was established in the Triple Refuge, counselled him to give up his wrong mode of living; how he refused his friend's good advice at first but finally succumbed to his persuasion half-heartedly by giving up hunting at night time and devoting to good deed of observing precepts. For his cruel misdeeds in the day time, he was suffering intensely during the day while at night he lived the blissful, sensuous life of devas.

The second *peta* story is similar. But it concerns a wealthy sportsman who hunted deer, day and night, as a pastime for sheer enjoyment, not for livelihood. He also paid no heed to a friend of his who proffered him good advice for his benefit. Ultimately, he was won over by an *arahat*, who came on an alms-round to his friend's house, who instructed him to devote at least the night time to meritorious acts instead of full-time pursuit after sport. He suffered the same fate after death as the hunter of the previous story.

We learn from these two stories that we reap the benefit of meritorious deeds even if they were performed only for the short period of night time. Accordingly, we should make an endeavour to observe the precepts for whatever time we could afford however short it may be.

(6) Sapariyanta-sīla and Apariyanta-sīla.

- (a) **Sapariyanta-sīla** is morality, the observance of which is brought to an end before a stipulated time for some reason such as being coaxed or tempted with an offer of wealth or servants and attendants to break the observance or being threatened with destruction of one's life and limb or of one's relatives to do so. In this type of *sīla* it should be noted that although its observance is brought to an end through outside interference, nevertheless, merit has been already gained, commensurate with one's precepts. *Sīla* observed before is not rendered fruitless by its termination.
- (b) **Apariyanta-sīla** is morality, the observance of which is not cut short by any outside influence but is maintained till completion of the intended period.

(7) Lokiya-sīla and Lokuttara-sīla

- (a) **Lokiya-sīla** is morality subject to (or accompanied by) mental intoxicants (*āsavas*) such as sensual desire, desire for future existence, wrong view and ignorance.
- (b) **Lokuttara-sīla** is morality not subject to (or not accompanied by) the mental intoxicants.

Lokiya-sīla is conducive to happy future rebirths (as a human being or a deva) and is a prerequisite for escape from the cycle of rebirths. *Lokuttara-sīla* brings about escape from *samsāra*; it is also an object for contemplation with Reflective Knowledge (*Paccavekkhanā-ñāṇa*).

Morality in Groups of Threes

(1) (a) Hīna-sīla, (b) Majjhima-sīla, and (c) Paṇīta-sīla.

When the four elements, viz. will (*chanda*), energy (*vīriya*), consciousness (*citta*) and investigative knowledge (*vimamsa*), (a) with which precepts are observed are of inferior quality, it is **Hīna-sīla**; (b) when they are of medium quality, it is **Majjhima-sīla**; (c) when they are of superior quality, it is **Paṇīta-sīla**.

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

- (a) When morality is observed through desire for fame, it is **Hīna-sīla**. Such an observance is an act of hypocrisy, a deceptive show of sham piety, without pure volition for doing a genuine meritorious deed. Hence it is low (*hīna*).
- (b) Observance of morality through desire for a good destination is no doubt associated with a certain amount of greed, but it is a wholesome wish for beneficial results of one's good deeds and is accompanied by volition and faith. Hence it is nobler than one observed through desire for fame.

On the other hand, since the motivating force here is still tainted with the expectation of beneficial results from one's meritoriousness, it is not ranked a superior kind, but only a middle one.

- (c) The morality observed, not through desire for fame nor through desire for reaping beneficial results of one's good deeds, but through understanding that observance of precept is a noble practice for pure life and through realization that one should indeed cultivate these practices, solely for their nobleness is known as a major morality. Only such a morality of superior quality observed with pure wholesome volition, unassociated with any form of greed, is reckoned as the genuine Perfection of Morality (*Sīla-pāramī*).

(When the Bodhisatta took the existence of a *nāga*, during his two lives as Campeyya Nāga and Bhūridatta Nāga, he could not exert for the superior kind of morality, but observed precepts only in the hope of attaining rebirth as a human being. In that sense, the morality he observed was of medium quality. Nevertheless, since he did not break the precepts and persisted in their observance even at the risk of his life, his effort is to be regarded as fulfilment of the Perfection of Morality).

Again:

- (a) When the morality is defiled by demeritorious thoughts of self-praise and disparagement of others such as "I am virtuous; others are not virtuous and inferior to me", it is a minor morality.
- (b) The morality which is not tainted with such defilements but is a mundane *sīla* is a middle morality.
- (c) When the morality is free from all taints and is associated with supramundane Path and Fruition it is classed as a major morality.

Again:

- (a) **Hīna-sīla** (Minor morality) is the morality that is observed with a view to attain happy prosperous rebirths.
- (b) **Majjhima-sīla** (Middle morality) is one practised for self-liberation from the cycle of suffering such as that practised by future ordinary disciples of the Buddhas or by future Paccekabuddhas (Non-Teaching Buddhas).
- (c) **Panīta-sīla** is observed by Bodhisattas for the purpose of liberating all beings from the cycle of rebirths and it qualifies as Perfection of Morality (*Sīla-pāramī*). (This Commentarial statement is made with reference to the noblest type of morality. But this does not mean that morality observed by Bodhisattas alone qualifies as such; morality belonging to Paccekabuddhas and Disciples of a Buddha, though it is not the noblest type, should also be recognized as Perfection of Morality).

(2) (a) **Attādhīpateyya-sīla**, (b) **Lokādhīpateyya-sīla** and (c) **Dhammādhīpateyya-sīla**.

- (a) **Attādhīpateyya-sīla** is the morality observed out of self-respect and to satisfy one's conscious by abandoning what is unbecoming and unprofitable.
- (b) **Lokādhīpateyya-sīla** is the morality observed out of regard for the world and to ward off censure of others.
- (c) **Dhammādhīpateyya-sīla** is the morality observed in reverence to the glory of the Buddha's Teaching. One who practises this *sīla* is convinced that the discourse of

the Buddha on the subjects of the Path, the Fruition and Nibbāna truly show the way to liberation from the cycle of rebirths and that the only way to pay respect to the Dhamma and to honour the Dhamma is through observance of precepts.

(3) (a) **Parāmaṭṭha-sīla**, (b) **Aparāmaṭṭha-sīla**, and (c) **Patippassaddha-sīla**.

- (a) **Parāmaṭṭha-sīla** is the same as *Nissita-sīla* (item 4 of the Groups of Twos); it is observed with adherence to craving or wrong view. Because of craving, one is pleased with the thought that his morality would result in happy destination he longs for and that it is superior to that of others. Because of wrong view, he holds that his morality is the 'Soul or Substance'. In either case, that morality falls under the category of *Paramattha-sīla*.

(Even while practising it, this morality burns with the fires of craving and wrong view. The fires of craving and wrong view burn not only when enjoying the sense pleasures, but even while practising alms-giving and morality. Only when the practice of good deeds reaches the state of meditation, that it becomes immune from the ravages of these fires. By practising (Vipassanā Meditation) till one comes to realize that this body is not self, not a personality but mere phenomenon of matter and mind, one can become free from the fires of wrong personality-belief, *sakkaya-diṭṭhi*).

- (b) **Aparāmaṭṭha-sīla** is morality observed by a virtuous worldling (*kalyāṇa-puthujjana*) who is established in the Triple Gem and who has started cultivating the Noble Path of eight constituents with a view to attain the Path and Fruition. This is also the morality of a learner (*sekkha*) who, through cultivating the Noble Path of eight constituents, has attained one of the four Paths or the first three Fruitions but still has to work for the Final Goal of the Fourth Fruition.

- (c) **Patippassaddha-sīla** is morality that becomes calm on attaining the four Fruition States (of *sotāpatti*, *sakadāgāmi*, *anāgāmi* and *arahatta*).

(4) (a) **Visuddha-sīla**, (b) **Avisuddha-sīla**, and (c) **Vematika-sīla**.

- (a) **Visuddha-sīla** is morality of a *bhikkhu* who has not committed a single offence (of the Vinaya rules) or who has made amends after committing an offence.

- (b) **Avisuddha-sīla** is morality of a *bhikkhu* who has committed an offence and has not made amends after committing it.

- (c) **Vematika-sīla** is morality of a *bhikkhu* who has misgivings about the alms-food he has accepted (whether it is bear meat which is not allowable, or pork which is allowable for him); who has misgivings about the offence he has committed (whether it is a *pācittiya-āpatti* or *dukkata-āpatti*) and who is uncertain whether the act he has done constitutes an offence or not.

(A *bhikkhu* engaged in meditation should endeavour to purify his *sīla* if it is impure. Should he be guilty of a light offence (i.e. one of the ninety-two *pacittiya* offences), he should remedy it by admission of the offence to a *bhikkhu* and thus purify his *sīla*. Should he be guilty of a grave offence (i.e. one of the thirteen *saṅghādisesa* offences), he should approach the Sangha and confess his offence. Then, as ordered by the Sangha, he should first observe the *parivāsa* penance⁷ and then carry out the *manatta* penance⁸. Then only would his *sīla* become pure and he is fit for practice of meditation. Should he have doubts about the nature of the alms-food he has accepted or of any of the actions he has done, he should carefully scrutinize them or consult a Vinaya specialist who is learned in the

7. *Parivāsa*: a penalty for a *saṅghādisesa* offence requiring him to live under suspension from association with the rest of the Sangha for as many days as he has knowingly concealed his offence. At the end of this *parivāsa* observance he undergoes a further period of penance, *mānatta*.

8. *Manatta*: a period of penance for six days to gain approbation of the Sangha, after which he requests the Sangha to reinstate him to full association with the rest of the Sangha.

Vinaya rules and thus remove his scruples and purify his *sīla*).

(5) (a) **Sekkhā-sīla**, (b) **Asekkhā-sīla**, and (c) **Nevasekkhā-nāsekkhā-sīla**.

- (a) **Sekkhā-sīla** is the morality observed by one who is still undergoing Training. It is the morality associated with those who have attained the Four Paths and the first Three Fruition States.
- (b) **Asekkhā-sīla** is the morality observed by one who no longer requires any training. It is the morality associated with those who have attained the Fruition State of an Arahāt.
- (c) The group of mundane precepts not falling under (a) and (b) is **Nevasekkhā-nāsekkhā-sīla**. It is the morality observed by one who is neither a learner nor a non-learner; it is the morality of an ordinary worldling.

Morality in Groups of Fours

(1) (a) **Hānabhāgiya-sīla**, (b) **Thitibhāgiya-sīla**, (c) **Visesabhāgiya-sīla**, and (d) **Nibbedhabhāgiya-sīla**.

- (a) The morality that is bound to decrease is called **Hānabhāgiya-sīla**. (A certain *bhikkhu* associates himself with immoral persons only and does not associate with the virtuous; he does not know or see the fault of committing an offence, he often dwells with wrong thoughts and does not guard his faculties. The morality of such a *bhikkhu* makes no progress, instead it decreases day by day.)
- (b) The morality that remains stagnant is called **Thitibhāgiya-sīla**. (A certain *bhikkhu* remains satisfied with the morality he is already established in and does not wish to practise meditation for further advancement. He is quite content with mere morality and does not strive for any higher state; his morality neither makes progress nor decreases, it just stagnates.)
- (c) The morality that will gain distinction is called **Visesabhāgiya-sīla**. (A certain *bhikkhu*, having established himself in morality, is not content with mere morality but strives for concentration of mind. The morality of that *bhikkhu* is called **Visesabhāgiya-sīla** or the morality that will gain the special benefit of the concentration of mind.)
- (d) The morality that penetrates and dispels the darkness of defilements is **Nibbedhabhāgiya-sīla**. (A certain *bhikkhu* is not content with mere morality but strives hard to get, through Vipassanā meditation, strong Vipassanā-insight (*balavavipassanā-nāṇa*) which is the knowledge of disgust with the sufferings of the cycle of rebirths. The morality of that *bhikkhu* is the one that penetrates and dispels the darkness of defilements through the Path and the Fruition.)

(2) (a) **Bhikkhu-sīla**, (b) **Bhikkhunī-sīla**, (c) **Anupasampanna-sīla**, and (d) **Gahaṭṭha-sīla**.

- (a) The rules of discipline promulgated by the Exalted One for *bhikkhus* and those which should also be observed by them although promulgated for *bhikkhunīs* are called **Bhikkhu-sīla**.
- (b) The rules of discipline promulgated for *bhikkhunīs* and those which should also be observed by them although promulgated for *bhikkhus* are called **Bhikkhunī-sīla**.
- (c) The Ten Precepts observed by male and female novices or neophytes, *sāmaṇeras* and *sāmaṇerīs*, are called **Anupasampanna-sīla**. (Non-*bhikkhus* are called *anupasampanna*. Although lay men are also *Anupasampanna*, according to this definition, they will be shown as *gahaṭṭha* separately and are, therefore, not included here. Only *sāmaṇeras* and *sāmaṇerīs* are taken as *anupasampanna* by the Commentator. Yet there is another kind called *sikkhamāna*. As the *sikkhamānas* are elder *sāmaṇerīs* who undergo a special training as probationers to become *bhikkhunīs*, they are not mentioned here separately but are reckoned as *sāmaṇerīs*).

(d) The morality observed by the laity is called **Gahaṭṭha-sīla**.

With regard to Gahaṭṭha Sīla, the **Visuddhi-magga** says:

Upasaka upāsikānam niccasīlavasena pañcasikkhāpadāni sati vā ussāhe dasa upesathaṅga vasena atthāti idam gahaṭṭha-sīlam.

The Five Precepts as a permanent undertaking, the Ten Precepts when possible and the Eight Precepts as a special observance on an Uposatha day, come under Gahaṭṭha Sīla which should be observed by male and female followers.

There are different views on the meaning of the Pāli phrase: “*sati vā ussāhe* — when possible” of the Visuddhi-magga.

Some teachers take the view that not only the Five Precepts but also the Ten Precepts are to be observed as permanent undertaking. They wrongly apply to the Ten Precepts the attribute of *nicca-sīla*, a ‘permanent undertaking’ which is only meant for the Five Precepts.

According to these teachers, “To observe the Five Precepts, it is not necessary to consider whether a person has the ability; he should observe the Five Precepts forever. Regarding the Ten Precepts, even though it is urged that the Ten Precepts should be observed as a permanent undertaking, only persons with the ability should observe them. The ‘ability’ means the ability to abandon his treasure of gold and silver with no more attachment to it; giving up his possessions in this manner, he should observe the Ten Precepts for the whole of his life, not just for some days and months only’. If his intention is to avoid handing gold and silver during the period of observance only and to use them again afterwards, then he should not observe them at all.

Again, some people erroneously think and say: “It is difficult for people to abandon their own possessions of gold and silver; therefore, laymen are not fit to observe the Ten Precepts.” Also, according to the **Visuddhi-magga Mahātika**, the term ‘*dāsa*’ (ten), should be taken as the Ten Precepts of *sāmaṇeras*. It is commented further that *sīla* here is meant to be like the *sīla* observed by Ghatikāra the pot-maker and others. This commentarial statement makes for more confusion in the already mistaken view of these people. They take the extreme view that it is not enough for people to merely refrain from acquiring and accepting new wealth; they should be able to abandon all that they have already possessed just as Gha Tikara of the Ghatikāra Sutta (**Rājavagga, Majjhimaṇṇāsa**) refrained from using gold and silver for his whole life. And only when they are like Ghatikāra in this respect, they can be fully established in the Ten Precepts. Thus they have made an overstatement.

To clarify:

Their view is that only when a person can “abandon his treasure of gold and silver with no more attachment to it”, he should observe the Ten Precepts. It is mistaken as it arises with reference to *Jātarūpa sikkhāpada* of the Ten Precepts. According to this interpretation, only when people can abandon all the wealth they possess, without clinging any more, they will be fully established in the precepts. Ghatikāra is an *anāgāmin* (a Non-Returner), who has already abandoned all his wealth without clinging any more. Nowadays, although the laity do not acquire fresh wealth on the day of observance of the Ten Precepts, they have stored up at home and elsewhere all the wealth they have made previously and so it is against the *jātarūpa sikkhāpada*. Hence, they should not observe the Ten Precepts unless they abandon all their wealth with no more attachment. Even if they take the Ten Precepts, they fail to keep them.

The interpretation of these teachers is not sustainable, because there is for *bhikkhus*, *rupiyasikkhāpada*, concerning handling and possession of money which is more subtle and nobler than the *jātarūpa sikkhāpada* of the laity. According to that *sikkhāpada*, a *bhikkhu* should not accept money nor let others do so for him; if it is left near him in the absence of someone to receive it, he should not remain complacent but raise his objection saying: “Gold and silver is not allowable for *bhikkhus*; we do not want to accept it.” If he does not

raise any objection, then he commits an offence; and the gold and silver should be abandoned by him too. This is the disciplinary rule laid down by the Buddha.

Suppose a *dāyaka* comes to a *bhikkhu* and offers money, even though the *bhikkhu*, following the Vinaya rules, forbade him and refuses to accept it; but he leaves it all the same and goes away; if another *dāyaka* comes along and the *bhikkhu* tells him about the money and the *dāyaka* says: “Then please show me a safe place for keeping the money”, the *bhikkhu* may go up to the seventh terrace of the monastery, taking the *dāyaka* with him, and says: “Here is a safe place”. But he should not say: “Keep it here”. However, when the *dāyaka* has gone away after keeping the money safely in the place shown by the *bhikkhu*, the *bhikkhu* can close the door of the room carefully and keep watch on it. In doing so, the *bhikkhu* is not guilty of infringement of any disciplinary rule, states the Commentary clearly on *rūpiya sikkhāpada*.

If possession of gold and silver is not allowable for the laity observing the *jātarūpa sikkhāpada*, it will, by no means, be allowable for the *bhikkhu* who observes the subtler and nobler precepts to keep watch on his gold and silver. Thus, it should be noted that if such a *bhikkhu* is free from offence, so is the laity who is not affected in the observance of the *jātarūpa sikkhāpada* by his possession of wealth left in place of security.

In the **Visuddhi-magga Mahātikā**, the example of Ghaṭikāra the pot-maker, is not cited to convey the meaning that “the laity should observe the Ten Precepts only when they can abandon all their wealth without clinging any more” like Ghatikāra. Actually, the example of Ghaṭikāra, a superior observer of the Ten Precepts, is cited just to exhort the people not to be content with their ordinary observance of the Ten Precepts, but that they should make efforts to become observers of a higher type following Ghatikāra's example. Even though they cannot be equal to him, the citation is made in order to encourage them to emulate Ghatikāra as far as possible.

The authority for this remark is: “*sīlamayanti niccasīla uposatha niyamādivasena pañca attha dasa vā silāni samādiyantassa*” as commented in the **Itivuttaka Aṭṭhakathā** by Acariya Dhammapāla Thera, the author of **Visuddhi-magga Mahātikā**. The Commentary mentions three kinds of morality, namely, (i) the Five Precepts observed permanently (*nicca sīla*), (ii) the Eight Precepts observed on *uposatha* days, (*uposatha sīla*), and (iii) the Ten Precepts observed occasionally (*niyama sīla*). It is clear that, according to this Commentary, the ten precepts are not observed permanently; they are observed occasionally.

Again, in the **Sagāthāvagga Saṃyutta Pāli, Sakka Saṃyutta**, we find the following account. Sakka, King of Devas, came down from Vejayanta Palace to go to the royal garden. When he was about to get onto his chariot, he paid homage to the eight directions. Then the Deve Mātali said: “To whom do you pay homage, Sir ?”

Sakka said: *Ye gahaṭṭhā puññakarā,
sīlavanto upasakā,
dhammena dāraṃ posenti,
te namassāmi Mātali.*

Mātali, some people perform meritorious deeds; they are also endowed with morality; they take refuge in the Three Gems of Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, and they support their wives and children righteously. To them I pay homage.

The term ‘*Sīlavanto*’ in the Sakka's reply is explained by the commentator thus: “*Sīlavanto ti upāsakatte patiṭṭhāya pañcahi pi dasahi pi sīlehi samannāgatā*. — Those, who are endowed with morality means those who take refuge in the Three Gems and become established in the Five Precepts and the Ten Precepts.” (According to this Commentary it is clear that the people to whom Sakka, King of Devas, pay homage are the people who, living with their families, observe the Five and Ten Precepts).

Also in the Saṃyutta Sub-Commentary, it is commented thus: *niccasīlavasena pañcahi*

niyamavasena dasahi — the Five Precepts should be taken as *Nicca-sīla*, the Ten Precepts as *Niyama-sīla*.

Niyama Sīla

In the Magadha Dictionary, verse 444, the meaning ‘**Niyama Sīla**’ is briefly shown thus: “The morality which must be observed forever is **Yāma Sīla**. The morality which is not observed forever but only occasionally is called **Niyama Sīla**. The expression, ‘*Yāma-sīla*’ and ‘*Niyama-sīla*’, has its origin in Brahmanism. (Not harming, not speaking lies, not stealing, not indulging in ignoble sexual act, not accepting alms-food—these five are *yāma-sīla* which must be observed forever; purifying, being easily content, practising austerity, reciting the Vedas, recollecting the Brahmā—these five are *niyama-sīla* which should be observed occasionally (**Amarakosa Brāhmaṇa Vagga**, v. 49.)

According to the **Saṃyutta Pāli** and its Commentary, it is clear that even the people who are supporting their families by right livelihood can observe the Ten Precepts. Hence the view: “People should observe the Ten Precepts only when they can abandon their gold and silver without clinging anymore, like Ghaṭikāra, the pot-maker” is not a right one; it is merely an overstatement.

Moreover, of the ten duties of a king, mentioned in the Mahāhamisa Jātaka of the **Asīti Nipāta**, the Commentary says that by the term ‘sīla’ is meant both the Five and the Ten Precepts. Therefore, it is evident that kings observe also the Ten Precepts as (one of) their duties. If it is maintained that “the Ten Precepts should be observed only when they can be observed forever”, then kings who have chief queens, lesser queens and maids of honour and a treasury filled with gold and silver would not be able to observe the Ten Precepts because of the *Abrahmacariya* and *Jātarūpa sikkhāpadas*. Had it been impossible for kings to observe, then the Commentator would not have included the Ten Precepts in his comment on *sīla* of the ten kingly duties. But the Commentator has definitely mentioned them in his comment. Therefore, the Ten Precepts are not *nicca-sīla*; they are the morality to be observed whenever one is able to do so.

Moreover, the **Khuddakapāṭha Commentary** explains how the Eight Precepts are derived from the ten *sikkhāpadas*: “Of the ten precepts⁹, the first two, *Pānātipātā sikkhāpada* and *Adinnādāna sikkhāpada*, are to be observed by the laity or *sāmaṇeras* as *nicca sīla*. (The third precept, *Abrahmacariya sikkhāpada*, is not mentioned as *nicca sīla* for the laity. It is the precept to be observed only when one is able to do so.) Again, out of the ten precepts, the seventh one, namely, *Naccagīta sikkhāpada* and the eighth one, namely, *Mālāgandha sikkhāpada* merge as one factor, the last *sikkhāpada* of *Jātarūpa* is excluded.

In accordance with this Commentary also, those out of the ten precepts which the laity should observe permanently are four, namely, refraining from killing, stealing, lies and taking intoxicants. The laity cannot always observe *Abrahmacariya sikkhāpada*. They are also unable to observe permanently the precepts of *Vikālabhojana*, *Naccagīta*, etc. Thus it is clear that all these ten precepts are *niyama* type of *sīla* to be observed only when able.

Although it is mentioned in the **Khuddakapāṭha Commentary** that *Jātarūpa sikkhāpada* is a special precept for *sāmaṇeras*, breaking it will not entail falling from novicehood. Because in the *Mahākhanda* of the **Vinaya Mahāvagga Pāli**, although the Exalted One laid down the ten *liṅgas* (factors) which will make the novices fall from their novicehood, only the first five from the Ten Precepts are included in the ten *liṅgas*. The last five are not include. Therefore, in spite of breaking one of these last five factors, the novices will not fall from their novicehood; they are only guilty of breach of the rules which entail due punishment. If they take the punishment imposed by their teachers in the form of carrying sand, water, etc., they will become again good novices, duly absolved from guilt.

9. The Ten Precepts (*Dasa Sikkhāpada*): (1) *Pānātipātā*, (2) *Adinnādāna*, (3) *Abrahmacariya*, (4) *Musavāda* (5) *Surāmeraya*, (6) *Vikālabhojana*, (7) *Nacca gīta vādita visuka-dassana*, (8) *Mālāgandha vilepana dhāraṇa mandana vibbūsanatthāna*, (9) *Ucchāsayaṇa Mahāsayaṇa*, and (10) *Jātarūpa rajata patiggahana*.

Thus, even *sāmaṇeras* for whom the Ten Precepts are mandatory will not fall from their novicehood in spite of the *Jātarūpa sikkhāpada*. It is clear, therefore, that of the ten precepts, the last five are not so important as the first five for *semen eras*. Thus, it is not proper to say and write very seriously exhorting strict observance of the *Jātarūpa sikkhāpada* for the laity when it is not regarded as very important even for *sāmaṇeras*.

It is accepted that both the **Visuddhi-magga** and the **Khuddakapāṭha Commentary** are written by the Venerable Mahā Buddhaghosa. As the two books are written by one and the same author, the exposition should not be different. The passage from the **Visuddhi-magga**: “*upasakanamnicāstīlavasena pañca sikkhāpadāni sati vā ussāhe dasa* — The Ten Precepts is not *nicca-sīla* for the laity; they are *niyama-sīla* to be observed only when able” should thus be noted to be in line with the **Khuddakapāṭha** and **Itivuttaka Commentaries**.

With respect to breach of precepts, the **Khuddakapāṭha Commentary**, after dealing with matters concerning novices, states: “Whereas, in the case of the laity, after taking the vow of the Five Precepts, if one of them is broken, only that one is broken; and if that one be observed by taking a new vow, the five precepts are complete again.” But some teachers (*apare*) maintain thus: “If the five precepts be taken separately, i.e. one after another, breach of one will not cause the breach of the rest.” However, if they say, at the beginning of taking precepts, “*Pañcaṅga samannāgatam sīlam samādiyāmi* — I vow to observe the complete Five Precepts”, then, if one of them is broken, all are broken; because the vow was initially taken to keep the precepts together. As to the result of breach of precepts, each breach will have its own consequences, not affecting others.

But some teachers rationalize this view by saying that after vowing to observe the complete Five Precepts, if one of them is broken, all are not broken; others remain unaffected. If we thus accept this rationalization, there will be no difference at all in their views. In this connection, the *Sikkhapada Vibhaṅga* of the **Sammohavinodani** states:

“Gahattha yam yam vitikkamanti, tam tadeva khandam hoti bhijjati, avasesam na bhijjati, kasmā gahattha hi anibaddhasilā honti, yam yam sakkonti, tam tadeva gopenti.

After taking the precepts, if the lay men break one of them, only that one is broken; the rest are not. Because for the laity there is no mandatory permanent precepts to observe like novices. Of the five precepts, they may observe whichever they can; one, two or three, but not necessarily all the five. We should not say that because they observe only partially and not the complete Five Precepts it does not amount to observance of the precepts and that they will not get any merit for it.”

It should be noted thus that even though the laity cannot observe all five precepts but only as many as possible, they will get merit and that their *sīla* is genuine. In this connection, the **Patisambhidāmagga Commentary** comments on *Pariyanta Pārisuddhi-sīla* (this morality is described fully under morality in groups of fives). There are two kinds of limit regarding *sīla*, namely, the limit to the number of precepts observed and the limit to the duration of observance. The laity may observe one precept, or two, three, four, five, eight or ten precepts. But the trainees (*sikkhamāna sāmaṇera* and *sāmaṇerī*) have to observe the Ten Precepts in full. This is the limit to the number of precepts observed.

The essential meaning here is: If the laity take precepts numbering one, two, three, four, five, eight or ten and observed them properly, his morality will become *Sikkhāpada Pariyanta Pārisuddhi-sīla*, a pure one with the limit in number.

Therefore, although in practice one does not vow to take one, two, three or four, but all five precepts, it is not mandatory to observe all of them. If they can observe only one precept, they should observe that one. If they can observe two, they should observe those two; and so on.

It may be questioned when the laity have the right to observe any number of precepts they wish, why the Five Precepts alone are prescribed in the **Visuddhi-magga** thus: “*Upāsakopāsikānam niccāstīlavasena pañca sikkhāpadāni?*”

The answer is that the Commentary is here concerned mainly with the principle of morality, which requires that all the five precepts must be observed permanently, “*niccasīlavasena pañca sikkhāpadāni*”. We have no right to leave out any precept we wish. It will be a guilt to break any one of the five precepts. It is not only in the **Visuddhi-magga** but also in other texts that the Five Precepts is shown as *Nicca-sīla* in the light of the principle of morality.

Brahmacariya-Pañcama Sīla

In addition to the Five, Eight and Ten Precepts, there is also *Brahmacariya-Pañcama Sīla* observed by the laity. However, that *Brahmacariya-Pañcama Sīla* is, in reality, the five precepts. The third precept of the original five, “*Kāmesu micchā cārā veramani-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi*” is replaced by “*Abrahmacariyā veramani-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi*” to be *Brahmacariya-Pañcama Sīla*.

The *Brahmacariya-Pañcama Sīla* was observed at the time of Buddha Kassapa by Gavesi Upāsaka. (**Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Pañcaka Nipāta, 3. Upāsaka Vagga, 13. Gavesi Sutta.) At the time of Buddha Gotama, this *sīla* was observed by Ugga, the Banker of Vesālī and Ugga, the Banker of Hatthigāma, Vajjian Country. (**Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Atthaka Nipata, 3. Gahapati Vagga, 1 Sutta and 2 Sutta.) The two Uggas took the *Brahmacariya-Pañcama Sīla* from the Exalted One and kept observing them; of the four wives they each possessed, the eldest ones were given away in marriage to the men they loved and the remaining ones were also abandoned likewise and thereafter they remained single for life; they were lay ‘Non-Returners’. It should not be misunderstood that married persons who want to observe the *Brahmacariya-sīla* at the present time have to abandon their wives with no more attachment to them. In other words, it should not be taken that they may not observe this *sīla* unless they are prepared to renounce their wives altogether. Because in the words of the **Khuddakapāṭha Commentary**, mentioned above, “of the ten precepts only four, namely, *Pāṇātipātā*, *Adinnādāna*, *Musāvāda*, and *Surāmeraya*, are regarded as *nicca-sīla*”. Hence it is evident that *Abrahmacariya sikkhāpada* and the remaining precepts, such as *Vikālabhojana*, etc. are not *nicca-sīla*; they are *niyama-sīla* to be observed occasionally. Even though they cannot observe the precepts exactly like Ghatikara the Pot-Maker, they can observe them as *niyama-sīla* as far as possible. So also, with regard to *Brahmacariya-Pañcama Sīla*, the two Uggas, being ‘Non-Returners’, abandoned their wives without anymore attachment, and observed the precepts for life. If other people can follow their example and observe this precept, it is well and good; but if they cannot emulate them fully, they should observe the precept only according to their ability.

Brahmacariya-Pañcama Ekabhaddika Sīla

Furthermore, there is yet *Brahmacariya-Pañcama Ekabhaddika Sīla* (or *Ekabhaddika Sīla*). *Ekabhaddika* means taking only one meal a day, in the morning. So, if lay people want to observe this *sīla*, they may, after making the vow of *Brahmacariya-Pañcama* precepts, take one more precept by saying: “*Vikālabhojanā veramani-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi*”. Or, if they wish to take the vow as a whole, they may do so by saying: “*Brahmacariya- Pañcama Ekabhaddikasīlam samādiyāmi*”. This *sīla* was observed by Dhammika Upāsaka and Nandamatā Upāsikā, etc. at the time of the Exalted One, according to the *Dhammika Sutta* of the *Suttanipāta* Commentary. At the time of Buddha Kassapa, Gavesi Upāsaka also observed this *sīla*; so did five hundred laymen. (**Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Pañcaka Nipāta, 3. Upāsaka Vagga, 10. Gavesi Sutta.)

Aṭṭhanga Uposatha Sīla

It may be questioned why, regarding the Five Precepts, the term ‘*pañna*’ alone is used, and, regarding the Ten Precepts, the term ‘*dāsa*’ is used; whereas in describing the Eight Precepts not only the term ‘*attha*’ but the additional term ‘*uposatha*’ is used?

The term ‘*Uposatha*’ has five meanings, namely,

- (1) Recitation of *Pātimokkha*,
- (2) Proper name for persons or animals,

- (3) Observance,
- (4) The *sīla* which should be observed, and
- (5) The day for observing *sīla*.

Of these five, the first meaning (1) is concerned only with the *bhikkhu*; and the second meaning (2), being the name for a prince (e.g. Prince Uposatha) or of an elephant (e.g. Uposatha Elephant), etc. has no connection with the Chapter on *Sīla*; only the remaining three meanings are to be considered here.

The three meanings are derived from the Pāli term ‘*Upavasa*’ which means observing or fulfilling the precepts. The third meaning (3) is the act of observing the precepts. The fourth meaning (4) is the precepts, which should be kept. The fifth meaning (5) is the day on which the precepts are kept.

No particular day was fixed by the virtuous people in the past for observance of the Five Precepts and the Ten Precepts; only the Eight Precepts was observed on specially fixed day. Hence the special epithet of *Uposatha* for these eight precepts.

There is another point to consider. The Five Precepts is not as numerous as the Eight Precepts and as it is to be kept everyday, no special day was named for their observance. But as the Ten Precepts is higher than the Eight Precepts, the virtuous people in the past should have fixed a special day for their observance. If so, why had they not done so? The probable reason is that the Eight Precepts is specially suitable for the laity whereas the Ten Precepts is not. According to the **Visuddhi-magga**, the Ten Precepts is for *sāmaṇeras* and *sāmaṇerīs*. The **Khuddakapatha Commentary** also states that the last precept, *Jātarūpa sikkhāpada*, of the Ten Precepts, is a special one for *sāmaṇeras*. It is, therefore, evident that the Ten Precepts is specifically for *sāmaṇeras*, not for laymen.

Therefore, the learned and virtuous in the past selected, out of the two kinds of *sīla* which concerned them, the Eight Precepts which is of a higher form, to be observed on a specially appointed day. Only the Eight Precepts is therefore called **Uposatha** as explained in the **Visuddhi-magga**.

The virtuous are not content with the observance of *sīla* only; they also wish to make meritorious deeds through giving alms, which entail acquiring, buying, shopping of things to offer. Consequently, they cannot properly observe the *Jātarūpa-rajata sikkhāpada*. Therefore, the ancient people fixed a special day for observance of the Eight Precepts only.

Navaṅga Uposatha

In the **Āṅguttara Nikāya** (Navaka Nipāta, 2. Sihanāda Vagga, 8. Sutta) an exposition on *Navaṅga Uposatha Sīla* is given with this introduction: “The Nine Precepts is beneficial, advantageous, powerful”. In enumerating them, the Exalted One expounds the usual Eight Precepts from the *Pāṇātipātā sikkhāpada* up to *Uccāsāyana-Mahāsāyana sikkhāpada*, but ends up with the formula for practice of loving-kindness thus: “*Mettā sahaḡatena cetasā ekam disaṃ pharitvā viharāmi* — I abide with thoughts of loving-kindness directed to beings in one direction.”

According to the discourse, to keep the *Navaṅga Uposatha Sīla*, after taking the usual Eight Precepts, one keeps on developing Loving-kindness. A man who observes the Eight Precepts without any breach and keeps on developing loving-kindness is called an observer of the Nine Precepts. Loving-kindness is to be developed whereas *sīla* is to be observed. Therefore, to practise the Nine Precepts, one need not recite the nine precepts when taking the vow. It is sufficient to take the usual Eight Precepts and to develop loving-kindness as much as possible; then one is said to be practising the Nine Precepts (*Navaṅga Uposatha*).

With regard to loving-kindness, as the Exalted One particularly mentioned ‘*ekam disaṃ*’, diffusing loving-kindness with one direction in mind is more effective than doing so without minding the direction. One should direct one's thought to all beings in the ten directions (the four cardinal points, the four intermediate points, plus above and below), one after another, beginning from whichever direction one wishes.

Even though there are four sublime mental states¹⁰, the Exalted One takes only loving-kindness and adds it to the Eight, thus prescribing the Nine Precepts because loving-kindness has a great power. That is why the Exalted One has expounded the Mettā Sutta in the **Khuddakapāṭha** and the **Suttanipāṭa**.

Also, in the **Āṅguttara Nikāya**, (Ekādasaka Nipata, 2. Anussati Vagga, 5. Sutta), are expounded the eleven advantages that accrue repeatedly to him who develops loving-kindness:

- (a) he sleeps well in peace,
- (b) he wakes up well in peace,
- (c) he dreams no bad dreams,
- (d) he is dearly loved by human beings,
- (e) he is dearly loved by non-human beings (*ogres* and *petas*),
- (f) he is protected by devas,
- (g) he is not afflicted by fire, poison and weapons,
- (h) his mind is easily concentrated,
- (i) his face is calm and clear,
- (j) he dies unconfused, and
- (k) if he cannot penetrate higher Dhamma, *arahatta-magga* and *phala*, in this life, he will take rebirth in the Brahmā-world.

Therefore, it is clear that loving-kindness is more powerful than the other three sublime mental states.

Three Kinds of Uposatha Sīla

Uposatha Sīla is of three kinds:

- (1) **Gopāla Uposatha** - The Cowherd's Uposatha
- (2) **Nigantha Uposatha** - The Naked Ascetic's Uposatha
- (3) **Ariya Uposatha** - The Noble One's Uposatha

as expounded by the Exalted One in the **Āṅguttara Nikāya** (Tika Nipāta, 2. Mahā Vagga, 10. Visakhuposatha Sutta). The essential meanings are-

(1) The **Uposatha Sīla** observed with thoughts of a cowherd is called '**Gopāla Uposatha**'. After grazing the cattle all day long, the cowherd returns them to the owner in the evening. On reaching home, he thinks only in this way: "Today, I have grazed the cattle in such-and-such a field and taken them to water at such-and-such a place. Tomorrow, I'll take them to such-and-such field for food and to such-and-such a place for water." Similarly, the observer of **Uposatha Sīla**, having greedy thoughts of food, thinks: "Today, I have taken such-and-such a kind of food. Tomorrow, I'll take such-and-such a kind." If he spends the day thus like the cowherd, his *uposatha* is called **Gopāla Uposatha**.

(2) The **Uposatha Sīla** observed by a naked ascetic who holds wrong views is called **Nigantha Uposatha**. For example, according to their practice with regard to *Pāṇātipātā* precept, killing living beings beyond a distance of one hundred *yojana* east, west, north and south must not be done. Within such-and-such a distance killing is allowed, thus giving a chance of committing evil. Differentiation between forbidden and unforbidden places for doing wrong, they practise their *uposatha*. The *uposatha* practised by the holders of such a view is called **Nigantha Uposatha**.

(3) If the *uposatha* is observed after purifying the mind of defilements through recollection of the special attributes of the Buddha, etc. it is called **Ariya Uposatha**. The *Ariya Uposatha* again is of six kinds:

10. The Four Sublime mental states: Loving-kindness (*Metta*), Compassion (*Karuṇā*), Altruistic joy (*Mudita*) and Equanimity (*Upekkhā*).

THE ANUDĪPAṆĪ

- (a) Brahmuposatha - Noble¹¹ Uposatha
 - (b) Dhammuposatha - Dhamma Uposatha
 - (c) Sanghuposatha - Sangha Uposatha
 - (d) Siluposatha - Sīla Uposatha
 - (e) Devatuposatha - Devata Uposatha
 - (f) Atthanguposatha - Uposatha with the eight precepts
-
- (a) The *uposatha* that is observed by taking the Eight Precepts and repeatedly recollecting the special attributes of the Buddha such as Arahant, etc. is called **Brahmuposatha**.
 - (b) The *uposatha* that is observed by taking the Eight Precepts and repeatedly recollecting the special attributes of the Dhamma is called **Dhammuposatha**.
 - (c) The *uposatha* that is observed by taking the Eight Precepts and repeatedly recollecting the special attributes of the Sangha is called **Sanghuposatha**.
 - (d) The *uposatha* that is observed by taking the Eight Precepts, observing without breaking any of them and repeatedly recollecting the special attributes of *sīla* is called **Siluposatha**.
 - (e) Reflecting that “there are in the world devas and Brahmās who have endowed themselves with noble qualities of pure faith, morality, learning, generosity, and wisdom in their previous births and as a result are reborn in the realm of devas and Brahmas; such noble qualities are present in me, too”, one observes the *uposatha* comparing himself with *devatās*. Such *uposatha* is called **Devatuposatha**. (Here *devatā* stands for both devas and Brahmās.)
 - (f) After taking the Eight Precepts, one reflects thus: “Just as *arahats* never kill or harm any living being and always have compassion for them, so also I do not kill or harm any living being and have compassion for them; by this practice, I am following the way of *arahats*.” The *uposatha* observed in this manner reflecting on each of the eight precepts is called **Atthanguposatha**.

It should be noted that the division of *uposatha* into the three and the six kinds is in reference to the manner of keeping it. Primarily, however, the *sīla* which is observed is of two kinds only, **Atthanga Uposatha Sīla** and **Navaṅga Uposatha Sīla** as already stated above.

Three Kinds of Uposatha Day

The classification below is made in the light of the **Aṅguttara Nikāya (Tika Nipata, 4. Devadutadvagga, 7. Raja Sutta, etc.)**, which says: “*uposatham upavasanti patijagaronti*” and

*cātuddasim pañcaddasim,
yā ca pakkhassa atthami,
pātihāriya pakkhañ ca,
atthanga susamāgatam.*

(1) Pakati Uposatha (Ordinary Uposatha Day)

In the above Pāli verse, the lines reading “*cātuddasim pañcaddasim, yā ca pakkhassa atthami*” refer to ordinary **Uposatha** days. In accordance with this, each fortnight of a month, waxing or waning, has three *uposatha* days, namely, the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth days. Therefore, a month has six **Uposatha** days, which are called ordinary **Uposatha** days. In the Commentary, however, the waxing fortnight has four **Uposatha** days,

11. Noble: Brahmā; here Brahmā refers to the Buddha, the Noblest Being.

namely, the fifth, the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth waxing days; the waning fortnight has four **Uposatha** days, too, namely, the fifth, the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth waning days; altogether there are eight **Uposatha** days in a month. These eight are ordinary **Uposatha** days usually observed by the laity.

(Whereas, nowadays, the lay people observe only four **Uposatha** days in each month. These are the eighth waxing, the full-moon, the eighth waning and the new-moon days.)

(2) **Paṭijāgara Uposatha (Pre-and Post-Uposatha Days)**

Paṭijāgara Uposatha means the eight ordinary **Uposatha** days observed with one additional day before and after each of them. (*Pati* means ‘repeatedly’; *Jāgara* means ‘waking’. Therefore, *Paṭijāgara-sīla* may be interpreted as morality which repeatedly wakes up from the slumber of defilements.) To calculate the number of days: the fifth waxing **Uposatha** day is preceded by the fourth waxing, and followed by the sixth waxing **Uposatha** days; the eighth **Uposatha** day is preceded by the seventh waxing and followed by the ninth waxing **Uposatha** days; the fortnight waxing **Uposatha** day is preceded by the thirteenth waxing **Uposatha** day (but there is not **Uposatha** day to follow); the full-moon day is not preceded by an **Uposatha** day but is followed by the first waning **Uposatha** day. Hence, serially there are the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, the seventh, the eighth, the ninth, the thirteenth, the fourteenth waxing, the full-moon and the first waning days. Thus there are ten days in the waxing fortnight and ten days in the waning fortnight of the month, making altogether eight **Pakati Uposatha** and twelve **Paṭijāgara Uposatha** days in a month.

(3) **Paṭihāriya Uposatha.**

The **Uposatha** which is more powerful than the *Paṭijāgara* is called **Paṭihāriya**. **Paṭijāgara Uposatha** has intervening days in the waxing and waning fortnight. **Paṭihāriya Uposatha** has no such days, *sīla* being observed continuously.

If the laity wants to observe **Paṭihāriya Uposatha**, they should observe for the whole three months of *Vassa* (rains-retreat) without a break. If they cannot observe for the whole three months, they should do so for one month from the full moon of Thadingyut (October) to the full moon of Tazaungmon (November). If they cannot observe for one month, they should do so for fifteen days from the full moon to the new moon of Thadingyut. This is stated in the **Aṅguttara Nikāya Commentary**.

However, according to the **Sutta Nipāta Attakhatha** (the Dhammika Sutta of the Cūla Vagga), the **Uposatha** observed for five months (Waso, Wagoung, Tawthalin, Thadingyut, Tazaungmon) without break is **Paṭihāriya Uposatha**. Whereas other teachers say that the **Uposatha** observed for each of the three months of Waso, Tazaungmon and Tabaung without break is called **Paṭihāriya Uposatha**. Still other teachers say that, according to Pāli Texts, there are three **Pakati Uposatha** days, namely, the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth of each fortnight of a month. If, in addition to those three **Pakati Uposatha** days, four more days, namely, the seventh before the eighth and the ninth after the eighth, the thirteenth before the fourteenth and the first day after the fifteenth are observed, such **Uposatha** is called **Paṭihāriya Uposatha**. The Commentator remarks that for the benefit of the good people, who wish to acquire good merit, all kinds of *Sīlas* are mentioned to enable them to observe whichever they like.

Of the three views shown in the **Suttanipāta Atthakatha**, the Commentator's own view: “the **Uposatha** observed for five months is **Paṭihāriya Uposatha**,” agrees in essence with the **Aṅguttara Commentary**, where the period of continuous observance is shown as three months; whereas in the **Suttanipata Commentary**, it is five months. That is the only difference.

The third view from the **Suttanipāta Commentary** is in agreement with that of the Commentaries on the **Nemi Jātaka**, **Vimānavatthu** (Uttara Vimānavatthu), the **Theragātha** and the **Suruci Jātaka** of the **Pakinnaka Nipāta**.

However, according to the **Sagathavagga** of the **Samyutta Atthakathā** (Indaka Vagga, 5. Sutta) the *Paṭihāriya-uposatha* days in each fortnight of the month are the seventh, the ninth, the thirteenth, and the first waning or waxing day after the fifteenth and the half month after *vassa*, i.e. from the first waning to the new-moon day of Thadingyut.

Herein, there is one thing to consider: Even though the Commentaries on the **Aṅguttara**, the **Suttanipāṭa**, the **Jātaka**, and the **Saṃyutta** are written by the same Commentator, Venerable Mahā Buddhaghosa, why are they different from one another regarding *Uposatha* days?

That the Buddha actually described the three kinds of **Uposatha** is clear from the Visakh'uposath Sutta, but there is no *sutta* delivered by the Buddha to set aside specific days, three or six, as **Uposatha** days. The fourteenth **Uposatha**, the fifteenth **Uposatha**, the eighth **Uposatha**, **Pāṭihāriya Uposatha** mentioned before are not prescribed by the Exalted One as days of **Uposatha** observance. Indeed, it was Sakka, King of Devas, who said to Tāvātimsa Deities: "People observe **Uposatha** on the fourteenth, the fifteenth, and the eighth. On the days called **Pāṭihāriya**, too, they observe **Uposatha**." He was given this information by Catumaharajika who went round in the human world preparing a list of the virtuous. The Buddha was only reproducing the words of Sakka. The classification of the fourteenth, the fifteenth and the eighth **Uposatha** days is merely a statement of the **Uposatha** days traditionally observed by people. There is no special discourse expounded by the Exalted One to enjoin **Uposatha** must be observed on these days or must not be observed on other days.

Thus the fourteenth, the fifteenth, the eighth **Uposatha** days were the days of **Uposatha** observance prescribed by the ancient people. So, traditionally, there were only three **Pakati-Uposatha** days, but later on people observed the fifth day also and therefore there come to be four **Uposatha** days in each fortnight of a month. Thus the fifth **Uposatha** day is mentioned in the Commentary. Nowadays people observe only four **Uposatha** in a month.

The Buddha did not prescribe any specific **Uposatha** day because people can observe the precepts on whichever day they like. In mentioning **Paṭijāgara** and **Pāṭihāriya Uposatha** days as special days for observance, the Commentators are merely recording the various customary practices of the people. Hence these seeming differences in the Commentaries.

Moreover, the **Aṅguttara**, the **Suttanipāṭa**, the **Saṃyutta** and the **Jātaka** which make expositions of *sīla* are known as the *Suttanta Desanā*, the teachings in discourses; they are also known as *Vohāra Desanā* because, in these discourses, the Buddha, who is incomparable in the usage of the world, employs the terms and expressions of the people which can never be uniform. Thus, with regard to different classifications of **Uposatha**, as all are meant to develop good merit, it is not necessary to decide which view is right and which view is wrong. In the **Suttanipata Commentary** the three views are described advising readers to accept whichever they like.

Sīla-observers select suitable days which they prefer and observe **Uposatha** accordingly in many ways. And all their observance develops merits, so the Commentators write, recording the ways employed by the people. In the Discourses, *Suttanta Desanā*, even the Buddha expounded following the usages of the people. Why did the Exalted One expound in this manner? Because He wished them not to violate their traditional customs which are not demeritorious.

The principal objective of the Exalted One is to expound only such realities as mind and matter (*Nāma-rūpa Paramattha Dhamma*) that would facilitate attainment of the Paths, Fruition States and Nibbāna. Teaching in such abstruse terms could be beneficial to those with right perception. But it could make those lacking it to commit wrong deeds which would lead them to the four lower worlds. For example, those who have wrong perception of *Nāma-rūpa dhamma* would think thus: "In this world there is *nāma-rūpa* only; there is neither 'I' nor 'others'; if there is no 'others' there will be no harm in killing them: and there will be neither 'mine' nor 'others'; therefore, there will be no harm in stealing things, in committing adultery, etc. In this manner, they will freely break the rules of society and do such unwholesome acts which will cause rebirths in the lower planes of existence.

In terms of Ultimate Truth (*paramattha-sacca*) there is neither 'I' nor 'others', neither 'man' nor 'woman', etc. There are only aggregates of *nāma-rūpa* (mental and physical phenomena). For those incapable of understanding the terms of Ultimate Truth, the Buddha employed terms of Conventional Truth (*samuti-sacca*) in giving Discourses (*Suttanta*

desanā). Though all is a mass of *nāma* and *rūpa*, by conventional-usage, it is determined for easy discrimination that such-and-such a mass is 'I' such and such a mass is 'they', such-and-such a mass is 'mother', 'father', etc. If people deviate the norm set up by conventional usages, they will go astray doing wrong deeds. It is to prevent them from falling to the lower planes of existence as a consequence of their misdeeds that the Buddha teaches the discourses in conventional terms.

If, however, only Discourses were delivered, people would take such term as 'I', 'they', 'my son', 'my daughter', 'my wife', 'my property', etc., as Ultimate Realities and their belief in Permanent Personality (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*) would become so great that they would not attain *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*.

Hence the teaching of *Nāma-Rūpa Paramattha Dhamma* by the Buddha.

Some teachers write: "In the **Vinaya Pīṭaka** there is an injunction for *bhikkhus* not to observe '*bhikkhu uposatha*' (recitation of *Pātimokkha* rules) on non-*Uposatha* days. If they do so, they commit the offence of *dukkata-apatti*. Likewise, laymen should not observe the Eight Precepts on non-*Uposatha* days."

Such writing shows they are not accomplished in interpreting the Teaching of the Buddha. *Vinaya Desanā* is called **Anādesanā** in Buddhist literature; it means the authoritative injunction laid down by the Exalted One. If a *bhikkhu* commits even with good intention a forbidden act, he is guilty because he goes against the command of the Exalted One and transgresses the rules of the Vinaya. To assume that such a Vinaya rule is also applicable to laymen in their observance of **Uposatha**, to say that people must not observe precepts on non-*Uposatha* days and that doing so will be an offence, is a clear misinterpretation of the *Desanā*. In brief, **Uposatha** being a pure and noble observance can be fulfilled on any day. The more it is observed the greater will be the beneficial results.

Therefore, the Sub-commentary on the Mahā Sudassana Sutta of the Mahā Vagga, **Dīgha Nikāya**, says: "*uposatham vuccati atthaṅgasamannāgatam sabbadivasesu gahaṭṭhehi rakkhitaḥṣāṣām-uposatha* is said to be the *sīla* with eight factors that can be observed by laymen on all days." (This Sub-commentary is written by the Ven. Dhammapāla who has also written the **Anutikā**, the Sub-commentary of the **Mūlatikā**, the **Visuddhi-magga Mahātikā**, the **Itivuttaka Atthakathā**, etc., and other Sub-commentaries.)

(3) (a) **Pakati-sīla**, (b) **Acāra-sīla**, (c) **Dhammatā-sīla** and (d) **Pubbahetu-sīla**.

- (a) Non-transgression of the Five Precepts by inhabitants of the Northern Continent is called **Pakati-sīla**. (By nature, these inhabitants refrain from wrong deeds, such as killing, etc. without taking the vow of the Five Precepts.) Non-breaking of the Five Precepts by them is not a matter of restraint through a vow (*samadana-virati*), but of natural restraint even when transgression is demanded by circumstances (*sampatta-virati*).
- (b) Following traditional practices of one's family, locality or sect is called **Acāra-sīla**. (Refraining from evil because it is done so by one's ancestry is called **Kula-acāra**; refraining from evil because it is generally done so in one's locality is called **Desa-acāra**; refraining from evil because it is done so in one's sect is called **Pāsāṇa-sīla**.)
- (c) The kind of *sīla* kept by the mother of a Bodhisatta since she conceived her son, by virtue of which she has no thought for man, is called **Dhammatā-sīla**. (A Bodhisatta's mother regularly observes the Five Precepts and desires no man, not even her husband, from the moment of conception. This is because an extremely Noble Being, the Bodhisatta, is lying in her womb. As the *sīla* is kept as a rule by the mother of a Bodhisatta, it is called **Dhammatā-sīla**.)
- (d) The observance of *sīla* by chaste persons, such as the youth Pippali (who later became Mahā Kassapa) and the Bodhisatta like King Mahāsīlava, through natural inclination and without anyone's instruction is called **Pubbahetu-sīla**. (As a result of habitual observance of *sīla* in their former births, they are by nature inclined to observe *sīla* in this life.)

(4) (a) **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla**, (b) **Indriyasamvara-sīla**, (c) **Ājivapārisuddhi-sīla**, and (d) **Paccayasannissita-sīla**.

These four are chiefly concerned with the *bhikkhu*. When the *Bodhisatta*, Sumedha the Hermit, reflected on the Perfection of Morality, he said to himself: “*tath’eva tvam catūsu bhūmisu, silāni paripūraya* — likewise, you should become accomplished in the four realms of *sīla*.”

(a) **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla**

The *Sīla* that liberates its observer from suffering of the four lower worlds is called **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla**. (“*pāti*” - observer; “*mokkha*” - to set free)

The observer of this *sīla* (i) should have proper conduct, (ii) should have blameless, wholesome resorts, (iii) should see great danger in the slightest fault; the offence may be small like a particle of dust but one should see in it a danger as big as Mount Meru which has a height of one hundred and sixty-eight thousand *yojanas* above and under water and (iv) should observe and practise the precepts properly.

To explain further:

(i) In the world, there is **Ācāra-dhamma** that should be practised, and there is **Anācāra-dhamma** that should not be practised. The three wrong physical actions (killing, stealing and unlawful sexual intercourse) and the four wrong speeches (telling lies, backbiting, abusing and babbling), altogether seven wrong doings (*duccarita*), and other deeds that cause breach of *sīla* constitute *anācāra*.

To give some examples of unwholesome actions that would cause breach of *sīla*: in the world, some *bhikkhus* earn their living by making gifts of bamboo, leaves, flowers, fruits, soap powder, and tooth sticks to the laity; they degrade themselves by approving of the wrong speeches of the laity, flattering them to gain favour, telling much falsehood mixed with a little truth just like a lot of uncooked peas mixed with a few cooked ones in a pot. They look after children of the laity as nurse-maids, embracing them, dressing them, etc. They serve as messengers running errands for their lay supporters; they give medical treatment to laity, look after their properties, exchange food and beverage with them. Such wrong livelihood as well as every other resort of wrong livelihood condemned by the Buddha are called **Anācāra-dhamma**.

It is improper for the *bhikkhu* to give bamboo, leaves, etc. even if the laity come and ask for their use; more so, therefore, when they are not asked for. Such acts of giving are not the business of *bhikkhus*. If they do so, they would be destroying the faith of the laity (*kuladūsana*) in the Vinaya.

In this connection, it might be asked whether the laity’s faith would not be destroyed if the *bhikkhu* does not give them what they want, or whether, if the *bhikkhu* gave them what they want, their faith would develop with the thought: “This is the *bhikkhu* who satisfies our needs.” The laity’s faith in the *bhikkhu* as a disciple of the Exalted One has been genuine and pure even before receiving gifts from the *bhikkhu*; after their receipt, the laity will see him as the giver of bamboo, the giver of leaves, etc. and as a result attachment will arise in them. Therefore, their faith in the *bhikkhu* becomes tainted with attachment. The genuine faith has been destroyed. Accordingly, the Exalted One has condemned the giving of gifts by the *bhikkhu*, naming such act as **Kuladūsana**, ‘despoilment of the laity’s faith’.

All practices which are the opposite of the aforesaid **Anācāra** are **Ācāra** practices which should be cultivated.

(ii) Resort is of two kinds, namely, wrong resort and right resort.

Wrong resort: some *bhikkhus*, in the Teachings of the Buddha, have intimate dealings with prostitutes, widows, divorced women, spinsters, eunuchs and *bhikkhunis*. They frequent ale houses which is unbecoming for a *bhikkhu*. They mingle with kings, ministers, heretics and their followers like ordinary laymen. They associate with people who have no faith, who abuse and threaten the disciples of the Buddha, *bhikkhus*, *bhikkhunis*, male and

female lay devotees and who wish them ill. All these intimate associates of *bhikkhus* and places frequented by them are wrong resort for *bhikkhus*.

'Wrong resorts' here refers to unwholesome friendship and association and improper places for *bhikkhus* to visit. But if a prostitute invites *bhikkhus* for alms offering, they can go and receive it, maintaining steadfast mindfulness. Herein, prostitutes, widows, divorced women, spinsters, eunuchs and *bhikkhunīs* are regarded as unwholesome resorts, because they form the bases of five sensual pleasures. Ale houses, taverns etc. are dangerous to the noble practice of Dhamma. Association with kings and ministers are also not beneficial; offerings made by them may prove destructive like a thunderbolt. And the houses, where there is no faith, where people are abusive and threatening, are unwholesome resorts because they discourage faith and cause fear in the *bhikkhu*.

People and places as opposed to those described above constitute the *bhikkhu's* wholesome resort. Some lay people have faith and confidence in the Triple Gem; they believe also in *kamma* and its results; they are like wells or lakes where the *bhikkhu* may enjoy inexhaustible supply of water. Their houses are brightened by the colour of the robes of *bhikkhus* who visit them frequently. The atmosphere of such a place is filled with the breeze which is caused by movements of *bhikkhus*. Here, people wish them well, wish for the welfare of *bhikkhus*, *bhikkhunīs* and male and female lay devotees; such a house is a wholesome resort for *bhikkhus*.

To explain still further: Ācāra, Anācāra and Gocara.

***Anācāra* (Improper Conduct)**

There are two kinds of improper conduct (**Anācāra**), namely, improper bodily conduct (**Kāyika Anācāra**) and improper verbal conduct (**Vacasika Anācāra**).

Improper bodily conduct (*Kāyika Anācāra*)

After entering the Order, a *bhikkhu* acts disrespectfully towards the Sangha. He stands jostling the Elders, sits jostling them, stands or sits in front of them, takes a seat higher than that of the Elders, sits with his head covered with the robe, speaks while standing, waves his hands while talking, walks with the footwear on while the Elders are walking bare foot, takes a higher path while the Elders are taking a lower path, walks on a path while the Elders are walking on the ground, sits pushing the Elders, stands pushing them and give no place to the younger *bhikkhus*; (at the bath house) he puts faggots into stove without permission of the Elders and closes the door; (at the bathing place) he pushes the Elders and gets into the water in front of them, pushes them and bathes before they do, comes out jostling them before they do, and goes before them overtaking the Elders ahead of him; on reaching the village and town, he hurries into the laity's private and secret chambers and ladies' rooms; he strokes children's heads (showing signs of fondness). This is called improper bodily conduct (*Kāyika Anācāra*).

Improper verbal conduct (*Vacasika Anācāra*)

After entering the Order, a *bhikkhu* acts disrespectfully towards the Sangha. He talks about Dhamma without asking for permission of the Elders, answers questions, recites the *Pātimokkha* without permission; talks while standing, waves his hands while talking. On reaching the village and town, without restraining himself, he speaks to the women or young girls: "You so and so of such and such a family, what do you have? Is there rice gruel? Is there cooked rice? Is there hard food to eat? What shall we drink? What hard food shall we eat? What sort of food shall we eat? What will you offer me?", etc. This is called improper verbal conduct (*Vacasika Anācāra*).

***Ācāra* (Proper Conduct)**

Ācāra should be understood as the reverse of the said **Anācāra**, improper conduct. Furthermore, a *bhikkhu* is reverential, obedient, possessed of shame and conscience, wears his lower robe properly, wears his upper robe properly, his manners inspire reverential faith whether moving forwards or backwards, looking sideways, bending or stretching, his eyes are downcast, he guards the doors of his sense-faculties; he knows the right measure

in eating, strives to be always wakeful, possesses mindfulness with full comprehension, he wants little, he is easily contented, he is strenuous in the practice of wholesome Dhamma, observes with meticulous care the *Abhisamācārika-sīla* described above. This is called proper conduct (**Ācāra**).

Gocara (Proper Resort)

Gocara is of three kinds: **Upanissaya Gocara**, the resort that serves as a powerful support for one's moral developments; **Ārakkha Gocara**, the resort that serves as a guardian of the mind, and **Upanibandha Gocara**, the resort that serves as an anchor of the mind.

A good friend who always uses the ten kinds of right speech conducive to liberation from *samsāra* is called **Upanissaya Gocara**. By depending upon such a friend, he hears the Dhamma which is unheard of before, dispels doubts, rectifies his views, gains clearness of mind. In addition to these benefits, he grows in faith, morality, learning, generosity and wisdom. Hence that good friend is the **Upanissaya Gocara**, the powerful support for developing wholesome qualities, such as morality, etc.

The ten kinds of speech conducive to liberation:

(1) appiccha kathā	-	speech about wanting little
(2) santutthi kathā	-	speech about contentment with what one has in hand
(3) paviveka kathā	-	speech about living in solitude
(4) asamsagga kathā	-	speech about living in seclusion
(5) viriyārambha kathā	-	speech about making effort
(6) sīla kathā	-	speech about morality
(7) samādhi kathā	-	speech about concentration of the mind
(8) paññā kathā	-	speech about Vipassanā Insight and the knowledge of the Paths
(9) vimutti kathā	-	speech about the Fruition States (liberation)
(10) vimuttiñānadassana kathā	-	speech about the <i>Paccavekhanā ñāṇa</i> (Reflective Knowledge of the Path and Fruition)

In brief, the person who uses ten kinds of speech relating to liberation from the suffering of *samsāra* bringing thus five advantages such as hearing the Dhamma unheard of before, etc. The good friend, who can make others progress in five attributes, such as faith, morality, learning, generosity, and wisdom, is called **Upanissaya Gocara**, the resort which provides the strong sufficing condition for the development of wholesome qualities, such as morality, etc.

Mindfulness (*sati*) that guards the mind is called **Ārakkha Gocara**. (*‘Ārakkha’* - that guards the mind; *‘Gocara’* - *Sati*, mindfulness.) (A *bhikkhu*, who takes resort in mindfulness, goes for alms round into the village and town with downcast eyes, seeing at the length of a plough yoke in front of him, and guarding his sense faculties. He goes on without looking at the troops of elephants, or troops of horses., or troops of chariots, or infantry soldiers, or at women or men. He does not look up or down, or towards any of the eight directions and keeps going. A *bhikkhu* who does not take resort in mindfulness, **Ārakkha Gocara**, when going round for alms food in the village and town, looks this way and that way, everywhere, like a crow kept in a covered basket.) Hence, mindfulness is the resort that protects the mind of the *bhikkhu* from the danger of evil thoughts.

As the Four Foundations of Steadfast Mindfulness (*Satipatthāna Kammattthāna*) are the resort to which the mind is anchored, it is called **Upanibandha Gocara**. ('*Upanibanda*' - where mind is anchored; '*gocara*' - resort.)

The bhikkhu, who wants to make his **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla** completely pure, should have proper conduct, wholesome resort and look upon the slightest fault as an enormous danger.

(b) Indriyasamvara-sīla

Guarding the faculty of sense is called **Indriyasamvara-sīla**. [(The six bases, namely, eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are called *Indriya*.) *Indriya* means governing. In seeing a sight, the eye (*cakkhu pasāda*) is the governing organ. If the eye is defective, it cannot see an object (eye-consciousness cannot arise); therefore, the Buddha says that the eye is called **cakkhundriya**. Similarly, in hearing a sound, the ear (*sota pasāda*) is the governing organ. If the ear is defective, it cannot hear a sound (ear-consciousness cannot arise); therefore, the ear is called **śotindriya**. In smelling an odour, the nose (*ghāna pasāda*) is the governing organ; if the nose is defective, it cannot smell an odour (nose-consciousness cannot arise); therefore, the nose is called **ghānindriya**. In tasting a flavour, the tongue (*jivhā pasāda*) is the governing organ. If the tongue is defective, it cannot taste a flavour (tongue-consciousness cannot arise); therefore, the tongue is called **jivhindriya**. In touching a tangible object, the body (*kāya pasāda*) is the governing organ. If the body is defective, it cannot feel a tangible object (body-consciousness cannot arise); therefore, the body is called **kāyindriya**. In cognizing a mental object, the mind (*mana*) is the governing organ. With no mind there cannot arise mind-consciousness; therefore, mind is called **manidriya**. Thus guarding these six faculties (*indriya*) is called **Indriyasamvara-sīla**.]

This is how to guard the six sense faculties: when seeing a visible object with the eye, one should be aware of it only as a visible object; one should not cognize even the general aspect of what is seen, e.g. "this is a woman", "this is a man", "this is beautiful", that will cause the arising of defilements. Nor should one give attention to details (*anubyañjana*) regarding the sign or image of that woman, man, etc., such as shape of hand, leg, etc. the manner of smiling, laughing, talking, etc. looking aside, etc., which will cause repeated arising of defilements.

Example of Venerable Mahā Tissa:

With regard to guarding the faculty of eye, Venerable Mahā Tissa who lived on the top of Cetīya mountain should be shown as an example. One day, the Venerable Mahā Tissa went into Anurādha for alms food. That day, a woman, who had quarrelled with her husband, left her house to go back to her parents' place. She had dressed herself in fine clothes. Seeing the Venerable, who was coming with the restraint of his faculties, she laughed loudly with the thought: "I will make him my husband after alluring him." The Venerable Mahā Tissa looked up to see what it was. Seeing the bones of her teeth, he developed Perception of Foulness (*Asubha saññā*), and contemplating on it, he attained arahatship.

Her husband who was going after her saw the Venerable and asked:

"Venerable Sir, did you see a woman on the way?"

*"Nābhijānāmi itthi vā, puriso vā ito gato,
api ca atthisaṃghato, gacchatesa mahāpathe"*

"Dāyaka, I don't notice whether it was a man or a woman that went by. I was only aware that a skeleton had gone along the road."

Even though the Venerable saw the sight of a woman, he just saw it, but was not aware that it was a woman; instead, he simply developed his meditation and became an *arahat*. That incident should be taken as a good example.

Without control of the sense of sight, when a *bhikkhu* sees a pleasant object, covetousness (*abhiññā*) will arise in him; if he sees an unpleasant object, unhappiness, grief (*domanassa*) will arise in him. Therefore, one should exercise control over one's sense of sight through

mindfulness to prevent arising of such unwholesome states of mind.

With regard to the remaining sense doors, similar control is to be maintained so that no defilement would arise from hearing a sound, smelling an odour, tasting a flavour, touching a tangible object or cognizing a mental object.

(c) **Ājivapārisuddhi-sīla**

Ājivapārisuddhi-sīla, the morality of purity of livelihood, means avoiding six kinds of livelihood which the Vinaya prohibits and avoiding of all other kinds of wrong livelihood. The six *sikkhāpadas* promulgated by the Buddha with regard to livelihood are:

- (1) Having evil wishes and being oppressed by them, if a *bhikkhu* boasts of *jhāna*, *magga*, *phala* attainments which are not present in him, and which have never been present before, he is guilty of *Pārājika-āpatti*.
- (2) For the sake of livelihood, if he acts as a go-between, arranging marriages, he is guilty of *Sanghadisesa-āpatti*.
- (3) Without mentioning directly: “I am an *arahat*”, if he says, for the sake of livelihood: “A certain *bhikkhu* lives at your monastery, that *bhikkhu* is an *arahat*” and if the donor of the monastery understands what he means, he is guilty of *Thullaccaya-āpatti*.
- (4) For the sake of livelihood, if he asks for and eats sumptuous food¹², without being ill, he is guilty of *Pācittiya-āpatti*.
- (5) For the sake of livelihood, if a *bhikkhunī* asks for and eats sumptuous food, without being ill, she is guilty of *Pāidesaniya-āpatti*.
- (6) For the sake of livelihood, if a *bhikkhu* asks for and eats curry or boiled rice, without being ill, he is guilty of *Dukkata-āpatti*.

Other kinds of wrong livelihood, in addition to the above six are:

(1) Kuhana , hypocrisy,	(2) Lapana , talking,
(3) Nemittkata , hinting,	(4) Nippesikatā , belittling.
(5) Lābhenā lābham nijjigisanatā , seeking gain with gain.	

(1) **Kuhana** (hypocrisy), is of three kinds:

- (i) Hypocrisy in use of requisites (**Paccaya patisevana**).
- (ii) Hypocrisy in talk on subjects close to attainments of the Path and the Fruition States (**Samanta jappana**).
- (iii) Hypocrisy in change of postures to deceive lay devotees (**Iriyāpatha saṇṭhapana**).

(i) When lay devotees offer a *bhikkhu* robes, etc. although he wants them, having evil desires to pretend and pose himself as if he has attributes which are non-existent, he says, in order to get even more, (for robes): “What is the use of such expensive robes for a *bhikkhu*? Only *pansukulika* robes made of refuse rags is proper for him.” (For food) he says: “What is the use of such expensive food for a *bhikkhu*? Only food obtained on alms round is proper for a *bhikkhu*.” (For dwelling place) he says: “What is the use of such a fine dwelling place for a *bhikkhu*? Only dwelling at the foot of a tree or in the open air is proper for him.” (For medicine) he says: “What is the use of such expensive medicine for a *bhikkhu*? Cow urine or a portion of gall nut or myrobalan is good for him as medicine.”

Accordingly, to practise what he preaches, he uses only coarse robes, coarse dwelling place and coarse medicines. Lay devotees think so highly of him thus: “This Venerable One has few wishes; he is easily contented; he is free from desires of material goods and sense pleasures; he does not mix with lay people; he is also very diligent (in the practice of Dhamma).” Then they invite him to accept more and more of requisites. Then the *bhikkhu* with evil desires boastfully says: “*Dayaka*, when these three things: the faith, material goods to offer and the person to receive them are present, then the good person who has

12. Sumptuous food means food mixed with ghee, butter, oil, honey, molasses, fish, milk and curd.

faith can develop much merit. Here, you devotees surely have faith; you have things to give away in charity; and indeed, I am a donee. If I do not accept your alms, your merit will decline. So out of compassion for you, I should accept your alms although I am not in need of them.” So saying, he accepts cartloads of robes and food, numerous dwelling places and large quantities of medicine. Thus, though he is avaricious, he pretends to be of little wants, and uses coarse requisites to make others think highly of him. This is called **Paccaya patisevana kuhana**, hypocrisy in use of requisites.

(ii) Without saying directly: “I have already attained *jhāna*, *magga* and *phala*”, he makes other people think that he is already in possession of them by insinuating: “The *bhikkhu* who wears such kind of robes is powerful, the *bhikkhu* who carries such a kind of bowl, such a kind of water filter, such a kind of water strainer, such a kind of waist-band, such a kind of sandal, is powerful.” This is called **Sāmaṇṭa Jappana**, hypocrisy in talk on subjects close to attainments of *jhāna*, *magga* and *phala*.

(iii) Determined on gaining the praise and high esteem of lay devotees, the *bhikkhu* thinks: “If I were to walk like this, people will praise me and think highly of me,” and effects the deportment of Noble Ones in going, standing, sitting and lying down. This is called **Iriyāpatha saṇṭhāpana**, hypocrisy in change of posture to deceive lay devotees.

(2) **Lapana** means talking with an evil motive. When the *bhikkhu* sees people coming to the monastery, he speaks to them first: “*Dayaka*, for what purpose do you come here? Do you come here to invite *bhikkhus*? If so, you go ahead, I will follow you carrying the bowl” or he says: “I am Tissa Thera. The king reveres me. The ministers revere me,” etc. While talking with the people, he takes care not to go against them, or to bore them, thus avoiding their displeasure. He flatters them, calling: “a great banker”, “a great miller”, etc. Talking thus in many ways to wheedle alms from lay devotees is called **Lapana**.

(3) **Nemittikā** means hinting by making signs or giving indications with an evil motive to induce charity. For example, seeing a man carrying some food, he gives an indication that he also wants some food by saying: “Have you already got food? Where have you got it from? How do you manage to get it?” etc. Seeing cowherds, he points to the calves and says: “Do these calves grow up on milk or water?” The cowherds reply: “Venerable sir, the calves grow up on milk.” “I don't think so. Should the calves get milk, the *bhikkhus* would have got it, too”, etc. thus sending the message through to their parents to offer them milk. Hinting thus to induce charity is called **Nemittikā**.

The forms of talk which gives more direct and glaring indications of what one wants is called *sāmaṇṭa jappa*. Both *nemittikā* and *sāmaṇṭa jappa* being different kinds of *Lapana*, are of evil nature.

In describing the *sāmaṇṭa jappa* kind of talk which indicates unmistakably the object of desire, the **Visuddhi-magga** gives the story of a *kulupaka bhikkhu*, a *bhikkhu* who habitually visited lay people.

The Story of A Kulupaka Bhikkhu

Wanting a meal, a *bhikkhu*, who was in the habit of visiting lay people, entered a house and took a seat uninvited. Seeing the *bhikkhu* and unwilling to give food to him, the woman of the house grumbled: “I haven't got any rice,” went out as though to look for some and stayed at a nearby house. The *bhikkhu* then stealthily went into an inner room and looking everywhere saw sugarcane in the corner behind the door, lumps of jaggery in a bowl, flattened piece of dried fish in a basket, rice in a pot and butter in a jar. Thereafter, he returned to his seat and sat there as before.

The woman came back murmuring: “I didn't get any rice.” The *bhikkhu* then said: “*Dayika*, this morning I saw some signs suggesting that I would get nothing to eat.” “What signs, Venerable Sir?” the woman asked. “As I came to this house for alms-food, I saw on the way a snake as big as sugarcane in the corner behind the door. To drive it away, I looked for something and found a stone which was as big as the lump of jaggery in your bowl. When I hurled the stone at the snake, its hood spread out to the size of the piece of flattened dried fish in your basket. When the snake opened its mouth to bite the stone it

showed its teeth and fangs which were like the rice-grains in your pot. The foamy saliva mixed with poison of the angry snake was like the butter in your jar.” Caught inextricably in the web of words which glaringly indicates his wish, the woman thought to herself: “Here is no way to deceive the shaven head!” And she reluctantly gave him the sugarcane, cooked the rice and offered it to him together with the butter, jaggery and dried fish.

(4) **Nippesikatā**, another form of wickedness, means pursuit of gain by wiping off or grinding or pulverising the virtuous qualities of a lay devotee like pursuit of perfume by grinding or pulverising scented materials. Such pursuit is made in many ways: use of abusive language to compel one to give; reproach by saying: “You are a fellow with no faith at all”, “You are not like other devotees”; sarcasm, by saying to one who does not give: “Oh, what a donor! Oh, what a great donor”; ridiculing remark made to a non-giver in the midst of people by saying: “Why do you say that this man does not offer anything? He always gives the words: ‘I have nothing’ to everyone who comes for alms.” Such pursuit of gain by belittling the virtuous qualities of lay devotees is called **Nippesikatā**.

(5) **Lābbhena lābham nijigisanatā** means pursuit of gain with gain motivated by covetousness. For example, after receiving some food offered at a *dayaka's* house, a *bhikkhu* gives it away to the children in the neighbourhood. He does so just to make the families of children give him more in return to express their thanks and delight (for his seeming interest in their children). In brief, seeking for more alms from another house by giving away the few offerings he has already received is called **Lābbhena lābham nijigisanatā**.

The five kinds of wrong livelihood, such as *Kuhana*, etc. described above, are different from one another only in the manner of pursuance in their nature, they are all the same, i.e. beguiling lay devotees into giving him offerings reluctantly.

Thus living on things obtained by infringing the six *sikkhāpadas* laid down by the Buddha with regard to livelihood as stated before and so things obtained by evil practices of *kuhana*, *lapana*, *nemittikatā*, *nippesikatā* and *lābbhena lābham nijigisanatā*, is called **Micchājīva** (Wrong Livelihood). Refraining from all forms of wrong livelihood and becoming pure in means of living is called **Ajivapārisuddhi-sīla**.

(d) Paccayasannissita-sīla

Morality fulfilled by depending on the four requisites is called **Paccayasannissita-sīla**.

The four requisites are robes, food, dwelling place and medicine. They are indispensable; living is impossible without them. But when using them, one should reflect on the nature of the requisite concerned so that such evils as greed, hatred, etc. may not arise.

The way in which one should reflect: (While using robes) without considering it as an embellishment (which will cause arising of demeritorious thoughts), one reflects on it wisely: “For the purpose of protection from the cold, I wear this robe; for the purpose of protection from the heat of the sun, I wear this robe; for the purpose of protection from contact with mosquitoes, gad-flies, wind, heat of the sun, snakes, scorpions, fleas, etc. I wear this robe; for the purpose of concealing the private parts of the body (that would disturb conscience), I wear this robe.”

(While using alms-food) one reflects wisely: “I take this alms-food not for amusement as children do; I take this alms-food not for intoxication with manliness; I take this alms-food not for development of body beauty; I take this alms-food not for a clear skin and complexion. I take this alms-food only for long endurance and maintenance of the body; I take this alms-food for warding off the oppression of hunger; I take this alms-food for facilitating the noble practice. By thus taking alms-food, the old suffering of hunger and thirst will be got rid of; I will also ward off the new suffering of indigestion due to overeating, etc. By moderate eating, the old suffering of hunger and thirst and the new suffering of indigestion due to over-eating cannot arise, and my body will be maintained. This alms-food is sought properly and eaten in a blameless manner and by taking it moderately I shall live in comfort.”

With regard to living in comfort by eating moderately, the Buddha expounded:

*Cattāro pañca ālope,
abhutvā udakam pive.
Alam phāsuviharāya,
pahitattassa bhikkhuno.*

With four or five morsels still to eat, a *bhikkhu* should finish off his meal by drinking water. This is sufficient to abiding in comfort of the *bhikkhu* with resolute will for meditation.

Even though this discourse was expounded by the Buddha primarily to meditating yogis, it is also beneficial to non-meditators. By following this instruction, they can abide in ease, free from discomfort of immoderate eating.

(While using a dwelling place) one reflects: “I use this dwelling place for the purpose of protection from the cold; I use this dwelling place for the purpose of protection from the heat of the sun; I use this dwelling place for the purpose of protection from mosquitoes, gadflies, wind, heat of the sun, snakes, scorpions, fleas, etc. I use this dwelling place to ward off the perils of extreme climates and for enjoying (secluded living).”

(While using medicine) one reflects: “I take this medicine for the purpose of countering illness, for the protection of life and for immunity from afflictions that have arisen or are arising.”

This elaborate manner of reflection is called **Mahā Paccavekkhanā**.

How to fulfil these four kinds of *sīla*

Of these four kinds, the **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla** should be fulfilled with faith and confidence (*saddhā*): faith and confidence in the Buddha thus, “The Exalted One who has promulgated the *sikkhāpadas* is truly a Buddha who realizes all the Laws of Nature without exception, (i.e. having a clear vision of the Buddha)”; faith and confidence in the Dhamma thus, “The *sikkhāpadas* to be practised by the Sangha are indeed those promulgated by the Buddha. (i.e. having a clear vision of the Dhamma)”; faith and confidence in the Sangha thus, “Members of the Sangha are the disciples of the Buddha, all of whom practising well these *sikkhāpadas* (i.e. having a clear vision of the Sangha).”

Thus, if one has faith and confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, one would be able to fulfil the **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla**.

Therefore, the *sikkhāpadas* as promulgated by the Buddha should be observed without exception, with faith and confidence and should be fulfilled even at the cost of one's life. The Buddha, indeed, has expounded thus: “*Kiki va andam camarīva vāladhim*, etc. — Just as the female pheasant guards her eggs, even sacrificing her life, just as the yak (*camari*) guards its tail, even sacrificing its life, just as the householder guards his only son with loving-kindness, just as the one-eyed man protects his only eye with meticulous care, even so the observers of moral precepts in all three ages should have a high regard for the *sīla*, and guarding it with affection.”

The Story of Elders who fulfilled Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla at The Cost of Their Lives

Once, in Mahāvattani forest grove of Sri Lanka, robbers caught a *thera* and bound him with creepers and made him lie down. Even though he could free himself with his effort, if he desired, he feared that should he make a struggle the black creepers would break and he would be guilty of ‘*Bhūtagāma pācittiya āpatti*’. So he developed Vipassanā Insight by meditation for seven days in his lying posture, attained the *anāgāmi-phala*, the Fruition State of Non-Returner, and passed away on the very spot. He was reborn in the Brahmā-world.

Also in Sri Lanka, a Venerable was similarly mistreated by robbers. At that time a forest fire broke out. Even though he could manage to free himself, he feared that he might be guilty of ‘*Bhūtagāma pācittiya āpatti*’. By developing Vipassanā Insight without cutting the creepers, he became a *Samāsisi arahat*, whose defilements and life span ended at the same

time, and attained *parinibbāna*. Then Abhaya Thera, the Dighanikāya Reciter together with five hundred *bhikkhus*, arrived on the scene. Seeing the body of the Venerable, he had it cremated properly and a shrine built. Therefore, it is stated in the commentary:

*Pātimokkham visodhento,
appeva jīvitam jahe.
Paññattam lokanathena,
na bhinde sīla samvaram.*

The good man who maintains the purity of the **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla** would sacrifice his own life rather than break the precepts laid down by the Buddha.

Just as **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla** is fulfilled with faith and confidence, so also **Indriyasamvara-sīla** should be fulfilled with mindfulness. Only when **Indriyasamvara-sīla** is well-guarded by mindfulness, **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla** will endure long. When **Indriyasamvara-sīla** is broken, **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla** will be broken too.

At the time of the Buddha, a newly ordained *bhikkhu*, Venerable Vangisa, while going on alms-round broke **Indriyasamvara-sīla** losing his restraint of faculties and was filled with lust on seeing a woman. He said to Ānanda: “Venerable Ānanda, I am burning with sensual lust, my mind is consumed by the flames of lust. Out of compassion, please teach me the Dhamma to extinguish the burning flames.”

Then the Venerable Ānanda replied: “As you perceive wrongly, the burning flames consume your mind. Dispel your perception of pleasantness in what you see, for it leads to lust; see foulness there to purify your mind.” The Venerable Vangisa followed the Venerable Ānanda’s advice and the burning fires of lust died down.

There are two other examples which should be followed by one who wishes to fulfil **Indriyasamvara-sīla**.

The Story of Venerable Cittagutta

In the great cave Kurandaka, in Sri Lanka, there was a lovely painting depicting the renunciation of the Seven Buddhas, such as Vipassī, etc. A number of guest *bhikkhus* wandering amidst the dwellings, saw the painting and said: “Venerable Sir, what a lovely painting it is in your cave!” The Venerable replied: “For more than sixty years, friends, I have lived in the cave, and I did not know whether there was any painting or not. Today, I come to know about it through you who have very keen eyesight.” (Though the Venerable had lived there for more than sixty years, he had never raised his eyes and looked up at the cave even once. And, at the entrance of his cave, there was a great ironwood tree. The Venerable had never looked up at the tree either. But seeing the flower petals on the ground each year, he knew it was in bloom.)

Hearing the Venerable’s strict observance of **Indriyasamvara-sīla**, the King of Mahāgama sent for him three times, desiring to pay homage to him. When the Venerable did not go, the King had the breasts of all the women with infants in the village bound and sealed off, saying: “As long as the Venerable does not come, let the children go without milk.” Out of compassion for the children the Venerable went to Mahāgama.

Being informed that the Venerable had arrived, the King said: “Go and bring the Thera into the palace. I want to take the precepts.” In the inner chamber, the King paid homage to the Venerable and provided him with a meal, after which, he said: “Venerable Sir, it is not opportune for me today to take the precepts. I shall do so tomorrow.” Carrying the Venerable’s bowl, he followed him for a short distance and paid homage with the Queen. Whether it was the King or the Queen who paid homage to him, the Venerable gave the blessing: “May the King be happy!” Seven days went by in this manner.

The fellow-*bhikkhus* asked him: “Venerable Sir, why it is that, whether it is the King or the Queen who pays homage, you say: ‘May the King be happy?’” The Venerable replied: “Friends, I have no particular awareness whether it is the King or the Queen.” At the end

of seven days, when the King found that the Venerable was not happy living there, he allowed him to leave. He went back to the great cave at Kurandaka. When night came, he went out onto his walk.

A deva, who dwelt in the ironwood tree, stood by with a torch. The Venerable's meditation was so pure and bright that it gladdened him. Immediately after the middle watch, he attained arahatship, making the whole mountain resound with a thunderous roar.

(This story gives a good example of how *Indriyasamvara* should be observed.)

The Story of Venerable Mahā-Mitta

The Venerable Mahā-Mitta's mother was sick with a breast tumour. She told her daughter, who also had gone forth as a *bhikkhuni*: "Go to your brother. Tell him my trouble and bring back some medicine." She went and told him, but he said: "I do not know how to gather herbs and concoct a medicine from them. But I will rather tell you a kind of medicine: 'Since I became a recluse, I have not broken my *Indriyasamvara-sīla* by looking at the bodily form of the opposite sex with lustful thoughts.' By this declaration of truth, may my mother get well. Go back and repeat the words of truth I have just uttered and rub her body." She went back and reported to her mother what her brother had told her and did as she has been instructed. At that very moment, the mother's tumour vanished like a lump of froth breaking into pieces. She got up and uttered with joy: "If the Fully Enlightened One were still alive, why should he not stroke with His net-adorned hand¹³ the head of a *bhikkhu* like my son!"

The Venerable Mahā Mitta's way of restraint of the faculties is somewhat different from that of the former Venerable Cittagutta. Venerable Cittagutta restrained his faculties with down-cast eyes so as not to look at any of the objects even by chance, whereas Venerable Mahā Mitta did not restrain with down-cast eyes, he looked at things as they presented themselves. Even when he caught the sight of the opposite sex, he restrained his faculty of eye to prevent lust from arising.

The Venerable Cittagutta's way of restraint of the faculties is like the closing of the door of the house completely, not letting any robbers to come in. The Venerable Mahā Mitta's way of restraint is not closing the door, but keeping the robbers from entering the house even once. Both types of restraint are marvellous and worthy of emulation.

While restraint of the faculties is to be undertaken with mindfulness (*sati*), purification of livelihood is to be practised with energy (*vīriya*). This is because one is able to abandon wrong livelihood only by applying right energy. Therefore, avoiding unbefitting, improper means, purification of livelihood should be undertaken with the right kind of search like going on alms round with energy.

No hint, roundabout talk, indication or intimation is allowable to acquire such requisites as robes and alms food. But, as regards acquiring a dwelling place, only intimation is not allowable.

'Hint': when a *bhikkhu*, who is preparing the ground, etc. as if to build a dwelling place, is asked: "What is being done, Venerable Sir? Who is having it done?" and he replies: "No one."; such a reply of his is a 'hint' (implying that there is no donor yet for the dwelling place). All other actions which communicate his need for a residence also constitute a hint.

'Roundabout talk': a *bhikkhu* asks a lay devotee: "What kind of a house do you live in?" "In a mansion. Venerable Sir." "But, *dāyaka*, is a mansion not allowed for *bhikkhus*?" This and any such expressions constitute a 'roundabout talk'.

'Indication': "The dwelling place is too small for the community of *bhikkhus*" or any other such suggestive talks constitute an 'Indication'.

All four forms of talk, such as hint, etc., are allowed in the case of medicine. But when

13. It is one of the 32 distinctive marks of a Grest Being (*Mahāpurisa Lakkhana*.) For details, refer to *Digha Nikāya*, Vol II & III.

the disease is cured, is it or is it not allowed to use the medicine obtained in this way? Herein, the Vinaya specialists say that since the Buddha has opened the way for its use, it is allowable. But the Suttanta specialists maintain that though there is no offence, nevertheless the purity of livelihood is sullied; therefore, it is not allowable. But one who wishes to live a completely pure noble life should not use hint, roundabout talk, indication or intimation, even though these are permitted by the Blessed One. Endowed as he is with special qualities such as having few wants, etc. he should make use only of requisites obtained by means other than hint, etc. even when he is to risk his life. Such a one is called a person of extremely noble, austere practice like the Venerable Sāriputta.

The Story of Venerable Sāriputta

Once, the Venerable Sāriputta, wishing to cultivate noble life, lived in a solitary place in a certain forest with the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna. One day, an affliction of colic arose in him, causing him great pain. In the evening, the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna went to confer with him and found him lying down. He asked: “What is the matter?” When the Venerable Sāriputta explained, he asked again: “What had helped you in the past?” The Venerable Sāriputta said: “When I was layman, friend, my mother gave me rice gruel prepared with a mixture of ghee, honey, sugar and so on. That used to make me recover.” Then the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna said: “So be it, friend, if either you or I have accumulated enough merit, perhaps tomorrow we shall get some.”

Now, a deva, who lived in a tree at the end of the walk, overheard their conversation. Thinking: “I will find rice gruel for the Venerable tomorrow”, he went immediately to the family who was supporting the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna and entered the eldest son's body to cause him discomfort. Then he told the boy's family, who had gathered, that if they would prepare rice gruel of such and such a kind next day for the Venerable, he would set the boy free.

They replied: “Even without being told by you, we regularly offer alms-food to the Venerable.” The next day they prepared rice gruel.

The Venerable Mahā Moggallāna went to the Venerable Sāriputta in the morning and told him: “Stay here, friend, till I come back from the alms round.” Then he went into the village. The people met him, took his bowl, filled it with rice gruel prepared as required and gave it back to him. When the Venerable wanted to leave, they said: “Eat, Venerable Sir, we shall give you more.” When the Venerable had eaten, they gave him another bowlful. The Venerable left taking the alms-food to the Venerable Sāriputta, and told him to eat. When the Venerable Sāriputta saw it, he thought: “The rice gruel is very nice. How was it got?” He then reflected and, seeing how it had been obtained, said: “Friend, the alms-food is not fit to be used.” Instead of feeling offended and thinking: “He does not eat the alms-food brought by someone like me”, the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna at once took the bowl by the rim and turned it over. (Not because he was angry.)

As the rice gruel fell on the ground, the Venerable Sāriputta's affliction vanished. (And it did not re-appear during the remaining forty-five years of his life.) Then he said to the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna: “Friend, even if one's bowels come out and fall to the ground in a whole coil through hunger, it is not fitting to eat gruel got by verbal intimation.”

Herein, it should be noted: the Blessed One prohibited only verbal intimation about the food. The Venerable Sāriputta did not use verbal intimation to get the food. When the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna wanted to know what had cured his affliction before, he only related the relief given by rice gruel in the past. However, he was not pleased that a verbal intimation had been made at all and did not accept the rice gruel.

The Story of Venerable Ambakhadaka Mahā Tissa

Let alone a *thera* of the Venerable Sāriputta's stature during the lifetime of the Buddha, even little known Mahā Tissa of Ciragumba in Sri Lanka, long after the demise of the Buddha, had strictly observed the disciplinary rules. Once Mahā Tissa, while travelling during a famine, became weary and weak owing to lack of food and tedious journey. So, he

lay down at the foot of a mango tree, which was full of fruit. Several mangoes fell everywhere on the ground near him. But he would not think of picking up some to eat in spite of his hunger.

At that time, an old man came near him and, seeing him in the state of exhaustion, prepared some mango juice and offered to him. Then, carrying him on his back, the man took him where he wanted to go. While being carried thus, the Mahā Tissa thought to himself: "This man is not my father, nor my mother, nor any relative of mine. Yet, he carries me on his back; this is only because of the morality I possess." Reflecting thus he admonished himself to keep his morality and concentration of mind intact without blemishes. He then developed Vipassanā Insight and while still being carried on the back of the man, he attained arahatship through successive stages of the Path.

This Venerable is a noble person whose abstemiousness in food serves as an example for emulation.

While Purification of livelihood (**Ajivapārisuddhi-sīla**) is to be practised with energy (*vīriya*), Morality which depends upon the four requisites (**Paccaya sannissita-sīla**) should be fulfilled with wisdom (*paññā*). Since only men of wisdom can discern the advantages and dangers of the four requisites, **Paccaya sannissita-sīla** is the morality which is fulfilled through wisdom. Therefore, one should make use of the four requisites, which have been obtained lawfully, without craving for them and after reflecting with wisdom in the aforesaid manner.

Two Kinds of Reflection (**Paccavekkhanā**)

There are two kinds of reflection (*paccavekkhanā*) on the four requisites (1) reflection at the time of receiving them and (2) reflection at the time of using them. Not only at the time of using the requisites but also at the time of receiving them one reflects either (a) as mere elements (**Dhātu paccavekkhanā**), or (b) as repulsive objects (**Patikūla paccavekkhanā**) and put them away for later use.

- (a) Reflection as elements: This robe (etc.) is a mere aggregate of eight elements which arise when conditions are present. So is the person who uses them.
- (b) Reflection as repulsive objects: Reflection on food as in meditation on perception of foulness in nutriment (*Ahare patikula sanna*); and reflection on robes, etc. thus: "All these robes, etc. which are not in themselves disgusting become utterly repulsive when associated with this filthy body."

(To recapitulate, reflection is of three kinds in all: (1) **Mahā paccavekkhanā** as described in detail regarding the use in general of the four requisites, (2) **Dhātu paccavekkhana**, reflecting on the four requisites as mere elements, and (3) **Patikūdamanasikāra paccavekkhanā** reflection on them as repulsive objects whether in their own nature or when put in use.)

If a *bhikkhu* reflects on the robes, etc. at the time of receiving them and if he does again at the time of use, his use of the requisites is blameless from beginning to end.

Four Kinds of Use

To dispel doubts about use of requisites, one should take note of four kinds of their use:

(a) **Theyya paribhoga**

Use like an act of thieving (theyya paribhoga): use of requisites by an immoral person even in the midst of the Sangha is called theyya paribhoga.

(The Blessed One has permitted the use of the four requisites for men of morality. Lay devotees also make their offerings to virtuous persons only, expecting great benefit for their good deeds. Therefore, immoral persons have no right whatever to enjoy the requisites.

Hence, using them without such right by immoral persons resembles an act of thieving.)

— Visuddhi-magga Mahā Tīkā —

(b) Ina paribhoga

Use like owing debt (*ina paribhoga*): use of requisites by a moral person without due reflection is like owing a debt. One should reflect every time a robe is used; every time a morsel of food is eaten. Failing to do so at the time of using these requisites, one should reflect on them in the morning, at dusk, during the first watch, middle watch and last watch of the night. If dawn breaks without his making such reflection, he finds himself in the position of one who owes a debt.

Every time he passes under the roof to enter the dwelling place and after entering it, every time he sits, every time he lies down, he should make due reflection. In receiving a requisite of medicine and in using it, he should make reflection. But if he makes reflection while receiving and fails to do so when using it, he is guilty of an offence. On the other hand, even if he fails to make reflection when receiving but does when using it, he is free from guilt.

Four Kinds of Purification of Sīla

If a bhikkhu happens to have committed an offence, he should take a recourse to any of the four kinds of purification of his morality as mentioned below:

- (1) Purification by admission of fault (*desanā suddhi*): **Patimokkāsamvara-sīla** is purified by open declaration of its breach.
- (2) Purification by restraint (*samvara suddhi*): **Indriyasamvara-sīla** is purified by making the resolution, “Never will I do it again.”
- (3) Purification by search (*pariyetthi suddhi*): **Ajivapariuddhi-sīla** is purified by abandoning wrong search and seeking requisites in a lawful manner.
- (4) Purification by reflection (*paccavekkanā suddhi*): **Paccayasannissita-sīla** is purified by reflection according to the manner mentioned above.

(c) Dāyajja paribhoga

Use like getting an inheritance (*dāyajja paribhoga*): use of requisite by the seven kinds of Learners (*sekkha* implying Noble Ones who have realized three lower Paths and three lower Fruition States and the Path of arahatship). These seven kinds of Learners are sons of the Buddha. Just as a son is a heir to his father, these noble persons, as heirs, make use of the requisites allowed by the Buddha. (Although the requisites are, in practice, given by the laity, yet they are allowed by the Buddha and thus they are to be considered as the Buddha's requisites.)

(d) Sami paribhoga

Use like a master by an arahat (*sami paribhoga*); worldlings (*puthujjanas*) and Learners (*sekkhas*) are not free from craving yet and accordingly, they remain subject to craving and their use of requisites is not as masters but as slaves of craving. On the other hand, Arahats have been liberated from servitude of craving and their use of requisites is as masters with full control over craving. Therefore, they can use disgusting things, reflecting on their non-disgusting nature or they can use non-disgusting things reflecting on their disgusting nature, or they can use reflecting on them as neither disgusting nor non-disgusting things.

Of these four kinds of use, use like a master by an *arahat* and use like getting an inheritance are allowable to all. Herein, as said before, use of requisites like a master is applicable only to *arahats*; but if *sekkhas* and *puthujjanas* use the requisites by abandoning craving through perception of their foulness, it is like being liberated from servitude of craving; therefore, this kind of use may also be classed as use like a master by an *arahat*, **sami paribhoga**. In the same way, *arahats* and *puthujjanas* may also be considered as inheriting sons of the Buddha.

Use like owing a debt is not allowable, more so is the use like an act of thieving which is certainly not allowable. Use of requisites after reflection by one endowed with morality is opposite to use like owing a debt, **ina paribhoga** and is thus called use without owing a debt, **ananya paribhoga**. At the same time *puthujjanas*

endowed with morality who use the requisites after due reflection may be reckoned as a *sekkha*, noble person. Therefore, use of requisites after due reflection by such *puthujjanas* endowed with morality is also reckoned as use like getting an inheritance.

Of these four kinds of use, use like a master by an *arahat* is the noblest; a bhikkhu who wishes to use the requisites like a master should fulfil the *Paccayasannissita-sīla* by using the four requisites only after due reflection.

Morality in Groups of Fives

(1) Morality is of five kinds:

- (a) Pariyanta Parisuddhi Sīla,
- (b) Apariyanta Parisuddhi Sīla,
- (c) Paripunna Parisuddhi Sīla,
- (d) Aparāmattha Parisuddhi Sīla, and
- (e) Patippassaddhi Parisuddhi Sīla.

(a) Morality consisting in limited purification (**Pariyanta Parisuddhi Sīla**). Morality observed by lay devotees and *sāmaṇeras* are called morality consisting in limited purification, because it is limited by the number of precepts to be kept.

The **Visuddhi-magga** does explain the limit by the number of the precepts in **Pariyanta Parisuddhi Sīla**. But the **Patisambhidā Magga Commentary** explains, as has been mentioned before, two kinds of limit (i) limit regarding the number of precepts observed (**Sikkhāpada pariyanta**); (ii) limit regarding the period of observance of precepts (**Kala pariyanta**).

- (i) Limit regarding the number of precepts observed: this refers to the number of precepts traditionally observed by lay devotees, namely, one, two, three or four precepts; five, eight or ten precepts (whatever number of precepts they can observe). Probationers, *sāmaṇeras* and *sāmaṇerīs* keep the ten precepts. This is the limit regarding the number of precept observed.
- (ii) Limit regarding the period of observance of precepts: when lay devotees make a ceremonial offering of alms, they also observe precepts within the limited period of the ceremony; whenever they go to monastery too, they observe precepts before returning home, or for a few days or more during day-time or night-time. This is the limit regarding the period of observance of precepts.

(b) Morality without limit (**Apariyanta pārisuddhi Sīla**). The **Dve Matika** which is the summary of the **Ubhato Vibhanga** enumerates 227 *sikkhāpadas* for members of the Sangha. When expanded, these *sikkhāpadas* total up to nine thousand, one hundred and eighty crores, five million and thirty-six thousand. These disciplinary rules for *bhikkhus* are promulgated by the Buddha and were recorded in brief by the Convenors of the First Council. The whole group of these disciplinary rules is called **Apariyanta parisuddhi Sīla**.

Though the disciplinary rules are laid down by the Buddha in a definite number, the Sangha has to observe all of them without exception; furthermore, it is impossible to foresee the termination of observance of *sīla* through five kinds of destruction, namely, that due to gain, that due to fame, that due to relatives, that due to impairment of body and that due to loss of life. For these reasons, these disciplinary rules are collectively called **Apariyanta parisuddhi Sīla**. This is the kind of *sīla* observed by the Venerable Mahā Tissa of Ciraḡumba described above.

(c) Morality which is completely purified by a worldling who is striving for the spiritual good is called **Paripunna parisuddhi Sīla**. His morality, since the time of admission to the Order, has been very pure like a bright ruby properly cut or like well refined gold. Therefore, it is devoid of even the stain of impure thoughts and becomes the approximate cause for arahatship. Hence it is named **Paripunna parisuddhi Sīla**. The Venerable Mahā

Sangharakkhita and his nephew, Venerable Sangharakkhita, set examples of how such *sīla* is to be observed.

The Story of Venerable Mahā Sangharakkhita

While the Venerable Mahā Sangharakkhita of over sixty years standing in the Order (aged eighty) was lying on his death bed, *bhikkhus* enquired of him: “Venerable Sir, have you attained the supramundane states?” The Venerable replied: “I have not made any such attainment yet.” At that time a young *bhikkhu* attendant of the Venerable addressed him: “Venerable Sir, people living within twelve leagues have assembled here thinking that the Venerable One has passed into *parinibbāna*. If they come to know that you have passed away as an ordinary worldling, they will be much disappointed.”

Then the Venerable said, “Friend, thinking I will see the coming Buddha Metteya, I have not strived for Vipassanā Insight meditation. If it will be a disappointment for many, help me to sit up and give me a chance to contemplate with mindfulness.” The young *bhikkhu* helped the Venerable to sit up and went out. As soon as the young *bhikkhu* left the room the Venerable attained arahatship and gave a sign by a snap of his fingers. The young *bhikkhu* then returned and made him lie down as before. He reported the matter to the Sangha who assembled and addressed the Venerable: “Venerable Sir, you have performed such a difficult task of attaining the supramundane state even when so close to death.” The Venerable replied: “Friends, it is not difficult for me to attain arahatship when the hour of death is drawing near. Rather, I will tell you what is really difficult to perform. Friends, I see no action which I have done without mindfulness and full comprehension since the time of my admission into the Order. It is only such kind of action which is always accompanied by mindfulness and full comprehension that is far more difficult to do.”

The Venerable's nephew also attained arahatship like him when he completed fifty-sixth year as a *bhikkhu*.

(d) Morality unaffected by wrong view and observed by *sekkha*, noble persons and morality untarnished by lust, and observed by worldlings are called **Aparāmattha pārisuddhi Sīla**, the kind of morality observed by the Venerable Tissa the householder's son.

The Story of The Venerable Tissa, The Son of A Householder

A householder in Sri Lanka had two sons. After the death of their father, the elder son, Tissa, gave all inheritance to his younger brother and became a *bhikkhu*, practising meditation in a jungle monastery. Then the younger brother's wife thought to herself: “Now we get all the wealth because my brother-in-law became a *bhikkhu*. If he decides to return to layman's life, we will have to give him back half the wealth. There is no knowing whether he will do so or not. We will have peace of mind only when he dies.” With this thought she engaged some men to kill her brother-in-law.

The men went to the jungle monastery and seized the Venerable Tissa in the evening. The Venerable told them that he possessed nothing which they might want. The men explained: “We do not come here to get your wealth. We come here to kill you (at the instance of your sister-in-law).” The Venerable said: “I possess pure *sīla*, but I haven't yet attained *arahatta-phala*. As I want to achieve arahatship depending on this pure *sīla*, allow me to practise Vipassanā Meditation before dawn.” “We cannot grant your request. If you run away during the night, we will have to take the trouble of catching you again.” Saying: “I will let you see clearly how I cannot run away,” the Venerable broke his two knees himself with a big stone.

When both knees were completely broken thus, the Venerable said: “Now you have seen my condition. By no means can I run away from you. I abhor to die as a worldling with sensual lust. I feel ashamed of it.” Only then did the men give him permission to practise meditation. Then the Venerable, depending upon his *sīla* which was not tarnished by lust, made efforts throughout the night until dawn when he attained arahatship.

The Story of A Senior Monk

Once there was a senior monk who was very ill and unable to eat with his hands. He lay rolling smeared with his own urine and excrement. Seeing him a young *bhikkhu*, he exclaimed: “Oh, how painful is the life process!” The senior monk said: “Friend, if I die now I will surely achieve divine bliss. I have no doubt of that. The bliss obtained by breaking¹⁴ this *sīla* is like forsaking monkhood and becoming a lay man. But I am determined to die with my *sīla* intact.¹⁵” So saying he lay in the same place, contemplating on the same illness inherent in the five aggregates of mind and matter and attained arahatship.

(The *sīla* of these noble Venerables is **Aparamattha-sīla**.)

(e) Morality of *arahats*, etc.¹⁶ which is purified through subsidence of the fires of defilements is called **Patipassaddhi pārisuddhi Sīla**.

Again:

(2) Morality is of five kinds:

- (a) *Pahāna-sīla*
- (b) *Veramani-sīla*
- (c) *Cetanā-sīla*
- (d) *Samrata-sīla*
- (e) *Avitikkama-sīla*

(a) Morality observed by abandoning killing, etc. is called Morality of abandoning (**Pahāna-sīla**). (Here ‘etc.’ covers not only the wrong deeds of stealing, sexual misconduct and so on but also abandoning of everything that ought to be abandoned through successive stages of meritorious deeds. In terms of Abhidhamma, ‘abandoning’ (*pahāna*) means a group of wholesome consciousness together with their mental concomitants which are characterised by their function of abandoning everything that is to be abandoned wherever necessary.)

(b) Morality observed by abstaining from killing, etc. is called Morality of abstention (**Veramani-sīla**). In terms of Abhidhamma, it is a group of wholesome consciousness together with their mental concomitants headed by *virati cetasika*.

(c) Morality observed by volition which associates avoidance of killing, etc. with consciousness is called Morality of Volition (**Cetanā-sīla**).

(d) Morality observed by preventing thoughts of wrong deeds, such as killing, etc. from defiling the mind is called Morality of Restraint (**Samvara-sīla**). In terms of Abhidhamma, it is a group of wholesome consciousness together with their mental concomitants headed by *sati cetasika*.

(e) Morality observed by not committing wrong deeds, such as killing, etc. is called Morality of Non-transgression (**Avitikkama-sīla**). In terms of Abhidhamma it is wholesome consciousness together with their mental concomitants.

(These five kinds of morality beginning with **Pahāna-sīla** are not separate ones like other sets of *sīla*; observance of one, e.g. *Pahāna Sīla*, by abandoning killing, etc. means observance of all the remaining ones as well.)

Defilement and Purification of Morality

(6) WHAT IS DEFILEMENT OF MORALITY?

(7) WHAT IS PURIFICATION OF MORALITY?

14. To break *sīla* means to die without becoming an *arahat*.

15. “*Sīla* intact” means passing away only after attaining arahatship.

16. Here ‘etc.’ means refers to other Enlightened Ones, namely, Paccekabuddhas and Sammāsambuddhas.

In answering these questions, Defilement and Purification of morality should be explained together.

Defilement of Morality means impairment of morality; and in reverse, non-impairment of morality is Purification of Morality.

Impairment of morality may arise through destruction due to gain, fame, etc. or through seven minor acts of sexuality.

To explain further:

Of the seven groups of transgression (*āpatti*)¹⁷, if a *sikkhāpada* of the first or the last group is impaired due to craving for gain, fame, etc. a *bhikkhu's sīla* is said to be torn like the cloth which is cut at the edge.

If a *sikkhāpada* in the middle group is impaired, his *sīla* is said to be rent like the cloth having a hole in the middle.

If two or three *sikkhāpadas* are impaired serially, his *sīla* is said to be blotched like a cow having irregular marks of brown, red and other colours on her back or belly.

If the *sikkhāpadas* are impaired at intervals, his *sīla* is said to be mottled like a cow having variegated spots of different colours on her body.

Thus impairment of morality through tearing, rending, blotching or mottling due to gain, fame, etc. is Defilement of Morality.

Even in the absence of impairment of morality through tearing, rending, blotching or mottling, there can be defilement of morality through seven minor acts of sexuality.

The seven minor acts of sexuality are expounded elaborately by the Buddha in the Jānussoṇi Sutta of Mahāyaṇa Vagga, Sattaka Nipāta of the Aṅguttara Nikāya. They may be mentioned briefly as follows:

- (i) An ascetic or a brahmin claiming to be leading the noble life does not have actual sexual intercourse with a woman, but enjoys being caressed, massaged, bathed and rubbed down by her. (He loves to be attended upon in person by a woman.)
- (ii) He does not have sexual intercourse with a woman, he does not enjoy being attended upon in person by her, but he enjoys joking and laughing with her.
- (iii) Or else, he enjoys staring and gazing at a woman eye to eye.
- (iv) Or else, he enjoys listening to a woman on the other side of a wall or a fence as she laughs, talks, sings or cries.
- (v) Or else, he enjoys recollecting frequently how he has talked, laughed and played with a woman formerly.
- (vi) Or else, he enjoys seeing a householder or his son who possesses five kinds of worldly pleasures and who is being served by a host of servants and attendants.
- (vii) Or else, he enjoys longing for a divine abode and leads the noble life with the wish: "With this *sīla*, with this practice, with this effort and with this noble life, may I be reborn as a great deva or some deva."

Thus impairment of morality through tearing, rending, blotching or mottling due to gain, fame, etc. and also through seven minor acts of sexuality is Defilement of Morality.

Purification of morality characterized by non-tearing, non-rending, non-blotching or non-mottling of *sīla* is brought about:

- (a) by not transgressing any of the *sikkhāpadas*;
- (b) by taking proper remedial measure whenever there is transgression;

17. (1) Pārajika, (2) Sanghādisesa, (3) Thullaccaya, (4) Pācittiya, (5) Pātiesaniya, (6) Dukkata and (7) Dubbhisita.

- (c) by avoiding seven minor acts of sexuality; furthermore,
- (d) through non-arising of anger, grudge, disparagement, rivalry, jealousy, meanness-stinginess, deceit, hypocrisy and such evils, and
- (e) through development of such attributes as fewness of wishes, being easily satisfied, practice of austerity, etc.

These types of morality (*sīlas*), which are not torn, not rent, not blotched and not mottled, also assume other names such as, **Bhujissa-sīla** because they set one free from servitude of craving; **Vīṇūpasattha-sīla** because they are praised by the wise; **Aparāmattha-sīla** because they are not effected by craving: “My *sīla* is very pure, it will produce great beneficial results in future”, or by wrong personality belief: “This *sīla* is mine; my *sīla* is very pure; no one possesses *sīla* like mine”; **Samādhi samvattanika-sīla** because they are conducive to advancement towards Access Concentration (*Upacāra-samādhi*) and Absorption Concentration (*Appanā-samādhi*).

As stated above, these seven factors, namely, not torn, not rent, not blotched, not mottled, liberating, praised by the wise and not tarnished by craving and wrong view are the factors conducive to purification of morality. Only when morality is complete with these seven factors can it develop the aforesaid two kinds of concentration. Therefore, a noble person wishing to develop these two kinds of Concentration should earnestly endeavour to make his *sīla* complete with all these seven factors.

(c) The Perfection of Renunciation (Nekkhamma-Pāramī)

Nekkhamma means renunciation which is here synonymous with emancipation. Emancipation is of two kinds: emancipation from cycle of existences (*saṃsāra*) and emancipation from sense-desire (*kāma*), the former being the result of the latter. Only when emancipation from sense-desire has been achieved through practice, can one gain emancipation from *saṃsāra*. Of these two kinds of emancipation, it is for the purpose of the resultant emancipation (from existences) that the Buddha expounds in the Buddhavaṃsa Text, likening the three states of existence¹⁸ to prisons.

Essential Meaning of Perfection of Renunciation

According to the **Cariyāpīṭaka Commentary**, Perfection of Renunciation, in terms of Abhidhamma, is wholesome consciousness together with mental concomitants that arises by virtue of emancipation from sense-desire and from the three states of existence. The **Mahā Niddesa** describes two kinds of sense-desire: pleasant objects of sense-desire (*vatthu-kāma*), and mental defilement of greed which is desire for pleasant objects (*kilesa-kāma*). With reference to Perfection of Renunciation, emancipation from sense-desire means emancipation from both kinds of sense-desire.

How to be Mindful to achieve Emancipation

How to achieve emancipation from bonds of *kilesa-kāma* is explained in the **Mahā Niddesa Pāli**:

*Addasam kāma te mūlam sankappā kāma jāyasi
na tam sankappayissāmi evam kāma na hohisi.*

O greed, I have seen your source; you arise from my thoughts of pleasant objects of sense (**Kāma Vitakka**). No more will I think of any pleasant object of sense. Then, O greed, you will arise no more.

In this connection, three kinds of wrong thought and three kinds of right thought should be understood. The three kinds of wrong thought are:

18. The three states of existence are: (a) *Kāma-bhava*, the state of sensual existence, (b) *Rūpa-bhava*, the state of fine material existence and (c) *Arūpa-bhava*, the states of formless, non-material existence.

- (i) **Kāma Vitakka**, sensuous thought, i.e. thinking of pleasant objects as desirable things;
- (ii) **Byāpāda Vitakka**, hateful thought, i.e. thinking of harming others, and
- (iii) **Vihimsā Vitakka**, cruel thought, i.e. thinking of torturing others.

The three kinds of right thought are:

- (i) **Nekkhamma Vitakka**, thought of renunciation, i.e. thinking of emancipating oneself from sensuous objects.
- (ii) **Avyāpāda Vitakka**, thought of hatelessness, i.e. thinking of others with loving-kindness. and
- (iii) **Avihimsā Vitakka**, thought of non-violence, i.e. thinking of others with compassion.

The source of greed (*kilesa kāma*), on close examination is found to lie in sensuous thought (**Kāma Vitakka**) which is one of the three wrong thoughts. As long as one keeps on thinking of sensuous thought, greed continues to multiply and there is no emancipation from that mental defilement of greed. Only when one ceases to think of pleasant objects of sense-desire, greed will not arise and one achieves emancipation. Therefore, as stated above, one should be mindful to be free from mental defilement of greed. Just as freedom from sense-desire leads to freedom from cycle of *saṃsāra*, even so, making efforts to free oneself from greed results in freedom from pleasant objects of sense-desire.

The characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes of this Perfection of Renunciation and of the remaining ones are dealt in the Chapter: On Miscellany.

Relation between Renunciation and The Life of A Bhikkhu

The **Cariyapitaka Commentary** defines '*nekkhamma*': "*Nekkhammam pabbajja-mūlakam.*" This definition can be interpreted in two ways: "Emancipation has a *bhikkhu's* life as its cause," and "Emancipation is the cause of a *bhikkhu's* life." The first interpretation, namely, a *bhikkhu's* life as a cause of emancipation is in consonance with the narration in the **Mahā Janaka Jātaka**. King Mahā Janaka first acquired requisites of robes, a bowl etc. without the knowledge of his Queen, lesser Queens and royal attendants and he then went up to the upper terrace of his palace and became a *bhikkhu*; thereafter, he renounced the world. In this instance, the Bodhisatta Mahā Janaka became a *bhikkhu* before he made the renunciation. Therefore, it may be said that the *bhikkhu's* life is the cause and renunciation is the effect.

The second interpretation, namely, emancipation as a cause of *bhikkhu's* life, is in consonance with the stories of Sumedha the Wise, the Hatthipāla brothers, etc. Sumedha the Wise, first went forth and reaching Dhammika Mountain, found a dwelling place readily prepared by Sakka, King of Devas. Then only he became a *bhikkhu*. Similarly, the Hatthipala brothers went forth first and when pursued by the whole country led by royal parents, they became *bhikkhus*. Therefore, it may be said renunciation of Sumedha the Wise, Hatthipāla brothers etc. is the cause and the *bhikkhu's* life is the effect.

The **Cariyapitaka Commentary** gives the exposition in accordance with the first interpretation. (This is mentioned in detail in the Chapter: On Miscellany.) Though Sumedha the Wise, the Hatthipāla brothers, etc. renounced the world first and became *bhikkhus* afterwards, they did so only because they wanted a *bhikkhu's* life. Therefore, even though renunciation took place first, it may be said that a *bhikkhu's* life which follows later is the real cause. (For example, to construct a building, the wood is cut first. Although cutting of wood precedes construction, the wood is cut with the intention of constructing the building. Therefore, it should be said the desire to build the building is the cause and cutting of the wood is its effect.)

Five Kinds of Forest Dwelling

As expounded in the **Vinaya Parivāra Ekuttarikanaya pañcaka** and **Upāli Pañha**, Dhutanga **Vagga**, forest dwelling is of five kinds:

- i) Dwelling in the forest because of stupidity, dullness of mind, not knowing the

advantages and their causes;

- ii) Dwelling in the forest with an evil desire, “If I go and dwell in the forest, people will support me generously as a forest dweller”;
- iii) Dwelling in the forest because of insanity;
- iv) Dwelling in the forest because the practice is praised by the Buddhas and the virtuous; and
- v) Dwelling in the forest because one has few wishes, contentment and such virtues.

Only the last two of these kinds of forest dwelling are praiseworthy.

Perfection of Renunciation is not a matter of where one lives. Defilement of sense-desire (*kilesa-kāma*), craving for pleasant sensuous objects, is liable to arise anywhere. This defilement of sense-desire should be eradicated wherever it appears and not be permitted to thrive. Emancipation from defilement of sense-desire by eradication in this way is the true characteristic of renunciation.

As for Emancipation from pleasant objects of sense-desire, there are examples of Sumedha the Wise, the Hatthipala brothers etc. who went forth as far as the Himalayas. Therefore, it may be asked whether it is necessary for those who wish to fulfil Perfection of Renunciation (Emancipation from pleasant objects of sense-desire) to go forth as far as the Himalayas. One should do so if possible, or if one wishes to or if circumstances favour. In the Jātaka Stories concerning renunciation, the majority went forth up to the Himalayas. They did so as circumstances were favourable to them.

According to the Maghadeva Jātaka of the **Ekaka Nipata** and the Nimi Jātaka of the **Mahā Nipata**, the continuous line of rulers numbering eighty-four thousand, beginning with King Maghadeva to King Nimi, went forth from household life to homeless one as soon as a single hair on the head turned grey. However, none of them went up to the Himalayas. They repaired only to the royal mango grove near their capital city of Mithila. It is said that by strenuous practice of meditation they attained *jhānas* and were reborn in Brahmā realms. It is evident from these stories that, although not travelling as far as the Himalayas, just leaving the place, where mental defilement of greed thrives, is sufficient for successful fulfilment of Perfection of Renunciation. The eighty-four thousand kings such as Maghadeva completely abandoned their luxurious palaces, and by living in the mango grove, their Perfection of Renunciation was fulfilled.

Therefore, Perfection of Renunciation can be fulfilled by anyone who abandons completely the place where his mental defilement of greed flourishes and without establishing such new resorts, dwells in a suitable place free from such defilement.

Two Kinds of Renunciation

Renunciation of Bodhisattas is of two kinds:

- (i) Renunciation when they are young (and single), and
- (ii) Renunciation when they are old (and married).

Sumedha the Wise, the Hatthipāla brothers, etc. renounced the worldly life to escape from (bonds of) pleasant objects of sense-desire, namely, luxuries of their palaces or homes. Although the Jātakas referred to them as examples of those who fulfilled the Perfection of Renunciation, they were then mere youths still unmarried. They were possessors of pleasant objects of sense-desire, but it may be said that their ties to them were not so strong. Only older people living a household life with wife and children are tightly bound with these fetters of *vatthu-kāma*. In this connection, it may be said that renunciation by old married people is more difficult than that by younger persons. But some could point out that the renunciation by the Bodhisatta Prince Temiya, made at a time when he was only sixteen and unmarried was really an arduous one. But his difficulty arose not from the bonds of pleasant objects of sense-desire but from the great troubles of having to pretend to be cripple, deaf and dumb to make his renunciation possible. Therefore, although he faced much difficulty when contriving to make his renunciation, when he actually did so, he encountered little difficulty because he had only few fetters of pleasant

objects of sense desire.

The **Atthasālini** gives, in the chapter on Perfection of Renunciation, full accounts of *pāramī* fulfilled by the Bodhisatta when he was Prince Somanassa, Prince Hatthipāla, Prince Ayoghara, etc. in innumerable existences. The Commentary gives the special names of *Paramattha Pāramī*, Supreme Perfection, to the Perfection of Renunciation fulfilled by King Cūla Sutasoma.

In the case of Prince Somanassa, Prince Ayoghara, Prince Hatthipāla, and Prince Temiya, they were youthful persons at the time of their renunciation. Renunciation by King Mahā Janaka was more difficult than theirs because he was an older and married man. He became a *bhikkhu* without the knowledge of his Queen, lesser Queens and royal attendants. And only at the time of renunciation that he faced difficulty, as he was pursued by his Queens and retinue to persuade him to return to them. They had not taken any measures to ensure that he would not go forth as a *bhikkhu* or renounce the worldly life.

As for the eighty-four thousand kings, such as Maghadeva, they openly and publicly declared their intention to renounce. In spite of the entreaties of their families, they refused to yield and made their renunciation. But they did not go very far. They dwelt in their own mango groves near their palaces.

In contrast to them, King Cūla Sutasoma announced his intention of leaving the world as he was deeply stirred by spiritual sense of urgency on seeing a grey hair on his head. Although his Queens, royal parents and the assembled citizens prayed in tears to him to give up his plan, he remained firm and indifferent to their earnest pleas and went away till he reached the Himalayas. Therefore, renunciation of King Cūla Sutasoma was far more powerful than those of King Maghadeva, etc. On this account, the Commentator has described the Perfection of Renunciation fulfilled by King Cūla Sutasoma as of the highest type, *Paramattha Pāramī*.

(d) The Perfection of Wisdom (Paññā-Pāramī)

Three Kinds of Wisdom

The Vibhanga of the Abhidhamma, in the section on **Nana Vibhanga**, mentions three kinds of Wisdom (*paññā*):

- (a) **Cintāmaya Paññā**.
- (b) **Sutamaya Paññā**, and
- (c) **Bhāvanamaya Paññā**.

(a) Knowledge of various kinds, whether low or noble, including various crafts and professions, etc., which are acquired through one's own reasoning and not through asking others or hearing about it from others, is called **Cintāmaya Paññā** ('*cinta*' - thinking; '*māyā*' - formed of; hence, literally, wisdom formed of thinking.)

This kind of wisdom includes not only thoughts on mundane affairs but also on things concerning Dhamma matters. Therefore, it comprises the knowledge of ordinary worldly things, such as carpentry, agriculture, etc., as well as the knowledge of things of Dhamma nature, such as Generosity, Morality, Concentration and Vipassanā Insight Meditation. The Omniscience (*sabbāññuta-ñāṇa*) of the Buddhas may even be called **Cintāmaya Paññā**, if one wishes to do so, because the Bodhisatta, Prince Siddhattha, had thought out by himself the practice leading to Omniscience without hearing of it from anyone and became Omniscient.

However, Wisdom as the fourth Perfection to be fulfilled by the Bodhisatta should be considered as only the group of fundamental knowledge necessary for the attainment of knowledge of the Path and Fruition State and Omniscience. We are not concerned here with the group of Wisdom, which is acquired in the final existence of a Bodhisatta, entitling him to Buddhahood. Bodhisattas, fulfilling the Perfection of Wisdom before the last life, practised only up to the first part of the

ninth stage (*saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*, 'Knowledge of Equanimity about Formations') out of the ten stages of Vipassanā Insight. The final part of this *saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa* leads on directly to the knowledge of the Path. So, Bodhisattas do not attempt to go beyond the first part until their last life, for should they do so, they would have accordingly attained *magga-phala* and become *ariyas* and passed into Nibbāna in those existences; they would not become a Buddha though. Therefore, it should be noted that as a Bodhisatta, the Perfection of Wisdom is fulfilled only up to the first part of the *saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*.

(b) Knowledge gained by listening to the wise who talk either on their own or at one's request when one is unable to think out or reason by oneself is called **Sutamaya Paññā**. ('*Suta*' - hearing, '*māyā*' - formed of; hence, wisdom formed of hearing.) Like **Cintāmaya Paññā**, this kind of wisdom is of very extensive nature. The only difference between the two is that in the first, wisdom is gained through one's own thought or reasoning and in the second by hearing from others.

(c) The kind of Wisdom gained at the time when one is actually experiencing the *jhāna* or *phala* states is called **Bhāvanamaya Paññā**.

The **Abhidhamma Vibhanga**, in the Chapter on the **Ñāṇa Vibhanga**, gives types of wisdom in groups of one kind, two kinds, etc. up to ten kinds.

All these groups of wisdom, however, may be taken as coming under the three types of wisdom given above. For example, in the *Vibhanga*, after the group of the three kinds of wisdom, namely, **Cintāmaya**, etc. are enumerated **Dānamaya Paññā**, **Sīlamaya Paññā** and **Bhāvanamaya Paññā**. **Dānamaya Paññā** is wisdom formed of generosity. Volition associated with generosity is of three kinds, namely, volition that arises before, volition that arises during and volition that arises after the offering. The wisdom associated with these volitions in each case is *Dānamaya Paññā*. Similarly, in the case of observance of morality, wisdom that arises with the intention: "I will observe the precepts", wisdom that arises while observing and wisdom that arises on reflection after observing the precepts, all three are **Sīlamaya Paññā**.

If the *Dānamaya Paññā* and *Sīlamaya Paññā* have been deduced through one's process of thinking and reasoning, then it is to be classed as *Cintāmaya Paññā*; if it has been gained through hearing from others, they are to be included in *Sutamaya Paññā*. Other kinds of wisdom can similarly be classified under the same three heading of *Cintāmaya Paññā*, etc.

The teaching "*paripucchanto budham janam paññā paramitam gantvā* — accomplishing the Perfection of Wisdom by learning from the wise," in the *Buddhavaṁsa* clearly indicates that the Buddha regards the *Sutamaya Paññā* as the basic wisdom. This is because in this world, one, who has not yet acquired basic wisdom, cannot know any thing through thinking it out for himself; he has to learn it first from the wise by listening to them. Therefore, the Buddha has expounded that one, who wishes to fulfil the Perfection of Wisdom, should first acquire knowledge from the wise before he has any basic wisdom.

In brief, Wisdom through hearing (*Sutamaya Paññā*) should be acquired before Wisdom through thinking (*Cintāmaya Paññā*).

The Commentaries such as the **Atthasālinī** describe the innumerable lives of the Bodhisatta, for example, as the wise men Vidhura, Mahā Govinda, Kudala, Araka, Bodhi the Wondering Ascetic, Mahosadha, etc. when he had to fulfil the Perfection of Wisdom. In these lives, the Bodhisatta had already acquired basic wisdom; he also possessed therefore *Cintāmaya Paññā*. As his basic wisdom was already great enough, acquiring *Sutamaya Paññā* was no longer his chief concern in those existences.

Four Kinds of Kavi

The *Catukka Nipāta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya* describes four kinds of **Kavi**:

- (1) **Cinta kavi**
- (2) **Suta kavi**
- (3) **Attha kavi**

(4) Patibhāna kavi

(The term *kavi* is derived from the root, ‘*kava*’ which means ‘to praise’; so a person who praises things worthy of praises is called *kavi* meaning a ‘wise person’.)

- (1) One who is capable of knowing a given matter by thinking it out for himself is called a **Cinta kavi**, a wise man of original thinking. It is the province of such persons to sing verses lauding those deserving praise. Thus **Cinta kavi** is one who composes poems relying solely on his own thinking.
- (2) One who puts into verse what one knows through hearing is called a **Suta kavi**.
- (3) One who does not know through his original thinking or through learning from others but interprets the meaning of a difficult point based upon the knowledge he already possesses of similar problems is called an **Attha kavi**, a wise man who explains meaning. He writes verses based on a given subject-matter.
- (4) One who, without having recourse to thinking out himself or listening to others or referring to what is already known, has the ability to penetrate at once the meaning of a given subject is called a **Patibhāna kavi**, a wise man of ready speech (like the Venerable Vangisa Thera during the Buddha’s time).

The Nature of Wisdom

Wisdom is a separate mental concomitant, one of the ultimate realities. In the **Dhammasaṅgani**, various names, such as *paññindriya*, *paññā*, *pajānanā*, etc. are given to wisdom, because it is the characteristic of the **Abhidhamma** to give complete details of everything that should be taught about each subject. The principal term for wisdom is ‘*paññindriya*’ made up of ‘*paññā*’ and ‘*indriya*’.

It is called **Paññā** (Wisdom), because it is conducive to understanding in all aspects the Four Truths or the Three Characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anatta*).

It is called faculty (*indriya*), (controlling or governing) because it can overcome ignorance (*avijjā*) and delusion (*moha*) or because it dominates in understanding the real nature. *Paññā* (wisdom), has the characteristic of creating light. Just as darkness is dispelled as soon as light appears in a dark room, even so, where ignorance blinds us, as soon as wisdom appears, ignorance is dispelled enabling us to see clearly. Therefore, the Buddha has said: “*Paññā samā ābhā natthi* — There is no light like wisdom”.

Wisdom has the characteristic of perceiving things with discrimination. Just as a clever physician discerns which food is suitable for his patient and which food is not, so when wisdom arises it enables one to distinguish between what is meritorious and what is not.

Wisdom also has the characteristic of penetrating the real nature as it is. It may be likened to an arrow which, shot by a clever archer, penetrates the target unerringly.

An important point to note with regard to this characteristic of wisdom: Genuine wisdom is knowing a thing as it really is and such a knowledge is blameless. That is why in the **Abhidhammattha Sangaha**, the mental concomitant of wisdom (*Paññā Cetasika*) is included in the ‘Beautiful’ (*Sobhaṇa*) types of mental concomitants.

Sulasā Jātaka in Brief

Questions arise concerning wisdom with reference to the action of Sulasā in the **Sulasā Jātaka** of the **Atthaka Nipāta**. In Bārāṇasī, a prostitute by the name of Sulasā saved the life of robber Suttaka who was about to be executed. She made him her husband and they lived together. Wanting to possess her jewellery, the robber persuaded her to put on her jewelled ornaments which worth one lakh of money and went up a mountain with him. On reaching the top of the mountain, he told her to take off all her jewelleries and prepared to kill her. Then Sulasā thought to herself: “He is sure to kill me, I must strike first and kill him by a ruse.” So she begged him: “My dear, even though you are going to kill me, I lose no love for you. Nearing my death, may I pay my respects to you from the four quarters, i.e.

front, back and the sides.” Not suspecting her stratagem, the robber allowed her to do so. After paying respects to the robber, who was standing on the edge of a precipice, from the front and the sides, when she went behind him, she pushed him over the precipice with all her might and killed him.

The Bodhisatta, who was a deva then, living in the mountain remarked: “*Na hi sabbesu thānesu puriso hoti pandito; itthipi pandito hoti tattha tattha vicakkhanā.* – Not in all circumstances is the man the wise one: woman is also wise and far sighted.”

Some raise the question as to whether it is proper for the Bodhisatta Deva to praise Sulasa as being wise. Sulasa's intention to kill the robber is a matter of committing the wrong deed of killing and cannot be associated with *paññā cetasika*.

In reply to that, some say that Sulasa's knowledge was not true *paññā*. Of the three kinds of knowledge, namely, knowledge through perception (*sanna*), knowledge through consciousness (*viññāṇa*), and knowledge through wisdom (*paññā*). Sulasa's was knowledge through consciousness only, that is to say, through exercise of imagination. That knowledge through consciousness has been referred to, here, as *paññā*.

Others wrongly assert that of the two views: wrong view (*miccha diṭṭhi*) and right view (*sammā diṭṭhi*); Sulasa had wrong view and the Bodhisatta Deva was referring to her view as *paññā* and not praising her because of the faculty of wisdom, and, therefore, it is not against **Abhidhamma**.

Both these answers, taking consciousness (*viññāṇa*) and view (*diṭṭhi*) as wisdom (*paññā*) contrary to the principles of **Abhidhamma**, are entirely wrong.

Sulasa's knowledge that she would win the robber, if she adopted a ruse was true knowledge and was, therefore, wisdom. One should not doubt whether genuine wisdom can be involved in matters connected with evil actions. For example, it is blameless to know discriminately about alcoholic drinks which should not be indulged in and which lead to immoral actions, as to which ones contain more or less alcohol, how much does each cost, what will happen if one drinks them etc. It begins to be immoral only from the moment one thinks of drinking the intoxicant.

Similarly, one can make a thorough study of all the various views and beliefs in the world without any exception, differentiating between what is correct and reasonable and what is wrong. Thus, studying and getting to know about them as they really are, whether right or wrong, is entirely faultless. Only when one misconstrues a wrong view to be right is one at fault.

So in Sulasa's case, knowing: “I will win over him, if I use a ruse” is knowing rightly; it is knowing through wisdom and therefore blameless. But, since the moment of her decision to kill her husband by means of a stratagem, her action had become blameworthy, immoral. It is only with reference to the correct knowledge which initially arose in her, before the deed of killing, that the Bodhisatta Deva praised, saying she was wise.

As has been said above, we should distinguish clearly between the knowledge about evil on one hand and the commission of evil such as killing on the other. If one persists in the belief that knowledge about evil is not true wisdom, one would make the error of thinking that the great Omniscience of the Buddha itself is not free from blemish.

Through His supreme Wisdom, the Buddha knows all there is to know, everything moral or immoral; hence the name of Omniscience. If true Wisdom has nothing to do with anything evil, then the Buddha would have no knowledge whatever of evil things; indeed, the Buddha's Wisdom is very extensive, infinite and is thus known as Omniscience.

In brief, the Buddha knows everything, good or evil. But since He has uprooted all latent defilements, He has no desire to commit anything evil, not to say of the actual deed. Thus reflecting on the attributes of knowing everything that is evil, of having abandoned what should be abandoned and of refraining from doing any evil, we should develop faith in the Buddha.

Again, we should also examine the story of Mahosadha the Wise as described in the

Mahosadha Jātaka. In this story, Culani Brahmadata with rulers of his vassal states surrounded and attacked the royal city of King Videha, who had as his right-hand man, Mahosadha the Wise. Mahosadha master-minded the defence of the city by devising various stratagem to deceive the enemy hordes, to break down their morale and finally to force them to retreat to all directions in a disorderly rout. Should we opine that deceptive measures adopted by Mahosadha, not being moral undertaking, do not count as Wisdom, there would be no occasion for the Bodhisatta to fulfil the Perfection of Wisdom. As a matter of fact, all the strategic devices employed by Mahosadha are the products of the Bodhisatta's Wisdom. The Buddha has therefore specifically mentioned the story of Mahosadha as an example of how the Bodhisatta had fulfilled his Perfection of Wisdom.

In view of what has been said, it should be noted that in the story of Sulasa, the Mountain deva praised Sulasa as a wise person because she indeed had Wisdom.

(This is an explanation on doubtful points with regard to characteristics of Wisdom.)

The Kinds of Wisdom

The definition of 'wisdom' given in the Commentaries, such as the **Aṭṭhasalini**, etc. as the knowledge of or the knowledge leading to full comprehension of the Four Noble Truths and the Three Characteristics refers to the highest (*ukkaṭṭha*) type of Wisdom. There are also certain types of Wisdom which are much lower.

The Commentary on the **Abhidhamma Vibhaṅga**, in expounding on **Cintāmaya Paññā** and **Sutamaya Paññā**, describes the kinds of Wisdom involved in 'manual labour for earning one's livelihood' (*kammāyatana*) and in 'skills for earning one's livelihood' (*sippāyatana*). Each is again divided into two kinds, lower and higher. Carpentry is an example of a lower type of manual labour. Farming, trading are of a higher type. Mat-making, weaving, etc. are of lower forms of skill for earning one's living and writing, calculating, etc. are higher forms of skill for earning one's living.

The essential distinction between forms of livelihood is that when manual labour is done for livelihood without taking special training, it is **Kammāyatana** type and when skill for earning livelihood is acquired after special training, it is called **Sippayatana**. When special training is for skill in vocal accomplishments it is called **Vijjāthāna**.

When we discriminate one fire from another, our discrimination is not based on the quality of the fuel used for burning but on the quantity of the fuel and we say "a small fire" or "a big fire". So also in the case of wisdom, discrimination should be done not on the basis of the quality of what is known but rather on the basis of the degree or extent of what is known and we should speak of wisdom as "weak" or "powerful", in other words, "simple" or "profound". We should not restrict ourselves to higher forms of knowledge, as expounded in the Commentary, but also recognize the lower forms also as wisdom.

Therefore, one who wishes to fulfil the Perfection of Wisdom should do so irrespective of the standard of wisdom, whether low or high, and regarding things unknown, one should approach the wise for learning from them. Therefore, it is said in the Buddhavaṁsa: "*Paripucchanto budham panna-paramitam gantva.*" meaning "Repeatedly asking the wise, having reached the Perfection of Wisdom."

Seven Ways of Developing Wisdom

The **Sammohavinodani**, Commentary to the **Abhidhamma Vibhaṅga** gives seven ways of developing wisdom in the chapter on the Foundations of Steadfast Mindfulness (**Satipatthāna**):

- (1) **Paripucchakatā** – asking the wise again and again. (This is in accordance with the Pāli phrase quoted above.)
- (2) **Vatthuvisadakiriya** – making objects, both inside and outside the body, pure. (For internal cleanliness, one's hair, nails and beard should not be too long. The body

should not be soiled with sweat and dirt. For external cleanliness, one's clothes should not be old and bad smelling; one's dwelling should be kept clean. When there is impurity inside and outside the body, the wisdom that arises is like the thick flame produced from a dirty wick soaked in the turbid oil of an unclean lamp. In order to have clean and bright wisdom, which is like the flame of a clean lamp, one should keep one's body clean both internally and externally.)

(3) Indriya samatta patipādanā – bringing the faculties, such as faith, etc., into perfect balance.

(There are five faculties¹⁹ which control consciousness and mental concomitants of beings. If the faith faculty is too strong, the other four faculties are bound to be weak; consequently, energy faculty cannot exercise its function of giving support and encouragement to exertion; mindfulness faculty cannot fulfil its task of minding the object of attention; concentration faculty cannot prevent distraction of mind; and wisdom faculty fails to discern. When faith faculty is in excess, an attempt should be made to moderate it and bring it in line with others either by reflecting on the Dhamma that will normalise it or avoiding to reflect on the Dhamma that will promote and strengthen it.

(If the energy faculty is too strong, faith faculty will not be able to perform its function; the rest of the faculties also cannot perform their respective functions. This excess of energy should be corrected by developing tranquillity. The same holds true in the case of each of the remaining faculties.)

What is particularly praised by the wise and virtuous is balancing faith with wisdom, and concentration with energy. If one is strong in faith and weak in wisdom, one will have faith in unworthy ones to no purpose. (Being weak in wisdom, one is unable to discern critically who is deserving of reverence and who is not; mistaking what is not true 'Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha' for genuine ones, one's devotion is then of no avail and fruitless.) Mistaken belief of those who wrongly devote themselves to false Buddha or false Dhamma is not true faith but only wrong and harmful conclusion (*micchadhimokkha*).

If wisdom is strong and faith is weak, one will miss the correct path and follow the wrong one, which leads to the side of cunning. To bring such a person to the right path is as hard to cure as a patient suffering from ill-effects of wrong medicine. For example, these are two kinds of giving: (i) gift of volition (*cetanā-dāna*) and (ii) gift of material objects (*vatthu-dāna*). A person, who has cunning ways of thinking, might consider that it is only volition not the material objects that would be fruitful in future; therefore, it is not necessary to offer material things as *dāna*; gift of volition is sufficient. Such a person who fails to do meritorious deeds of alms-giving, because of his cunning, would be reborn in the lower planes of existence.

Only when faith and wisdom are in balance can one have proper faith in deserving ones and with the absence of cunning, there can develop many advantages. Energy and concentration should also be in balance; when energy is weak and concentration strong, idleness (*kosajja*) will result: without any activities but assuming an air of calmness as if in good concentration, one is overwhelmed by indolence.

When energy is strong and concentration weak, there will be agitation and excitement but no steadiness. Overwhelmed by restlessness (*uddhacca*), one may be distracted with the thought: "If this work does not yield any good result as

19. The five faculties are faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom; each has its own function: faith enables one to give devoted attention to the object of reverence; energy gives support and encouragement enabling one to exert and strive hard; mindfulness keeps track of the object of attention; concentration prevents distraction of mind; and wisdom enables one to see, to understand. These faculties must be kept in balance, for if one is in excess, the others would suffer and fail to do their functions.

expected, it will not be suitable for me. I would abandon it and try something else.”

When energy and concentration are in equilibrium, idleness (*kosajja*) and restlessness (*uddhacca*) get no chance to arise. Balancing of these two leads to quick attainment of *jhāna* or Absorption Concentration (*Appannā*).

However, mindfulness-faculty can never be in excess; there may be only its shortage. In the Text, it is likened to salt, a necessary ingredient of all food preparations or to a Prime Minister who attends to all the royal business. Therefore, while maintaining the maximum possible mindfulness, faculties in each of the two pairs, namely, faith and wisdom, energy and concentration, should be kept in perfect balance with each other. Excess of any is a disadvantage. In this connection, the Venerable U Buddh has made the following comment in his *Mahā Satipatthana-Nissaya*:

Excess of faith leads to over enthusiasm,
Excess of wisdom leads to craftiness,
Excess of energy leads to restlessness,
Excess of concentration leads to ennui (mental weariness),
But there is never an excess of mindfulness.

(4) Duppaññapuggala parivajjanam – avoiding persons without wisdom.

(*Duppañña* means an individual who has no wisdom to discern penetratingly such groups of Dhamma as the aggregates (*khandha*), the bases (*āyatana*), etc. One should keep oneself far away from such people.)

(5) Paññavanta puggalasevana – associating with the wise.

(The wise means persons who are possessed of the fifty characteristics of the knowledge of arising and falling (*udaya bhaya ñāṇa*). For details of the fifty characteristics of *Udhaya bhaya ñāṇa*, **Patisambhidāmagga** may be consulted²⁰.)

Concerning both items no's (4) and (5), the commentator is only describing the developments of the highest (*ukkattha*) type of wisdom. In item (4), a person without wisdom means one who cannot discern penetratingly the group of Dhammas such as aggregates and the bases; a person with penetrating knowledge of such Dhammas can only be one who is of great wisdom. But there are those, who though not possessing wisdom to discern such subtle Dhammas as aggregates and bases, know ordinary matters concerning practice of Dhamma: “It is proper to make such offering; it is not proper to do so. Precepts should be observed thus; they should not be observed otherwise.” They also know matters concerning worldly living, “This act will prolong one's life; this act will shorten one's life.” Such persons cannot be said to be entirely devoid of wisdom. One should cultivate association with them too.

In item (5) also, by defining a wise person as one who is possessed of the fifty characteristics of the knowledge of arising and falling (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*), the commentator is referring by way of excellence (*ukkattha naya*) only to the wise who are most highly advanced in Vipassanā Meditation.

But with regard to acquiring knowledge, the Buddha had expounded in the *Buddhavaṃsa*: “Taking the example of a *bhikkhu* going on alms round to all the houses in serial order without discrimination, a learner should approach whoever can answer his questions, regardless of his social or educational status. Therefore, he should avoid only a totally ignorant one and approach all who can help him in his quest of knowledge.”

In short, avoiding only those who are completely incapable of answering any questions, one should associate with those who can furnish him with even the slightest information he is seeking.

20. May also see Path of Purification by Bhikkhu Nanamoli. Chapter XX para 93-104.

According to the Buddhavaṃsa, in acquiring wisdom, one should first ask and learn from the wise to develop wisdom through hearing, **Sutamaya paññā**. Then, if one is not clear about any point, one should reflect on it and think about it, and thus develop wisdom by means of thinking, **Cintamaya paññā**.

In the Discourse to the Kalamas (**Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Tikanipata, Dutiya Pannasaka, 2-Mahavagga, 5-Kalama Sutta), the Buddha was told by the Kalamas that many preachers visited their place, that all of these visiting preachers praised only their own doctrines, denouncing and condemning others and that they had doubt and perplexity as to which doctrine to accept and follow. The Buddha's reply to them may be summarized as "you should accept the doctrine which you find after due consideration to be free of fault."

This Discourse shows that one should first acquire **Sutamaya paññā** by listening to the talks of preachers. and then think over which doctrine is blameless by using the **Cintamaya paññā**.

Moreover, in the Patha Jātaka, Dasaka Nipata, **9-Maha Dhammapala Jātaka**, when the great teacher of Takkaṣila went in person to the village of Dhammapala to find out why the young people of the village did not die before the end of their life span, Mahadhammapala, (the village headman) who would be reborn as King Suddhodāna in time to come, replied: "We listen to all who come and preach. After listening, we ponder upon their preaching. We do not heed what the immoral persons teach, instead we forsake them. We accept only the teachings of the moral ones with which we are delighted and which we follow. Therefore, in our village, the young ones never die before the end of their life span."

This Jātaka story also clearly shows that one acquires wisdom first by means of **Sutamaya Ñāṇa**, and then accepts only what is confirmed to be true by **Cintamaya Ñāṇa**.

Associating with The Wise

The expression 'associating with the wise' does not mean mere approaching a wise person and staying with him day and night. It implies learning and acquiring some knowledge from the person who is possessed of wisdom.

The advice "Do not associate with the fool", given as one of the Blessings in the Maṅgala Sutta, does not necessarily present staying with a foolish person. One may even live with him for the purpose of coaxing and persuading him to the right path. In such a case, one is not going against the advice of the Maṅgala Sutta. An example is the sojourn of the Buddha in the Uruvelā Grove in the company of ascetics of wrong view (to help them abandon their wrong path).

Thus, only when one accepts the view and follows the practices of a foolish person, one is then said to be associating with the fool. Likewise, the advice given in the Maṅgala Sutta exhorting one to associate with the wise is well taken, not by merely keeping company with him but only when one acquires some form of knowledge (from him), be it only a little.

(6) **Gambhirananacariya paccavekkhana** – reflecting on the nature of Dhamma which is the resort of profound wisdom. (Herein, wisdom is like fire which burns all inflammable things whether big or small. Depending on the size of what is burning, fire is said to be a small fire or a big one. In the same way, wisdom knows everything there is to know; it is called small, manifest or profound depending on what is known as small, manifest or profound. The Dhamma which is the resort of profound wisdom comprises aggregates, bases, etc. The wisdom, which arises from the knowledge of these profound subjects, is what is meant by profound wisdom. Such profound wisdom is as numerous as there are profound Dhammas. Analytical review of all these numerous profound Dhammas leads to the development of wisdom.)

(7) **Tadadhimuttata** – Having the inclination towards developing wisdom. (In all four postures of lying, sitting, standing and walking one should be only inclined to development of wisdom. Having such a mind is one of the causes of developing wisdom.)

Resume in verse by U Buddh:

(1) Asking again and again,

- (2) Keeping things clean,
- (3) Having faculties in balance,
- (4) Avoiding the fool,
- (5) Associating with the wise,
- (6) Pondering deeply, and
- (7) Having the mind bent on development of wisdom constitute seven ways of developing of wisdom.

The Qualities of Wisdom

(1) When Wisdom takes a predominant place in performing multifarious functions, it acquires the name of **Vimamsadhipati**, one of the four Predominance-conditions.

(2) Forming constituent parts of the twenty-two Controlling Faculties are four different faculties which are concerned with wisdom: (a) the Wisdom that is included in the thirty-nine mundane consciousness associated with knowledge (*lokiñāna-sampayutta citta*) is called **Pannindriya**; (b) the Wisdom accompanying the consciousness that arises at the moment of the first stage of Enlightenment (*sotāpatti-magga citta*) is known as **Anannātaññassāmit'indriya**; (c) the Wisdom that arises with the Fruition State of Arahatsip (*arahatta-phala*) is called **Aññātavindriya**; (d) the Wisdom that is associated with the six intermediate supramundane consciousness (that comes between the *sotāpanna* and *arahatta* stage) is termed **Aññindriya**.

The Wisdom that should be fulfilled as a Perfection is concerned only with mundane consciousness; thus it is included in the thirteen kinds of moral consciousness (*Kusala Nana Sampayutta Citta*) of the thirty-nine *lokināna-sampayutta citta*. (The non-functional consciousness (*kiriya citta*) belongs only to *arahats*; it is not the concern of Bodhisattas who are still worldlings; the Resultant Consciousness (*Vipāka citta*) arises without any special effort as a consequence of one's past *kamma*. Therefore, the wisdom that is associated with these two types of consciousness does not count as Perfection.) Bodhisattas concentrate only on the mundane wisdom so as to fulfil the Perfection of Wisdom to its highest degree.

In the thirty-seven Constituents of Enlightenment (*Bodhipakkhiya Dhamma*) are included the five Controlling Faculties (*Indriya*), one of which is Faculty of Wisdom (*Pannindriya*); this Faculty of Wisdom is of two kinds: mundane and supramundane. The supramundane kind is not included in the Perfection of Wisdom developed by a Bodhisatta. Only the wisdom that is associated with mundane moral consciousness which arises while undertaking purification of morality and purification of mind previous to attainment of *magga-phala* states is the Perfection of Wisdom fulfilled by Bodhisattas.

(3) Similarly, in the other four constituents of the *Bodhipakkhiya* are included factors of wisdom (*paññā*) under different names. Thus in the Five Powers (*bala*) it is known as Power of Wisdom (*Paññā bala*); in the Four Means of Accomplishment (*Iddhipada*) as Accomplishment by Wisdom (*vimansiddhipada*); in the Seven Factors of Enlightenments (*Bojjhaṅga*) as Investigation of Dhamma (*Dhammavicaya Sambojjhanga*) and in the Eight Constituents of the Noble Path (*Ariya-magganga*) as Right View (*Samma-ditthi*).

As with Faculty of Wisdom (**Paññindriya**), these various factors of wisdom, under different names, are developed at two different levels: mundane and supramundane. The Wisdom that accompanies the supramundane consciousness is not included in the Perfection of Wisdom as fulfilled by Bodhisattas. It is only the wisdom associated with mundane moral consciousness, which arises while undertaking purification of morality and purification of mind previous to attainments of *magga-phala* states, that counts as the Perfection of Wisdom fulfilled by Bodhisattas.

Contemplating on these special qualities of wisdom, may you fulfil the Perfection of Wisdom to its highest possible stage.

(e) The Perfection of Energy (*Vīriya-Pāramī*)

Bodhisatta's Exertion of Energy

In matters of the Perfection of Energy, the Texts give the example of a maned lion whose nature is to put forth maximum effort whether in hunting a rabbit or in hunting an elephant. He does not exert less in hunting a rabbit because it is a small animal; nor does he strive more in hunting an elephant because of its great size. In both cases, he uses equal degree of exertion.

Following the ways of a maned lion, a Bodhisatta while fulfilling the Perfection of Energy, does not make less effort for ordinary tasks nor put forth more energy for more arduous ones. He always makes the same amount of maximum exertion, whether the task is small or great.

Deep Impression of Past Exertions on The Buddha

As a result of the habit of employing uniform energy whether attending to big or small affairs in past lives as a Bodhisatta, when He finally became an Enlightened One, the Buddha made equal efforts when giving discourses. He did not reduce His effort and deliver an address casually to a single person; neither did he put forth more energy to enable the audience at the extreme end hear Him when addressing a huge assembly as, for example, at the time of delivering the First Sermon. He maintained an even voice putting forth equal energy for both occasions.

Special Glory of the Buddha. The Buddha being blessed with unthinkable majestic glory, His voice uttered with uniform exertion reaches all who listen. If there is only one person listening to Him, only that person hears the discourse. When there are many people, each person, whether near or far from the Buddha, hears Him clearly. (When the Chief Disciple Mahāthera Sāriputta gave the Discourse of Samacitta Suttanta, as the audience was very large, his normal voice could not reach all of them; he had to make them all hear him with the help of his Supernormal Psychic Powers of Accomplishments (*Iddhividha Abhiññāna*); he had to use the '*abhiññā loud-speaker*,' so to say. However, it was not necessary for the Buddha to do so to make everyone in the audience hear Him.) This is the special glory of the Buddha.

Every Buddha exerts Himself to fulfil the Perfection of Energy in all His previous lives as a Bodhisatta. In addition, in His last birth when He would gain Enlightenment, He renounces the world and makes strenuous efforts to practise austerities (*dukkaracariya*) at least for seven days. Having performed the austerities, as the time draws near for Buddhahood, He sits on a seat of grass at the foot of the Bodhi tree and makes a resolute effort with a firm determination: "Let only My skin remain; let only My sinews remain; let only My bones remain; let all the blood and flesh dry up, I will not rise from this seat until I have attained Omniscience (*sabbāññuta-nāṇa*)."

Through this effort, He developed the Knowledge of Insight as powerful as a thunder bolt (*Mahā Vajira Vipassanā Nāṇa*) which enables Him to realize first, the Law of Dependent Origination, followed by the knowledge of the three characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*), unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*) and unsubstantiality (*anatta*) in all material and mental phenomena (*rūpa* and *nāma*).

Energy (*Vīriya*) like Wisdom (*Paññā*), is a mental concomitant, but whereas Wisdom is, as stated before, always associated with moral consciousness, energy being a miscellaneous type of concomitant (*pakiṇṇaka cetasika*) is associated with both moral and immoral consciousness and also of indeterminate type (*abyākata*) which is neither moral nor immoral. Consequently, energy can be wholesome or unwholesome or indeterminate. Effort which is wholesome is known as Right Effort (*Sammā vāyāma*); effort employed for wrong purpose is unwholesome and is called Wrong Effort (*Micchā vāyāma*). It is only the Right Effort which should be cultivated to the fullest extent as the Perfection of Energy.

Right Exertion (Sammappadhana)

Right Effort (*Sammā vāyāma*) is also known as Right Exertion (*Sammappadhāna*). The

meaning is the same. In exposition on Sammappadhāna of the **Abhidhamma Vibhanga**, the Buddha has explained four kinds of Right Exertion:

- (1) The endeavour to prevent the arising at any time, any place on any object of evil which has not yet arisen; or which one cannot recall to mind of having arisen at a certain time, at a certain place, on a certain object.
- (2) The endeavour to put away evil that has arisen.
(As a matter of fact, it is impossible to abandon evil that had already arisen or that had arisen and passed away. The evil that had arisen in the past had ceased; it is no longer existing. What does not exist cannot be removed. What is to be understood here is that one should strive to prevent arising of new evil which is of similar nature to the one that has arisen before.)
- (3) The endeavour to bring about the arising of the good which has not yet arisen or which one cannot recall to mind of having arisen at a certain time, a certain place, on a certain object.
- (4) The endeavour to maintain and further develop the good that has arisen or that is arising. (Here also what is to be understood is that one should strive to bring about the repeated arising of the good similar to the one that has already arisen.)

Eleven Factors of Developing Energy

The **Satipatthana Vibhanga Commentary** and the **Mahā Satipatthana Sutta Commentary** describe eleven factors of development of energy.

- (1) Reflecting on the dangers of lower worlds of existence (**Apāya bhaya paccavekkhanata**).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: “If I am lax in making effort, I may be reborn in the realms of misery (*apāya*). Of the four realms of misery, if I am reborn in the realm of continuous suffering (*niraya*), I will suffer intense pains resulting from numerous, terrible tortures; or if I am reborn in the animal world, I may be subjected to all forms of ill-treatment by human beings; or if I am reborn in the ghost realm (*peta-loka*), I will be tormented by hunger for long periods (of world-cycles) between the appearance of one Buddha and of another; or if I am reborn in the demon world (*asura loka*), with my huge body, sixty or eighty cubits in length, of bones and skins only, I will suffer from heat, cold or winds. In any of these terrible rebirths, I will get no chance of developing the four Right Exertions. This life is my only opportunity to do so.”

- (2) Perceiving the benefits accruing from development of energy (**Ānīsamassadassāvītā**).

Energy will develop in him who, reviewing and seeing the advantages of developing energy, reflects thus: “A lazy man can never get out of the cycle of rebirths (*saṃsāra*) and attain the supramundane Paths and Fruition States. Only the industrious can attain them. The beneficial result of making effort is the attainment of the supramundane Path and Fruition States which are so difficult to realize.”

- (3) Reviewing the path to be tread (**Gamanavithi paccavekkhanatā**).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: “All Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and Noble Disciples of a Buddha realize their goals by walking along the path of industry. Exertion is the straight path trod by the Noble Ones. No idle person can follow this road. Only the industrious take to this path.”

- (4) Honouring the alms food of devotees (**Piṇḍapātāpacāyanatā**).

This factor is the specific concern of *bhikkhus*. Energy will develop in him who, regarding with esteem and appreciation rich food offered by devotees, reflects thus: “These devotees are not my relatives; they give me this alms food not because they want to make their living by depending on me; they do so only because of the great merit that accrues from giving (to the Sangha). The Buddha does not allow us to eat alms food in a light minded, irresponsible manner, or to live an easy-going life. He permits it only for the

purpose of practising the Dhamma to achieve liberation from *saṃsāra*. Alms food is not for the lazy or the indolent. Only men of diligence are worthy of it."

(5) Reflecting on the nobility of the inheritance (**Dāyajjamahatta paccavekkhanatā**).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: "The heritage of the Buddha known as 'the treasures of the virtuous' to be received by His disciples is of seven kinds: faith (*saddhā*), morality (*sīla*), learning (*suta*), liberality (*cāga*), wisdom (*paññā*), moral shame (*hiri*), and moral dread (*ottappa*).

The indolent are not entitled to inherit from the Buddha. Just as bad children, disowned by their parents, cannot inherit from them, even so those who are lazy cannot receive the 'treasures of the virtuous' as heritage from the Buddha. Only men of diligence deserve this inheritance."

(6) Reflecting on the nobility of the Teacher, the Buddha (**Satthumahatta-paccavekkhanatā**).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: "My Teacher, the Buddha, is so noble that the ten-thousand world-universe shook when He took conception (as a Bodhisatta for His last life), when He renounced the world, when He became the Enlightened One, when He expounded the First Sermon (**Dhammacakka-pavattana Sutta**), when He performed the Twin Miracle at Savatthi to defeat the heretics (*tiṭṭhiya*), when He descended from the Tāvātimsa deva-world to Sankassa Nagara, when He renounced the Vital Principle (*Āyusankhāra*) and when He passed into Parinibbāna. Being a true son (or daughter) of such a noble Buddha, should I remain care-free and lazy without exerting myself to practise His Teachings?"

(7) Reflecting on the nobility of own lineage (**Jāti mahatta paccavekkhanatā**).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: "My lineage is not humble; I am descended from (the first king) Mahasammata of pure and high caste; I am the brother of Rāhula who is the grandson of King Suddhodāna and Queen Mahā Māyā, who belonged to the House of King Okkāka, one of the descendants of Mahāsammatā; Rāhula is the Buddha's son; since I have also taken the name of Buddha's son of Sakya ancestry, we are brothers. Being of such noble ancestry, I should not live a life of indolence but exert myself to practise the noble Teaching."

(8) Reflecting on the nobility of companions in the holy life (**Sabrahmacārimahatta-paccavekkhanatā**).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: "My companions in the holy life, the Mahāthera Sāriputta and Mahā Moggallāna, as well as eighty Great Disciples, who practised the noble Dhamma, have already realized the supramundane Paths and Fruition States. I should follow the way of the venerable companions in the holy life."

(9) Keeping away from those who are indolent (**Kusita puggala parivajjanata**).

Energy will develop in him who avoids idle ones, i.e. those who forsake all physical, verbal and mental activities to lie down and roll in sleep like a python that has eaten its fill.

(10) Associating with people who are industrious and energetic (**Araddha vīriya puggala sevanatā**).

Energy will develop in him who associates himself with industrious and energetic people who are devoted only to their task whole-heartedly.

Men of dedication (*pahitatta*) are always determined not to leave their efforts in carrying out a set task until success is achieved (or if not successful until death). Those lacking dedication hesitate even before beginning a work with the thought, "Shall I succeed or not?" While carrying out the work, if the expected goal is not easily achieved, he flinches with the thought, "Even though I carry on with the work, I shall not succeed" and thus they stop putting effort.

(11) Inclination towards development of Energy in all four postures (**Tad adhimuttatā**).

Energy will develop in him who is intent on and inclined to cultivating it in all four

postures of lying down, sitting, standing and walking.

These are the eleven factors which develop Energy.

The Main Foundation of Energy

The main foundation of Energy is the emotion of dread (**saṁvega**). It is of three kinds:

(1) **Cittutrāsa Saṁvega**

Disturbance of mind through dread of dangers of elephants, tigers, weapons, such as swords, spears, etc. is known as “**Cittutrāsa Saṁvega**.” In terms of Abhidhamma, it is the mental concomitant of aversion (*dosa*). Through weak aversion arises fear; through strong aversion arises aggressiveness.

(2) **Ottappa Saṁvega**

Dread to do evil is **Ottappa Saṁvega**. It is a wholesome type of mental concomitant (*sobhana cetasika*).

(3) **Ñāṇa Saṁvega**

Dread that arises as religious emotion through reflecting on cause and effect is known as **Ñāṇa Saṁvega**. It is the kind of fear of *saṁsāra* felt by the virtuous. In the Texts, **Ñāṇa Saṁvega** is described also as the knowledge that is accompanied by moral dread of evil.

(Should one include **Dhamma Saṁvega** which is the wisdom of Arahats that arises accompanied by moral dread on seeing the dangers of conditioned phenomena, there will be four kinds of **Saṁvega**).

Of these types of *saṁvega*, only *ñāṇa saṁvega* should be considered as the main spring of Energy. When one sees the dangers of *saṁsāra* through wisdom and is stirred by moral dread, one would certainly work arduously for liberation from these dangers. Without such wisdom, one will not work for it at all.

Even in everyday mundane life, a student who is struck with fear of poverty, that is, one who has *ñāṇa saṁvega* will work hard reflecting thus: “Without education, I will be faced with poverty when I grow up”; another who is not moved by such anxiety, that is, one who has no *ñāṇa saṁvega*, will put forth no effort whatever to acquire knowledge.

Similarly, motivated by fear of poverty, workers assiduously devote themselves to work which provides them with necessities of life; whereas those who do not consider for their future will remain indolent and carefree. It should be surmised from what has been said that only *ñāṇa saṁvega* can cause the development of Energy.

But this applies only to the development of Energy which serves as a Perfection. As already mentioned, there are two kinds of Energy, namely, Energy which is developed for a wholesome act and that developed for an unwholesome act. The energy necessary for an unwholesome act is also caused by stirring of emotion (*saṁvega*); but it is *cittutrāsa saṁvega* and not *ñāṇa saṁvega* that serves as its foundation.

An indigent person in need of money will make effort to steal; he cannot take up a proper mental attitude (*yoniso manasikāra*). This is an example of how wrong effort arises through unwholesome *cittutrāsa saṁvega*. A person who does not possess a proper mental attitude will have recourse to wrong efforts to prevent possible dangers falling upon him. But a person with right frame of mind will not exert to do wrong actions; he always strives for good ones.

Thus, whereas the main foundation of Energy is the emotion of dread (*saṁvega*), it is the mental attitude which determines the kind of energy whether wholesome or unwholesome to develop.

As a Perfection, unwholesome energy is not to be considered; it is only blameless, wholesome energy that is reckoned as a Perfection.

When we consider the four Right Exertions, it would seem that only energy that causes wholesome acts serves as a Perfection. But, although an effort may not result in wholesome

acts, if it is neither a wrong effort nor the kind that would produce unwholesome acts, it should be counted as a Perfection of Energy.

As an example of super effort for Perfection, the Commentary cites the story of Mahajanaka. The Bodhisatta, as Prince Janaka, made effort of swimming for seven days in the ocean (when the ship he was travelling in sank). His strenuous endeavour was not motivated by a desire to perform wholesome acts or to practise charity, observe morality or cultivate meditation. It does not result in arising of unwholesome states such as greed, hatred, bewilderment either and may thus be regarded as blameless. Prince Janaka's supreme exertion, being blameless and being free from unwholesomeness, counts as fulfilment of Perfection of Energy.

When the ship was about to be wrecked, seven hundred people on board wept and lamented in desperation without making any attempt to survive the disaster. Prince Janaka, unlike his fellow travellers, thought to himself: "To weep and lament in fear when faced with danger is not the way of the wise; a wise man endeavours to save himself from an impending danger. A man with wisdom as I am, I must put forth effort to swim my way through to safety." With this resolve and without any trepidation, he courageously swam across the ocean. Being urged by such a noble thought, his performance was laudable and the effort he put forth for this act was also extremely praiseworthy.

Bodhisattas in every existence undertake what they have to do bravely and without flinching; not to say of rebirths in the human world, even when he was born as a bull, the Bodhisatta performed arduous tasks (**Pāṭha Jātaka**, Ekaka Nipāta, 3-Kuru Vagga). Thus as a young bull named Kanha, the Bodhisatta, out of gratitude to the old woman who had tended him, pulled five hundred carts loaded with merchandise across a big swamp.

Even as an animal, the development of Energy as a Perfection by the Bodhisatta was not slackened; when reborn as a human, the tendency to put forth effort persisted in him. Extreme hardships he went through as King Kusa, in his endeavours to win back the favours of Princess Pabhavati (who ran away from him because of his ugly appearance), are examples of determined effort, unyielding in face of difficulties of the Bodhisatta. The latent tendency to develop such energy remained with a Bodhisatta throughout all his various existences.

The Life of Mahosadha

The Texts give the story of Mahosadha to show the Bodhisatta's fulfilment of the Perfection of Wisdom. But, in that very life, the Bodhisatta also developed the Perfection of Energy. On the whole, Mahosadha made use of Wisdom as a guide in attending to multifarious duties of his; but once a careful decision had been made, it was put to execution by making continual effort. Such endeavours of Mahosadha, even though they were not intended to develop meritorious acts of generosity, morality or meditation, should be considered as Perfection of Energy since they were made for the welfare of others.

Mahosadha's Endeavours

It may be asked whether some of Mahosadha's endeavours did not cause suffering to others. For example, when King Cūḷani-Brahmadatta laid siege to Mithilā with 18 divisions of his indestructible (*akkhobhaṇī*) army, Mahosadha devising a stratagem brought about a complete rout of the great army, causing much suffering to King Cūḷani-Brahmadatta and his hordes. Should we not blame Mahosadha then for his attempts to make his opponents suffer?

In answer to that: take the simile of scaring a snake which is about to catch a frog. Some people take the view that such an attempt is blameworthy because by so doing the frog will no doubt get out of harm's way but the snake will go hungry. The Buddha teaches that volition is the deciding factor in such a situation. If one frightens away the snake in order to make it suffer from hunger, it is blameworthy; on the other hand, if one acts only to get the frog out of danger without giving any thought to the snake's hunger, it is quite blameless.

Again, in the Questions of King Milinda (**Milindapañha**, 4-Meṇḍaka Vagga, 5-

Devadattapabbajja paṇha) the King asked the Venerable Nāgasena: “Venerable Sir, is it not a fact that the Buddha knew that Devadatta would create a schism if he was permitted to become a *bhikkhu*. Knowing thus, why did the Buddha admit him into the order? If he did not receive admission, he would not be able to cause the schism.”

The Venerable Nāgasena replies: “O King, the Buddha indeed foresaw that Devadatta would create a schism among *bhikkhus* but He also knew that if Devadatta did not gain admission into the Order, he would commit unwholesome acts such as holding ‘wrong view with fixed destiny’ (*niyata micchādīṭṭhi*); for which he would suffer worse fate than he would for causing schism. Creating the schism would no doubt lead him to miserable realms (*Apāya*), but there is a time limit for suffering in these realms. Staying outside the Order, however, through his unwholesome deeds such as holding ‘wrong views with fixed destiny’ he would be doomed to unlimited misery in the realms of intense suffering (*Niraya*). Foreseeing this possible limit to his suffering, the Buddha, out of compassion, admitted him into the Order thus mitigating his agony to a certain extent.”

In the same way, by putting to rout the great army of King Cūḷani-Brahmadatta without causing suffering to his country, Mahosadha was saving his own country of Mithilā from complete destruction. He acted thus to serve the best interest of both and was free of any blame.

The Qualities of Energy

(1) When Energy takes a predominant place in performing multifarious functions, it acquires the name of **Vīriyadhipati**, one of the four Predominance-Conditions (**Adhipati**).

(2) It forms a constituent part of the twenty-two controlling Faculties (*indriya*) and is known as **Vīriyindriya**. But only the energy that is associated with mundane moral consciousness is reckoned as the Perfection of Energy. In the five Controlling Faculties (*indriya*) of the Bodhipakkhiya Dhamma also, the *vīriyindriya*, just as in the case of *paññindriya*, is counted as a Perfection, only when it is included in the mundane purifications (of morality and mind).

Likewise, concerning the four kinds of Right Exertion (*sammappadhāna*) it is only the energy included in the mundane purification that is considered as a Perfection.

(3) The factor of Energy included in the Five Powers (*bala*) is known as Power of Energy (*vīriya-bala*); in the Four Means of Accomplishment (*iddhipada*) as Accomplishment by Energy (*vīriyiddhipāda*); in the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*) as Energy Factor of Enlightenment (*vīriya-sambojjhaṅga*) and in the Eight Constituents of the Noble Path (*ariya-maggaṅga*) as Right Effort (*sammā-vāyāma*). These various factors of Energy under different names are reckoned as Perfection of Energy only in association with mundane moral consciousness which arises while undertaking mundane purification.

Contemplating on these special qualities of Energy, may you fulfil the Perfection of Energy to its highest possible stage.

(f) The Perfection of Forbearance (Khantī-Pāramī)

The Text exhorts ‘to bear praise and disdain with patience’ (*sammānāvamānakkhamo*). One should neither be elated when meeting with pleasant objects nor upset when encountering unpleasant objects. It is no tolerance of pleasantness, if we develop greed under fortunate circumstances or of unpleasantness if we develop hate under unfortunate circumstances. The essential meaning here is: we are truly patient only when favourable situations are faced without greed; and unfavourable ones without hate.

However, with regard to the Perfection of Forbearance, the Commentaries generally use in illustrative stories the term Perfection of Forbearance (**Khantī-Pāramī**) only for tolerance to acts of physical or verbal aggression by others without giving way to anger. The **Cariyāpiṭaka Commentary**, expounds in the Chapter on Miscellany: “*Karuṇīpāyākosallapariggahitaṃ sattasaṅkhārāparādhasaṇaṃ adosappadhāno*

tadākārappavattacittuppādo khañtī-pāramitā.” The group of consciousness and its concomitants associated with tolerance of wrongs done by others, predominated by the mental factor of non-aversion (*adosa-cetasika*) and grasped by compassion and skill in means is called Perfection of Forbearance; that is, the group of consciousness and its concomitants formed in such a mode of tolerance to faults of beings is called Perfection of Forbearance.

The **Mūla Tikā** in commenting on the five restraints (morality, mindfulness, wisdom, forbearance and energy) briefly explained in the **Aṭṭhasālīni**, defines the restraint of forbearance as: ‘*Khañtīti adhvīṣanā; sā ca tatha pavattā khandhā; paññāti eke, adoso eva vā.*’ “*Khañtī*” means forbearance; that forbearance is actually the four mental aggregates formed in such a mode of tolerance; some teachers say it is Wisdom (*paññā*) or only the mental factor of non-aversion.

Some scholars take the view:

“The exhortation in the Pāli Texts, ‘to bear praise and disdain with patience’ seems to imply that one should tolerate praise as well as disdain. But, in actual experience, one is liable to be displeased and angry only when one is insulted and despised; no one shows such emotions when treated with honour and veneration. Therefore, the term forbearance should be used only when one shows no anger in a situation which would normally provoke anger to many others.

“To take the Pāli Text exhortation literally is to equate the Perfection of Forbearance with the Perfection of Equanimity, seeing no difference between the two.”

As the authority quoted by these scholars is the aforesaid **Cariyāpiṭaka Commentary** and **Mūla Tikā**, their view may not be set aside.

It should be noted, however, that forbearance is considered to be tolerance of others’ treatment whereas equanimity is indifference towards beings, without hate or love.

The Venerable Ledi Sayadaw in his *Maṅgala Sutta Nissaya* defines *Khañtī* as “not feeling exalted when encountering pleasantness and remaining patient without giving vent to anger when encountering hardships.” This definition is in agreement with the exhortation ‘*sammānāvamānakkhamo*’.

To reconcile the Commentary’s exposition and the Text: Bodhisattas are by nature serious minded; pleasant experiences or happy circumstances do not make them excited with greed; they are accustomed to remain unmoved by them without having to make a special effort to discipline their mind. When faced with an unhappy turn of events, however, they have to make special endeavour to bear them patiently so as to fulfil their Perfection of Forbearance.

Bodhisattas, who are fulfilling the Perfection of Forbearance, have to put up with both pleasant and unpleasant experiences so as not to develop greed and ill-will. Hence, the exhortation given in the Text, to bear praise without developing greed and to tolerate insults and ill-treatments without generating hate. But it is nothing strange for Bodhisattas, who are serious minded, to experience pleasantness without being moved by greed. Therefore, the Commentary comments only upon tolerance, which is to be cultivated as Perfection of Forbearance in unpleasant situations which are unbearable to ordinary persons. Viewed in this way, there is no disagreement between the exposition in the Commentary and the teaching in the Text.

The Nature of Forbearance

Forbearance being the group of consciousness and its concomitants led by the mental factor of non-aversion (*adosa cetasika*), which has the characteristics of lack of ill-will or anger, is not a separate ultimate reality like Wisdom or Energy. However, When considered by itself as *adosa cetasika*, it is of course an ultimate reality like Wisdom or Energy.

Although forbearance (*khantī*) is non-aversion (*adosa cetasika*) every case of non-aversion is not forbearance. The *adosa cetasika* accompanies every arising of a 'Beautiful' (*sobhaṇa*) type of Consciousness but it is called forbearance (*khantī*) only if it serves as a deterrent to anger when provoked by others. If the 'Beautiful' consciousness arises due to any other cause, the *adosa cetasika* that accompanies it is not called forbearance.

The Venerable Puṇṇa's Forbearance

The Venerable Puṇṇa's mental attitude serves as a good example of forbearance one should develop. It is, therefore, briefly described here. Once during the Buddha's time, the Venerable Puṇṇa approached and informed the Buddha that he would like to go to Sunāparanta district and live there. The Buddha said to him: "Puṇṇa, the people in Sunāparanta are rough and brutal. How would you feel, should they abuse and revile you?"

The Thera replied: "Venerable Sir, should the people of Sunāparanta abuse and revile me, I would regard them as good people, control my temper and bear them patiently with the thought: 'These are good people, extremely good people; they merely abuse and revile me, but not assault me with their fists and elbows.' "

The Buddha asked him further: "Puṇṇa, suppose the people of Sunāparanta assault you with their fists and elbows, how would you feel?" "Venerable Sir, I would regard them as good people, control my temper and bear them patiently with the thought: 'These are good people, extremely good people; they merely assault me with their fists and elbows but not stoned me.' "

(The Buddha asked him further how he would feel if people stoned him, beat him with a stick, cut him with a sword or even kill him.)

The Thera replied: "Venerable Sir, I would control my temper and bear them patiently with the thought: 'The disciples of the Bhagavā, such as Venerable Godhika, Venerable Channa, etc. (being weary of, and ashamed of and being disgusted with the body and with life), had to commit suicide (*satthahāraka kamma*); how fortunate I am. I need not kill myself.' " The Buddha then approved of his replies and blessed him. (**Majjhima Nikāya**, Uparipannāsa, 5-Salāyatana Vagga, 3-Punnovāda Sutta)

Again, in the **Pāṭha Jātaka**, Sattālisa Nipāta, Sarabhaṅga Jātaka, Sakka, the King of Devas, asked the hermit, Sarabhaṅga:

"O Hermit of Koṇḍañña ancestry, what may one slay without having to repent? What may one abandon to gain praise from the virtuous? Whose abusive, harsh words should one bear with patience? Give me answers to these questions."

The Bodhisatta, Sarabhaṅga, the Hermit, replied:

"One may slay anger without having to repent; one may abandon ingratitude to gain praise from the virtuous; one should bear with patience abusive, harsh words from everyone, whether superior, equal or inferior; the virtuous call this the highest form of patience."

Again, Sakka asked:

"O Hermit, it may be possible to put up with the abusive, harsh words of those who are superior or one's equal but why should one tolerate the rude words coming from one's inferiors?"

The Bodhisatta answered:

"One may bear with patience the rudeness of one's superior through fear; or the abusive language from those who are equal to ward off danger of rivalry. (Both cases are not superior types of patience.) But the wise say that to put up with the rude language coming from one's inferiors, with no special reason to do so, is the supreme form of forbearance."

Sakka's Forbearance

Once, in a battle between the devas of Tāvātimsa and the *asuras*, the devas captured

Vepacitti, King of the Asuras, and brought him to the presence of Sakka. As he entered or left the Assembly, he reviled Sakka with abusive words but Sakka endured him without showing anger. (**Saṃyutta Nikāya**, Sagatha Vagga, Sakka Saṃyutta, Vepacitti Sutta.)

Then Mātali (Sakka's charioteer) asked his master why he remained calm, without showing any resentment in the face of such insults. Sakka's reply in verse included the following extract:

*Sadatthaparamā atthā,
Khantī bhīyyo na vijjati.
Yo have balavā santo,
Dubbhassa titikkhati,
Tam āhu paramam khamtim.*

Of all kinds of interest, self-interest is supreme; and amongst acts that promote self-interest, forbearance is the best. He who being strong himself endures the weak; this the virtuous call the supreme forbearance.

Explanation on quotations from the Texts.

Although the above quotations, from the **Sakka Saṃyutta** and **Sarabhaṅga Jātaka**, refer particularly to forbearance to verbal insults, it should be understood that enduring physical assaults also is meant. The Texts mention verbal insults because these are more commonly met with than physical attacks.

This is borne out by the example of the aforesaid story of Venerable Puṇṇa which included physical ill-treatments in ascending order of grievousness.

In the **Khantivādī Jātaka** also is found the story of Hermit Khantivādī who set an example of supreme forbearance when King Kalabu tortured him, not only verbally but also physically, causing him death.

Anger (akkodha) and Forbearance (khamti)

As has been stated above, forbearance is controlling oneself not to resent when being attacked by others, either verbally or physically. But there is another form of anger which is not connected with verbal or physical wrongs done by others. Suppose a man employs someone to do a certain job and the workman performs it to the best of his ability. But the employer is not satisfied with his work and may burst out with anger. If one controls one's temper in such a situation, it is not forbearance (*khamti*), it is just giving no vent to anger (*akkodha*).

Akkodha and Khamti as Kingly Duties

In the Mahā Hamsa Jātaka of the Asiti Nipata, **Pāṭha Jātaka**, the Buddha teaches 'Ten Duties of the King' (*dāsa rāga-dhamma*) which include both *akkodha* and *khamti*.

In carrying out various orders of a monarch, his executives may have performed their tasks well with the best of intention, but not to his satisfaction. *Akkodha* as one of the Ten Duties of the King forbids him from giving way to royal anger in such a situation. In contrast, *khamti* which is bearing verbal or physical insults without losing temper is laid down separately as another Duty of the King.

Nine Causes of Anger

There are nine causes of anger which arises in relation to oneself, to friends, loved ones or to one's enemies. It may also arise regarding actions in the past, present or future. Thus there are nine causes of anger arising with regard to individuals and with regard to time:

- (1) One is angry in relation to oneself, thinking: "He *has* caused damage to my interest."
- (2) One is angry in relation to oneself, thinking: "He *is* causing damage to my interest."
- (3) One is angry in relation to oneself, thinking: "He *will* cause damage to my interest."
- (4) One is angry in relation to one's friends, thinking: "He has caused damage to the interest of my friend."
- (5) One is angry in relation to one's friends, thinking: "He is causing damage to the

interest of my friend.”

- (6) One is angry in relation to one's friends, thinking: “He will cause damage to the interest of my friend.”
- (7) One is angry in relation to one's enemies, thinking: “He has promoted the interest of my enemies.”
- (8) One is angry in relation to one's enemies, thinking: “He is promoting the interest of my enemies.”
- (9) One is angry in relation to one's enemies, thinking: “He will promote the interest of my enemies.”

— **Āṅguttara Pāli**, Navaka Nipāta, 1-Pannāsaka, 3-Vagga, 9-Suits —

Irrational Anger (Aṭṭhāna kopa)

In addition to the above nine causes of anger, one can also become angry if it is raining too heavily or too windy or too hot, etc. Losing temper over matters about which one should not get angry is called irrational anger (*aṭṭhāna kopa*). It is the mental factor of ill-will (*dosa cetasika*) which arises mostly in those having no reasoning ability. To restrain such irrational anger (*aṭṭhāna kopa*) is to remain without anger (*akkodha*).

Eight Kinds of Power (Bala)

In a list of eight kinds of power of the noble and virtuous is included Forbearance. (**Āṅguttara Pāli**, Atthaka Hipāta, 1-Paṇāsaka, 3-Gahapati Vagga, 7-Sutta). The eight kinds of power are:

- (1) crying is the power of children
- (2) anger is the power of women
- (3) weapon is the power of robbers
- (4) sovereignty over wide territories is the power of kings
- (5) finding fault with others is the power of fools
- (6) careful scrutiny is the power of the wise
- (7) repeated consideration is the power of the learned
- (8) tolerance to wrongs done by others is the power of *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas*.

Samaṇas and Brāhmanas

With reference to the terms ***Samaṇas*** and ***Brāhmanas*** in no. (8) of the above list, it may be asked whether *samaṇas* are of equal status.

Outside of the Teaching, ‘*Samaṇa*’ means a recluse. Within the Teaching, it is understood as a *bhikkhu*, a member of the Order, a son of the Buddha. The term ‘*Samaṇa*’ is thus well known and needs no further explanation.

What requires elaboration is the word ‘*Brāhmaṇa*’. The Aggañña Sutta of the Pāthika Vagga, **Dīgha Nikāya**, gives an account of how this appellation ‘*Brāhmaṇa*’ comes to be used first.

At the beginning of the world, (after humans had lived on earth for aeons) evil ways had appeared amongst them and they elected a certain individual to rule over them as ‘the Great Elect’, King Mahā Sammata. At that time, some people saying: “The world is being overwhelmed by forces of evil; we do not wish to live in association with people who are so corrupted as to be governed by a king. We will repair to the forest and drive away, wash away these evil ways,” went to the forest and stayed there meditating and being absorbed in *jhāna*. Because they lived in this manner they were called ‘**Brāhmanas**’.

‘*Brāhmaṇa*’ is a Pāli word which means ‘one who has done away with evil’. *Brāhmanas* did not cook their own food; they lived on fruits which had fallen from trees or on alms-food collected from towns and villages. They were called ‘*Brāhmaṇa*’ because they led a pure, holy life in keeping with the literal meaning of the Pāli word ‘*Brāhmaṇa*’. They were

thus **Guṇa brāhmanas**, that is, *brāhmanas* by virtue of their holy practice.

After lapse of many aeons, some of these *Guṇa brāhmanas* failed to keep to the practice of meditation and absorption in *jhāna*. They settled down on the outskirts of towns and villages; they composed and taught Vedas to those eager to learn them. They no longer practised meditation to attain *jhāna* absorption and to cast off evil. But they still retained the name of *Brāhmaṇa*; but they were not *Guṇa brāhmanas* since they did not possess any more, the attribute of holy practice. They could only claim to be **Jāti brāhmanas**, i.e. *brāhmanas* by birth being descended from the *Guṇa brāhmanas*. As they could not practice meditation to attain *jhāna*, they are regarded to be of inferior class. But with lapse of time, writing Vedic books and teaching, they came to be considered as quite respectable and noble. Although these *brāhmanas* by birth would not actually cast off and wash away mental defilements by cultivation of *jhāna*, they immersed themselves in the waters of rivers and streams to deceive people, calling their deceptive performance as acts of ablution to wash away impurities.

A reference to this practice of washing out one's sins by *brāhmanas* is found in the **Bhūridatta Jātaka**. Bhūridatta, King of Nāgas, used to visit the human world to observe precepts. On one such visits, he failed to return to the *nāga* land at the expected time. His two brothers went in search of him.

(They were able to retrieve him in time from the captivity of a snake charmer who ill-treated him. He was betrayed by a brahmin named Nesāda who saw him observing precepts on top of an ant-hill.)²¹

His younger brother, Subhoga Nāga, while following the course of the river Yamunā in search of him, came across the Brahmin Nesāda who was responsible for his capture by the snake charmer. The Brahmin was found immersed in the Yamunā river in order to wash out the impurities of his betrayal.

The Buddha had in mind only *Guṇa brāhmanas* when he said that tolerance is the power of *samaṇas* or *brāhmanas*. The ascetics of Aggañña Sutta, who, wearing white clothes, practised to rid themselves of defilements were ordinary *brāhmanas* or *brāhmanas* by birth. But when the Buddha made His appearance and started teaching, He described attributes only by virtue of which one may be called a *brāhmaṇa*. In the **Dhammapada**, the Buddha devoted an entire *Vagga-Brāhmaṇa Vagga* of 42 verses to explain fully the noble qualities, possession of which would entitle one to be called a *brāhmaṇa*. Such *brāhmanas* are all *Guṇa brāhmanas*; there is no division of this class. The *brāhmanas* by birth, however, are split into many divisions.

(The last four Paragraphs dealing with the etymology of which is Myanmar word for *brāhmaṇa* are left out from our translation.)

(g) The Perfection of Truthfulness (Sacca-Pāramī)

(The opening paragraphs of this Chapter deals with how the Pāli words, 'Khaṇṭī' and 'Sacca' are adopted with some change in the Myanmar language and how Truthfulness is likened in the Myanmar literature to the Morning Star which never deviates from its course. We have left them out of our translation.)

What is to be noted, however, is this: as has been mentioned in the Text, Just as the morning star always goes straight without deviating from its course, so one should speak straight and truthfully, Such a speech alone means truthfulness. Hence the Commentator Buddhaghosa's explanation of the simile of the morning star.

Two Kinds of Truth

Truth (*sacca*) is not a separate ultimate principle like wisdom (*paññā*) or energy (*vīriya*). It is truthfulness without having a trace of falsehood. It involves such mental concomitants as restraint (*virati-cetasika*), volition (*cetanā-cetasika*), etc. As truthfulness varies under

21. This paragraph is inserted by translators to provide continuity of the story.

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

different circumstances, truth is basically of two kinds: (1) Conventional Truth (*Sammuti-sacca*) and (2) Ultimate Truth (*Paramattha-sacca*). (Only these two kinds of Truth are taught by the Buddha; there is no such thing as a third truth; there is no truth other than these two in the entire world.)

Conventional Truth (*Sammuti-Sacca*)

Of these two kinds, the conventional truth is the truth which agrees with what has been named by people. People generally name things according to their shapes. They call a thing of this shape a 'human', a thing of that shape a 'bull', a thing of another shape a 'horse'. Again, among humans, one of this shape is called a 'man' and one of that shape a 'woman'. There are, in this way, as many names as there are things.

If you call a thing named 'man', a 'man', it is a conventional truth; it is conventionally correct for you to say so. If you call what has been named 'man', a 'bull', it is not a conventional truth; it is not conventionally correct for you to say so. If you refer to someone, who has been named 'woman', as a 'man', it is not a conventional truth; it is not conventionally correct for you to say so. In this way, one should differentiate between the two truths.

Ultimate Truth (*Paramattha-Sacca*)

That which not only has been named by people but which really exists in its ultimate sense is called Ultimate Truth. For example, when it is said, "the thing that knows various sense objects is mind (*citta*)", the knowing principle is an Ultimate Truth because it truly exists in its ultimate sense. When it is said, "the thing that changes owing to opposite phenomena, such as heat and cold, etc. is matter (*rūpa*)", the changing principle is an Ultimate Truth, because it truly exists in its ultimate sense. In this way, mental concomitants (*cetasika*) and Nibbāna should also be known as Ultimate Truths, because they also truly exist in their ultimate sense.

Perception (*Saññā*) and Wisdom (*Paññā*)

Of the two kinds of truth, the conventional truth is associated with perception; in other words, the conventional truth depends on perception. Recognition of things according to their respective shapes as one has been saying since one's childhood 'such a shape is a man', 'such a shape is a woman', 'such a shape is a bull', 'such a shape is a horse' and so on, is perception. A person seeing through perception will say: "There exists a human body', 'there exists a man', 'there exists a woman', etc."

The Ultimate Truth is the object of wisdom. In other words, it manifests itself through wisdom. The greater the wisdom, the more discernable the Ultimate Truth. Wisdom makes an analysis of everything and sees its true nature. When it is said "the thing that knows various sense objects in mind", wisdom investigates whether a knowing principle exists or not and decides that it does. If there were no such thing as knowing, wisdom ponders, there would never be beings; all would have been sheer matter, such as stones, rocks and the like. Material things are far from knowing. But all beings do cognize various sense objects. When wisdom thus ponders, there manifests itself the principle (*citta*) which knows sense objects.

Therefore, that mind exists, in ultimate sense, is clear to those who think through wisdom; the more they think, the clearer they comprehend. But to those who see things through perception, it will not be clear; it will remain indiscernible. Because, as has been said before, perception is a notion of shapes. When you say there is mind, the perceptionist may ask, "Is the mind round, flat, or square? Is it a powder, a liquid, or a gas?" But you cannot answer that it is round, flat, or square nor can you say that it is a powder, a liquid, or a gas. If you cannot say anything, he may argue that there is no such thing as mind; because if there were such a thing, it must be round, flat or square; it must be a powder, a liquid or a gas. To the perceptionist, who is preoccupied with the idea of concrete forms, mind does not exist simply because it does not assume any concrete form.

Just as the perceptionist cannot see the ultimate truth, so the intellectual cannot see the

conventional truth. When the intellectual takes a look at what has been named 'man' by the perceptionist, he does so with an analytical mind and makes thirty-two portions of this person, such as hair on the head, hair on the body, fingernails, toenails, etc. "Is hair on the head called man?" "Is hair on the body called man?" The answers to these questions cannot be in the affirmative. In the same way, when a similar question on each of the remaining portions of the human body is asked, the answer will be no every time. If none of these portions can be called 'man', the intellectual will say, "Well, there really does not exist such a thing called man."

Conventional truth appears only when it is seen through perception; but when seen through wisdom, it disappears; so also the Ultimate Truth, which appears when it is seen through wisdom; when seen through perception, it disappears.

In this connection, what is particularly noteworthy is the fact that Nibbāna is an Ultimate Truth. This Ultimate Truth is peace through cessation of all kinds of sorrow and suffering. This peace can be discerned only when it is examined by means of sharp insight but not by means of perception.

The Perceptionist's View

Nowadays, some people might like to ask: "Are there in Nibbāna palatial buildings? How do those who have passed into Nibbāna enjoy there?" and so on. They ask such questions because of their perception of Nibbāna, which as Ultimate Truth lies in the sphere of wisdom.

To be sure, there are no palatial buildings in Nibbāna nor are there any individuals that pass into Nibbāna. (Those, who have realized peace of Nibbāna with their attainment of arahatship, are no longer subject to rebirth, and their minds and bodies cease to exist when complete demise takes place in their final existence, like a great flame of fire become extinct. Such a cessation is called passing into *parinibbāna*. No living entity exists in Nibbāna.)

"If that were the case, such thing as Nibbāna would not exist", the perceptionist would say, "It is, therefore, useless and unnecessary." In order to encourage him, others would assert: "Nibbāna is a place where beings are immortal, assuming special mental and physical forms and enjoying incomparable luxury in palaces and mansions." Then only is the perceptionist satisfied immensely because the assertion agrees with what he has preconceived.

If one looks through perception at something and sees the appearance of its concrete form, that is not absolute (*paramattha*) but merely a conventional designation (*paññatti*). So also, if one looks through wisdom at something and sees the disappearance of its form, that is not absolute either, but merely a conventional designation too. Only when one looks through wisdom and sees its true nature, then this is absolute. The more one looks thus, the more one sees such reality. Therefore, Nibbāna, which is just Peace, highly unique Absoluteness, should not be sought through perception which tends to grasp form and substance. Instead, it should be examined through wisdom which tends to remove form and substance and delve into their true nature so that Peace, Nibbāna, manifests itself.

Conventional truth and ultimate truth are both acceptable, each in its own context, as has been shown above. Suppose a person takes an oath saying: "I declare that there really exist man and woman. If what I have declared is not correct let misfortune befall me", and suppose another person also take an oath saying: "I declare that there really do not exist man and woman. If what I have declared is not correct let misfortune befall me", never will misfortune befall either of them. The reason is: though the two declarations are against each other, both are correct from their respective points of view. The former, correct from the point of view of conventional usage, is conventional truth; the latter, correct from the point of view of ultimate sense, is ultimate truth.

Although Buddhas intend to teach only the nature of absolute reality, they do not exclude the conventional terms from their teaching. Instead they mention them side by side with those of ultimate truth. For instance, even in the First Sermon, though the emphasis is on

the two extremes and the Middle Path, it is taught that “The two extremes should not be taken up by a recluse,” in which “recluse” is a mere designation.

Importance of Conventional Designation

When the Buddha teaches Ultimate Truth, He uses conventional designation wherever necessary. He does so not just to make a contrast. For ordinary persons, the conventional truth is as important as the ultimate truth. Had the Buddha taught things only in ultimate terms, those with proper mental attitude will understand that “whatever exists in the world is impermanent, unsatisfactory and unsubstantial,” and they will make efforts to cultivate Vipassanā Meditation, which will directly lead them to Nibbāna.

On the other hand, those with improper mental attitude will hold thus: “It is said that there are only aggregates of mind and matter which are subject to impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and unsubstantiality in this world. There is no self, nor are there other persons. Then there cannot be such things as ‘my wealth, my son, my wife’; nor can there be such things as ‘his wealth, his son, his wife’. One can make use of anything as one desires. Because there is no such thing as ‘he’, there can be no such thing as ‘killing him’, no such thing as ‘stealing his property’, no such thing as ‘doing wrong with his wife’.” Thus will they commit evil according to their wild desires. So upon their death, they will be reborn in woeful states. To prevent this, the Suttanta Desanā Discourses, are delivered embodying conventional terms. The Suttanta teachings thus form effective, preventive measures for beings from falling into the four woeful states.

Besides, the Suttanta teachings lead beings to such happy states as human world, celestial world and Brahmā-world, because the virtues, namely, generosity, morality and tranquillity meditation, which are conducive to rebirth in those states, are most numerous taught in the Suttantas. (For example, to accomplish a meritorious act of generosity, there must be the donor, his volition, the recipient and the object to offer. Of these factors, volition alone is an ultimate reality, but the rest are just designations, exclusion of which makes generosity impossible. The same is true of morality and tranquillity meditation.) Therefore, it should be noted without any doubt that conventional truth leads to happy abodes as has been stated. Exclusion of conventional truth, to say the least, will deter fulfilment of Perfections which are required for Buddhahood.

Although it is true that the Buddha's Teachings of Suttantas alone would make beings avoid wrongdoings. Since the Buddha Himself has said that there exist ‘I’, ‘he’, ‘mine’, ‘his’, ‘my wife and children’ and ‘his wife and children’, etc. there is danger of beings becoming strongly attached to the wrong notion that there really exist such things and becoming gradually removed from the Path, Fruition and Nibbāna. In order to help them reach the Path, Fruition and Nibbāna, the Buddha had to teach Ultimate Truth as embodied in the Abhidhamma.

Reasons for teaching Two Kinds of Truth

The Suttanta's teaching of the existence of individuals and things belonging to them is made in agreement with designations which are universally used. But by means of Abhidhamma, the Buddha had to remove their wrong notions saying that there is no such thing as ‘I’, ‘he’, ‘man’, ‘woman’, etc., therefore, because of their conventional terms it should not be grasped that they really exist; all is but impermanent, unsatisfactory and unsubstantial.

In this way, the Buddha explained that there exist ‘I’, ‘he’, ‘man’, ‘woman’, etc. only as mere designations (or as conventional truth), and that these things do not exist in their ultimate sense. Hence the need for Him to teach both kinds of truth.

Natural Truth (Sabhāva Sacca) and Noble Truth (Ariya Sacca)

Ultimate Truth is of two kinds: (a) Natural and (b) Noble. All the four ultimate realities, namely, mind, mental concomitants, matter and Nibbāna, constitute Natural Truth because they are real in their absolute sense.

In the field of mundane affairs, there are both physical happiness (*sukha*) and mental happiness (*somanassa*) which constitute Natural Truth. If one is in contact with a pleasant object, because of that touch, there arises happiness in one's person. None can deny saying: "No, it is not true." or "No, it is not good to be in contact with a pleasant object." Nobody can say so because of the fact that one is really happy to be in contact with a desirable body as a sense object (*iṭṭhaphotthabbārammaṇa*).

Similarly, if one's mind is in contact with a pleasant mind object, one enjoys mental happiness. Such a feeling is called *somanassa-vedanā*. This is irrefutable because arising of mental happiness is a reality. Thus, it should be held that both *sukha* and *somanassa* exist in mundane affairs.

Noble Truths (Ariya Sacca): The Noble Truth of Suffering (Dukkha Ariya Sacca)

In terms of Noble Truth, one does not see either *sukha* or *somanassa* in mundane affairs. If one clings to the view that there exist both *sukha* and *somanassa* as Natural Truth, one cannot be detached from worldly outlook; one cannot then attain the State of a Noble One (*ariya*). Therefore, one who aspires to become an *ariya* should make efforts to see that mental states called *sukha* and *somanassa*, in terms of natural truth, are all suffering. These feelings called *sukka* and *somanassa* are things which cannot remain without change forever; indeed they are subject to change every second.

Worldlings crave the pleasures of human and divine abodes, wrongly believing them to be a source of happiness and delight. They do so because they do not know such pleasures are transitory and subject to constant change. They are ignorant of the true nature of these pleasures because they have little intelligence but great craving. Such ignorant people will look upon them as enjoyable and delightful before process of decay and deterioration sets in. But it is in their nature to change and when that happens these people become sad much more than they had been happy.

For example, a poor man will become very happy the moment he hears that he has won a lottery prize. Then he starts day dreaming how to spend and enjoy his wealth to make up for his former poverty. While he is building castles in the air, he lost all his money through some misfortune. It may be imagined how much he will be unhappy then. His sorrow at the loss of his wealth will be far greater than his happiness on becoming suddenly rich.

In the field of worldly affairs, everything is associated with both enjoyment and sorrow. The five sense-pleasures are enjoyable to worldlings. But the Buddha says that they are more of suffering than enjoyment. Unlike worldlings, however, the Buddha's Disciples do not find them enjoyable, much less the Buddha. Yet the Buddha does not say that they are totally devoid of pleasantness; he does say that there is little pleasantness but much sorrow in them.

In any situation, the wise and virtuous always consider first whether there is fault or no fault, but never whether there is pleasantness or unpleasantness. If there is fault, they take no interest in it, even if there is pleasantness. They decide it is undesirable to them. If there is no fault, they take it to be desirable even if pleasantness is absent.

Supposing someone is told that he could rule a country as a sovereign monarch just for one day; but that the next day he would be executed. Then there will be none who dares or desires to rule. From the point of view of a worldling, a Universal Monarch's life for one day which has never been enjoyed before, may be entirely attractive. But as there is the impending death on the following day which is a great disadvantage, there can be nobody who will enjoy one day's life of such a Universal Monarch.

In the same way, seeing that everything is perishable, the Noble Ones cannot hold temporary pleasure, which occurs just before it vanishes, as enjoyment. One can become a Noble Person only through contemplation that "there is no such thing as happiness in this world; everything is impermanent; as there is no permanence, there is no happiness; there is but sorrow."

Only by developing Insight through contemplation that everything in the world is of the nature of suffering, it is possible to become an *ariya*. The aggregates of phenomena which

are the objects of such meditation is called the Noble Truth. In other words, since the Noble Ones meditate on this aggregate of mundane phenomena as they really are, it is called the Noble Truth.

The Insight that, in the cycle of existence which are called the three worlds, there is no enjoyment at all, but only suffering according to the right view held by those who are working for attaining the Noble State and by those who have already attained the same is a truth; it is therefore called the Noble Truth of Suffering.

In short, the five aggregates of clinging (*pañca-upādānakkhandha*), also named the phenomena of the three mundane planes of existence, are all suffering and that they are nothing but suffering. The *pañca-upādānakkhandha* are the five aggregates of clinging: the aggregate of matter (*rūpa*), the aggregate of feelings (*vedanā*), the aggregate of perceptions (*saññā*), the aggregate of mental formations (*saṅkhāra*) and the aggregate of consciousness (*viññāṇa*), which form objects of attachments as 'I', 'mine', 'myself'. These five aggregates are called the Noble Truth of Suffering.

The Noble Truth of The Cause of Suffering (Dukkha Samudaya Ariya Sacca)

The *pañca-upādānakkhandha*, which form the Noble Truth of Suffering, do not arise by themselves. They have their respective reasons for their arising, the most fundamental and important being craving for sense objects.

In the world, every being is subjected to suffering because he or she is to toil daily for essentials of living. And all this is motivated by craving. The more one craves for good living, the greater one's suffering is. If one would be satisfied with simple life, living very simply on bare necessities, one's misery would be alleviated to a corresponding extent. It is clear, therefore, that suffering, wrongly believed to be good living, is caused by craving.

Beings do all kinds of acts for wanting better things, not only for the present life but also for coming existences. When a new birth appears as a result of those acts, the real cause for this new birth is found to be craving that motivates those acts.

Craving is called the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering because it is truly that craving, which is the origin of suffering, *upādānakkhandha*, in the new birth. In other words, craving is the true cause of the aggregates which form suffering. This Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering (**Dukkha Samudaya-Sacca**) is also referred to, in short, as **Samudaya-Sacca**.

The Noble Truth of The Cessation of Suffering (Dukkha Nirodha Ariya Sacca)

Craving called the Truth of the cause of Suffering, like the gum of myaukhna tree, clings to various mundane sense objects, but, like flies which cannot approach burning iron, it cannot form an attachment to Nibbāna.

The reason for this is that the Ultimate Reality, Nibbāna, the Unconditioned Element, is unattractive from the point of view of craving. To explain, craving rises from feeling, as the Buddha has stated "*vedanā paccaya taṇhā*" in the doctrine of the Dependent Origination (*Paṭicca-Samuppāda*), and accordingly craving owes its existence to feeling. But the Unconditioned Nibbāna has nothing to do with feeling (it is not the kind of happiness that is to be felt); it is but peaceful happiness (*santi-sukha*).

Then the question arises: Totally devoid of sensation, can Nibbāna be likeable and desirable?

If somebody asked like this, he does so because he thinks feeling is real happiness or he does not consider that peaceful happiness is real happiness.

The answer is: There are two kinds of happiness; happiness derived from feeling (*vedayita-sukha*) and happiness derived from peace (*santi-sukha*). Here is a simile: Suppose there is a rich man who is fond of food. He expends much to nourish himself with sumptuous delicacies. But a *vijjādhara* (one who is sustained by magical power) may find the rich man's food disgusting, let alone finding it appetitive, as he is endowed with the power of living without eating. When asked: "Of these two, who is happier as far as food

is concerned?" A man of craving will say the rich man is happier because he enjoys highly sumptuous food whenever he desires while the latter enjoys nothing. They will say so because, being overwhelmed by craving, they believe that feeling which stimulates craving is something to be esteemed.

Men of intelligence, on the other hand, will say that the *vijjādhara* is happier. The rich man, being a man of dainty palate, must go in quest of elaborate foodstuff. Having acquired them, he is flooded with troubles of making necessary preparations (*paṭisaṅkhārana-dukkha*) and longing for novelty (*āsā-dukkha*). To enjoy happiness derived from feeling (*vedayita-sukha*) is to be burdened with these twin *dukkha*; there is no escape from them. The *vijjadhara* has no such *dukkha*; he lives happily having nothing to do with food. There is no trace of worries in his happiness, which is absolute. Thus, they will say he is happier.

Men of craving say that the rich man is happier because they do not see any of his troubles; what they do see is his enjoyment of food. They have no good impression of the peaceful life of the *vijjadhara* who need not eat at all. Instead they envy the rich man's way of living and want to become rich themselves. In the same way craving has no high opinion of and no desire or yearning for *santi-sukha* (the Unconditioned Nibbāna) which is devoid of feeling and which indeed is peace.

In this connection, the Third Sutta, 4. Mahāvagga, Navaka Nipāta of the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** says:

"Once, the Venerable Sāriputta, while staying in the midst of *bhikkhus*, uttered: 'Friends, Nibbāna is indeed happiness; Nibbāna is indeed happiness.' Then the Venerable Udāyi asked: 'How can Nibbāna be happiness, Friend Sāriputta, if there is no feeling?' The Venerable Sāriputta replied: 'Friend Udāyi, Nibbāna's being devoid of feeling is in itself happiness.' "

Worldly people, who lack intelligence, view the five aggregates, the Truth of Suffering, as happiness. Intelligent worldly people and the Noble Ones view the cessation of the five aggregates, like the extinction of great fire, as happiness. A simile, to illustrate the superiority of happiness derived from cessation and extinction for those worldly people of poor intelligence, is as follows: A patient, who is suffering from a chronic, acute flatulence, takes a dose of medicine from a good physician. Consequently, he gets completely cured of his disease. It may be imagined how happy he would be. At that moment, he has no pleasant sensation whatever; what he experiences is simply the extinction of the flatulent trouble. He will certainly be delighted knowing, "Oh, gone is my trouble now!" as his suffering has ceased to trouble him. The flatulent trouble is nothing, when compared with *samsāric* suffering. If one takes delight in extinction of that insignificant trouble, why will he not find happiness in extinction of the great *samsāric* suffering. He will certainly be overjoyed.

Nibbāna

What is **Nibbāna**, the cessation of suffering? When the Unconditioned Element (*asankhata-dhātu*), the unique Ultimate Reality, which has the characteristics of peace, is realised with the four-fold knowledge of the Path, all the defilements, numbering one thousand and five hundred, are completely eradicated, never will they rise again. In any existence, when the *arahatta-magga* is attained, the suffering, in the form of the five aggregates, ceases once and for all immediately after death, just as a heap of fire has been extinguished. There is no more rebirth in any realms of existence. That Unconditioned Element, the unique Ultimate Reality, which has the characteristics of peace and all the unique attributes described above is called '**Nibbāna**'.

The worldlings do not know full well the nature of Nibbāna as the Noble Ones do. If they, without knowing it, say or write to let others understand it as the Noble Ones do, they could go wrong. Let alone speaking of Nibbāna, when they speak even of a mundane object which they know only from books, as though they have seen it with their own eyes, they are likely to make mistakes. The common worldlings not being able to see every aspect of it like the Noble Ones do, should speak of Nibbāna only in the aforesaid manner.

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

When Nibbāna is considered as to what it is like, those who have not understood what it really is, are likely to regard Nibbāna as a kind of indestructible country or city. When Nibbāna is mentioned as a secure city in a discourse at a water-pouring ceremony, it is just a figurative usage. Nibbāna is not a city, nor is it a country. Yet there are some who believe and say that Nibbāna is a city where those who have passed into it live happily with mind and body free of old age, sickness and death. The truth is that passing of Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and *arahats* into Nibbāna means complete cessation of the five aggregates, material and mental, of an *arahat* at his death in his last existence; they will no longer appear in any realm of existence. (Nibbāna is the Ultimate Reality which is the object of the Path and Fruition. Parinibbāna is complete cessation of the material and mental aggregates which will never come into being again.) Their passing into Nibbāna is not going into the city of Nibbāna. There is no such thing as the city of Nibbāna.

The Myanmar word ‘*Nibbān*’ is a Pāli derivative. When people perform meritorious deeds, their teachers will admonish them to pray for *Nibbān*. Though they do so accordingly, they generally do not know well what *Nibbān* means. So they are not very enthusiastic about it. The teachers, therefore, should ask them to pray for the extinction of all suffering and sorrow because the words are pure Myanmar and the devotees will understand thoroughly and pray enthusiastically and seriously.

Two Kinds of Nibbāna

Suppose there is a very costly garment. When its owner is still alive, you say: “It is an excellent garment with a user.” When he dies, you say: “It is an excellent garment with no user.” (The same garment is spoken of in accordance with the time in which the user is alive or in which the user is no longer alive.) Similarly, the Unconditioned Element, the Ultimate Reality of Nibbāna, which has the characteristic of peace and which is the object the Venerable Ones such as Sāriputta, who contemplate by means of the Path and Fruition, is called **Sa-upādisesa Nibbāna** (Nibbāna with the five aggregates of *upādisesa* contemplating) before his death; after his death, however, since there are no longer the five aggregates that contemplate Nibbāna, it is called **Anupādisesa Nibbāna** (Nibbāna without the five aggregates of *upādisesa* contemplating it.)

The peace of Nibbāna is aspired for, only when it is pondered after overcoming craving by wisdom. That the peace of Nibbāna is something which should really be aspired for, will not be understood if craving is foremost in one's thinking and not overcome by wisdom.

Three Kinds of Nibbāna

Nibbāna is also of three kinds according to its attributes which are clearly manifest in it: (1) **Suññata Nibbāna**, (2) **Animitta Nibbāna** and (3) **Appaṇihita Nibbāna**.

- (1) The first attribute is that Nibbāna is devoid of all distractions (*palibodha*); hence **Suññata Nibbāna**. (“**Suññata**” means “void”.)
- (2) The second attribute is that it is devoid of consciousness (*citta*), mental concomitants (*cetasika*) and matter (*rūpa*) which, as conditioned things, are the cause of defilements. Conditioned things, whether mental or material, cannot only arise individually and without combining with one another. Material things arise only when at least eight of them form a combination. (That is why they are called *atthakalapa*, unit of eight.) Mental things also arise only when at least eight elements make a combination. (By this is meant *pañca-viññāṇa*, the fivefold consciousness.) When such combinations of mental and material components brought together to form an aggregate are wrongly taken to be ‘myself’, ‘my body’, ‘a thing of substance’, they give rise to mental defilements, such as craving, etc. Conditioned things are thus known as **nimitta**, ground or cause. In particular, mundane consciousness, mental concomitants and matter are called **nimitta**. In Nibbāna, however, there are no such things of substance as ‘myself’, ‘my body’, which cause the emergence of defilements. Hence the name **Animitta Nibbāna**.

- (3) The third attribute is that Nibbāna is devoid of craving which is *taṇhā*. As has been said before, Nibbāna has nothing to crave for. Nibbāna is not to be craved. Therefore, it is also called **Appaṇihita Nibbāna**. In this way there are three kinds of Nibbāna according to its attributes.

This Truth of Cessation of Suffering is in short called the Truth of Cessation. This Truth of Cessation is the Unconditioned (*Asaṅkhata*) Element. (It is not conditioned by any factor.) Therefore, this Truth of Cessation, the Unconditioned Element, the Ultimate Reality of Nibbāna, is named ‘**Appaccaya-Dhamma**’ (Uncaused Phenomenon), or ‘**Asaṅkhata-Dhamma**’ (Unconditioned Phenomenon), in the **Dhammasangani**.

The Noble Truth of The Path

Though Nibbāna is causeless, not conditioned by any cause and always exists, it is not possible to realise its peace without a cause. It can be realised only through a cause. That cause is nothing but the Noble Practice. Therefore, the Noble Practice that leads to Nibbāna, the Cessation of Suffering, is termed **Dukkha Nirodhagāmini Paṭipadā**, the Course of Practice that leads to the Cessation of Suffering.

The Middle Path (Majjhima Patipadā)

Living in enjoyment of sensual pleasures in the world fulfilling the demands of craving is not the path for attainment of Nibbāna, the Cessation of Suffering. It is just an ignoble practice called *kāmasukhallikānuyoga*. Efforts to make oneself suffer by exposure of one's body to fire or to the sun, by keeping one's hand raised continuously, with a view to prevent mental defilements from appearing, do not form the way to Nibbāna, the Cessation of Suffering. It is another ignoble practice called *attakilamathānuyoga*. Avoiding self-indulgence in sensual pleasures on one hand and self-mortification on the other, following only the middle path which is neither too comfortable nor too arduous, like the string of a harp which is neither too taut nor too loose, is the practice that surely leads to Nibbāna. This practice which is neither easy nor difficult is called ‘**Majjhimapatipada**’, the Middle Course.

This very Middle Course is called the Path (*Magga*), the Way leading to Nibbāna. Wrong view, etc. which are unwholesome, are called *duggati-magga* or *micchā-magga* as they lead to the four woeful states (*apāya*). Right view, etc. which are mundane and wholesome, are called *sugati-magga* or *sammā-magga* as they lead to Nibbāna. The Commentary on *Sacca Vibhanga* explains that these factors, such as Right View, etc. which constitute Path Consciousness are called *Magga* because they are sought by those who aspire for Nibbāna; because these factors lead to Nibbāna; and because they find their way to Nibbāna after eradicating mental defilements.

This Path is not of one factor only; it is of eight factors, as will be shown below; hence it is called ‘**Atthangika-Magga**’, the Path of Eight Constituents, which are:

- (1) **Sammā-ditthi**: Right View (Knowledge of the Truth of Suffering, Knowledge of the Truth of the Cause of Suffering, Knowledge of the Truth of the Cessation of Suffering and Knowledge of the Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering. Thus it is the fourfold Knowledge).
- (2) **Sammā-saṅkappa**: Right Thought. (Three kinds of thought, namely, thought of liberating oneself from sensuous defilements (*kilesa-kāma*) and sensuous objects (*vatthu-kāma*) as has been explained in the section on the *Nekkhamma Pāramī*, Perfection of Renunciation; thought of not destroying others; and thought of not harming others).
- (3) **Sammā-vacā**: Right Speech (Restraint of four evil speeches).
- (4) **Sammā-kammanta**: Right Action (Restraint of three evil doings).
- (5) **Sammā-ājīva**: Right Livelihood (Livelihood that is free of seven evils).
- (6) **Sammā-vāyāma**: Right Exertion (Exertion so as not to give rise to unwholesomeness that has not yet occurred, exertion so as to eradicate unwholesomeness that has occurred, exertion so as to give rise to wholesomeness that has not yet occurred and

exertion so as to develop wholesomeness that has occurred).

- (7) **Sammā-sati**: Right Mindfulness (Mindfulness so as to be aware of one's body, of one's feelings, of one's consciousness and of mental hindrances, etc.).
- (8) **Sammā-samādhi**: Right Concentration (The first *jhāna*, the second *jhāna*, the third *jhāna* and the fourth *jhāna*).

These eight constituents do not arise simultaneously in the mundane fields; they arise in combination with one another as far as possible. When they come to the supramundane field, however, all the eight rise simultaneously. Only these eight constituents which arise simultaneously at the moment of attaining the supramundane Path are collectively called the Noble Truth of the Path. Thus by the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering is meant the group of eight factors beginning with Right View that arise as a whole and simultaneously. The Path which is included together with the Fruition and Nibbāna in the collection of supramundane phenomena (*magga-phala nibbāna*) stands for all these eight constituents which form the Noble Truth of the Path.

Truth of Learning (**Pariyatti-sacca**) and Truth of Practice (**Patipatti-sacca**)

The Truths we have so far discussed are those learnt from the Scriptures (**Pariyatti-sacca**). But what really counts as Perfection of Truthfulness is the Truth of Practice (**Patipatti-sacca**) fulfilled by the Noble Ones such as Bodhisattas and others. The Truth of Practice means Truthful Speech or Telling the Truth (*vacī-sacca*). Fulfilment of such a practice in one's self is fulfilment of Perfection of Truthfulness. It is the verbal Truth that Bodhisattas and other Noble Persons fulfil in particular. And this verbal truth is of three kinds:

- (1) **Saddahāpana-sacca**, the verbal truth told so that one may be believed by others;
- (2) **Ichchāpūrana-sacca**, the verbal truth told so that one's wish may be fulfilled; and
- (3) **Musāviraṃaṇa-sacca**, the verbal truth told so that telling lies may be avoided.

(1) **Saddahāpana-sacca**

Of these three truths, the way Bodhisattas fulfil **Saddahāpana-sacca** is mentioned in the Bhisa Jātaka of the **Pakinnaka Nipata**. The full story of the Bhisa Jātaka may be read in the Jātaka Book. The story in brief is as follows.

The Story of The Bhisa Jātaka in Brief

Once upon a time, a brahmin youth, Mahākāñcana by name, who was born in the city of Bārāṇasī, went forth in renunciation into a forest together with ten companions including his young brothers, one young sister, a male servant, a female servant and a friend. They made their lodgings at a suitable place near a lotus pond and lived on gathered fruits.

In the beginning they all went out together to look for fruits; talking to one another they behaved like townfolk or villagers, not like forest-dwellers. To stop this unpleasant situation, the eldest brother Mahākāñcana said: "I alone will go out for fruits. You all stay behind to practise Dhamma in peace." Then the other brothers said: "You are the chief of us all. It is not proper for you to gather fruits. The sister and the female servant should not do so either, for they are women. But the rest, eight of us, will do that by turns." This was agreeable to everyone and the remaining eight male persons gathered fruits on rotation to feed them all.

As time went by, they became so content that they did not care for fruits but took lotus sprouts from the nearby pond and shared among themselves in this manner. The one on duty brought lotus sprouts into the leaf roofed hut and divided them into eleven portions. The oldest of them took his portion first and, after striking the stone drum, went back to his place to eat it peacefully and carried on with his practice. When the next senior member heard the sound of the stone drum he took his share and struck the drum in turn. In this manner, they took their food one after another, went back to their place to eat and continue to practise. Thus, they did not see one another unless there was any special reason.

As their practice was so severe, causing Sakka's abode tremble, the King of Devas

thought of the reason and came to know it. He was then doubtful that these people were really detached from sensual pleasures. In order to investigate the matter, he kept the eldest brother's share of food hidden by his supernormal power for three days continuously.

When the oldest brother came to take his share on the first day, he did not see it and thought that it must be left out through forgetfulness; he then said nothing and went back to his place to continue his meditation. On the second day also he found his share missing; thinking that his share was purposely left out as a punishment because of some misunderstanding that he was guilty of something, he remained quiet as on the first day. On the third day, when he did not find his share, he thought that he should apologize if he had been guilty and in the evening he summoned the others by striking the stone drum. He said: "Why did you not keep my share of food? Please speak out if I have some guilt. I will tender my apology to you." Then the first younger brother stood up and after giving his respect to the eldest brother, said: "Sir, could I get your permission to speak only for myself?" On getting the permission, he took an oath, saying:

"Sir, if I had stolen your share of food, may I come into possession of horses, cattle, silver, gold and a beautiful wife here at this place and stay with my family (enjoying a full mundane life)."

(This form of oath suggests that as much as objects of desire give us pleasure when we are in possession of them, we feel grieved and distressed when we are bereft of them. The oath was taken to despise the objects of desire.)

The eldest brother said: "You have taken a very severe oath. I believe you did not take my food. Go and sit in your place." The rest of the group, covering their ears also said: "Brother, please do not say so. Your word is very serious and terrible." (They covered their ears because as meditators they found sense pleasures disgusting to them; sensuality was so dreadful that they could not bear even to hear something associated with it.) Then the second younger brother said:

"Sir, if I had stolen your lotus sprouts, may I become one who wears flowers, puts on sandalwood paste from Kāsi, has many children and who is very much involved in and attached to sensuality."

(In this way, the remaining eight persons took an oath individually.)

In this Jātaka, the ascetic Mahākāñcana, leader of the group, was the Bodhisatta and the rest were destined to become foremost Disciples in their own right. Therefore, having attained spiritual maturity, they really abhorred sensuality. Each of them was bold enough to take such a dreadful oath to convince the others. The word "asseveration" is not used directly in this **Bhisa Jātaka** but the word "oath" is. Since that oath was based on what was true, it was the same as the verbal truth (*vacī-sacca*) fulfilled by Bodhisattas. In their individual oaths, the main point was, "We do not steal your share of lotus sprouts." Since it was a true statement, it amounts to verbal truth. Such words as: "May I be also have this or that" (which in effect mean, "May I encounter this or that") are included as proposed punishment for oneself in the oath just to make the others believe him or her. Accordingly, this truth is called '**Saddahāpana-sacca**'. The oath that has been taken from the times of ancient Mahāsammata kings down to the present governments are all *saddahāpana-sacca*.

Taking of A Corporal Oath

Before the subject-matter of an oath was put into writing as a sacred text, taking of an oath was done verbally and was called "swearing of an oath". Since written sacred oath came into existence, purely verbal taking of an oath has been replaced by holding the sacred text (or placing it on one's head); thus taking of a corporal oath by holding a sacred text has come into use. This gives rise in Myanmar parlance to "holding the sacred text" for taking a corporal oath and "administering the corporal oath" for making someone else hold the sacred text. Only the form of taking an oath for oneself, whether it is taken verbally or by holding the sacred text, in order to convince others saying: "What I have said is the truth; if not, such and such a misfortune befall me.", etc. should be named **Saddahāpana-sacca**.

An utterance not based on truth, but made just to consign others to destruction is not an oath, but merely a curse. An example may be seen in the following story.

The Story of Two Hermits

In the past, while King Brahmadata was reigning in the city of Bārāṇasī, a hermit, Devila by name, was living in the Himalayas. On his visit to Bārāṇasī, in order to have acid and salt, he stayed in a potter's hut near the city with the owner's permission. Soon another hermit called Nārada came for a similar purpose and stayed at the same place. At night, when the time for sleeping came, the newcomer noted Devila's sleeping place as well as the door at the entrance to the hut and went to bed. But, after lying down at his place, Devila moved to the entrance and slept crosswise in the middle of the doorway.

When Nārada went out in the dead of the night, he happened to tread on Devila's matted hair. Devila then said: "Who has stepped on my hair?" Nārada replied gently: "Sir, I have, because I did not know that you were sleeping here. Please accept my apology." And he left the hut while Devila was grumbling.

Then, just in case Nārada should do it again when he came back, Devila completely reversed his lying position and went to sleep. When Nārada returned, he thought: "When I went out, I wrongly stepped on his hair because I did not know where his head lay; I shall now go in by the other way." Thus, he happened to tread on his neck. Devila asked: "Who trod on my neck?" "It is I, Sir," said Nārada. "You wicked hermit!" said Devila, "The first time, you stepped on my hair. This time, you did the same but on my neck. Curse you, I will." "Sir, I am not guilty," said Nārada, "The first time I was wrong because I did not know the way you were sleeping. Now I came by way of the foot-end not to wrong again. Please pardon me," apologized Nārada.

"O wicked hermit, I am going to curse you," threatened Devila. Then despite Nārada's plea, Devila uttered a curse: "Tomorrow morning, as soon as the sun rises, may your head be split into seven pieces!" "In spite of my apologies you did curse me," said Nārada, "May the guilty one's head be split into seven pieces." Thus Nārada put Devila under a curse in retaliation. (Unlike Devila's curse, Nārada's was free of anger and volition to harm him. He cursed him just to make him fear and admit his wrong. He was so powerful that he could see eighty *kappas*, i.e. the past forty and the future forty.) When he looked into Devila's future, he foresaw that the latter would be destroyed. So out of compassion for Devila, he tried with his power to prevent the sun from rising.

When the sun did not rise at the time it was due to, people thronged to the palace and shouted in unison: "O King, the sun does not rise while you are ruling over us. Please improve your conduct so that the sun reappears. The King pondered his conduct and did not see anything wrong. He thought that there must be some peculiar reason which might be a quarrel among ascetics in his country. On enquiry, he came to know the quarrel between the two hermits. The King then went overnight to the hermits. Under instructions from Nārada, he placed a solid mass of earth on Devila's head and made him plunge into a pond by force. When Nārada withdrew his power, no sooner had the sun risen than the solid mass of earth was split into seven pieces. Devila then moved to another place in the water and came out of it safe and sound. (**Dhammapada Commentary**, I. Yamaka Vagga, 3. Tissa Vatthu.)

Devila's curse in this story, "Tomorrow morning, as soon as the sun rises, may your head be split into seven pieces!" is for Nārada, uttered with anger. Thus it was not an oath but a mere curse.

Like the curse in this story, there are curses recorded in the Myanmar inscriptions of old. For instance, the Nadaungtat Pagoda inscription, dated 537 (M.E.) on the northern side of Cūlāmuni Pagoda of Bagan reads near the end: "He who destroys my work of merit, may the seven generations of his descendants be destroyed. May he suffer in Avīci Hell and may he not be liberated but become rooted there even when Buddhas of successive *kappas* come and try to save him." Such a curse is something that is not done by Bodhisattas. In

fact, it is a verbal evil called 'harsh speech' (*pharusa-vācā*). In other words, it is the kind of abusive words uttered by mean persons.

Saddahāpana-sacca may be understood not only from the Bhisā Jātaka but also from the Sutasoma Story of the Asiti Nipāta of the Jātaka. A summary of this latter story runs as follows.

(Once the cannibal Porisada, who formerly was King of Bārāṇasī but now living in a forest, made a vow to bathe the trunk of a banyan tree with the blood of a hundred and one kings if his foot that was pierced by an acacia thorn were healed in seven days. The foot was healed and he succeeded in capturing one hundred princes. At the command of the deity of the tree to make the number of captured kings complete, he was to catch King Sutasoma of Kuru. He managed to do so while Sutasoma was returning from Migājina Park and carried him away on his shoulder.) Then, Sutasoma said: "I have to go home for a while. Because, on my way to Migājina Park, I met a Brahmin Nanda, who offered to teach me four verses worth four hundred pieces. I have promised him to learn them on my way back from the Park and asked him to wait. Let me go and learn the verses and keep my promise. After that I will come back to you."

"You sound like saying: 'Having been freed from the hands of death, I will come back to death!' " replied the man-eater. "I do not believe you."

Then Sutasoma said: "Friend Porisāda, in the world, death after living a virtuous life is better than a long life full of wickedness, as it is blamed by others. Words uttered not truthfully cannot protect one from rebirth in a woeful state after one's death. Friend Porisāda, you may rather believe if somebody were to say: 'The strong winds blew away rocky mountains into the sky', or 'The sun and the moon have fallen to earth', or 'All rivers flow upstream', but you never believe if somebody says: 'Sutasoma tells lies.' Friend Porisāda, if somebody says: 'The sky has been split up', or 'The Ocean has dried up', or 'Mount Meru has been wiped out without a trace', you may believe it. But never do you believe if somebody says: 'Sutasoma tells lies.' " Still Porisāda was not fully convinced.

As Porisāda remained adamant Mahāsutasoma thought: "This Porisāda still do not believe me. I will make him believe by taking an oath." So he said: "Friend Porisāda, please put me down from your shoulder. I will convince you by taking an oath." Porisada then put him down from his shoulder. "Friend Porisāda, I will hold the sword and the spear and take the oath. I will take leave of you for a short time and will fulfil my promise given to Brahmin Nanda to learn the verse from him in the city. Then I will come back to you to keep my promise. If I do not say the truth may I not gain rebirth in a royal family, well protected by weapons such as this sword and this spear."

Then Porisāda thought: "This King Sutasoma has taken an oath which ordinary kings dare not do. No matter whether he comes back or not, I too am a king. If he does not come back, I will get the blood out of my arm to sacrifice it for the deity of the banyan tree." Thus thinking Porisāda set Bodhisatta Sutasoma free.)

This verbal truth of King Mahāsutasoma uttered to convince Porisāda is also *saddahāpana-sacca*. This is the kind of Perfection of Truthfulness which Bodhisattas have to fulfil.

(2) Icchāpūrana-sacca

This second verbal truth spoken to have one's desire fulfilled may be learnt from the Suvannasāma Story, the third story of the Mahānipāta of the Jātaka, as well as from other stories.

In the **Suvannasāma Jātaka**, the Bodhisatta Suvannasāma, looking after his blind parents, went to fetch water from a river. King Piṇiyakkha, who was out hunting, saw him and shot him with an arrow, mistaking him for a supernatural being. Being overcome by the poisonous effect of the arrow, the Bodhisatta became unconscious. King Piṇiyakkha brought the Bodhisatta's father and mother to the place where the Bodhisatta remained lying in a dead faint. On their arrival there, his father Dukūla sat down and lifted his head while his mother Pārikā sat down, held his feet placing them on her thigh and cried. They

touched their son's body and feeling the chest which still had body heat, the mother said to herself: "My son has not died yet. He is just unconscious because of the poison. I will remove that poison by my words of solemn truth." Accordingly, she made an asseveration comprising seven points:

- (1) Formerly, my son Sāma has practised righteousness (*dharmacāri*). If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son vanishes.
- (2) Formerly, my son Sāma has engaged himself in noble practice. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son vanishes.
- (3) Formerly, my son Sāma has spoken only truth. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son vanishes.
- (4) My son Sāma has looked after his parents. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son vanishes.
- (5) My son Sāma has shown respect to the elders in the family. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son vanishes.
- (6) I love my son Sāma more than my life. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son vanishes.
- (7) May my Sāma's poison disappears by virtue of meritorious deeds done by his father and by me.

Then Suvanna Sāma who was lying on one side turned over to the other side.

The father too thinking: "My son is still alive, I will also say words of solemn truth, made an asseveration comprising the same seven points as the mother's." Then the Bodhisatta changed again his lying position.

At that moment, a goddess, Bahusundari by name, who had been Suvannasāma's mother in the past seven existences and who was now staying at Gandhamādāna Hill, came from the Hill to the spot where Suvannasāma was lying and made her own asseveration: "I have long been dwelling at Gandhamādāna Hill in the Himalayas. Throughout my life there is none whom I love more than Suvannasāma. If this be true, may Sāma's poison vanishes. In my abode at Gandamādāna Hill, all the tree are scented ones. If this be true, may Sāma's poison vanishes." While the father, the mother and the goddess were thus lamenting, the handsome and youthful Bodhisatta Suvannasāma quickly sat up.

In this story, the words of truth are uttered by his mother, Parika, father, Dukula and Goddess Bahusandari in order to have their wish of eradicating Suvannasāma's poison and getting him well, fulfilled and are, therefore, called **Ichchāpūraṇa Vacīsacca**.

The Story of Suppāraka

Ichchāpūraṇa-sacca occurs also in the Suppāraka story of the Ekādasaka Nipāta of the **Jātaka**. The story in brief is:

In days gone by, the Bodhisatta, Suppāraka by name, who was highly learned, was living in the sea-port town of Kurukaccha (Bharukaccha). He had long worked as the captain of a ship and had become blind through contact of his eye with the vapour of sea-water. So he retired. However, at the request of certain merchants, he took control of a ship sailing out into the sea. After seven days, because of an unseasonal gale, the ship could not hold its course and wandered astray on the sea for four months. It then went beyond such seas as (1) Khuramālisamudra, (2) Aggimālisamudra, (3) Dadhimalisamudra, (4) Kusamālisamudra and (5) Nalamālisamudra, and was about to reach the most terrible sea of Balavāmukhasamudra. At that moment, Captain Suppāraka said that whoever came to this sea was not able to retreat, but would be drowned. This made all the merchants cry in fright.

Thinking: "I will save all these people by asseveration." the Bodhisatta made a solemn declaration: "Since I came of age, I have never ill-treated even a single person; I have not stolen other's property, even a blade of grass or a piece of split bamboo; I have not eyed even with an iota of lust another person's wife; I have not lied; I have not taken any

intoxicating drink even with the tip of a grass blade. On account of this truthful declaration of mine, may the ship get home safe and sound.” Then the ship that had wandered aimlessly for four months, turned back to Kurukaccha as though it were a mighty being and arrived at Kurukaccha port within one day by virtue of the Bodhisatta's asseveration.

This verbal truth of Suppāraka the Wise is also *icchāpūrana-sacca* as it was made to have his wish of saving the lives of all fulfilled.

The Story of King Sivi

It is the third story of the Visati Nipāta. In the city of Ariṭṭhapura, Sivi country, Bodhisatta, King Sivi, gave away six hundred thousand pieces daily in charity. Even then, he was not content and thought that he would like to give away parts of his body. In order to make the King's desire fulfilled, Sakka came down in the guise of a blind brahmin to the King and said: “O King, both your eyes can see, but mine cannot. If you would give me one of yours, you can see with the remaining one and I will also see with the eye given by you. So kindly give me one of your eyes.” The King was delighted, for a recipient had come to him the very moment he was thinking of giving. He summoned his surgeon Sivika and ordered: “Take out one of my eyes.” The surgeon, ministers and queens all tried to dissuade him. But he stood by his order and Sivika could do nothing but take out one of the King's eyes. Looking at the extracted eye with the one remaining, the King happily expressed his aspiration for Perfect Self-Enlightenment (*Sammāsambodhi*) and handed the gift of his eye over to the brahmin.

When the brahmin, who in reality was Sakka, put the eye into his eye-socket, it fitted in like his original. King Sivi, seeing this, was so delighted that he asked Sivika: “Get also my other eye out.” Despite protests from his ministers, the King had his remaining eye taken out and given to the Brahmin. The latter put the King's eye into the socket of his other eye which became as good as the original. He then gave his blessings and disappeared as though he had returned to his place.

As King Sivi became totally blind and was not fit to rule, he moved to a dwelling place near a pond in the royal gardens, where he reflected on his act of charity. Sakka then came to him and walked to and fro nearby so that the King would hear his footsteps. When the King heard, he asked who it was. Sakka replied: “I am Sakka. Ask for any boon you want.” “I have plenty of wealth such as gems, gold and silver. I want only death, for both my eyes are gone now,” said the King. “O King, you say you want death. Do you really desire to die? Or do you say so only because you are blind?” When the King answered he desired so because he was blind. Sakka said: “O King, I am not able to make you see again. You can see only with the power of your truthfulness. Make a solemn declaration of truth.” The King then uttered: “I adore those many people who came to me for gifts and I also adore those who actually asked for what they needed. By virtue of this verbal truth may my eye sight be restored to me.” No sooner had he said so than the first eye appeared in him. Then again he made another declaration of truth:

“When the blind brahmin came to me for my eye, I gave him both of mine. In so doing, my heart was full of joy. By virtue of this verbal truth, may the other eye be restored to me.”

Accordingly, he regained his second eye. These two eyes were not the ones which were with him at his birth; neither were they divine eyes. In fact, they were the eyes which appeared by the power of his verbal Perfection of Truthfulness.

This verbal truth of King Sivi was also *icchāpūrana-sacca* as it was spoken to have his wish for the restoration of his eyesight fulfilled.

In the Maccha Story of the Varana Vagga of the **Ekaka Nipāta**, the Bodhisatta, when reborn as a fish, made an asseveration because the water in the pond had dried up as a result of draught and the fish in it were eaten by crows. He declared solemnly: “Although I was born as a fish whose species survives by living upon one another. I have never eaten even a fish of the size of a rice-grain. By virtue of this verbal truth, may there be a great

thunderous downpour.” No sooner had he thus declared than there occurred a heavy rain.

Again in the Vaṭṭaka Story of the Kulāvaka Vagga of the **Ekaka Nipāta**, the Bodhisatta was born into a quail family. When he was still unable to fly or walk, there broke out a great forest fire and both of his parents had fled. “In this world there are such things as the virtues of pure morality, truthfulness and compassion. I have no other recourse to make but an oath of truth.” thinking thus, he uttered: “I have wings, yet I cannot fly. I have legs, yet I cannot walk. My parents have fled. O forest fire, please go passing by me.” The forest fire that went by from a distance of sixteen (*pais*) became extinct after leaving the young quail unharmed.

In this connection, there is something that calls for clarification. In the aforesaid Suvannaṣāma Story and others, asseverations were based on meritoriousness and it is, therefore, appropriate that the respective wishes were fulfilled. But the young quail's asseveration was not so based. What he said was simply: “I have wings, yet I cannot fly; I have legs, yet I cannot walk. My parents have fled.” His asseveration is in fact based on what is not meritorious. Why then had his wish been fulfilled?

The basis of an asseveration is truthfulness whether it is meritorious or not. Even if a speech is connected with meritoriousness but not spoken truthfully, it is not a verbal truth; it has no power, nor does it bear fruits. Truthfulness, which is a truthful speech alone, has power and bears fruits.

Being truthful, the Bodhisatta's speech amounted to a verbal truth and achieved what was desired. Though it was not a speech of meritoriousness, it was not demeritorious either. Even if a speech is connected with demeritoriousness, but spoken truthfully, it amounts to a verbal truth and achieves what is desired. This is known from the Kaṇha Dīpāyana Story of the **Dasaka Nipāta**.

(Once, the Bodhisatta Dīpāyana together with a friend, after giving away their wealth, became ascetics in the Himalayas. He later came to be known as Kanha Dīpāyana. For more details see the **Kanha Dīpāyana Jātaka**, No. 444.) One day Kanha Dīpāyana was visited by the householder Mandavya, the donor of his dwelling place, his wife and son Yaññadatta. While the parents were being engaged in a conversation with their teacher, Yaññadatta was playing with a top at the end of a walk. The top rolled into the hole of a mound, which was the abode of a snake. When the boy put his hand into the mound to retrieve his top, he was bitten by the snake and fell down suddenly, being overcome by the snake's poison.

Learning what had happened to their son, they brought and placed him at the feet of Kanha Dīpāyana. When the parents requested him to cure their son of snake bite, he said: “I do not know any remedy for snake bite. But I will try to cure him by declaration of an oath.” Placing his hand on the boy's head, he uttered: “Being tired of human society, I become an ascetic. But I could live the happy life of an ascetic only for seven days. Since my eighth day as an ascetic, I have not been happy up till now for fifty years. I have reluctantly struggled along only with self-restraint. By the power of this truthful saying, may the poison vanish so that the boy survives.” Then the poison drained away from the boy's chest and seeped into the earth.

Yaññadatta opened his eyes; seeing his parents he called out just once: “Mother, Father,” and went to sleep again writhing. The ascetic said to the father: “I have done my part. You, too, should do yours.” Then the father said: “I have never been pleased whenever ascetics and brahmins visit me. But I have not let this known to anybody else. Instead, I have hidden my feeling. When I give alms, I do it reluctantly. By this truthful saying may the poison vanish so that my little son, Yaññadatta, survives.” The poison remaining above the waist drained away into the earth.

The boy sat up, but he still could not rise. When the father asked the mother to follow suit, she said: “I have something to declare as an oath. But I dare not do it in your presence.” When the father insisted, she obliged saying: “I hate the snake that has bitten my son. I hate the boy's father as much as I hate the snake. By this truthful saying may the

poison vanish so that my son survives.” Then all the poison drained away into the earth and Yaññadatta stood up and played again with his top.

(The basis of the respective asseverations of the ascetic teacher and his two devotees was an unwholesome matter which each had long kept it to himself or herself. How he or she had revealed it boldly saying what was true, As this means truthfulness, their wish was completely fulfilled by its power.)

In this connection, it may be asked: “If the verbal truth, whether it is based on wholesome or unwholesome matter, was fruitful as has been mentioned, can it be similarly efficacious nowadays?”

The answer is: Of the three kinds of truthfulness, *musāvīramana-sacca*, avoidance of telling lies or speaking truthfully in any matter, was something that is always spoken by the virtuous. The ancient persons of virtue who had made asseverations, as mentioned in the texts, had lips which were the domain of truthfulness where *musāvīramana-sacca* dwelt forever. Such a domain was so pure and noble that truthfulness which was born in it was wish-fulfilling. In ancient times when truthfulness prospered and shone forth, an evil thing such as falsehood would quickly result in undesirable punishment; so also truthfulness would result in desirable reward. That falsehood would quickly bring about punishment in those days is known from the Cetīya story of the **Atthaka Nipāta**. (According to this story, King Cetīya knowingly lied, saying one of the two candidates for the post of royal chaplain was senior and the other junior although the reverse was true; in consequence he was swallowed up by the earth.)

But nowadays, adhering to the maxim, ‘no lie, no rhetoric’, people mostly tell lies. Thus, the evil domain of falsehood has been created and truthfulness born in this domain cannot produce beneficial results in a visible manner. Similarly, consequences of falsehood are not conspicuous either.

Other stories which contain fruitful asseverations are as follows:

The Nalapāna Story of the **Ekaka Nipāta** tells of the reeds which became hollow throughout because of the truthfulness shown by the Bodhisatta, Monkey King.

The Sambulā Story of the **Timsa Nipāta** tells of the complete cure of Prince Sothhisena's leprosy because of the truthful words spoken by Crown Princess Sambulā.

The Temiya Story of the **Mahā Nipāta** tells of the birth of the Bodhisatta, Prince Temiya, to the Chief Queen Candā Devi when she made an oath of truth after her observance of Sīla.

The Janaka story of the **Mahānipāta** tells of the escape of Crown Prince Pola Janaka from his bondage of iron chains and from prison because of his words of truth.

The Katthavāhana Story of the **Ekaka Nipāta** tells of an asseveration made by a mother, chopper of fuel wood. In order to convince the king that he was the father of her child, she threw the child into the sky taking an oath of truth, by which the boy remained sitting cross-legged in the sky.

The Mahāmora story of the **Pakinnaka Nipāta** tells of the escape of birds from their respective cages because of an oath of truth declared by a Paccakabuddha, who, formerly as a hunter, had caught the Bodhisatta, Peacock King, in a square. On hearing the Dhamma talk of the Bodhisatta, he gained enlightenment and become a Paccakabuddha. (As advised by the Bodhisatta) he made an asseveration thus: “I am now liberated from the bondage of defilements. May all the birds that I have kept in cages at home go free the way I do.” How powerful the asseveration in these stories should be thus understood.

Power of Truthfulness during The Buddha's Time

Once during the Buddha's time, there befell threefold misfortune of disease, demons and famine in the city of Vesali. The Buddha went there accompanied by *bhikkhus* and taught

the Venerable Ānanda how to recite the verses of oath. The Venerable Ānanda spent the whole night walking within the three walls of the city, chanting the verses by virtue of which all three misfortunes vanished. This story is mentioned in detail in the Commentary of the Ratana Sutta. The verses of oath comprising a number of verses forms a discourse of *paritta* (protection), called Ratana Sutta. It begins with an attribute of a Buddha: “In the worlds of devas, humans, *nāgas* and *garulas*, there exist various gems; but none is comparable to the gem of Buddha. By virtue of this truth may all beings be free of the threefold misfortune and be happy.” In the Ratana Sutta there are twelve verses of asseveration which reveal the various attributes of the Triple Gem, i.e. the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. (Together with the three verses ascribed to Sakka, there are fifteen verses of asseveration.) This Sutta was recorded in the Buddhist Councils as the first Sutta in the Cūla Vagga of the **Sutta Nipāta** and as the sixth sutta of the **Khuddaka Pāṭha**.

The Angulimāla Sutta in the Rājavagga of the Majjhima Pannāsa contains another story that also took place in the lifetime of the Buddha. While the Buddha was sojourning at the Jetavana Monastery, Sāvatti, the Venerable Aṅgulimāla reported to the Buddha about a woman in confinement who found difficulty in delivering a baby. Under instructions from the Buddha, the Venerable Aṅgulimāla went to the woman to help her by means of an oath of truth. “Since the day I became a noble one,” declared the Venerable, “I have never intentionally taken the life of a sentient being. By virtue of this truth may the mother and the son be well.” The mother then gave birth to her son without any more trouble and both were well.

In this way, in the lifetime of the Buddha, too, solemn declarations of truth was efficacious and fruitful.

Power of Truthfulness during Buddhist Period in Sri Lanka

When Buddhism spread to Sri Lanka after the Parinibbāna of the Buddha, the Venerable Mahāmita's mother was suffering from breast cancer. The mother sent her daughter, a *bhikkhunī*, to the Venerable for some medicine. “I know nothing of normal drugs,” said the Venerable, “I will tell you a certain form of medicine. ‘Since the moment of my ordination, I have never looked at a woman with a lustful eye. Because of this truthful declaration, may my mother become well again.’ When you get back to mother, run your fingers over her body while repeating what I have just said.” The sister went back to the ailing mother and carried out his instructions. No sooner had she done so, the mother's cancerous affliction dissolved like a foam. So says the Chapter on Analysis of Sila in the **Visuddhi-magga**.

A similar story is told in the Dvāra Kathā, Citt'uppāda Kaṇḍa, of the **Aṭṭhasālīnī Commentary**. While explaining the word *sampattavirati*, it says that a woman was suffering from a certain disease. Being told by the physician that hare's meat was needed for cure, the older brother sent the younger one, Jaggana, to a farm to look for a hare. On seeing Jaggana, a hare ran away in fright and was caught in a tangle of creepers. It then screamed. Jaggana rushed there and seized the hare. But he thought: “It is not justified to kill this little creature just to save my mother's life,” and set the hare free and went home. “Have you got one?” asked the older brother. When Jaggana told his brother what he had done, the latter scolded him vehemently. Then Jaggana approached his mother and while standing by her, he uttered: “Since my birth, I have never known any instance of intentional killing of a creature by me. By virtue of this truth, may my mother become well and happy.” At that very moment, the mother became well and happy again.

In this way, it should be noted that *icchāpūrana-sacca* was individually performed also after the Parinibbāna of the Buddha.

(3) Musāviraṃaṇa-sacca

Stories related to **Musāviraṃaṇa-sacca** are known from the Vidhura Jātaka of the **Mahānipāta** and other Jātakas. The following is a summary of the long narration of the Vidhura Story.

When King Korabya and Puṇṇaka the ogre were playing a game of dice, they agreed to bet as follow: should the King lose, Puṇṇaka would take anything from the King except (1) the King's person, (2) the Chief Queen and (3) the white parasol. Should Puṇṇaka lose on the other hand, the King would take from him the Manomaya Gem and the thoroughbred horse. The King lost the contest and Puṇṇaka asked: "I have won, O King, give me the stakes as agreed."

As it was a fact that the King had lost, he could not refuse, but allowed Puṇṇaka to take anything he wanted. Puṇṇaka said he would take Vidhura the Minister. Then the King pleaded: "The Minister is my person. He is also my refuge. Therefore, he should not be compared with other treasures of mine, such as gold, silver, etc. He should be compared only with my life. Thus I cannot surrender him."

Then Puṇṇaka said: "We shall not get anywhere if we are arguing whether he belongs to you or not. Let us go to him and abide by his decision." The King agreed and they went to the Minister, whom Puṇṇaka asked: "O Minister, as the Minister of the Kurus you are praised even by devas for standing in righteousness. Is it true? Are you King Korabya's servant? Are you a relative of the King's and of equal rank? Or are you a relative of the King's but of higher rank? Is your name Vidhura meaningful (*anvattha*) or without meaning (*rulhi*)?"

(The last question means to say like this: In this world there are two kinds of names. The first is *rulhi*, a name, the meaning of which does not agree with what it represents; instead, it is a name given at random. The other is *anvattha*, a name, the meaning of which agrees with what it represents. For example, if some ugly person is named Maung Hla (Pretty Boy), it is just a *rulhi* name because the name does not suit the boy. If some handsome person is named Maung Hla, it is an *anvattha* name because it goes well with the appearance.

When Puṇṇaka asked whether Vidhura's name was *rulhi* or *anvattha*, he wanted to verify whether the Minister was righteous or not, for the name Vidhura signifies a virtuous person who eradicates evils. Should the Minister not abide by righteousness, his name would then be *rulhi*, a name given to him with no significance. Should he abide by righteousness, his name would then be *anvattha*, a name in harmony with his true nature.

Should the Minister not abide by righteousness, his name would then be *rulhi*, a name given to him with no significance. Should he abide by righteousness, his name would then be *anvattha*, a name in harmony with his true nature.)

Then the Minister thought to himself: "I can say that I am a relative of the King, or I am of higher rank or I am not at all related to the King. But in this world there is no refuge like truthfulness. I should speak out what is true." So he said: "Friend, there are four kinds of servitude in the world:

- (1) the servitude of one born of a female slave,
- (2) the servitude of one bought by money,
- (3) the servitude of one who serves voluntarily, and
- (4) the servitude of a prisoner of war.

Of these four servitudes, I am a servant who comes to serve the King voluntarily." So the Minister answered truthfully.

Such an answer given truthfully without deceit was a speech of truth but not *saddahapana-sacca* because the speech was made not to convince others; nor was it *icchapurana-sacca* because it was made not to get one's wish fulfilled. It was made just to avoid telling lies and therefore was *musāviraṃaṇa-sacca* only.

Similarly, in the Suvanna Sāma Jātaka when King Piliyakkha asked Suvanna Sāma: "What is your clan? Whose son are you? Tell me the clan to which you and your father belong." he would have believed if Suvanna Sāma were to say: "I am a deva," or "a *Nāga*" or "a Kinnarī" or "of a royal family" or if he were to give any other answer. But he thought he should say nothing but the truth; so he said truthfully: "I am a fisherman's son." Suvanna

Sāma's speech was like Vidhura's: it was not to make others believe nor was it to get his wish fulfilled. In fact, it was a speech made to avoid falsehood and, therefore, was *musāviraṃaṇa-sacca*.

In the Bhūridatta Jātaka also, when Nesāda Brahmin approached the (*Nāga*) Bodhisatta who was observing the precepts, and asked him: "Who are you? Are you a powerful god? Or are you a mighty *nāga*?" "This man will believe me," thought the Nāga King, "even if I say I am a divine being. But I ought to tell him the truth." and told him that he was a powerful *nāga*. This speech of the Nāga King, like Vidhura's, was made not to make others believe nor was it to have one's wish fulfilled. But as it was made to avoid falsehood and to reveal the truth, it was *musāviraṃaṇa-sacca*.

What constitutes the sixth of the Ten Perfections is this *musāviraṃaṇa-sacca*. Bodhisattas of old always made it a point to cultivate this kind of speech which is an avoidance of falsehood. They fulfilled their Perfection of Truthfulness by speaking truthfully, existence after existence. If they kept silent to avoid having to tell lies and to observe truthfulness, it was not pure verbal truth (*vacī-sacca*) because there was no speech at all. It was only *viratī-sacca*, avoidance of falsehood.

Use of The Three Kinds of Truth by Bodhisattas

Only when circumstances demand to convince others did Bodhisattas use truth of the first kind, *saddahāpana-sacca*; otherwise they did not. Similarly, only when they were required to get their wish fulfilled, they made use of the truth of the second kind, *icchāpurana-sacca*. As regards the third kind, *musāviraṃaṇa-sacca*, they always resorted to it on all occasions. Following their examples, those who are virtuous should speak *musāviraṃaṇa-sacca* and make efforts to cultivate it.

Two Kinds of Truth

The aforesaid truths may be classified under two headings only, namely,

- (1) **Vacībhedasiddhi Sacca** (Truth that accomplishes something the moment one speaks.)
- (2) **Pacchānurakkhana Sacca** (Truth that entails a follow-up after one has spoken.)

As has been mentioned before, the *Saddahāpana Sacca* of the Bhisā Jātaka, the *Ichchāpurana Vacisacca* of the *Suvaṇṇa Sāma*, *Suppāraka*, *Sivi*, *Maccha*, *Vattaka*, *Kanhadipāyana*, *Nalapāna*, *Sambulā*, *Temiya*, *Janaka*, *Katthavāhana* and *Mahāmora Jātakas*, and the *Musāviraṃaṇa Sacca* of the *Vidhura*, *Suvaṇṇa Sāma* and *Bhūridatta Jātakas* produced results as soon as they were individually spoken out. There was nothing more to be performed to achieve results. Therefore, such truths are to be known as **Vacībhedasiddhi-sacca**.

But Truthfulness shown by King Sutasoma to Porisada in the above-mentioned Mahā Sutasoma Jātaka was different. It was a *Saddahāpana Sacca* spoken to convince Porisada that he would definitely return to him. This promise would be fulfilled when the King did return to the cannibal and only then would his truthfulness be established. For this, he had to make special arrangements to effect his return to the Bodhisatta. This truthfulness of King Sutasoma was therefore of *pacchānurakkhana-sacca* type.

In the same way, the truthfulness practised by King Jayadisa in the *Jayadisa Jātaka* of the *Timsa Nipata* and that practised by Prince Rāma in the *Dasaratha* are both *pacchānurakkhana-sacca*.

With reference to King Jayadisa's truthfulness, here is the story in brief. While King Jayadisa of Uttara Pañcālā City, in the Kingdom of Kapila, was going on a hunting spree, on the way, he met Nanda Brahmin who had come back from Takkaśīla and who wished to deliver a discourse.

The King promised him to hear the discourse on his return and went to the forest.

On arrival in the forest, the King and his ministers divided the hunting ground among themselves, each one to his own allocated area to catch deer. But one escaped through the King's location and the King had to pursue it with all his might. After a long pursuit, he

managed to catch the deer; he cut it into two halves and carried them, hanging from a pole on his shoulder. Having taken a rest for a short while under a banyan tree, he stood up to continue his journey. At that moment, the human-ogre who was dwelling at the banyan tree prevented him from going, he said: "You have now become my prey. You must not go." (A human-ogre is not a real ogre. He was, in fact, the King's older brother, who, while an infant was caught by an ogress. But she had no heart to eat the baby and brought him up as her own son. So he had an ogre's mental and physical behaviours. When his foster mother, the ogress, died, he was left alone and lived like an ogre.)

Then King Jayadisa said: "I have an appointment with a brahmin who has come back from Takkaṣāḷa. I have promised him to hear his discourse. Let me go and hear it, after which, I will come back and be true to my word." The human-ogre set him free readily accepting the king's assurance. (The human-ogre and the king were brothers in reality. Because of their blood relationship, which was not realized by both, the former had some compassion for the latter and let him go.) The King went to hear the brahmin's discourse and was about to return to the human-ogre. At that moment, his son, Prince Alīnasattu, (the Bodhisatta) pleaded with the King that he should go on behalf of his father. As the son insisted, the father allowed him to go. The King's word, "I will come back", had to be kept and made true after it had been spoken; so it was a *pacchānurakkhana-sacca*.

The story of Prince Rāma in brief is: After giving birth to the older son, Rāma, the younger son, Lakkhaṇa and the daughter, Sitā Devī, King Dasaratha's Chief Queen passed away. The King took a new Queen of whom Prince Bharata was born. The new Queen repeatedly pressed the King to hand over the throne to her own son Bharata. The King summoned his two senior sons and said: "I am worried about you, for you might be in danger because of the new Queen and her son Bharata. The astrologers have told me that I would live twelve more years. So you should stay in a forest for twelve years after which you should come back and take over the kingship."

Then Prince Rāma promised his father that he would obey him and the two brothers left the city. They were joined by their sister as she refused to be separated from them. In spite of the astrologers' prediction, the King died after nine years because of his worries about his children. Then the ministers, who did not want to have Bharata as their King, went after the royal children. They told them of the King's death and requested them to return to the city and rule over the people. But Prince Rama said: "I have promised my father to return only after twelve years as my father had ordered. If I return now, I will not be keeping my promise to my father. I do not want to break my word. Therefore, take my brother, Prince Lakkhaṇa, and my sister, Sitā Devī, to make them crown prince and crown princess and you ministers, yourselves rule the country." Here Prince Rāma had to wait for the end of the time limit so that what he had agreed upon with his father would be substantiated. This too was *pacchānurakkhana-sacca*.

Truth concerning Time

In order to make an easy distinction between *vacībhedasiddhi-sacca* and *pacchānurakkhana-sacca*, there are four kinds of truth according to a brief classification:

- (1) Truth concerning the past only.
- (2) Truth concerning the past and the present.
- (3) Truth concerning the future only.
- (4) Truth concerning no particular time.

Of these four, the one concerning the future was *pacchānurakkhana-sacca* and the remaining three are *vacībhedasiddhi-sacca*.

Of the truths in the **Suvannasāma Jātaka**, the collection of truths uttered by the Bodhisatta's parents concerned the past, for they said: "Sāma had formerly practised Dhamma; he used to cultivate only noble practices; he used to speak only the truth; he had looked after his parents; he had shown respects to the elders."

The truth uttered by his parents that "We love Suvanna Sāma more than our lives" and the truth uttered by the Goddess Bahusundari that "There is none whom I love more than

Sāma” were truths which concern no particular time.

The collection of *icchapurana-saccas* in the **Suppāraka** and **Sivi Jātakas** concerned the past. Similarly, that contained in the **Kanha Dipayana** and **Nalapāna Jātakas** also concerned the past.

In the **Vaṭṭaka Jātaka**, the utterance, “I have wings, yet I cannot fly; I have legs, yet I cannot walk,” concerned both the past and the present.

The truth saying “There is none whom I love more than you,” in the **Sambulā Jātaka** and that of the Chief Queen, Candā Devi in the **Temiya Jātaka** concerned no particular time.

In this way, the relationship between the truths and their respective times referred to may be considered and noted.

The Supreme Perfection of Truthfulness

With reference to the Perfection of Truthfulness, the **Atthasālini Commentary** and the **Commentary on the Buddhavaṃsa** explain that King Mahāsutasoma's Perfection of Truthfulness was the Supreme Perfection because, in order to keep his word true, the King went back to Porisāda as promised at the risk of his own life. In this case, the vow was made in the presence of Porisāda but as it was a mere utterance, its purpose had not yet been fulfilled; to fulfil it, the vow still remained to be kept. As he had promised: “I will come back”, he returned even after he had been back in the city of Indapattha. At first, when he promised “I will come back”, his sacrifice of life did not appear imminent. It became so only when he returned to Porisāda from Indapattha. Therefore, in the Commentaries, he is mentioned as “the King who protected his truthfulness, sacrificing his life — *jīvitam cājivā saccam anurakkhantassa*” but not as “the king who made an oath at the risk of his life — *jīvitam cājivā saccam bhaṇantassa*.”

Thoughts on The Two Kinds of Truth

In this connection, the truthfulness of King Mahā Sutasoma and that of Minister Vidhura are worthy of a comparative study. The minister's truthfulness was his truthful saying that “I am a servant” as is told in the verse 102 of the **Vidhura Jātaka**. As soon as he said so, his truthfulness was accomplished. But, when he said that he had nothing to worry about his life, he could not die just being a servant. Therefore, one might say that Vidhura's truthfulness was inferior to Sutasoma's.

However, it may be considered that Vidhura was prepared to sacrifice his life, thinking to himself: “That young man may like to do away with me after taking me away. If he does so, I will accept death.” For, as he was wise, he must have kept pondering like this: “This young man asked for me, not to honour me. If he had a desire to honour me, he would have openly told me his purpose and invited me for the same. Now he had not invited me. He won possession of me by gambling and would not set me free.” Besides, though he was a young man, he was an ogre (by birth). Seeing his behaviour, the minister must have noticed that he was a wild tough person. Another thing that should be taken into consideration is this: When Vidhura had (by way of farewell) exhorted the king and his family members, and said: “I have done my job,” the young ogre, Puṇṇaka, replied: “Do not be afraid. Firmly hold on to the tail of my horse. This will be the last time for you to see the world while you are living.” (**Verse 196**). Vidhura boldly retorted: “I have done no evil that would lead to the woeful states. Why should I be afraid.” From this word of the minister, it is clear that the minister had decided to sacrifice his life.

All this points to the fact that Vidhura's truthfulness contained some element of taking risk of life and was thus not inferior to Sutasoma's. It should be concluded that it was, if not superior, of the same class as that of Sutasoma.

Moral Lesson

The unique feature of this Perfection of Truthfulness in contrast to the previous ones is that it possesses the power to have one's desire fulfilled because of the truth uttered. In the **Sutasoma Jātaka (Verse 62)** also it is said: “Of all the tastes which prevail on this earth, the

taste of truth is the sweetest.” Therefore, one should exert great efforts in order to enjoy the delicious taste of truth.

(h) The Perfection of Resolution (*Adhiṭṭhāna-Pāramī*)

The Pāli word ‘*adhiṭṭhāna*’ is usually translated as ‘resolution’. (Then the author goes on to explain the Myanmar word, which is a translation, not only of *adhiṭṭhāna* but also of *samādāna* used in observing precepts. As the author's explanation, though elaborate, is chiefly concerned with the Myanmar word, we left it out from our translation.) If one fulfils *adhiṭṭhāna* as a Perfection, one has to establish it firmly and steadfastly in one's mind. That was why when the Bodhisatta Sumedha reflected on *adhiṭṭhāna-pāramī*, he likened it to a rocky mountain which is unshaken by strong winds but remaining firmly rooted at its own place.

From this comparison, it is clear that *adhiṭṭhāna* means bearing in mind without wavering at all, as regards what one is determined to do. Therefore, if one intends to attain the knowledge of the Path and Fruition or Omniscience (i.e. if one is determined to become a Buddha) one's determination to practise for achieving them must be borne in mind as firmly as a rocky mountain.

Various Resolutions

Resolution has thus been likened to an unshaken mountain and there are various kinds of resolution as described in the texts.

Resolution concerning Uposatha

The Uposathakkhandhaka of the **Vinaya Mahāvagga** mentions three kinds of **Uposatha**: **Sangha Uposatha**, **Gaṇa Uposatha** and **Puggala Uposatha**. **Sangha Uposatha** is the one that is observed at the meeting of minimum four *bhikkhus* in a *sima* on full-moon and new-moon days. There, the *pātimokkha* is recited by one *bhikkhu* to whom others listen respectfully. Such an observance is also called ‘**Sutt'uddesa Uposatha**’ (Uposatha observance with a brief recitation of the Text of the disciplinary rules).

If there are only two or three *bhikkhus*, they observe **Gaṇa Uposatha** because the word *Sangha* is used for a meeting of at least four *bhikkhus*; when there are only two or three *bhikkhus*, the word “*Gaṇa*” is used. If the number of *bhikkhus* is three in a **Gaṇa Uposatha**, a motion is put first and if it is two, no motion is needed. Then each of the *bhikkhus* declares in Pāli that he is free from any offences. Therefore, it is also known as **Parisuddhi Uposatha** (*Uposatha* meeting where *bhikkhus* declare their individual purity).

If there is only one *bhikkhu*, he observes **Puggala Uposatha**. But before doing so, he should wait for other *bhikkhus* to join him, provided there is still time. When the time has passed without other *bhikkhus* arriving, he is to observe the *uposatha* alone. The Buddha had enjoined that he is to resolve: “Today is my *uposatha* day.” This means that he is mindful of this day constantly. Such an *uposatha* is known as **Adhiṭṭhāna Uposatha** (**Uposatha** kept firmly in one's mind.) This is the resolution concerning *uposatha*.

Resolution concerning The Robe

Bhikkhus are required to perform *adhiṭṭhāna* or *vikappana* concerning the robe within ten days after its acquisition. If the robe is kept more than ten days without performing either, it is to be discarded according to the Vinaya. The *bhikkhu* concerned also commits thereby a *Pācittiya* offence: Therefore, within ten days of its acquisition, he must resolve saying: “I undertake to put on this robe.” Then the robe is not to be discarded and he does not commit the offence. Resolution concerning the robe means making up one's mind firmly to use the robe either as a lower garment, or an upper garment or an outer garment or for general use. (Paṭhama Sikkhāpada, Nissaggiya civara Vagga, **Vinaya Pārajika**.)

Resolution concerning The Bowl

Similarly, when a *bhikkhu* acquires a bowl, he should resolve within ten days of its acquisition, saying: “I undertake to use this bowl.” If he does not do so in ten days, he has to discard it as required by the Vinaya. He also commits a *Pācittiya* offence. Resolution

concerning the bowl means determining firmly that “this receptacle is my bowl.”

Adhiṭṭhāna in these three cases is used as a technical term belonging to the Vinaya. It has nothing to do with the following three cases.

Resolution concerning Jhāna

In the case of *jhāna*, when for instance, the first *jhāna* has been attained, one should cultivate and develop it in five ways of *vasīhāva*; so it is said in the **Pathavikasina Niddesa** and in other places of the **Visuddhi-magga**. “*Vasīhāva*”, a Pāli word, means ‘mastery’. So five way of *vasīhāva* are five kinds of mastery. When the first *jhāna* has been attained, one is to continue practising it until one gains complete mastery of the *jhāna* in all five kinds.

The first kind is **Āvajjana** (reflection), i.e. reflection as to what factors are contained in his first *jhāna* and as to which factor is of what character. At the beginning, he does not discern them easily. There may be a delay, for he is not yet skilled in reflecting. As he gains experience, he discerns them more easily. Then, he is said to be endowed with mastery of reflection.

The second kind is **Samapajjana** (absorption), *jhāna* consciousness being absorbed into the stream of one's consciousness, (i.e. *jhāna* consciousness continuously arising in the stream of one's consciousness). After mastering reflection, he has to gain mastery of absorption. He can do so by repeatedly developing the *jhāna* he has attained (just as by repeatedly reciting, one can master the literary piece that one has learnt by heart). If he tries for absorption before attainment of such mastery, *jhāna* consciousness does not arise easily in the stream of one's consciousness. This becomes easier only after mastering the development of *jhāna*. Then he is said to be endowed with mastery of absorption.

The third kind is **Adhiṭṭhana** (resolution), i.e. determining as to how long he wants to remain in *jhāna*. If he tries to determine the duration of absorption before mastery of resolution, *jhāna* consciousness may occur for either longer or shorter period than that of his determination. Suppose he resolves: “Let *jhāna* consciousness constitute my stream of consciousness for one hour,” the *jhāna* attainment may break off before or after one hour. This is because he is not yet skilled in making resolution. Once he is skilful enough, he can remain in *jhāna* for the exact length of the time he has resolved, Then he is said to be endowed with mastery of resolution.

The fourth kind is **Vutthāna** (rising from *jhāna*). [‘Rising from *jhāna* means change of *jhāna* consciousness to life-continuum (*bhavaṅga-citta*).] Mastery of rising from *jhāna* at the exact time of his determination is called ‘**Vutthāna-vasībhāva**’.

The fifth kind is **Paccavekkhanā** (reviewing) i.e. recollecting all the factors contained in the *jhāna*. In thus recollecting, as in the kind of **āvajjana**, they do not become manifest to him easily for lack of mastery on his part. Only when he gains mastery, they become manifest more easily. (Reflection (**āvajjana**), is a stage in the process of reviewing (*paccavekkhaṇā-vithi*), and reviewing (**paccavekkhanā**) is the stage that immediately follows the stage of reflection. If he has mastered **āvajjana**, he has mastered *paccavekkhanā* as well. Therefore, he who is endowed with mastery of reflection is endowed with mastery of reviewing; so it is stated in the texts.)

Among the five kinds of mastery, what we are concerned with here is **adhiṭṭhāna-vasībhāva** (mastery of resolution).

Resolution concerning Iddhi

The *Iddhividha Niddesa* of the **Visuddhi-magga** enumerates ten kinds of *iddhi* (supernormal power).

(1) Adhiṭṭhāna Iddhi,	(6) Ariya Iddhi,
(2) Vikubbana Iddhi,	(7) Kammavipākaja Iddhi,
(3) Manomaya Iddhi,	(8) Puññavanta Iddhi,
(4) Nāṇavipphāra Iddhi,	(9) Vijjāmaya Iddhi, and

(5) *Samādhivipphāra Iddhi*, (10) *Sammāpayoga Iddhi*.

(‘*Iddhi*’, as a Pāli word, means ‘accomplishment gaining one’s wish’. In Myanmar it means supernatural power.)

- (1) **Adhiṭṭhāna Iddhi**: Power concerning resolution; when, for instance, one resolves: “Let there be a hundred or a thousand images of myself,” then the images appear miraculously and their number is exactly what one has determined. (It is the power to project one’s images without oneself disappearing. The images may or may not be in one’s original posture.)
- (2) **Vikubbana Iddhi**: Power concerning transformation of oneself into the form of a *nāga* or of a *garula*. (‘*Vi*’ means ‘various’ and ‘*kubbana*’, ‘making’. It is the power to make oneself assume various forms as one wishes.)
- (3) **Manomaya Iddhi**: Power concerning creation of mind-made image, i.e. to create a miniature image of oneself inside own body. ‘*Manomaya*’ means ‘mind-made’. (It is neither the projection of images as in the case of *adhiṭṭhāna-iddhi* nor the transformation of one’s form as in the case of *vikubbana-iddhi*. It is the power to create a miniature image of oneself inside own body.)
- (4) **Ñānavipphāra Iddhi**: Power concerning miraculous phenomena due to the influence of imminent supramundane wisdom. This power should be understood from the stories of the Venerable Bākula and others.

Venerable Bākula

The story of Bākula occurs in the commentary on the *Etadagga Vagga*, *Ekaka Nipāta* of the **Āṅguttara Nikāya**. The following is an extract in brief from the same story.

Bākula was son of a wealthy man of Kosambī. On the day his birth was celebrated, the infant was taken to the River Yamunā for ceremonial bath but he was swallowed by a fish. The fish, feeling very hot in the stomach, swam away. On its arrival at Bārāṇasī, a certain fisherman caught it and hawked it in the city. The wife of a wealthy man of Bārāṇasī bought the fish and when its stomach was cut open, a beautiful baby was found inside the fish. Since she had no child of her own and was longing for one, she was extremely delighted saying to herself: “This is my very own.”

When the strange news reached the natural parents of Kosambī, they hurried to Bārāṇasī to claim their son. But the lady of Bārāṇasī refused to give him back, saying: “The baby came to us because we deserve him. We cannot return him to you.” When they went to court to settle the dispute, the judges gave their verdict that the baby equally belonged to both pairs of parents. In this way, the baby had two mothers and two fathers, on account of which he was named Bākula. (*Bā* = two, *kula* = family; hence a boy of two families.)

It was a miracle that the boy was not harm though he was swallowed up by a fish. The miracle was due to the power of the *arahatta-magga ñāṇa* and was certainly to be attained by Bākula in that very existence. (Or, may be it was due to the influence of the glorious *pāramī ñāṇa* that was inherent in the boy and that would enable him to attain without fail, the *arahatta-magga ñāṇa* in that very life.) Such power is said to be *Ñānavipphāra-iddhi*.

Saṅkicca Sāmaṇera

Saṅkicca Sāmaṇera was conceived by the daughter of a householder of Savatthi. The mother died when she was about to give birth to the baby. While her body was being cremated, it was pierced with iron spikes so that it might burn better. A spike hurt the baby’s eye and the baby cried. Knowing that the baby was still alive, people took the body down from the funeral pyre, cut open the stomach and took out the baby. The baby grew up in due course and at the age of seven became an *arahat*.

The boy’s miraculous escape from death was also attributed to the power of the *arahatta-magga ñāṇa*. (Or it was attributed to the influence of the power of the boy’s inherent *pāramī-ñāṇa* that helped him attain the *arahatta-magga ñāṇa*.)

- (5) **Samādhivipphāra Iddhi**: Power by the influence of concentration. The miraculous phenomenon that occurs when one is about to enter upon or is entering upon or has

just entered upon *jhāna* is due to the influence of *samādhi*. The power that causes such a miracle is called **Samādhivipphāra Iddhi**. With reference to this power, the **Visuddhimagga** narrates a number of stories beginning with the story of Sāriputta, which alone will be reproduced here.

Venerable Sāriputta

One day while the Venerable Sāriputta was staying with the Venerable Moggallāna at a gorge called Kapota, he had his head newly shaven and engaged himself in *jhāna* in an open space during a moonlit night. When a mischievous ogre came with a friend of his and seeing the Venerable's cleanly-shaven, shining head, became desirous of striking it with his hand. His friend advised him not to do so; yet he struck the Venerable's head with all his might. The blow was so hard that the sound of it roared violently like thunder. But the Venerable felt no pain as the power of *samādhi* pervaded throughout his body.

- (6) **Ariya Iddhi**: When *ariyas* (Noble Ones) desire to contemplate on loathsome objects as though they were unloathsome or on unloathsome objects as though they were loathsome, they can do so. Such power of *ariya* to contemplate on any object in whatever way they wish is called '**Ariya Iddhi** (Power of Noble Ones.)
- (7) **Kammavipākaja Iddhi**: Creatures like birds fly in the sky. To possess that ability to fly they do not have to make any special effort in the present life. It is a result of what they did in past existences. Devas, Brahmās, the first inhabitants of the world and *Vinipatika asuras* have also the ability to move about in space. The power to perform such feats is **Kammavipākaja Iddhi**.
- (8) **Puññavanta Iddhi**: *Cakkavattis* (Universal Monarchs) and the like can travel in space. They can do so because they have accumulated merits for themselves. Those who accompany the Universal Monarch in his aerial travels can do so because they are associated with the monarch who is the real possessor of merits. The riches and luxuries that belonged to such wealthy persons as Jotika, Jatila. Ghosaka, Mendaka and others are also **Puññavanta Iddhi**.

(The difference between **Kammavipākaja Iddhi** and **Puññavanta Iddhi** is this: **Kammavipākaja Iddhi** is the power not due to one's deeds done in the present life but due to one's deeds done in the past; it accompanies one's birth. **Puññavanta Iddhi** is due not only to one's past deeds but also due to one's present efforts made in support of those deeds. It does not accompany one's birth; it becomes full and operative only when supported by one's deeds of the present life. To illustrate: To Cakkavatti, the Treasure of Wheel does not arise at his birth. It arises only when he has observed certain precepts and fulfilled special duties of a Universal Monarch. So this particular power is due not entirely to one's past deeds but also due to one's present supporting efforts.)

- (9) **Vijjāmayā Iddhi**: Aerial travels and such feats by *Vijjadhara*s (Bearers of magical knowledge). (The power acquired by means of the art of specially contrived *mantras*, medicine, etc.)
- (10) **Sammāpayoga Iddhi**: the power that accrues from various accomplishments. (The scope covered by this *iddhi* is vast. The Path and Fruition that are attained as a result of proper endeavours is the highest form of *Sammāpayoga Iddhi*. In short, all accomplishments that result from learning arts and crafts, the three Vedas, the three Piṭakas or (to say the least,) from agricultural activities, such as ploughing, sowing, etc. are all *Sammāpayoga Iddhi*.)

Of these ten *iddhis*, the first, **Adhiṭṭhāna Iddhi**, is the power of resolution to project images of oneself by the hundred or by the thousand, such as the power possessed by the Venerable Cūla Pathaka and others. Ordinary people who are not possessors of such power make similar resolutions; but because they lack the basic factor of *jhāna* or *samādhi*, they do not realize what they have resolved; on the other hand, possessors of such power have their resolution fulfilled because their *jhāna* or *samādhi* is strong enough to help them.

Adhiṭṭhāna preceding Nirodha-samāpatti

When an *anāgāmin* or an *arahat* who is endowed with all eight *samāpattis* is about to enter upon *nirodha-samāpatti*, he resolves thus: “During the period of my absorption in the *samāpatti*, let no destruction befall my belongings that are kept apart from me. If the Sangha wants my presence, may I be able to rise from my *samāpatti* before the messenger comes to me. Promptly, may I be able to do so when the Buddha summons me.” Only after resolving thus he enters upon *samāpatti*.

In accordance with his resolution, during the period of his absorption in the *samāpatti*, his personal effects kept apart from him cannot be destroyed by the five kinds of enemy. When the Sangha wants him during that very period, he has already arisen from his *samāpatti* before the messenger's arrival. No sooner has the Buddha called for him, then he emerges from his *samāpatti*. No damage can be done by the five enemies to his possessions, such as robes, etc. that are on his body because of the power of his *samāpatti* even though he has not resolved previously for their safety.

Three Kinds of Adhiṭṭhāna

Resolution is of three kinds, according to context:

- (1) **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna** (Resolution made so that portending signs appear before something happens);
- (2) **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna** (Resolution made so that one's dream comes true); and
- (3) **Vata Adhiṭṭhāna** (Resolution made so that one's duties are fulfilled).

(1) Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna

This kind of Adhiṭṭhāna may be understood from the Campeyya Jātaka of the **Viṣati Nipāta** and other stories. The extract from the Campeyya Jātaka in brief is: When the Nāga King Campeyya told his Queen Sumana that he would go to the human abode to observe precepts, the Queen said: “The human abode is full of dangers. If something happens to you by which signs should I know?” The Nāga King took her to the royal pond and said: “Look at the pond. Should I be caught by an enemy, the water will become dark. Should I be caught by a Garula, the water will boil. Should I be caught by a snake-charmer, the water will turn red like blood.” After that the Nāga King left for the human abode to observe precepts for fourteen days.

But the King could not return home even after about a month for he was caught by a snake-charmer. Worried about his safety, the Queen went to the pond and saw the surface of the water turned red like blood.

This resolution of the Nāga King Campeyya is **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna** because he made the firm determination beforehand for the appearance of portending signs.

Similarly, according to the Introduction to the **Jātaka Commentary**, when Prince Siddhattha renounced the world, he cut off his hair and threw it up into the sky resolving: “May this hair remain in the sky if I would become enlightened; if not let it fall back to the ground.” The hair hung in the sky like a festoon. This resolution, too, made to know in advance whether or not he would become a Buddha is Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna.

Again, after six years of strenuous asceticism, after He had eaten the milk-rice offered by Sujātā on the bank of the Nerañjarā, He set the golden bowl afloat on the river with the resolution: “If I would become a Buddha, may this bowl go upstream; if not, may it go downstream,” and the bowl went upstream until it reached the Nāga King Kāla. The resolution in this account also is a **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna**.

Similarly, any resolution made in the world to know beforehand by portent whether one's wish will be fulfilled or not is **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna**. This kind of *adhiṭṭhāna* is still practised today and is thus well known. Some people are used to lifting the stone placed at a famous pagoda or at a nat (spirit) shrine after resolving: “If my plan would materialise, may the stone be heavy; if not may it be light,” or vice versa. After lifting the stone, they read the omen whether they would succeed or not from the feel of the stone's weight.

(2) Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna

Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna is a resolution made so that one's wish gets fulfilled. This kind of resolution may be known from the **Vidhura Jātaka**.

(Vidhura, the Minister, was taken away from King Korabya by Punnaka the ogre, who had won the game of dice.) It is stated in the commentary on Verse 197 of this particular Jātaka: Having valiantly thundered: "Of death I am not afraid," Vidhura resolved: "May my lower garment not go off against my wish." Reflecting on his Perfections, he tightened his garment and followed Punnaka by catching hold of the tail of his horse fearlessly with the dignity of a lion-king. This resolution made by Vidhura is **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna**.

In the Nalapana Jātaka of the Sīla Vagga, **Ekaka Nipāta**, eighty thousand monkeys headed by their king, the future Buddha, found it difficult to drink the water from a pond that was protected by a wild water-demon. The monkey king then took one of the reeds that grew around the pond, made an asseveration that the reed be rid of the joints and blew air into it. The reed became hollow throughout, with no joints. He thereby made it possible for his followers to drink the water through the hollow reeds. But there were too many monkeys and the king was unable to provide each with a hollow reed. So he resolved: "Let all the reeds around the pond become hollow." This resolution made by the monkey king to fulfil his wish to let the monkeys drink the water individually is **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna**.

In the Kukkura Jātaka of the Kurunga Vagga, **Ekaka Nipata**, it is mentioned that leather straps of the chariot of King Brahmadatta of Bārāṇasī were gnawed by the dogs bred in the inner city. Under the wrong impression that the leather-eating dogs were owned by the citizens living in the outer city, royal servants chased to kill them. So the dogs dared not live in the city and gathered at a cemetery. Knowing the true reason of the trouble and realizing that the leather straps of the royal chariot could have been eaten only by the dogs of the inner city, the leader of the pack, the Bodhisatta, asked them to wait while he went to the palace. While he entered the city, he concentrated his thoughts on Perfections, and diffusing his *mettā*, he resolved: "May nobody be able to hurl stones or sticks at me." This resolution, too, made to fulfil his wish that the dogs of the outer city might be safe from harm is **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna**.

In the Mātanga Jātaka of the **Visati Nipāta**: During the reign of King Brahmadatta of Bārāṇasī, the Bodhisatta was born into a lowly caste of candala and named Mātanga. The daughter of a wealthy man of Bārāṇasī was named Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā because she believed in auspiciousness of pleasant sights. One day, she went to a garden to amuse herself with her maids. On the way, she saw Mātanga who went into the city. Though he kept himself aside as he was of a low birth, the sight of his person aroused displeasure in Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā, who, therefore, returned home thinking that it was not an auspicious day for her. Her followers were also annoyed. Saying: "Because of you, we will have no fun today," they beat him until he became unconscious; thereafter they departed. When Mātanga regained consciousness after a while, he said to himself: "These people of Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā have tortured an innocent man like me." Then he went to the house of Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā's father and lay at the entrance with a resolution, "I will not get up until I win Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā's hand." This resolution of Mātanga made to humble Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā's pride is also **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna**.

In the Commentary on the **Mahāvagga** of the Vinaya, too, it is said thus: Just after His Enlightenment, the Buddha stayed for seven weeks at seven different places in the vicinity of the Bodhi tree spending a week at each place. At the end of the last seven day's stay at the foot of a rajayatana tree, the brothers, Tapussa and Bhallika, came to him and offered some cakes. The Buddha considered how to accept the offer of cakes. (The bowl offered by Brahmā Ghatikāra disappeared the day the Buddha accepted the milk-rice offered by Sujātā.) Then the Four Deva Kings presented the Buddha with four emerald bowls. But the Buddha refused to accept them. The Deva Kings then offered the Buddha four stone bowls having the colour of kidney beans. To strengthen their faith, the Buddha accepted the bowls and resolved: "May the bowls merge into one." Then the bowls became one with four concentric brims. This resolution of the Buddha also is **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna**.

It seems that **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna** and **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna** of this section on **Adhiṭṭhāna** and **Īcchāpūrana-sacca** of the section on **Sacca** are one and the same because all these are concerned with fulfilment of one's wish.

With regard to **Īcchāpūrana-sacca**, when Suvanna Sama's mother, father and Goddess Bahusundari made their respective resolutions, they all wished the disappearance of the poison of the arrow that struck Suvanna Sama; with regard to **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna**, too, when the Bodhisatta made his resolution, throwing up his cut-off hair to the sky, he had wished that the hair would hang in the sky if he would become a Buddha; with regard to **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna**, too, when Vidhura made his resolution, his wish was to keep his dress intact. The connection of these resolutions with their respective wishes makes one think that they all are the same. That is why some people nowadays combine the two words, **Sacca** and **Adhiṭṭhāna**, into one, saying, "We perform **sacca-adhiṭṭhāna**."

In reality, however, **sacca** is one and **adhiṭṭhāna** another of the Ten Perfections. Therefore, they are two different things and their difference is this: As has been said before, **sacca** is truth whether it is of good or evil nature. A wish based on that truth is **Īcchāpūrana**. But when one's wish is not based on some form of truth, the determination made of one's own accord to have one's wish fulfilled is **Adhiṭṭhāna**.

To explain further: In the **Suvanna Sama Jātaka**, when his parents made an asseveration, they said: "Sama has formerly practised only righteousness" (which is the basic truth). And they added: "By this truthful saying, may his poison vanish" (which is their wish). Thus expressing the wish based on what was true is **Īcchāpūrana-sacca**.

When the Bodhisatta threw up his cut-off hair to the sky resolving: "If I should become a Buddha, may the hair remain in the sky," he did so without any basis of truth. His truthfulness was made for portending signs which would let him know beforehand of his coming Buddhahood.

The resolution made by Vidhura when he was about to follow Punnaka by holding on to the tail of his horse, "May my dress remain intact," is also **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna** because it has no truth as a basis and is, therefore, a mere determination of his wish, **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna**.

Thus the difference between **Sacca** and **Adhiṭṭhāna** lies in the presence or absence of the basis of truth.

(3) **Vata Adhiṭṭhāna**

These habits and practices include those of a bull (*gosīla* and *govata*): cattle eat and discharge faeces and urine while standing; in imitation of cattle, some ascetics (during the lifetime of the Buddha) did the same, believing that by so doing they would be purified and liberated from *samsāra*. (That is not to say that cattle had that wrong view, but only those ascetics who imitated cattle had.) This practice (**vata**) is connected with evil.

But **adhiṭṭhāna** has nothing to do with such wrong practices, for it belongs to the noble practice of Perfection. Here **vata** refers to observances of such noble practices as generosity, morality, etc. When one resolves to observe these Practices, such an action may be termed **Vata Adhiṭṭhāna**, but mere resolution and mere designation do not mean fulfilling the Perfection of Resolution. The reason is that **adhiṭṭhāna** does not belong to the past nor does it belong to the present. One fulfils the Perfection of Resolution when one observes in the future exactly as one has resolved firmly now. However ardently one resolves at present, if one fails to observe later, one's resolution is useless and meaningless.

This idea is expressed in the **Kavilakkhaṇā Thatpon**. A line in it reads to the effect that resolution should be compared to the horn of a rhinoceros, a beast which has one horn, not two. Just as a rhinoceros has only one horn, so should one stick to his resolution steadfastly and firmly, but not waveringly. This line of the **Kavilakkhaṇā** agrees with such saying as "*yathā pi pabbato selo*" as mentioned in the Buddhavaṃsa. Its meaning has been shown above.

The different resolutions as classified before, such as **adhiṭṭhāna** concerning *uposatha*, **adhiṭṭhāna** concerning the robe and **adhiṭṭhāna** concerning the bowl, cannot be included under **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna**, **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna** and **Vata Adhiṭṭhāna**, for they are the

resolutions made as required by the Vinaya rules. On the other hand, the *adhiṭṭhāna* of one of the five *vasībhāvas* and the *adhiṭṭhāna* that precedes *Nirodhasamāpatti* and that belongs to the ten *iddhis* are **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhānas**.

The Future Buddhas and The Three Kinds of Adhiṭṭhāna

Of these three kinds of *adhiṭṭhāna*, the future Buddhas practise **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna** and **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna** not for fulfilling the Perfection of **Ādhiṭṭhāna**, but for meeting some requirements under certain circumstances. On the other hand, it is this **Vata Adhiṭṭhāna** that they practised to fulfil the Perfection of **Adhiṭṭhāna** that leads to the attainment of the *arahatta-magga ñāṇā* and *sabbaññuta ñāṇa*.

In order to mention a little of the way, they practise (this particular *adhiṭṭhāna*), here is an extract from the **Cariya Piṭaka**:

*Nisajja pāsādavare evaṃ cintes' aham tadā
Yam kiñ ci mānusam dānaṃ adinnam me na vijjati
Yo pi yāceyya mañ cakkhum dadeyyam avikampito*

Sāriputta, when I was King Sivi, I thought to myself while in the palace: ‘Of the kinds of *dāna* that people give, there is nothing that I have not given. Should somebody ask for my eye, unshaken I will give it to him.’

By this, King Sivi meant to say that he had firmly resolved, “If someone comes to me today and begs for my eye, without hesitation I will offer it to him.”

When Sakka, in the guise of a brahmin, went to ask for one eye, true to his resolution, he gave away both eyes to him unhesitatingly. This resolution of King Sivi is with reference to *Dāna*.

In the Chapter on Bhuridatta's Practice, it is said:

*Caturo ange adhiṭṭhāya semi vammikamuddhani
chaviyā cammena māmsena nahāru atthikehi vā
yassa etena karaniyam dinnam yeva harātu so*

This describes how the Nāga King Bhuridatta resolved when he observed the precepts. It means: “Having resolved with regard to four components of my body, namely, (1) skin, thick and thin, (2) flesh and blood, (3) muscles and (4) bones, I lay on the top of the anthill. He who has some use for any of these four components, let him take it, for I have already made a charity of them.” Wishing to promote his observance of the precepts, King Bhuridatta resolved: “I will guard my morality at the sacrifice of the four components of my body.” This resolution of King Bhuridatta is in connection with *sīla*.

In the Campeyya Jātaka of the **Visati Nipata**, too, the Nāga King Campeyya went to observe the precepts after telling his Queen of the signs that would show when he was in danger in the aforesaid manner; it is mentioned in the Commentary: “*Nimittāni ācikkhitvā cātuddasī uposatham adhiṭṭhāya nāgabavanā nikkhamitvā tattha gantvā vammikamatthake nīpajji*. — Having told of signalling signs and having resolved to observe the precept on the fourteenth day of the new moon, Campeyya left the abode of *nāgas* for the human world and lay on the top of an ant-hill.” This resolution of Campeyya was purely for observing *sīla*.

In all these stories, *dāna* or *sīla* is one thing and *adhiṭṭhāna* is another thing. King Sivi's *dāna* occurred the moment he gave his eyes, but his resolution took place when he resolved to do so before the actual giving. Therefore, resolution came first and it was followed by the act of giving. In the case of *sīla* observed by the Nāga Kings, too, the resolution was first and then came the act of observance of *sīla*. In the secular affairs, too, it is natural to do things only after making up one's mind “I will do like this.”

Prince Temiya's Adhiṭṭhāna

The future Buddha was once son of King of Kāsi and named Temiya. (He was so named

by his father because on the day he was born it rained heavily in the whole country of Kāsi and people became wet and happy.) When the prince was one month old, while he was in the lap of his father, four thieves were brought to the King, who ordered them to be punished. The Prince was shocked to see this and became sad, thinking: “What shall I do to escape from this palace.”

The next day, while he was staying alone under the white parasol, he reflected on his father's action and was scared to become a king. To him, who was pale like a lotus flower crushed by hand, the guardian goddess of the parasol, who was his mother in one of his previous births, said: “Do not worry, son, if you want to escape from this royal residence, resolve to pretend to be dumb, deaf and mute. Your wish will be fulfilled.” Then the Prince made a resolution and acted accordingly.

For sixteen years the Prince was tested by various means, but he remained firm without deviating from his resolution. Then the father ordered: “My son is really dumb, deaf and mute. Take him to the cemetery and bury him there.”

Although he was variously tested and presented with difficulties for sixteen long years, he remained resolute, like the example of a rocky mountain mentioned in the Buddhavaṃsa. His firm, unshaken determination is an act of tremendous resoluteness. Only when one fulfils one's **Vata** resolution with the kind of determination of Prince Temiya, with all might and valour and without wavering, will one be carrying out the fulfilment of the Perfection of Resolution as observed by Bodhisattas.

(i) The Perfection of Loving-kindness (Mettā-Pāramī)

Three Kinds of Pema

Teachers of old have translated the word “*mettā*” of *mettā-pāramī* into Myanmar (love). Similarly, they translate “*pema*” also as love. “Love” meant by *mettā* is a specialised term while “love” meant by *pema* is a general one. Therefore, **pema** is divided into three:

- (1) **Taṇhā-pema** is love between men and women and is generated by craving, greed; this love is called *singara* in books on rhetoric.
- (2) **Gehasita-pema** is attachment between parents and children, among brothers and sisters, and is based on living together in the same house. This kind of love is called *vacchala* in rhetoric.

Both **taṇhā-pema** and **gehasita-pema** are not wholesome, the former is passion (*taṇhā-rāga*) while the latter, greed (*lobha*).

- (3) **Mettā-pema** is loving-kindness or unbounded benevolence shown towards others for their wellbeing. This love is entirely free from attachment or desire to live always together with others. People may be living poles apart and yet one is happy to hear that those living far away are prosperous. Such separation does not prevent one from feeling satisfied with their wellbeing. Therefore, *mettā* is pure and noble and has been also called **Brahma-vihāra** (Sublime Abode). That is to say, developing such love is living in a sublime state of mind. Not only *mettā*, but *karuṇā* (compassion), *muditā* (altruistic joy) and *upekkhā* (equanimity) are also **Brahma-vihāra**.

So **Brahma-vihāra** comprises all these four virtues. They are also known as four **Brahma-cariya** (Noble Practices). (Another name for **Brahma-vihāra** is *Apamaññā* (Illimitable), for they are the mental qualities to be developed and extended towards all beings whose number is limitless.)

It should be carefully noted that development of loving-kindness is not development of impure *taṇhā-pema* and *gehasita-pema*, but that of pure and noble *mettā-pema*. How to develop *mettā* will be shown later.

Mettā and Adosa

Mettā is a reality which exists in its ultimate sense (*Paramattha*). But when ultimate realities are enumerated, *mettā* is not shown as a separate item for it is covered by the term

adosa cetasika (mental concomitant of hatelessness) which has wide connotation. *Mettā* forms a part of that mental concomitant of *adosa*.

To explain further: According to the **Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha**, *adosa cetasika* is associated with 59 *sobhana-cittas*. Whenever these 59 *cittas* arise, there arises *adosa cetasika*, too. *Adosa* can contemplate various objects, but *mettā* can have only living beings as its object. In performing different acts of *dāna* or observing various kinds of *sīla*, there invariably arises *adosa*. But each time *adosa* arises in this way, it is not necessarily *mettā*. Only when one contemplates living beings with the thought “may they be well and happy”, wishing them prosperity, can *adosa cetasika* be called *mettā*.

With reference to the aforesaid, **Khantī Pāramī** (Perfection of Forbearance), too, *khantī* may mean *adosa cetasika*, but not all *adosa cetasikas* are *khantī*; when one is wronged by others, one restrains oneself from showing *dosa* (hate or anger) to them, and it has been discussed that only such *adosa* should be taken as *khantī*. Similarly, not all *adosa* should be taken as *mettā*, but only that *adosa* that arises in the form of goodwill towards other beings should be.

528 Kinds of Mettā

With reference to *mettā*, people say that *mettā* is of 528 kinds. But in reality it is not so. It should be noted people say so because according to the **Patisambhidāmagga** there are 528 ways of developing *mettā*.

Of the 528 ways, five are *anodhisa* (without specifications of beings). They are:

- (1) **sabbe sattā** (all beings)
- (2) **sabbe panā** (all living things)
- (3) **sabbe bhūtā** (all existing creatures)
- (4) **sabbe puggala** (all persons or individuals)
- (5) **sabbe attabhāvapariyāpannā** (all those who have come to individual existences.)

When one directs one's thought to all beings that exist in the 31 planes of existence in any one of these five ways, they all are embraced without any one of them being left out. Since there is none who is not covered by these five ways, these five are called five *anodhisas*. (Or also called five *anodhisa* individuals.) “*Odhi*” of “*anodhisa*” means “boundary; limit”. Hence “*anodhisa*” is “having no limit.”

(The next paragraph on the usage of ‘*satta*’ and ‘*puggala*’ deals only with the meaning of those words in Myanmar; it is, therefore, left out from our translation.) When *mettā* is directed towards beings who are specified, the classification is as follows:

- (1) **sabbā itthiyo** (all females)
- (2) **sabbe pursā** (all males)
- (3) **sabbe ariya** (all noble persons, *ariyas*)
- (4) **sabbe anariya** (all ignoble persons, those who have not yet attained the state of *ariyas*)
- (5) **sabbe deva** (all devas)
- (6) **sabbe manussā** (all humans)
- (7) **sabbe vinipātikā** (*petas* belonging to miserable states).

Each of these seven belongs to a separate category of beings and they are accordingly called **odhisa** (or seven *odhisa* beings).

In this way, there are twelve kinds of beings, five *anodhisa* (unspecified) and seven *odhisa* (specified), to whom *mettā* should be directed.

How *mettā* is directed to these twelve categories of beings is taught as follows:

- (1) **averā hontu** (may they be free from enmity)
- (2) **abyāpajjā hontu** (may they be free from ill will)

(3) **anīghā hontu** (may they be free from unhappiness)

(4) **sukhī attānaṃ pariharantu** (may they be able to keep themselves happy).

When *mettā* is suffused in these four ways on each of the above twelve categories of persons, the modes of suffusing *mettā* become 48 in number. There is no mention of directions in these 48 modes.

When the four cardinal points, the four subordinate points and the upward and downward directions are mentioned in each of these 48 modes, there will be 480 modes all together: “May those beings in the east be free from enmity, be free from ill-will, be free from suffering and may they be able to keep themselves happy.” In this way, beings in other directions also should be suffused with *mettā* thus the number of modes of suffusing *mettā* become 480.)

If 48 modes of suffusing without mention of directions are added to those 480 modes, the total becomes 528.

These 528 modes of suffusing *mettā* are named briefly “suffusion of *mettā*” by teachers of old and composed as a traditional prayer. If one desires to suffuse *mettā* in the first way in Pāli one should do so by reciting “*Sabbe sattā averā hontu*. — May all beings be free from enmity.” Repeating in this way continuously means development of *mettā*. If one desires to do so in the second way in Pāli one should recite: “*Sabbe sattā abyāpajjā hontu*. — May all beings be free from ill-will.” Repeating in this way continuously also means development of *mettā*. (In this manner all the 528 ways of suffusing *mettā* should be understood.)

The development of *mettā* in these 528 ways, as shown above, is taught in the **Paṭisambhidā-magga** and is well-known. In that Text there is no mention of development of *karuṇā*, *muditā* and *upekkhā* at the end of that of *mettā*.) But, nowadays, suffusion of *mettā*, as published in some books, contains at the end of development of *mettā* (a) *dukkha muccantu* — ‘may they be free from suffering’, which is development of *karuṇā* (b) *yathā laddha sampattito māvigacchantu* — ‘may they not suffer loss of what they have gained’, which is development of *muditā*, and (c) *kammassakā* — ‘they have their deeds, *kamma*, as their own property; each being is what his or her *kamma* makes’, which is development of *upekkhā*. They are included by ancient teachers so that those who wish to develop *karuṇā*, *muditā* and *upekkhā* may do so by taking development of *mettā* as a guide.

Therefore, if one desires to develop *karuṇā* one should incline one's thought towards living beings like this: *Sabbe sattā dukkha muccantu*. — ‘May all beings be free from suffering’; if one desires to develop *muditā*: *Sabbe sattā yathā laddha sampattito māvigacchantu*. — ‘May all beings not suffer loss of what they have gained’; if one desires to develop *upekkhā*: *Sabbe sattā kammassakā*. — ‘All beings have their deeds, *kamma*, as their own property.’

But this does not mean that only this way, as mentioned in the scriptures, should be adopted but not others. Because for covering all beings without any classification, there are not only terms like *sattā*, *pāna*, *bhūta*, *puggala* and *attabhāvapariyāpannā*, but there are such words as *sariri*, *dehi*, *jiva*, *paja*, *jantu*, *hindagu*, etc. To suffuse beings with the thought: *Sabbe sariri averā hontu*. — ‘May all those having bodies be free from enmity’, etc. is also to direct *mettā* towards them.

The number of ways to direct *mettā* is also given as four in the **Paṭisambhidā-magga**. But there are other ways as well, for instance, *Sabbe satta sukhino hontu*. — ‘May all beings be happy.’: *Sabbe sattā khemino hontu*. — ‘May all beings be secure.’, and such thoughts are also *mettā*. The fact that suffusing beings with one's *mettā* by using other Pāli words and by adopting other ways also constitutes development of real *mettā* is evidenced by the **Mettā Sutta**.

Development of Mettā according to The Mettā Sutta

The **Mettā Sutta** was delivered by the Buddha in connection with forest-dwelling *bhikkhus* and was recited at the Councils and preserved in the **Sutta Nipāta** and the **Khuddaka Pāṭha**. The Sutta first describes fifteen virtues which those desirous of developing *mettā* should be

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

endowed with. These fifteen are known in Pāli as fifteen *Mettāpubbabhāga*, i.e. virtues to be endowed with before developing *mettā*.

The Sutta says:

He who is clever in what is noble and profitable and who desires to abide contemplating Nibbāna through his wisdom, i.e. Nibbāna which is peaceful and blissful, should endeavour to be endowed with the following:

- (1) ability to execute what is good,
- (2) uprightness in conduct,
- (3) total straightforwardness,
- (4) being receptive to the words of the wise,
- (5) gentleness in manners,
- (6) having no conceit,
- (7) being easily contented with what one has,
- (8) being easy to support,
- (9) not being burdened by unnecessary cares and duties,
- (10) frugal living (i.e. not being saddled with too many personal belongings for one's travel; a *bhikkhu* should travel light only with his eight requisites just as a bird flies taking with it only its wings),
- (11) having calm and serene sense-faculties,
- (12) mature wisdom with regard to faultless things,
- (13) modesty in one's deeds, words and thoughts,
- (14) having no attachment to one's supporters, male or female, (which is particularly concerned with *bhikkhus* as the Sutta is originally meant for them. Lay people also should not have attachment to friends),
- (15) not doing even the slightest deed that would be reproved by the wise.

The Sutta explains how to develop *mettā* after becoming endowed with these fifteen virtues saying: “*Sukhino vā khemino hontu, sabbasattā bhavantu sukhittattā*” etc.

How to develop *mettā*, as taught in the **Mettā Sutta**, should be briefly noted as follows:

- (a) **Sabbasaṅgāhika mettā**: ‘*Mettā* developed in an all inclusive manner covering all beings.’
- (b) **Dukabbhāvanā mettā**: ‘*Mettā* developed by dividing beings into two groups.’
- (c) **Tikabhāvanā mettā**: ‘*Mettā* developed by dividing beings into three groups.’

(a) Sabbasaṅgāhika Mettā.

Of these three ways of development of *mettā*, that of **Sabbasaṅgāhika mettā** is explained in Pāli as suffusing thus: *Sukhino vā khemino hontu, sabba sattā bhavantu sukhittattā*. If one wishes to develop *mettā* according to this explanation one should keep reciting and contemplating as follows:

- (1) **Sabbe sattā sukino hontu** - ‘May all beings be happy physically’,
- (2) **Sabbe sattā khemino hontu** - ‘May all beings be free from dangers’,
- (3) **Sabbe sattā sukhittattā hontu** - ‘May all beings be happy mentally’.

This is the development of **Sabbasaṅgāhika mettā** as taught in the Mettā Sutta.

(b) Dukabbhāvanā Mettā

Dukabbhāvanā mettā and **Tikabhāvanā mettā** are both likely to be confusing to those who do not know how to interpret the Pāli text. (How one may get confused will not be explained, lest it should cause more complications.) The **Dukabbhāvanā mettā** is developed as follows:

There are four pairs of beings, namely,

- (1) **Tasa thāvara duka** - the pair of frightened and unfrightened beings.
- (2) **Diṭṭhādīṭṭha duka** - the pair of seen and unseen beings.
- (3) **Dūra santika duka** - the pair of far and near beings.
- (4) **Bhūta sambhavesi duka** - the pair of Arahats and worldlings together with learners.

(1) *Tasā vā thāvarā vā anavasesā sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhittattā.* — ‘May all those worldlings and noble learners who are frightened and may those Arahats who are unfrightened, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally.’ Contemplating thus is development of **Tasa thāvara duka bhāvanā mettā**.

(2) *Diṭṭhā vā adiṭṭhā vā anavasesā sabbasattā bhavantu sukhittattā.* — ‘May all those beings seen and unseen, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally.’ Contemplating thus is development of **Diṭṭhādīṭṭha duka mettā**,

(3) *Dūra vā avidurā vā anavasesā sabbasatta bhavantu sukhittattā.* — ‘May all those beings living afar and living near, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally.’ Contemplating is development of **Dūra santika dukabhavana mettā**.

(4) *Bhūta vā sambhavesi vā anavasesā sabbasattā bhavantu sukhittattā.* — ‘May all those beings who are Arahats, and those who are worldlings and learners, (or those who have been born and those who are still in the womb of their mothers), without exception, be happy both physically and mentally.’ Contemplating thus is development of **Bhūta sambhavesi dukabhāvanā mettā**.

The above-mentioned four ways of development of *mettā* is called *dukabhavana mettā*, i.e., *mettā* developed after dividing beings into two groups.

(c) Tikabhāvanā Mettā

This **Tikabhāvanā mettā** is of three kinds:

- (1) **Dīgha rassa majjhima tika** - the set of three of tall, short and medium beings,
- (2) **Mahantānuka majjhima tika** - the set of three of large, small and medium beings.
- (3) **Thūlānuka majjhima tika** - the set of three of fat, thin and medium beings.

(1) *Dīgha vā rassā vā majjhima vā anavasesā sabbasattā bhavantu sukhittattā.* — ‘May all those beings having long bodies, those having short bodies and those having bodies of medium length, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally.’ Contemplating thus is development of **Dīgha rassa majjhima tikabhāvanā mettā**.

(2) *Mahantā vā anukā vā majjhima vā anavasesā sabbasattā bhavantu sukhittattā.* — ‘May all those beings having big bodies, those having small bodies and those having bodies of medium size, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally.’ Contemplating thus is development of **Mahantānuka majjhima tikabhāvanā mettā**.

(3) *Thūlā vā anukā vā majjhima vā anavasesā sabbasattā bhavantu sukhittattā.* — ‘May all those beings having fat bodies, those having thin bodies and those having bodies of medium build, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally.’ Contemplating thus is development of **Thūlānuka majjhima tikabhāvanā mettā**.

The above-mentioned three ways of development of *mettā* is called *Tika bhāvanā mettā*, i.e., *mettā* developed after dividing beings into three groups.

Since these three ways of development of *mettā*, namely, (a) **Sabbasaṅgāhika mettā**, (b) **Dukabhāvanā mettā** and (c) **Tikabhāvanā mettā** are thoughts of loving-kindness, developed with the desire to see others attain prosperity and happiness, they are called *Hitasukhāgamapattanā mettā*.

Similarly, thoughts of loving-kindness developed with the desire to see others free from misfortune and not suffering are called *Ahitadukkhānāgamapattanā mettā*. This kind of *mettā* is described in Pāli:

Na paro param nikubbetha,

THE ANUDĪPAṆĪ

*Nā' timaññetha katthaci nam kañ ci.
Vyārosanā patighasaññā,
Nānnamaññassa dukkham iccheyya.*

The meaning is: 'May not one being deceive another; may not one despise another; may they not wish to cause suffering to one another by offending and hurting physically, verbally and mentally.' Contemplating thus is development of *Ahitaḍḍakkhānāgamapattathanā mettā*.

It may be asked: "Why development of *mettā* is described not in one way only but in several different ways in the **Paṭisambhidā-magga** and the **Mettā Sutta**?"

The answer is: The mind of a worldling roams about continuously from one sense object to another. The mind, in such a state, cannot be kept steady on the object of *mettā* by adopting one means only. Steady concentration of the mind can be achieved by repeated change of method of contemplation. Therefore, a variety of ways of developing *mettā* was taught by the Buddha. Sages of later times, too, were obliged to explain these different ways. (Or alternative explanation:) Those who develop *mettā* are of different basic aptitudes; for some *anodhisa mettā* method is more comprehensible; for some *odhisa mettā* method is more intelligible; for some mode of suffusing beings in different directions with *mettā* is more lucid; for some *sabbasangāhika* means of the *Mettā Sutta* is clearer; for some *dukabhāvanā* is more suitable; still for some *tikabhāvanā* means is more appropriate. Since the different basic aptitudes of those who develop *mettā* require adoption of diverse means suitable for each individual, the Buddha had to teach these different method and later teachers had to explain them fully.

The Bodhisatta's Mettā

How the Bodhisatta had developed *mettā* (how he had fulfilled the Perfection of Loving-kindness) has been explained in the *Suvaṇṇasāma Jātaka* told in the **Cariya Piṭaka** and the **Mahā Nipāta** (of the **Jātaka**). The story as told in the **Cariya Piṭaka** in brief is as follows: "Dear Sāriputta, when I was *Suvaṇṇasāma*, living in the residence made ready by Sakka, I directed loving-kindness towards lions and tigers in the forest. I lived there being surrounded by lions, tigers, leopards, wolves, buffaloes, spotted deer and bears. None of these animals was frightened by me: nor am I frightened any of them. I was happy living in the forest as I was fortified with the powers of *mettā*."

From this passage, we know nothing of *Suvaṇṇasāma*'s family, birth, etc.; we know from it only of his noble and happy living without a trace of fear for the beasts in the forest, sustained by the virtues of his loving-kindness.

In the **Mahā Nipāta**, however, it is said that when the Bodhisatta *Suvaṇṇasāma* was struck by an arrow, he asked: "Why did you shoot me with the arrow?" and King *Piliyakkha* replied: "While I was aiming at a deer, the deer that had come nearer to the point of the arrow fled, being frightened by you. So I was annoyed and shot you." Then *Suvaṇṇasāma* replied: "*Na mam migā uttasanti, araññe sāpadānipi.* — Seeing me, deers are not frightened; nor are the other beasts of the forest." He also said:

"O King, even *Kinnarās* who, with a very timid nature, are living in the mountain of *Gandhamādana*, would joyfully come to me while they are roaming in the hills and forests."

From this Pāli verse, it is known that the Bodhisatta *Suvaṇṇasāma*, living in the forest, directed *mettā* towards all forest-dwelling animals including *Kinnarās* and that he was accordingly loved by each and every animal in the forest.

In the list of eleven advantages that accrue by developing *mettā*, one is: being loved by devas, humans, demons and ghosts. But from the *Suvaṇṇasāma* story, we know that animals too love one who develops *mettā*. (The eleven advantages of developing *mettā* have been shown in connection with the *Navanga Uposatha* in the Section on the Perfection of Morality). Of these eleven advantages, in connection with *amanussanām piyo*, 'love of deva, demons and ghosts', the story of the Venerable *Visākhā* is cited in the *Brahmavihāra*

Niddesa of the **Visuddhi-magga**.

The Story of Venerable Visākhā

Visākhā, a householder of Pātaliputta, having heard about Ceylon, was desirous of going to that country to devote himself to practice of Dhamma. After leaving his wealth to his family, he crossed over to Ceylon and became a monk at the Mahāvihāra. For five months, he studied Dve Mātikā (the two books of concise Vinaya) and then left the Mahāvihāra for a group of monasteries which were suitable places for meditation. He spent four months at each monastery.

On his way to the hill-monastery called Cittala, Visākhā came to a junction of two roads and while he was thinking which road to follow, the deva of the hill guided him to the right direction. Accordingly, he arrived at the monastery and stayed for four months there. After planning to go to another monastery the following day, he went to sleep. While he was thus sleeping, the spirit of an emerald green tree sat on a wooden plank at the edge of a staircase and wept. "Who is weeping here?" asked the monk. "I am the spirit of the emerald green tree, Sir," was the reply. "Why are you weeping?" "Because you are about to leave." "What advantage is there to you of my stay here?" "Your stay here makes the local devas, demons and others show loving-kindness to one another. (Love prevails among them.) After your leaving, they will quarrel among themselves even using harsh words."

"If my stay here really helps you live happily as you have told," said the monk, "well, I will stay on for another four months." When the four months had lapsed, the monk was about to leave and the spirit wept again. In this way, the monk could not leave the place at all and passed into Nibbāna at the same monastery of Cittala.

The story shows that those who receive *mettā* not only love him who directs *mettā* to them, but they show goodwill to one another under the influence of his *mettā*.

Loving-kindness of A Hunter

In the Mahā Hamsa Jātaka of the **Asīti Nipāta**, when the Bodhisatta, King of Hamsas, was caught in a snare, he suffered much from injury. At the instance of the Hamsa General, the repentant hunter picked up the Hamsa King tenderly and nursed him with loving-kindness to relieve his pain. Even the weals raised by the snare did not remain on his feet, which became normal with the veins, flesh and skin undamaged because of the power of the hunter's *mettā*.

This is but a pertinent extract from the Mahā Hamsa Jātaka. The story in full may be learnt from the same Jātaka. Similar stories are told in the Pathama Cūla Hamsa Jātaka of the **Asīti Nipāta**, the Rohana Miga Jātaka and the Cūla Hamsa Jātaka of the **Visati Nipāta**. The power of *mettā* may be well understood from these stories.

Passion in The Guise of Loving-kindness

He who wants to direct his *mettā* towards beings should be careful about one thing and this is not to have developed passion (*rāga*) in the guise of *mettā* as it is warned in the **Netti Commentary**: "*Rāgo mettāyaṇāṃmukhena vañceti*. — Passion in the guise of loving-kindness is deceiving." In the Brahmavihāra Niddesa of the **Visuddhi-magga**, too, it is stated: "Extinction of anger means fulfilment of *mettā*, but arising of passion means destruction of *mettā*."

The meaning is: When a man directs his *mettā* towards another whom he has shown anger, the anger disappears and there appears in him *mettā* which is goodwill. Therefore, disappearance of anger leads to appearance of *mettā*. If passionate attachment appears in him while he is thus developing genuine *mettā*, his genuine *mettā* fails. He has now been deceived by passion which assumes the semblance of loving-kindness.

As *mettā* is one of the Ten Perfections, it should be directed towards other beings until they return their good-will. Therefore, disappearance of anger leads to appearance of *mettā*. If passionate attachment appears in him while he is thus developing genuine *mettā*, his genuine *mettā* fails. He has now been deceived by passion which assumes the semblance of loving-kindness.

THE ANUDĪPAṆĪ

As *mettā* is one of the Ten Perfections, it should be directed towards other beings until they return their goodwill to oneself, as per example the Bodhisatta Suvannasama and others. Not only is *mettā* included in the Ten Perfections, but included in the forty methods of *Samatha* meditation, which leads to attainment of *jhāna* and *abhiññānas*. Therefore, Bodhisattas and virtuous men of ancient times developed *mettā* and with sharp and intense concentration attained *jhānas* and *abhiññānas* (which are called **Appanā** in Pāli). To give illustrations of such an attainment while fulfilling the Perfections, the Seyya Jātaka, Abbhantara Vagga of the **Tika Nipāta**, and the Ekarāja Jātaka, Kalinga Vagga of the **Catukka Nipāta**, may be cited.

Seyya Jātaka

A synopsis of the **Seyya Jātaka**: King Brahmadatta of Bārāṇasī ruled righteously, fulfilling his ten kingly duties. He gave alms, kept the Five Precepts, observed *uposatha* morality. Then a minister, who had committed a crime in the palace, was expelled by the King from the kingdom. He went to the neighbouring country of Kosala and while serving the King there, he urged him to attack and conquer Bārāṇasī which, he said, could easily be done. King Kosala followed his suggestion, arrested and imprisoned King Brahmadatta, who put up no resistance at all, with his ministers.

In the prison, Brahmadatta directed his *mettā* towards Kosala, who had robbed him of his kingdom, and in due course he (Brahmadatta) attained *mettā-jhāna*. Because of the power of that *mettā*, the robber King Kosala felt burning sensations throughout his whole body as if it were burnt with torches. Suffering from particularly severe pain, he asked his ministers: “Why has this happened to me?” They replied: “O King, you suffer thus because you have imprisoned King Brahmadatta who is endowed with morality.” Thereupon Kosala hurried to the Bodhisatta Brahmadatta, begged for forgiveness and returned Bārāṇasī to Brahmadatta, saying: “Let your country be yours again.” From this story it is clear that *mettā* is conducive to attainment of *jhāna*.

Ekarāja Jātaka

The story of Ekarāja: Once upon a time, a minister serving King Brahmadatta of Bārāṇasī committed an offence. The story thus begins with the same incident as that in the previous Seyya Jātaka. Both the Seyya Jātaka and the Ekarāja Jātaka runs like the Mahā Sīlava Jātaka of the **Ekaka Nipāta**. For the full story read the Mahā Sīlava Jātaka.

What is peculiar to the Ekarāja Jātaka is this: While King of Bārāṇasī was sitting in great state with his ministers in the courtyard, King Dubbhisena of Kosala had him tied and caged and then hung upside down above a doorstep in the palace. Having developed *mettā* with the robber king as the object of his contemplation, Brahmadatta attained *jhānas* and *abhiññānas*. He managed to release himself from bondage and sat cross-legged in the sky. Dubbhisena's body became burning hot and the heat was so intense that he rolled from side to side on the ground, grumbling: “It's so hot; it's so hot.” Then he asked his ministers: “Why has this happened to me?” The ministers replied: “O King, you suffer very painfully like this because you have wrongly arrested and suspended upside-down the virtuous and innocent King.” “In that case, go and quickly release him.” Under this order, the royal servants promptly went where the King Brahmadatta was and saw him sitting cross-legged in the sky. So they turned back and reported the matter to King Dubbhisena.

The Buddha's Mettā

Once while members of the Sangha headed by the Buddha were travelling to Kusinara, Malla princes made an agreement among themselves that any one of them who did not extend his welcome to the congregation would be punished. Accordingly, a Malla prince, Roja by name, who was a friend of Ānanda while he was a layman, extended his welcome with other Malla princes to the congregation. Thereupon Ānanda said admiringly to Roja that it was a great opportunity to do so as the congregation was under the Buddha's headship. Roja replied that he did so not because he had faith in the Triple Gem but

because of the agreement made among themselves. Finding Roja's reply unpleasant, Ānanda approached the Buddha and told him of it. He also requested the Buddha to make Roja's mind more pliant. The Buddha then directed His thoughts of *mettā* exclusively to Roja, who could not remain still in his residence and like a calf which has been separated from its mother, went to the monastery where the Buddha was staying. With genuine faith in the Buddha arising in him, he paid homage to the Buddha and listened to His sermon, as a result of which he became a *sotāpanna*.

At another time, too, when members of the Sangha, with the Buddha at its head, entered the city of Rājagaha and went on alms-round. Devadatta, after consulting King Ajātasattu, sent Nālāgiri the Elephant, who was in must, to attack the Buddha. The Buddha overcame the elephant by suffusing him with *mettā*. Then the citizens of Rājagaha recited with joy the following verse:

*Daṇḍen'eke damayanti ankusāhi kasāhi ca
adaṇḍena asatthena ṇāgo danto mahesinā.*

Some cattle-trainers, elephant-trainers and horse-trainers tame (their respective animals) by beating or hurting them with a goad or a whip.

However the mad elephant Nālāgiri has been tamed by the Buddha without any stick or any weapon.

(j) The Perfection of Equanimity (Upekkhā-Pāramī)

Meaning of Upekkhā

A literal translation of the Pāli word '**upekkhā**' would be 'taking up a balanced view' which means maintenance of a neutral position between the two extremes of sorrow and happiness. Traditional Myanmar scholars rendered it as 'indifference'.

If the meaning of this rendering is not well thought of, one is liable to misinterpret it as 'being inattentive', 'being negligent'. But *upekkhā* is not remaining inattentive or negligent. *Upekkhā* pays attention to objects but only in a balanced manner with the feeling of neutrality when encountering objects of sorrow or objects of happiness.

Development of Upekkhā

Development of *upekkhā* is the same as that of *mettā* mentioned in the **Paṭisambhidāmagga**. As mentioned above, the methods to be adopted in developing *mettā* are 528 because there are four basic modes. On the other hand, in developing *upekkhā* there is only one mode which is *kammassakā* meaning 'all beings have deeds, *kamma* (done by them) as their own property.' Therefore, the methods in this case form one fourth of 528 which is 132.

As in developing *mettā*, there are twelve categories of beings: five *anodhisa* (unspecified) and seven *odhisa* (specified). Since there is just one mode of it, we have twelve methods only that are to be adopted before applying them to the ten directions:

- (1) **sabbe sattā kammassakā** (all beings have kamma as their own property);
- (2) **sabbe paṇā kammassakā** (all living things have kamma as their own property);
- (3) **sabbe bhūstā kammassakā** (all existing creatures have kamma as their own property);
- (4) **sabbe puggalā kammassakā** (all persons or individuals have kamma as their own property);
- (5) **sabbe attabhāvapariyāpannā kammassakā** (all those who have come to individual existences bodies have kamma as their own property);
- (6) **sabbā itthiyo kammassakā** (all women have kamma as their own property);
- (7) **sabbe purisā kammassakā** (all men have kamma as their own property);
- (8) **sabbe ariyā kammassakā** (all noble ones have kamma as their own property);

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

- (9) **sabbe anariyā kammassakā** (all persons who have not yet attained the state of ariyas have kamma as their own property);
- (10) **sabbe devā kammassakā** (all devas have kamma as their own property);
- (11) **sabbe manussā kammassakā** (all humans have kamma as their own property); and
- (12) **sabbe vinipātikā kammassakā** (all *petas* belonging to miserable states have kamma as their own property).

When these twelve are applied to the ten directions the result is 120. To these are added twelve methods which have no reference to any direction and the total number of methods becomes 132. Any one of these suitable methods may be used in developing *upekkhā* but it should not be taken that the other methods are inapplicable.

To make it clearer: As in the case of *mettā*, one may develop *upekkhā* by using other terms for beings and persons if one so desires. The word ‘*kammassakā*’ may also be replaced by other Pāli terms of the same meaning, which are mentioned in the Abhinha Sutta, Nīvarana Vagga, Pañcaka Nipāta of the **Āṅguttara Nikāya**. There it is said: *sabbe sattā kammassakā, kammadāyādā, kammayonī, kammabandhū, kammaṭṭissaraṇā*.

- (1) **kammassakā**, ‘having kamma as one’s property’;
- (2) **kammadāyādā**, ‘having kamma as one’s heritage’;
- (3) **kammayonī**, ‘having kamma as one’s origin’;
- (4) **kammabandhū**, ‘having kamma as one’s own friend’;
- (5) **kammaṭṭissaraṇā**, ‘having kamma as one’s refuge’.

Since all these five Pāli terms have one and the same significance, one may develop *upekkhā* by substituting ‘*sabbe sattā kammassakā*’ with any of the following four expressions that pleases one or that is understood well by one.

*sabbe sattā kammadāyādā,
sabbe sattā kammayonī,
sabbe sattā kammabandhū,
sabbe sattā kammaṭṭissaraṇā.*

A Point to consider

In this connection, a point to consider is this: It is clear that *mettā* is a Perfection to be fulfilled for the welfare of beings and thus deserves to be considered as a noble Perfection. On the other hand, though *upekkhā* is a Perfection to be fulfilled, it is a mental disposition which holds that “happiness or suffering is one’s lot in life; if one is possessed of good deeds for happiness, one will be happy; if one is possessed of bad deeds for suffering, one will suffer. I can do nothing to alter the *kamma* of others.” Is it not difficult to call such an attitude noble? Will it be wrong if one says that *upekkhā* is an attitude of mind which does not care for the welfare of beings and which remains apathetic towards them? It is therefore, necessary to consider why *upekkhā* is ranked as an exalted virtue of Perfection.

In both secular and spiritual matters, it is natural that something which is difficult to get is of great value and something which is easy to get is of little value. It is, therefore, a common knowledge that in the world, easily available materials, such as pebbles and sand are cheap, whereas gold, silver, rubies and other gems, which are hard to come by, are precious.

Similarly in spiritual matters, greed, hate and other unwholesome mental states are likely to arise easily; accordingly they are of little worth. It requires no special exertion to let them arise. As a matter of fact, what is difficult is to prevent them from arising in an uncontrollable manner. They are indeed like useless weeds. On the other hand, *dāna*, *sīla* and other wholesome deeds cannot happen without putting forth necessary efforts; they do not take place automatically. One of such meritorious deeds is development of genuine *mettā* which is superior to *dāna* and *sīla*. This genuine loving-kindness is indeed difficult to be developed.

There are three types of persons: *verī-puggala*, *majjhatta-puggala* and *piya-puggala*, a foe, neither a foe nor a friend and a friend respectively. It is difficult to develop *mettā* directed towards a *verī-puggala* (foe), not so difficult towards a *majjhatta-puggala* (neither a foe nor a friend); on the contrary, it is easy to direct *mettā* towards a *piya-puggala* (friend). *Mettā* that has as its object neither a *verī* nor a *majjhatta* but only a *piya-puggala* is *mettā* of no value, no matter how often it is developed, because it is just a performance of an easy task.

If one desires to fulfil *mettā pāramī* properly, one should develop *mettā* directed towards oneself first. Since such a development is in one's own interest, *mettā* arises easily and fully without fail. This *mettā* which is complete as it is developed for one's own self should serve as an example. Hence *mettā* should be directed towards oneself first.

When *mettā* is directed towards a *verī*, a *majjhatta* and a *piya*, one should do so all alike without any discrimination, in the same manner one has done towards oneself. Could it be easily done? No, it could not be. Indeed it is difficult to develop *mettā* even towards a friend the way one does towards oneself, let alone towards a foe or a neutral person, as has been instructed by the Buddha, *attasamaṃ pemaṃ n'atthi*, there is no person like oneself that one loves. Only when *mettā*, which is so difficult to develop towards a friend, can be developed not only towards a friend but also towards the other two persons on a par with oneself and without the slightest difference, can it become genuine *mettā* of *pāramī* stature.

This suggests how difficult it is to develop genuine *mettā* and how great its value is. On account of the development of this form of *mettā*, as has been stated above, Suvanna Sāma was loved by wild beasts like tigers, lions, etc. It is even more difficult to develop *upekkhā* as a fulfilment of Perfection than to develop *mettā* for the same purpose.

It is not easy to develop *upekkhā* even towards a neutral person of the three types. People would say: "I remain equanimous with regard to him now" or "In this matter I adopt the attitude of *kamassakā*," and so on. As such a saying signifies unconcern and disinterest, *upekkhā* appears to be of little importance. In reality *upekkhā* presupposes paying attention to and taking interest in the object of contemplation (but as a neutral observer).

As it is easy to develop *mettā* towards a friend, so it is easy to develop *upekkhā* towards a neutral person. Because one does not love or hate him, it is easy to keep one's attitude towards him balanced without any desire to see him happy or to see him suffer. But it is more difficult to develop *upekkhā*, towards a foe. Because, if one hates him, one rejoices easily when he declines and one envies him when he prospers. It is hard to prevent both mental states from arising; when either of them sets in, even in the slightest manner one fails to maintain *upekkhā*.

It is still more difficult to develop *upekkhā* towards a friend than towards a foe. Because one is already attached to a friend one is delighted when he prospers or distressed when misfortune befalls him. It is difficult to prevent both delight and distress from arising in oneself.

Only when one maintains equanimity with the same attitude towards all three types of persons as towards oneself without any of the above-mentioned difficulties can development of *upekkhā* be possible. As long as there is partiality in one's attitude towards these three types of persons *upekkhā* is far from successful.

As has been said, development of *upekkhā* is not an attitude of unconcern or neglect; on the contrary, it does pay attention to and takes interest (in the object of contemplation). In doing so, one says to oneself: "Nothing can be done to make beings including myself happy or unhappy. Those who are possessed of good *kamma* will be happy and those who are possessed of bad *kamma* will be unhappy. Since their happiness and unhappiness are related to their past deeds, nothing could be done about them." Only profound reflection in this vivid manner, with living beings as objects of contemplation, constitutes genuine *upekkhā*. Since it involves neither anxiety nor uneasiness, it is noble, serene and calm. The more it goes beyond *mettā*, the higher its spiritual standard is.

Like *mettā*, *upekkhā* is one of the forty subjects of *samatha* meditation and one of the Ten Perfections. One who desires to meditate on *upekkhā* according to *samatha* method does so

only for the highest *jhāna* and not for the lower ones. Those who are slow to grasp, reach the highest stage of *jhāna* only by acquiring them five times. For them, the Buddha has taught fivefold *jhāna* which is called *pañcaka* method (method of five). The *jhāna* acquired for the first time by them is the first *jhāna*, that acquired for the second time is the second *jhāna* and so on up to the fifth *jhāna*. In this way, there are five *jhāna* for the dull.

The intelligent, however, reached the highest *jhāna* after acquiring them four times. For them, the Buddha has taught fourfold *jhāna* which is known as *catukka* method (method of four). The *jhāna* acquiring for the first time is the first *jhāna*, and so on. In this way there are four *jhāna* for the intelligent.

Those who have not attained any *jhāna* in either of these two ways should not try to meditate yet on *upekkhā* for the highest stage of *jhāna*. *Upekkhā*, as a subject for meditation, belongs to the fifth *jhāna* in the *pañcaka* method and to the fourth *jhāna* in the *catukka* method. The dull can meditate on *upekkhā* only when they have attained the fourth *jhāna* and the intelligent only after acquiring the first three *jhāna*, by means of other *samatha* subjects. Because, as has been said, *upekkhā* is subtle, serene and noble and thus belongs to the highest *jhāna* and not to the lower ones.

Mettā on the other hand belongs to the lower four or three *jhāna*. This indicates the fact that *upekkhā* is superior to *mettā*. If *upekkhā* is not intended as a subject for meditation but intended as a Perfection to be fulfilled, it can be developed at any time.

Mahā Lomahaṃsa Cariya

With regard to the Perfection of Equanimity, the story of the Bodhisatta's hair-raising, severe efforts in fulfilling *Upekkhā Pāramī* will be reproduced from the **Cariya Piṭaka Commentary**.

Once the Bodhisatta was born in a family of wealth and rank. When the time came for his education, he went to a well-known teacher. After completing it, he returned to his parents to look after them. On their death, his relatives urged him to protect and increase the riches that he had inherited.

However, the Bodhisatta had developed fear of all realms of existence and his fear was based on the nature of impermanence of all conditioned things. He also had perceived the loathsomeness of the body and had no desire at all to be entangled in the thicket of defilements associated with household life. In fact, his desire to get out of the world of sensuality had long been growing. Accordingly, he wanted to renounce the world after abandoning his great wealth. "But because of sounds of praise, my renunciation will make me famous," he thought to himself. Since he disliked fame, gain and honour shown to him, he did not renounce the world. In order to test himself whether he could unshakably stand the vicissitude of life, such as gaining and not gaining (wealth), etc. wearing the usual clothes, he left the house. His special desire was to fulfil the highest form of *Upekkhā Pāramī* by enduring ill-treatment of others. Leading a noble life of austerities, he was thought by people to be a feeble-minded eccentric, one who never showed anger to others. Regarded as a person to be treated not with respect but with impudence, he roamed about villages and towns, big and small, spending just one night at each place. But he stayed longer wherever he was shown the greatest insolence. When his clothes were worn out, he tried to cover himself with whatever remnant was left. And when that piece was torn away, he did not accept any garment from anybody but tried to cover himself with anything available and kept moving.

After living such a life for a long time, he arrived at a village. The village children there were of aggressive nature. Some kids, belonging to widows and associates of ruling class, were unsteady, conceited, fickle-minded, garrulous, indulging in loose talk. They wandered around, always playing practical jokes on others. When they saw aged and poor people walking, they followed them and threw ashes on their backs. They tried to place ketaki leaves under the old people's arm-pits (just to make them feel uncomfortable). When the old people turned round to look at them, they mimicked their movements and manners by bending their backs, curving their legs, pretending to be dumb, etc., and had great fun

laughing among themselves.

When the Bodhisatta saw the unruly children, he thought: “Now I have found a good means of support for fulfilment of Perfection of Equanimity,” and stayed in the village. Seeing him, the mischievous kids tried to make fun of him, who, pretending as though he could no longer endure them and as though he was afraid of them, ran away. Still the kids followed him wherever he went.

The Bodhisatta, on the run, reached a cemetery and thought to himself: “This is a place where no one will prevent these mischievous youngsters from doing harm. I have now a chance to fulfil *Upekkhā Pāramī* to a great extent.” He went into the cemetery and slept there using a skull as a pillow. Getting an opportunity to indulge in devilry, the foolish kids went where the Bodhisatta was sleeping and insulted him in various ways, spitting phlegm and saliva on him and doing other evil things and went away. In this way, they ill-treated the Bodhisatta everyday.

Seeing these wrong acts done by the wicked children, some wise people stopped them. With the knowledge that “This indeed is a holy ascetic of great power”, they all paid obeisance to him with utmost reverence.

The Bodhisatta kept the same attitude towards both the foolish kids and the wise people. He showed no affection to the latter who honoured him nor aversion to the former who insulted him. Instead, he took a neutral stance between affection and aversion with regard to both parties. In this way, he fulfilled the Perfection of Equanimity.

(Though this story is called Mahā Lomahaṃsa Jātaka, the name Mahā Lomahaṃsa was not that of the Bodhisatta. It just refers to the effect on those who come to know of how the Bodhisatta had practised; the horrible story could make their hair stand on end; hence the story's name Mahā Lomahaṃsa).

Fulfilment of Upekkhā

Extinction of hate and love is fulfilment of *upekkhā*. (*Upekkhā pāramī* signifies stilling of these two mental states. There is no Perfection of Equanimity unless both are calmed.)

In special affairs, staying in a negligent mood without taking interest in anything leads to the impairment of *upekkhā*. Such an attitude cannot be called *upekkhā*. It is only unawareness which is wrongly thought to be so.

Real *upekkhā* is not indifference or unawareness. It sees both good and evil which lead to happiness and suffering respectively. But he who observes *upekkhā* reflects clearly: “I am not concerned with these matters of happiness and suffering; they are the results of their own good and evil deeds.”

In the **Netti Commentary** it is stated: “Extreme absent-mindedness appearing as indifference with regard to various sense objects either good or bad is deceptive. (Delusion (*moha*), disguised as *upekkhā* is deceptive.) Reluctance to perform deeds of merit also tends to deceive by assuming the appearance of the sublime mode of doing *upekkhā*. Indolence (*kosajjha*), for doing good deeds is also likely to pretend to be *upekkhā*.) Therefore, one should take care of oneself not to be deceived by either delusion or indolence that is apt to behave like *upekkhā*.

Essence of Upekkhā

Upekkhā in ultimate sense is a separate entity. It is a mental concomitant (*cetasika*) called *tatramajjhataṭṭā* (central position thereof). But all the mental concomitants of *tatramajjhataṭṭā* cannot collectively be called **Upekkhā Pāramī**. *Tatramajjhataṭṭā* is a mental concomitant that is associated with all *sobhana citta*s (‘beautiful’ consciousness); it accompanies each arising of *sobhana citta*. *Tatramajjhataṭṭā* which can be regarded as genuine *Upekkhā Pāramī* pays attention to beings and reflects: “Happiness and suffering of beings are conditioned by their *kamm*s in which nobody can intervene. They have kamma as their own property and cause.” *Tatramajjhataṭṭā* that arises out of contemplation, not of beings but of the Three Gems, alms-giving and observance of the precepts cannot constitute *Upekkhā Pāramī*.

When equanimity is maintained, contemplating happiness and suffering of beings, *tatramajjhataṭā* does not arise alone but all associated consciousness and mental concomitants appear with it. Though the object of *tatramajjhataṭā* and the object of its associates are one and the same, equanimity, with regard to happiness and suffering of beings, is its main function. Therefore, this *tatramajjhataṭā* is designated *Upekkhā Pāramī*. Its associated consciousness and mental concomitants also come to be included in *Upekkhā Pāramī*; *tatramajjhataṭā* plays the leading role and this is the only difference between it and its associates.

Ten Kinds of Upekkhā

There are other kinds of *upekkhā* that cannot be included in **Upekkhā Pāramī** though each of them is an ultimate reality. The **Visuddhimagga** and the **Atthasalini** enumerate ten such *upekkhā*:

1. Chalang'upekkhā ,	6. Vedan'upekkhā ,
2. Brahmavihār'upekkhā ,	7. Vipassan'upekkhā ,
3. Bojjhaṅg'upekkhā ,	8. Tatramajjhataṭ'upekkhā ,
4. Viriy'upekkhā ,	9. Jhān'upekkhā , and
5. Saṅkhār'upekkhā ,	10. Parisuddh'upekkhā .

1. There are six sense objects, good and bad, that appear at the six sense-doors. Arahats are not delighted when the sense objects are desirable and not dejected when these are undesirable. Always being endowed with mindfulness and comprehension they take them in with equanimity, maintaining their natural purity of their mind. This kind of mental equipoise is called **Chalang'upekkhā**. (That is, *upekkhā* with six factors, namely, six sense-doors and six-objects.)
2. Equanimity, which views that happiness and suffering of beings occur according to their kamma, is **Brahmavihār'upekkhā**. (Equanimity with sublime living. **Upekkhā Pāramī** is this kind of *upekkhā*.)
3. When efforts are made to attain the Path and the Fruition, if some factors are weak and other strong, the weaker ones are to be strengthened and the stronger are to be suppressed; but when these factors of the Path reached the status of *Bojjhaṅgas* (Constituents of Enlightenment), their associated factors are of equal strength. *Upekkhā* observed equally on these elements is called **Bojjhaṅg'upekkhā**.
4. In making efforts to attain the Path and the Fruition, energy extended for just the required amount, neither more nor less, is **Viriy'upekkhā**.
5. In making efforts for the attainment of concentration, Path and Fruition states, remaining detached from *saṅkhāra-dhammas* (conditioned things), such as *nivaraṇas* (hindrances), etc., that are to be eradicated by means of the first *jhāna*, etc. is called **Saṅkhār'upekkhā**. (This *Saṅkhār'upekkhā* arises when the Vipassanā wisdom matures. Before its maturity, one needs making efforts to eradicate *saṅkhāra-dhammas*. But once the maturity is acquired, it is no longer necessary to make special efforts to eradicate them. Only an attitude of indifference is needed for the purpose.)
6. Feeling experienced neutrally without delight or dejection when in taking in a sense object is **Vedan'upekkhā**.
7. Maintaining a mental equilibrium in developing insight into the nature of impermanence and other characteristics of the aggregates is called **Vipassan'upekkhā**. (A brief meaning of '*Vipassanā*' may be given here in this connection. 'Vi' means 'special' and 'passana', 'seeing'. Hence '*Vipassanā*' is 'Insight'. Perceiving that there are concrete things, such as men, women and so on, is an ordinary knowledge, common to all. It is an understanding based on perception but not a special understanding based on profound wisdom. Vipassanā Insight is: "In reality there are no such things as 'I' or 'he'. What is termed 'I' or 'he' is just an aggregate of matter and mind that is subject to destruction and dissolution. These aggregates are

continuously decaying without interruption. There is no sign of impairment only because every decaying object is being endlessly replaced by a newly conditioned thing.”)

8. *Upekkhā* observed without making efforts to maintain neutrality on these correlated *dhammas* that are well balanced in their respective functions is called **Tatramajjhataṭṭa'upekkhā**.
9. In developing *jhāna*, remaining indifferent to the sublime bliss that appears at the third *jhāna* is called **Jhān'upekkhā**. (It is the *upekkhā* that is acquired only at the final *jhāna*.)
10. Being purified of all opposing factors and requiring no effort in pacifying them is called **Parisuddh'upekkhā**. (It is the equanimity at the fourth *jhāna* stage which is free of all opposing factors.)

Of these ten, the six, namely, *Chalang'upekkhā*, *Brahmavihār'upekkhā*, *Bojjhaṅg'upekkhā*, *Tatramajjhataṭṭa'upekkhā*, *Jhān'upekkhā* and *Parisuddh'upekkhā*, are the same in their ultimate sense. They are all *Tatramajjhataṭṭa cetasikas*.

Why are they then enumerated as six kinds? Because they differ from one another in their time of arising. A simile is given in the above-quoted Commentaries to explain this point. A man, in his childhood, is called *kumāra* (boy); when he becomes older, he is called *yuva* (youth); again, when he becomes older, he is called *vuddha* (adult), *senapati* (general), *raja* (king), etc. A man is thus called differently according to the stages in his life.

To make it clearer: Their distinctions are due to the differences in their functions which are as follows:

- (1) As has been stated before, to contemplate all six sense objects, good and bad, with equanimity is the Function of **Chalang'upekkhā**.
- (2) To contemplate happiness and suffering of beings with equanimity is the function of **Brahmavihār'upekkhā**.
- (3) In striving to achieve the *jhānas*, Path and Fruition states, to contemplate with equanimity the hindrances that are to be removed is the function of **Bojjhaṅg'upekkhā**.
- (4) To develop energy neither more nor less than what is required is the function of **Viriya'upekkhā**.
- (5) To contemplate with equanimity all correlated factors without encouraging or suppressing is the function of **Sanṅkhār'upekkhā**.
- (6) To contemplate sensations with equanimity is the function of **Vedan'upekkhā**.
- (7) To contemplate with equanimity the three characteristics (*anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*) is the function of **Vipassan'upekkhā**.
- (8) To contemplate with equanimity the associated factors which are well balanced is the function of **Tatramajjhataṭṭa'upekkhā**.
- (9) To contemplate with equanimity even the most sublime bliss of *jhānas* is the function of **Jhān'upekkhā**.
- (10) To contemplate with equanimity which is purified of all opposing factors is the function of **Parisuddh'upekkhā**.

Thus, not only the differences of functions but those of sense objects should be noted. **Viriya'upekkhā** is *vīriya cetasika* and **Vedan'upekkhā** is *vedanā cetasika*: these two *upekkhās* are quite separate from other *cetasikas* in terms of *Dhamma*. **Sanṅkhār'upekkhā** and **Viriya'upekkhā** are both *paññā cetasikas*. But they have two different functions as follows:

Contemplating without making special efforts on the three characteristics of conditioned things (*saṅkhāra*) is **Vipassan'upekkhā**; equanimity, when contemplating without fear of the conditioned things (*saṅkhāra*), is **Sanṅkhār'upekkhā**.

Upekkhā as A Perfection and The Ten Upekkhās

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

The list of these ten *upekkhās* mentioned by the Commentators do not directly include *Pāramī Upekkhā*, *upekkhā* as a Perfection. One might, therefore, anxious to know: Is the exclusion due to the fact that *upekkhā* as a Perfection is not associated with any of the ten or is it an oversight on the part of the Commentators? It could not be said that the Commentators were so negligent as to leave it out from their list. It is to be taken that *Pāramī Upekkhā* is contained in **Brahmavihār'upekkhā**.

However, some are of the opinion that *Brahmavihār'upekkhā* and *Pāramī Upekkhā* are two different things. According to them, taking up one and the same attitude towards one's foe and friend alike is **Pāramī Upekkhā**; taking up one and the same attitude towards happiness and suffering of beings with the thought that these two conditions are the result of their own deeds is **Brahmavihār'upekkhā**.

That is to say, *Pāramī Upekkhā* contemplating happiness and suffering of beings is not *Pāramī Upekkhā* but *Brahmavihār'upekkhā*.

However, the nature of *Upekkhā Pāramī* is explained in the *Buddhavaṃsa* thus:

*Tath'eva tvam pi sukhadukkhe
tulābhūto sadā bhava
upekkhāpāramitaṃ gantvā
sambodhiṃ pāpuṇissati.*

In this verse, '*sukhadukkhe tulābhūto*' means 'in happiness and suffering, be like the scales of a balance.'

Thus contemplation of happiness and suffering is taught as the basis of *Upekkhā Pāramī* also in the Mahā Lomahamsa Cariya of the **Cariya Piṭaka**. It is said:

*Ye me dukkham upadahanti
ye ca denti sukhāṃ mama
sabbesaṃ samako homi.*

There, also on the basis of those two stages in life, it is taught, "Some people do harm while others give comfort. My attitude towards all of them is the same." "*Sukhadukkhe tulābhūto yasesu ca* — whether in happiness and suffering, or in fame and disgrace, I am like the scales of a balance."

In the **Atthasālini** and the **Pāṭha Jātaka Commentary** mentioned above, explanations are given also on the basis of those two mental states: happiness and suffering. "Though the village boys' ill-treatment (spitting of phlegm, etc.) should normally cause suffering and the villagers' honouring him with flowers, scents, etc. should normally cause happiness, the Bodhisatta viewed both with a balanced attitude of mind. The Bodhisatta's *upekkhā* that did not deviate from that balanced position was the supreme Perfection of Equanimity, **Paramattha Upekkhā Pāramī**."

Besides, when the **Visuddhi-magga** and the **Atthasālini** explain the characteristics, etc. of **Brahmavihār'upekkhā** it is said thus: *Sattesu majjhatakaralakkhana upekkhā* — "*upekkhā* has the characteristics of viewing things with equanimity". *Satta* (beings), here is used as a general term; it means those who offend and those who show kindness towards oneself, or those who are happy and those who are suffering. Therefore, taking up a neutral attitude towards one's foe and friend alike is clearly *Brahmavihār'upekkhā*. Therefore, it clearly means also that *Pāramī Upekkhā* is included in *Brahmavihār'upekkhā*.

Chapter 1. The Story of Sataketu Deva, The Future Buddha

Ref: The Uproar announcing The Appearance of Buddha

Five Kolāhalas

Kolāhala means a verbal agitation started by a few persons who say: "Thus will it happen", before the predicted event actually takes place. It arises among people who are

brought together and speak of the impending matter in same language and in same voice.

That is to say, *kolāhala* exactly is an uproar created with excitement by people at large, as an omen before the actual occurrence of something. It does not mean a nonsensical commotion that prevails in towns and villages, falsely predicting an impossible incident such as “Prince Setkya is about to come back!”²²

There are five *kolāhalas* in this world:

(1) Kappa-kolāhala

The *kolāhala* that warns people of the dissolution of the world is **kappa-kolāhala**. When the time for the destruction of the world is drawing near, the deities named Lokavyūha of the realm of sensual pleasures (*kāmāvacara*-devas), wearing red garments, letting their hair down, wiping the tears off their faces, roam in a distressed manner about roads and highways used by people, and cry aloud to human beings at all places, a hundred years ahead of the event:

“Friends, a hundred years from today, the world will dissolve! The great oceans will dry up! The great earth, Mount Meru and all will burn and disintegrate (if the world is to be destroyed by fire), will go under floods and disintegrate (if it is to be destroyed by water), will expose itself to violent storms and disintegrate (if it is to be destroyed by the winds)! There will be the destruction of the world extending from this great earth with Mount Meru and the oceans up to the abode of Brahmās! Friends, develop loving-kindness (*mettā*), develop compassion (*karuṇā*), develop altruistic joy (*muditā*), develop equanimity (*upekkhā*) which form the conduct of Brahmās! Attend and serve your parents respectfully! Be awake to good deeds! Do not be careless!”

The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as **kappa-kolāhala**.

(2) Cattkavatti-kolāhala

The *kolāhala* that arises in the world of human beings proclaiming that “a Universal Monarch will appear” who rules over the human realm including the four great island-continents and their satellite smaller islands, two thousand in all, is called ‘**Cakkavatti-kolāhala**’. The guardian deities of the world (*lokapāla*), these *kāmāvacara*-devas, knowing in advance of the appearance of a Universal Monarch, roam about public roads and highways and cry aloud to human beings at all places, a hundred years ahead of the event:

“Friends, a hundred years from today, a Universal Monarch will emerge in this world!”

The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as **Cakkavatti-kolāhala**.

(3) Buddha-kolāhala

The *kolāhala* predicting in the world of human beings that “a Buddha will arise” is called **Buddha-kolāhala**. The Brahmās of the Suddhāvāsa abode, knowing in advance of the advent of an Omniscient Buddha and wearing Brahmā clothing, ornaments and crowns, happily

22. The name is spelt “Tsakyamen” by Burney, British Resident at Ava (In-wa) during the reign of King Bagyidaw (1819-37). Tsakyamen or Prince Setkya, as the only son, was Heir-apparent. He was executed, according to the British, by Bagyidaw's brother, King Tharrawaddy, who usurped the throne in 1837, and the execution took place in April 1838. But tradition has it that Queen Mai Nu, Bagyidaw's wife and the Prince's step mother, was instrumental in the execution. No matter who did it, it was true that the people's feelings were “those of regret and indignation.” (History of the British Residency in Burma 1826-1840 by W.S.Desai, p.335).

The latter version is dramatized and popularized by theatrical troupes which thereby enhanced the people's sympathy towards the unfortunate Prince. Those, who did not believe that the prince actually was killed, entertained the hope that he would re-appear some day. But there has been no sign of the return of the Prince.

The word “*setkya*” being the derivative of the Sanakrit *cakra* (*Pāli*, *cakka*) should not be confused with Cakravartin (*Pāli*, *Cakkavattī*), ‘Universal Monarch’.

roam about public roads and highways and cry aloud to human beings at all places, a thousand years ahead of the event:

“Friends, a thousand years from today, an Omniscient Buddha will evidently come into being in this world!”

The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as **Buddha-kolāhala**.

(Herein, the statement meaning that the **Buddha-kolāhala** occurs a thousand years ahead of the arrival of a Buddha should be noted in accordance with the life span of the appearing Buddhas. It should not be noted as a statement made regardless of their life spans. Reason: The Bodhisattas, such as Prince Dīpaṅkarā, Prince Kondañña, Prince Maṅgala, etc., who had appeared in a period of long life span, after descending to the human world and enjoying kingly pleasures as human beings for ten thousand years or so, renounced the world, practised *dukkara-cariya* and became Buddhas. The *Buddha-kolāhala* originates in the celestial world, and on account of that *kolāhala*, devas and Brahmās in the ten thousand world-systems approach the Bodhisatta Deva to make the request. Only after getting his consent, do Suddhāvāsa Brahmās roam the human abode and make the announcement. Thus, more than one thousand years, or even more than five thousand years, maybe nine or ten thousand years, after the prevalence of *Buddha-kolāhala*, the long-lived Buddhas appeared. Therefore, it should not be noted that the aforesaid statement that “*Buddha-kolāhala* lasts for a thousand years” is made with regard to all Buddhas; the statement should be taken to have been made only with regard to a short-lived Buddha such as Buddha Gotama.)

(4) Maṅgala-kolāhala

Undecided as to the exact meaning of Maṅgala (auspiciousness), people gather and define the word each in his own way, saying: “This is called Maṅgala!”, “This is called Maṅgala!”, which gives rise to a tumult voicing: “They say it is Maṅgala.” Such a tumultuous voice is called Maṅgala-kolāhala. Suddhāvāsa Brahmās knowing in advance that the Buddha will give a discourse on Maṅgala and being aware of the thought of people who yearn for the truth about auspiciousness, roam about public roads and highways and cry aloud to human beings at all places, twelve years before the Buddha's delivery of the Discourse:

“Friends, twelve years from today, the Buddha will teach the Doctrine of Maṅgala!”

The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as **Maṅgala-kolāhala**.

(5) Moneyya-kolāhala

The *kolāhala* concerning the ascetic practice of *moneyya* is called **Moneyya-kolāhala** (An elaboration on the *Moneyya* Practice is made in the section on Nālaka Thera as part of the History of Elders in the Sangha Jewel.) Suddhāvāsa Brahmās, knowing in advance that a *bhikkhu* in the human world will approach the Buddha to ask about *moneyya* asceticism, similarly roam about public roads and highways and cry aloud to human beings at all places, seven years before the Buddha's Teaching:

“Friends, seven years from today, a *bhikkhu* will approach the Buddha and ask *Moneyya Dhamma*!”

The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as **Moneyya-kolāhala**.

These are the five *kolāhalas*. Explanations of these five are given in the Aṭṭhakathās of the Buddhavaṃsa, Jātaka, Kosala Saṃyutta, Khuddaka-Pāṭha, Sutta-Nipāta and also in the Jinālaṅkāra.

Ref: The Request made to The Bodhisatta Deva

Five predicting Signs (*pubba-nimittas*) signalling The Approaching Death of Devas.

The Five Pubba-nimittas are:

- (1) Withering of celestial flowers
- (2) Dirtiness of celestial costumes and ornaments
- (3) Sweating from armpits
- (4) Deterioration of physical beauty
- (5) Displeasure in living in celestial residences

(1) **Withering of celestial flowers:** That is to say drying of divine blossoms that have appeared as decorations since the day the beings are reborn as deities. These flowers, that appear on their bodies simultaneously with their birth as devas, never wither during their life span but remain fresh throughout. The flowers begin to wither only when there are seven days left for them to live, according to human reckoning. (The flowers belonging to the Bodhisatta Deva Setaketu did not go dry even once throughout the length of his life of devas living in Tusitā abode, i.e., over the period of fifty-seven crores and six million years of terrestrial calculations. They started withering seven days of the humans before his passing away.)

(2) **Dirtiness of celestial costumes and ornaments:** As in the previous case, celestial costumes and ornaments never become dirty normally; only when it is seven days before the devas' death do they show terrible dirtiness.

(3) **Sweating from armpits:** In the celestial realm, unlike in the human abode, there is absolutely no such change of weather condition as intense heat or intense cold. Only seven days prior to death, beads of sweat come out and flow down from various parts of their bodies (especially from the armpits).

(4) **Deterioration of physical beauty:** Such signs of old age as missing teeth, greying hair, wrinkled skin and the like that also betray decaying states of physical beauty never happen to them. Female deities always remain to be sixteen-year old and male deities twenty-year old. Though they are perpetually tender and youthful with fresh, brilliant, beautifying colours, there sets in deterioration of the bodies, that have become weary and wretched as the time for their passing away is coming nearer.

(5) **Displeasure in living in celestial residences:** They never know unhappiness while living in celestial mansions throughout their divine lives. It is only when they are about to fall from their divine state that they lose delight and become displeased with life in divine residences.

Five Pubba-nimittas do not occur to Every Deity

Though the five **pubba-nimittas** occur to dying deities as has been said above, it should not be understood that they do so to each and every divine being. Just as in the human world such omens as the falling of a meteor, the quake of the earth, the eclipse of the moon or of the sun, and the like manifest with regard to great and powerful kings, ministers, etc. even so in the celestial world these *pubba-nimittas* happen only with reference to highly glorious male and female deities. They never occur to those deities of insignificant power.

As good or bad things predicted by the omens that occur in the human abode are understood only by learned interpreters, so the events, whether good or bad, forecast by those omens occurring in the celestial realm are comprehended by wise devas, not by unwise ones.

When the omens occur to deities of inconsiderable merit, they become greatly frightened, wondering: "Who knows where shall I be reborn?" Those of considerable merit do not feel so at all, knowing that "We shall enjoy further bliss in higher divine existences because of the merit that accrue from our act of generosity, from our observance of morality and from our practice of meditation." (Exposition of the Mahāpadāna-Sutta, **Sutta-Mahāvagga Aṭṭhakathā**.)

Ref: The Conception of The Bodhisatta

It may be questioned as to why did Mother Queen Maya conceive the Bodhisatta only in the third period of the second stage of life. The answer is: The sensual desire in an existing being in the first stage is usually strong. Therefore, women who become pregnant at that stage are unable to look after their pregnancy. Many are those who cannot take care of it. Such an inability causes several forms of injury to the pregnancy.

The middle stage, which is the second of the equally divided three periods, may be subdivided into three equal portions. When a woman reaches the third portion, her womb is clean and pure. A baby conceived in such a clean and pure womb is healthy, free from diseases.

The mother of a Bodhisatta in his last existence enjoys pleasure at her first stage, and it is customary that she dies after giving birth to him during the length of the third portion of the middle stage. (It is also a phenomenal law that she dies seven days after the birth of the Bodhisatta. She dies not because she is in labour. As a matter of fact, the (Bodhisatta) deva descends only when he has seen that his would-be mother has ten months and seven days more to live, after she begins to conceive, as has been mentioned in the account of the Bodhisatta Deva's five great investigations. Taking this into consideration, it is clear that her death is not caused by childbirth; it should undoubtedly be held that the mother dies only because her time is up.) (**Dīgha Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā**, etc.)

Ref: Queen Mahā-Māyā's Journey from Kapilavatthu to Devadaha²³

In the story of Queen Mahā-Māyā's visit from Kapilavatthu to Devadaha, it is written in the **Jināttha Pakāsaṇī** as follows:

“having cleaned and levelled the road of five *yojanas* long between Devadaha and Kapilavatthu, like a hardened plain ground. . .”

In the **Tathāgata-Udāna Dīpaṇī** however, the following is mentioned:

“having had the journey of thirty *yojanas* from Kapilavatthu to Devadaha, repaired by digging, enlarging and filling the potholes so as to make it agreeable...”

The two writings are different.

In this Chronicle of Buddhas, however, we follow the **Aṭṭhakathās** of the **Buddhavaṃsa** and **Jātaka** where the distance between the two kingdoms, Kapilavatthu and Devadaha, is not given; these Commentaries simply describe the mending and levelling of the road.

The vehicle taken by Queen Mahā-Māyā is said in this work to be a golden palanquin in accordance with the same Commentaries. (It should not be wondered how the palanquin was carried by a thousand men, because, as in the case of the statement that “the Bodhisatta was suckled by two hundred and forty wet-nurses”, it is possible that they carried it in turn, or, it was probable that the palanquin was pulled by them simultaneously with long ropes of cloth.)

In the first volume of the **Tathāgata Udāna Dīpaṇī**, etc., it is unusually and elaborately written as follows:

“The whole journey of thirty *yojanas* was mended, improved and decorated extensively and magnificently. The Queen rode the stately chariot drawn by eight horses of white lotus colour and of Valīhaka Sindhī breed. King Suddhodāna was together with her, for he was accompanying her up to the distance on half a *yojana*, there, he saw her off and turned back after she had given him respect and he had said words of encouragement. The white horses merrily drew the chariot thinking “this service of ours by taking Queen Mahā Māyā with the Bodhisatta in her womb will bring us merit leading to Nibbāna.”

The **Aṭṭhakathās** of the **Buddhavaṃsa** and **Jātaka** as well as the **Jinālaṅkāra Tīkā** do not make such an account. All they tell us is that the journey was made in a golden palanquin;

23. This subtitle too is not given in the original work. It is the translators'.

hence this treatise of the Chronicle is in accordance with the **Aṭṭhakathās** and **Tikas**.

The Sala Grove of Lumbinī

With reference to the Sala Grove of Lumbinī, two version: one from the **Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā** and the other from the **Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā**, have been reproduced in this work. The clause reading in the second passage, “hovering around and enjoying the nectar themselves and carrying it for others as well” in brackets, is in agreement with the Ngakhon Sayadaw's writing. It seems that the Commentary in the Sayadaw's possession contains “*anubhuttasañjārāhi*”. In the Commentaries, whether older or the Chaṭṭha-Saṅgāyanā edition, there is “*anubhuttapañjārāhi*”. Dictionaries give “cage” as the meaning of *pañjara* of the Commentaries. Hence “cage” is not agreeable.

Again, “*parabhata-madhukara-vadhūhi*” is translated “with female bees carrying (the nectar) for others as well.” Though “*parabhata*” has “cuckoo” as its meaning in the **Abhidhamma**, that meaning does not fit in here; it finds no place in this case. Therefore, the Ngakhon Sayadaw has appropriately said “carrying for others” in his translation.

When a rational interpretation is thought of, one recalls the distribution of work among bees: (1) there are (female) bees bringing all available kinds of nectar from the four directions, (2) female bees that are waiting at the hive and are able to turn the nectar of different tastes into honey of sweet taste.

Here in this **Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā**, it seems that the female (worker) bees are meant. Therefore, “*parabhata-madhukara-vadhūhi*” should be translated “Liquefying female bees able to make honey out of different kinds of nectar brought by other (nectar-carrying) bees”. And it will be acceptable only if its paraphrase be given as follows:

“Liquefying female bees that can make honey of sweet taste from various types of nectar brought by nectar-bearing bees after flying around and around over trees big and small.”

Ref: The Birth of The Bodhisatta²⁴

With reference to the birth of the Bodhisatta, the **Tathāgata Udāna Dīpanī** and other Myanmar treatises on **Buddhavaṃsa** say to the effect that “When the time for Queen Mahā-Māyā's delivery of the son was drawing very close, did her younger sister, Pajāpati Gotamī, extended help to her by supporting her on the left side? She gave birth by being aided by her attendants all around.” In the **Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā**, **Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā** and the **Jinalankāra Tika**, however, it is said that when the time for child-birth was nearer as she felt the force in the womb as the impetus for her delivery, those who were with her set up screens and stayed away from her. While they were thus staying aloof, the Queen gave birth to the Bodhisatta. This work follows the account given in the said Commentaries.

The statement that the two streams of water, warm and cold, enabled (the mother and the child) to adjust the temperature of body immediately after the birth is made according to the exposition in the **Mahāpadāna Sutta**, **Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā** and **Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā**.

What is particularly said in the **Sutta Mahāvagga Aṭṭhakathā** is this: “Of the two water streams, the cold one falls into the gold jar and the warm into the silver. These two streams, that had fallen from the sky, are mentioned to say that they were meant for the son and the mother, who were not dirtied by any impurity on earth, to drink and to play with exclusively of others. Apart from the warm and cold water from the sky, there was the water fetched by gold and silver pots, the water from *haṃsa* lakes, etc. Water for them was indeed unlimited, it was plentiful. This should particularly be noted.

Ref: The Story of Kāladevila The Hermit

(The name of this hermit is given as Devala in the Sinhalese version. In the Myanmar version it is shown as Devila). The account of Devila will be reproduced from the **Sutta Nipāta Aṭṭhakathā**, Volume II:

24. This subtitle is not given in the original work. It is the translators'.

THE ANUDĪPAṆĪ

This Devila the Hermit was the *purohita* (foremost adviser) of King Sīhahanu, King of Kapilavatthu and father of King Suddhodāna. Because of his dark complexion, the brahmin hermit was also called Asita. He was the King's instructor and counsellor who served King Sīhahanu by giving him advice so as to enable him to carry all undertakings through, be they political, administrative or otherwise that confronted him.

During the reign of King Sīhahanu, he was tutor and guardian to Prince Suddhodāna who was simply, a crown prince and unconsecrated as yet. Devila taught him various royal manners and palace customs and educated him in statecraft and trained him in all skills.

When Prince Suddhodāna ascended the throne and was consecrated after King Sīhahanu, it was also the former royal teacher who again became advisor to King Suddhodāna.

After his ascension to the throne and his consecration, King Suddhodāna did not show profound respect to his teacher as he had done when he was a young prince. During court meetings, he merely raised his joined hands in adoration, according to the tradition of consecrated Sakyan kings.

As he no longer received the King's special reverence as before, his birth as a brahmin and his pride as a teacher generated displeasure and dissatisfaction. Unhappy and disgusted with his obligations to attend the palace, he sought the King's permission to become an ascetic.

Knowing his teacher's firm decision, Suddhodāna requested: "You may become an ascetic. But after becoming an ascetic, please do not go far away. Kindly stay ever in my garden for my convenience in seeing you." After giving his consent, saying: "Very well, let it be so," and having made himself an ascetic and receiving the King's favourable treatment, he stayed in the royal garden. Repeatedly engaging himself in meditation on *kaṣiṇa* device for mental concentration, he gained the five mundane psychic powers. After his acquisition of these powers, he usually had his meal each day at King Suddhodāna's palace, and visited the Himalaya, Catu-Mahārājā abode, Tāvātimsa abode, and other places, where he spent his daytime.

All this is about Kāladevila the Hermit otherwise named Asita.

Ref: A Brief History of The Royal Lineage of The Bodhisatta

In connection with the Bodhisatta's investigation into his family (*kula olokana*), a history of Sakyan kings should be noted in brief as follows. Such a note means recognition of the attribute of the Bodhisatta's high birth (*jātimahatta-guṇa*).

In the first intermediate (*antara*) period of incalculably long aeon of evolution (*vivaṭṭatthāyī asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*), the first king of the people, in the beginning of the world, was our Bodhisatta. He was originally named Manu.

The Bodhisatta Manu was more handsome, more pleasant to look at, more respectable, glorious and virtuous than other inhabitants of the world of the earliest age.

In that primeval age, people were of very pure morality at first. Later on, there appeared people who committed crimes, such as theft, etc. In order to be able to live free from these dangers and in peace, other earliest men of the world discussed among themselves and decided unanimously to elect someone who would govern them justly.

They also agreed that Bodhisatta Manu was the best to govern, for he was endowed with all the required qualifications. Then they approached him and made a request that he be their righteous ruler.

As Manu fulfilled his administrative duties, the people who were under his administration honoured him by paying their taxes, a kind of fee for his ruling performance, which amounted to one tenth of their crops.

The Acquisition of Three Epithets

The people unanimously recognized the Bodhisatta, showing no objection at all, as one who would govern them with righteousness, for which honour in the form of taxes was due. Therefore, he acquired the epithet **Mahāsammata**.

He saw to it that there were no disputes, quarrels, etc. over ownership of farmlands. (If there be any) the noble Manu had the power to decide and pass his judgement. This earned him the epithet **Khattiya**.

As he endeared himself to the people by observing upright kingly duties towards them, he won the third: **Rājā**.

In this *bhadda-kappa*, it was Bodhisatta Manu who was the first among monarchs to gain these three titles: *Mahāsammata*, *Khattiya* and *Rājā*.

As the sun possesses a thousand rays and gives beings light, sight and forms, so Bodhisatta Manu, like the eye of these primeval people and endowed with of many noble attributes, came out shiningly, as if he were their second sun, and was also designated by lineage *Ādiccavaṃsa* (Descendant of the Sun).

(Herein, with reference to the *Mahāsammata* of the primeval time, and also with reference to the present and fourth *antara-kappa* of the sixty-four divisions of *Vivattatthāyī* state of *asaṅkheyya* aeons, forming one-fourth of this *bhadda-kappa*, learned authors write differently. Thus, in “The Glass Palace Chronicle” compiled by well-versed monks and ministers who met and discussed for three years in the “Glass Palace” during the reign of King Bagyidaw²⁵, the fourth founder of the city of Ratanapura, and in the **Kappa Vinicchaya Pāṭha Nissaya**, written in settlement of controversies, by the Mohtā Thathanabaing Sayadaw, entitled “Sujātābhisirīdhajadhipatipavara Mahādhamma-Rajādhirājaguru”, at the request of King Mindon²⁶, the Convenor of the Fifth Council, it has been decided, giving ample strong evidence from the Texts, Commentaries and Sub-Commentaries, that there was only one Bodhisatta Mahāsammata and that the present *Antara-kappa* is the fourth one.

(Particularly in the **Kappavinicchaya** there are special sections (*visesa kaṇḍa*) which systematically contain questions and answers (*codanā* and *sodanā*) giving decisions on such topics of controversies as the eleven *antara-kappas*, eleven *Mahāsammatas*, the twelfth *antara-kappa*, the nineteenth *antara-kappa*, and the rest with discussions so elaborate and with evidence so strong that doubtful persons, both monks and laymen, are likely to become free of doubts.

(In enumerating the kings in succession (*rājakkama*) such as Mahāsammata, etc. some commentaries and treatises are slightly different: these are the Commentary on the Ambaṭṭha Sutta of the **Sutta Silakkhandha Vagga** and its new **Tika**, the Commentary on them Cetiya Jātaka of the **Aṭṭhaka Nipāta** the Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā, the **Mahāvaṃsa**, **Dīpavaṃsa**, and **Rājavaṃsas**. What is shown below is based chiefly on the **Mahāvaṃsa** and the **Mahāsutakārī Maghadeva Laṅkā**.

- (1) First, Manu the Mahāsammata,
- (2) his son King Roca,
- (3) his son King Vara-roca,
- (4) his son King Kalyāna,
- (5) his son King Vara-Kalyāna,
- (6) his son King Upasatha,
- (7) his son King Mandhātu (Bodhisatta),
- (8) his son King Vara,
- (9) his son King Upavara,
- (10) his son King Cetiya,
- (11) his son King Mucala,

25. He reigned from 1819 to 1839.

26. Bagyidaw's younger nephew and Tharrawaddy's younger son, the second last king of the Konbaung Dynasty, his reigning years being 1853-78.

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

- (12) his son King Mahāmucala,
- (13) his son King Mucalinda,
- (14) his son King Sāgara,
- (15) his son King Sāgara-deva,
- (16) his son King Bharata,
- (17) his son King Aṅgira,
- (18) his son King Ruci,
- (19) his son King Suruci (also called Mahāruci),
- (20) his son King Patāpa,
- (21) his son King Mahāpatāpa,
- (22) his son King Panāda,
- (23) his son King Mahāpanāda,
- (24) his son King Sudassana,
- (25) his son King Mahāsudassana,
- (26) his son King Neru,
- (27) his son King Mahā Neru, and
- (28) his son King Accima

- (a) These twenty-eight kings were of long lives of *asaṅkhyeyya* years. The twenty-seven kings after Mahāsammata were his descendants. Some of these twenty-eight kings reigned in Kusavatī City, others in Rājagaha and still others in Mithilā.
- (b) King Accima, son of the last of the twenty-eight kings, founded Kusavatī City again and reigned there; his descendants were exactly one hundred. (The **Dīpavaṃsa** says that they lived in Kapilavatthu.)

[Then the author gives an extract from the **Mahā Suta-kārī Māgha-Deva Laṅkā** enumerating the kings listed in (a) and (b) and this makes one hundred and twenty-eight kings.]

- (c) Of the hundred kings descended from King Accima, the last was named King Arindama. His son founded the city of Ayujjhapura and reigned. He and his descendants in that city numbered fifty-six.
- (d) The last of these fifty-six kings was named Duppasaha. His son founded Bārāṇasī and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were sixty.
- (e) The last of these sixty kings was named Ajita. His son founded Kambala. He and his descendants in that city were eighty-four thousand.
- (f) The last of these eighty-four thousand kings was named Brahmadatta. His son founded Hatthipura and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were thirty-six.
- [Here comes another extract from the same Laṅkā that enumerates the kings in (c), (d), (e), and (f) amounting to 84,152.]
- (g) The last of these thirty-six kings was named Kambalavaṃsa. He founded Ekacakku and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were thirty-two.
- (h) The last of these thirty-two kings was named Purindeva (Surindeva or Munindeva in other versions). His son founded Vajiramutti and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were twenty-eight.
- (i) The last of these twenty-eight kings was named Sādhina. His son founded Mathura and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were twenty-two.
- (j) The last of these twenty-two kings was named Dhammagutta. His son founded Ariṭṭhapura and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were eighteen.
- (k) The last of these eighteen kings was named Sippi. His son founded Indapattha-nagara

and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were twenty-two.

[Another extract comes here from the same *Laṅkā* combining the paragraphs (g) to (k) and making one hundred and seventeen kings in all.]

- (l) The last of these one hundred and seventeen kings was named Brahma Deva. His son also reigned in Ekacakkhu. He and his descendants in that city were fifteen.
- (m) The last of these fifteen kings was named Baladatta. His son founded Kosambī and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were fourteen.
- (n) The last of these fourteen kings was named Hatthi-Deva. His son founded Kannagocchi and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were nine.
- (o) The last of these nine kings was named Nara-Deva. His son founded Rocana and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were seven.
- (p) The last of these seven kings was named Mahinda. His son founded Campā and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were twelve.

[Another extract is taken from the *Laṅkā* combining the above five paragraphs and giving the total number of kings which is fifty-seven.]

- (q) The last of these fifty-seven kings mentioned in the above five paragraphs was named Nāga-deva. His son founded Mithilā and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were twenty-five.
- (r) The last of these twenty-five kings was named Samuddadatta. His son reigned back in Rājagaha. He and his descendants in that city were twenty-five.
- (s) The last of these twenty-five kings was named Tidhaṅkara. His son founded Takkasila and reigned; he and his descendants in that city were twelve.
- (t) The last of these twelve kings was named Tālissara. His son founded Kusināra and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were also twelve.
- (u) The last of these twelve kings was named Purinda. His son founded Tāmalitthiya and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were twelve.

[Another extract from the same *Laṅkā* counting up the kings in the above five paragraphs and gives eighty-three as the total number of kings thereof.]

- (v) Of these eighty-three kings in the above five paragraphs, the last was named Sāgara-Deva. His son was Māgha-Deva (Magghadeva). He and his descendants reigned in Mithilā until their number became eighty-four thousand.
- (w) The last of these eighty-four thousand kings was named Nimi, the Bodhisatta. His son was named Kaḷārajanaka, whose son was named Samaṅkara, whose son was named Asoca (or Asoka). Their descendants totalling 84,003 again founded Bārāṇasī and reigned there.
- (x) The last of these 84,003 kings was named Sīhappati.

- (1) King Sīhappati's son was King Vijitasena,
- (2) Vijitasena's son was King Dhammasena,
- (3) Dhammasena's son was King Nāgasena,
- (4) Nāgasena's son was King Samiddha,
- (5) Samiddha's son was King Disampati,
- (6) Disampati's son was King Reṇu,
- (7) Reṇu's son was King Kusa,
- (8) Kusa's son was King Mahākusa,
- (9) Mahākusa's son was King Navaraṭṭha,
- (10) Navaraṭṭha's son was King Dasaraṭṭha,
- (11) Dasaraṭṭha's son was King Rāma,

THE ANUDĪPAṆĪ

- (12) Rāma's son was King Vilāraṭṭha,
- (13) Vilāraṭṭha's son was King Cittaraṃsi,
- (14) Cittaraṃsi's son was King Ambaraṃsi,
- (15) Ambaraṃsi's son was King Sujātā, and
- (16) Sujātā's son was King Okkāka.

These sixteen kings continued to reign in Bārāṇasī.

There were 252,556 descendants from Mahāsammata, the Bodhisatta of the earliest aeon, down to King Okkāka.

[The author here gives the final extract from the **Māgha-Deva Laṅkā**, which sums up the 84,003 kings contained in (w), the sixteen kings contained in (x) and those counted elsewhere, and arrives at the total number of 252,556 beginning with the Mahāsammata and ending with King Okkāka].

(Herein, since the exposition of the Ambaṭṭha Sutta in the **Sīlakkandha Atthakathā** and that of the Muni Sutta in the **Sutta Nipāta Atthakathā** state that “after the eighty-four thousand kings belonging to the lineage of Māgha-Deva, there occurred three successive rulers, all bearing the name Okkāka” and that “the third Okkāka had five queens, each with five hundred lady attendants”, it should be taken that the Sakyan princes were the descendants of Okkāka III, and that the last of the 252,556 kings was this very person, Okkāka III.)

The Story of King Okkāka

The wives of King Okkāka, the last of the 252,556 kings, were five: Hatthā, Cittā, Jantu, Jālīnī, and Visākhā. Each of them had five hundred ladies-in-waiting.

(The King was called Okkāka because when he spoke there emanated from his mouth the light as if from a shooting star, so explains the exposition of the Ambaṭṭha Sutta. It is note-worthy that in Myanmar history as well, such remarkable men as King Kyansittha, King Manūhā (of Thaton) emitted from their mouths the brilliant light of insignia or of a shooting star or some other particular rays of light.

(It should not be taken for certain that King Okkāka's city was Bārāṇasī. As the commentary on the Ambaṭṭha Sutta again says that his daughter Princess Piyā and King Rāma of Bārāṇasī joined in marriage, Okkāka's (the third Okkāka's) could be any city but Bārāṇasī).

Of the five queens, the eldest one, Hatthā, gave birth to five sons namely, Ukkāmukha, Karakaṇḍu, Hatthinika, Sinisūra and five daughters, namely, Piyā, Suppiyā, Ānanda, Vijitā, Vijitasenā.

When Queen Hatthā died after giving birth to her children, King Okkāka III made a young, pleasant princess of great beauty his chief queen: a son named Jantu was born of her. On the fifth day after his birth, he was dressed in pretty ornaments and was shown to the King. The King was so delighted that he granted a boon to the queen, saying: “Take anything you like!”

After discussing with her relatives, the Queen asked that the little son Jantu be made king. The King refused to comply and scolded her: “You wicked one, down with you! You just want harm to my sons!” On every favourable occasion the Queen tried to please the King and said: “Your Majesty, a monarch should not turn what he has said (a promise) into a lie. You should keep your word.” So saying she repeatedly demanded that kingship be bestowed upon her son. The King was then compelled to summon his older sons, Ukkāmukha and others and said with great sorrow:

“Dear sons, I happened to have given Jantu's mother a boon on seeing your little brother. Now Jantu's mother has a burning desire to have her son made heir to the throne. Leaving aside my state elephant, state horse, and state chariot, take as many elephants, horses and chariots as you want and go and stay away from this city until I die. Come back after my death and take over the kingdom.”

After saying thus, the King sent his sons away together with eight ministers.

Ukkāmukha and other elder brothers felt painful and wept bitterly. They also did obeisance to their royal father and said: “Dear father, please forgive our faults if any.” They also asked court ladies for forgiveness. The five sisters requested the King, saying: “Dear father, let us go along with our brothers,” and together they went out of the city. They were taken along the journey by their brothers who, being accompanied by the eight ministers and troops of fourfold army²⁷ departed from the city. A large number of men followed the princes, thinking: “These senior royal sons will definitely come back and reign on the death of their father. We shall start attending upon them even now.”

The size of the following grew from one *yojana* on the first day to two *yojanas* on the second day, and three *yojanas* on the third. This caused them to discuss among themselves: “The strength of our troops is so great. If we only wish to fight and occupy the countries around here with such power, no kings or states would dare to put up resistance. But what is the use of taking other kingdoms by force and through violence. There is indeed no profit at all! This Jambudīpa is huge and immense. We shall find a new city in a free forest region.” After agreeing thus, they all headed for the Himalaya and searched for a site to build a city.

The Founding of Kapilavatthu

At that time, our future Buddha was a wealthy brahmin, born of a family which possessed highly substantial riches and named Kapila. Renouncing his wealth, he went forth as an ascetic and was staying in a leaf-hut that he built near a lake of clear waters, in a teak forest by the side of a Himalayan mountain.

Learned in the science of earth (the study of signs of the soil), called Bhāmijāla, Kapila the Hermit and future Buddha knew the advantages and disadvantages that were in store throughout the region of eighty cubits underground and eighty cubits aboveground. Around the site on which Kapila's leaf-hut was built, the grass, trees and bushes grew, turning in the right direction, with their trunk-like sprouts stemmed from them facing to the east. Besides, when beasts of prey, such as lions and tigers, gave chase to deer and pigs which were their food, or when snakes and cats gave chase to frogs and rats respectively and reached that spot, they could not pursue and catch, instead they all turned back running away, for they were threatened and shown hostility by their own respective preys. Seeing all this, Kapila came to note that “This is the best of all sites where enemies are conquered.”

When the princes led by Ukkāmukha was searching for a suitable site for their proposed city, they came to the hermit's leaf-hut. Asked by the hermit about their purpose, they told him of their plan. Knowing of the matter, Kapila the Hermit and future Buddha took pity on them and said:

“Princes, the city founded on this site of my hermitage would be the best of all cities throughout Jambudīpa. Among men born in this city, one will emerge able enough to overwhelm all others, numbering even hundreds or thousands. Therefore, construct a new city on this land of my hermitage. Build a palace on this spot of my residence. If I were to tell you of its pre-eminence, even a low-born son deriving support from this land will become somebody praised for his power of a Universal Monarch.”

When the princes asked: “Venerable Hermit, is not this place still used and occupied by you?” Kapila replied: “Do not bother yourselves, thinking that this place is still in use by me. Build a hermitage for me somewhere on an outlying spot, and set up a city with your residences here as I have pointed out to you. And name the city Kapilavatthu.”

As has been directed by Kapila the Hermit, the four princes headed by Ukkāmukha, and their ministers and troops established a city together with royal palaces and mansions; they also named the city Kapilavatthu and settled there.

27. An army consisting of four divisions: elephants, chariots, horses and foot soldiers.

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

The Beginning of The Sakyas

While they were thus settling at Kapilavatthu, the princes grew old enough to get married. Then the ministers deliberated among themselves saying: “Sirs, these princes have come of age. If they were near their father King Okkāka III, he would have made these princes and princesses marry. Now the responsibility has come upon us.” After their deliberations they consulted the princes.

The princes said: “O ministers, there are no princesses here who are equal to us by birth. Nor are there princes of matching class for our sisters. If those of unequal birth marry one another, their offsprings will become impure either from their paternal side or from their maternal side. This will thus bring them a destructive mixture of castes (*jāṭisambheda*). Accordingly, let us put the eldest sister of us, nine children, in the place of our mother and let the remaining ones of us, four brothers and four sisters, join in marriage so as to avoid such corruption of lineage.” Thus agreeing among themselves they selected their eldest sister Princess Piyā to be their mother and married their sisters, making four pairs of husband and wife lest their birth should get impure.

In course of time, each of the four couples of Okkāka’s sons and daughters thrived with issue. When the King heard of the founding of Kapilavatthu by his children, led by Prince Ukkamukha, of their marriages not with members of a different family but among themselves and of the prosperity of these brother-and-sister couples born of same parents, the King was so delighted that he spoke out in praise of his children in the midst of his ministers and others:

“*Sakyā vata bho kumārā*”

Able indeed are my sons and daughters, O men!

“*Paramā sakyā vata bho kumārā*”

Lofty and able indeed are my sons and daughters.

As the king used the expression ‘*sakyā vata* — able indeed’, in praising them, it was after this very expression *sakyā* meaning ‘able’ that the name *Sakyā*, or *Sākiya* was given to the descendants of the brothers and sisters led by Ukkamukha and it has come to be known well.

The Founding of Koliya

At one time thereafter, the eldest sister, who was most senior to the brother and sister householders, was afflicted with leprosy. There appeared on her body some boils like the flowers of *sālimuggala* or *parijāta*.

Thereupon the princely brothers considered and discussed among themselves thus: “If we were to stay and eat with our sister, who has been stricken with such a horrible skin disease, we would be infected too.” One day, they pretended to go for amusement in the garden taking their eldest sister Piyā in a chariot. When they came to a forest glade, they had a square ditch dug huge enough to move therein indifferent postures of lying, sitting, standing and walking. In the underground chamber of the ditch, they stored all kinds of food and drink and placed their sister in it. They also covered the square ditch with wooden planks to protect her from dangers and made grooves along the edges of the planks which served as a roof covered with earth, before they went home to Kapilavatthu.

At about the same time, the King of Bārāṇasī, named Rāma, was suffering from leprosy too and his female attendants and other courtiers and retinue became disgusted and horrified. He was, therefore, alarmed and entered a forest after handing over his kingdom to his eldest son. He made a shelter of leaves for himself. Because of his eating fruit and roots, his skin disease soon vanished and he assumed golden complexion. While roaming from place to place, he came across a tree with a gigantic trunk with a hollow in it. He created a large room, sixteen cubits in size, in that tree. He had the main door for entrance, windows and a ladder fixed. It was like a small palace chamber where he had already lived.

At night, Rāma made a fire in a huge pan and noted the cries of deer, boars and the like by their direction before he slept. In the morning, he went in that direction to find pieces of the flesh of deer, boars, etc. They were leftovers from the food of lions, leopards, tigers and so on.

He simply collected and cooked them for his food and lived in this manner.

One day, a tiger, getting the odour of the princess's body that came out from her underground dwelling, which was not far from Rāma's place, scratched the wooden roof and tried to burst open it. The princess was so frightened that she screamed aloud. It was nearing daybreak and Rāma was then sitting after making a fire in the pan. On hearing the scream and knowing that "this indeed is a women's", he rushed to the ditch as the day broke and asked: "Who is it that is living in this underground dwelling?" and when he heard the reply: "I am a woman," he asked further: "What is your lineage?" "Sir, I am a daughter of King Okkāka." "Come out," said the King. "Sir, I am not able to come out." "Why?" "Sir, I have leprosy." The King then asked all about the matter and knowing that the princess did not come out because she was proud of her aristocratic birth, the King let her know of his being a potentate himself by saying: "I too belong to the ruling class." He took out the princess from the underground chamber by means of a ladder and brought her to his place. He gave her the same medicinal drugs that he had taken himself. The princess took them and her affliction abated. She became golden in complexion. By mutual consent, the two lived together as husband and wife.

In due course the King's consort, Piyā, gave birth sixteen times to twin sons and thus had thirty-two boys in all. When they grew up, their father King Rāma sent them away for princely education.

One day, a hunter from the King's native Bārāṇasī, while coming to that forest near the Himalaya in search of treasures, encountered Rāma. Recognizing him, the hunter said: "Lord, I know you very well." The King, therefore, enquired all about his kingdom and while he was doing so, the thirty-two sons returned. Seeing the boys, the hunter asked: "Great King, who are these boys?" "They are my sons," said the King. After asking a further question, he came to know of their maternal relatives and thought: "I have now got some information to give the ruler of Bārāṇasī as my gift." So thinking, he returned to the city and told the whole story.

The present King of Bārāṇasī, who was Rāma's own son, was delighted and in order to bring back his father, visited him, accompanied by his fourfold army. He saluted his father very respectfully and made a request: "Dear father, kindly accept kingship of Bārāṇasī." "Dear son," replied Rāma, "I have no more desire to become King of Bārāṇasī. I will not return to the city. Instead, remove this tree and build residences and a new city for me here, at this very place of the great *kola* tree." At his command, his son, King of Bārāṇasī founded the new city.

As the new city was founded after removing the *kola* tree on his father's site, it was named *Koliya*. Since it was founded on the route frequented by tigers, it was also called *Vyagghapajja*. Having thus given the city both names, the son, King of Bārāṇasī, paid respect to his father, King Rāma and returned home.

As King Rāma and his consort Piyā were residing in the new city of Koliya, Piyā one day told his sons who had now attained manhood:

"Dear sons, your uncles, Sakyan princes, were reigning in the city of Kapilavatthu.

The daughters of your uncles dressed themselves and had their hair-dos in this manner; their gait and deportment is like this. When they approach bathing places to bathe, catch hold of the princess you like and bring them over here."

In accordance with the mother's instructions, the Princes went to the bathing places of the daughters of their uncles, Sakyan princes, at Kapilavatthu and after observing them and choosing from among them, each brought a princess of his liking, after identifying himself and taking her at the moment she let her hair to dry.

On hearing the matter, the Sakyan princes said among themselves: "Dear folks, let it be so. These Koliya Princes are scions of our elder sister, thus they are our nephews, our

close relatives.” So saying thus they did not blame them; as they were pleased, they just kept silent.

From the marriages between the Sakkas and the Kalians, the lineage came down without any break to the lifetime of the Buddha.

In this way, the growth of the Sakyan descendants took place in purity and worthiness, as they mixed with their own relatives. Since there was no interruption from the time of King Okkāka, the founding head of the Sakyans, down to the time of Prince Siddhattha, the future Buddha, they went down in history with good reputation as “*Asambhinna-Khattiya* (unbroken aristocratic)” lineage.

The Founding of Devadaha

The Sakyan princes living in Kapilavatthu used to go to a big, pleasant and beautiful lake in order to amuse themselves in water. Because it was the lake of royal sports, it came to be known as Devadaha (‘*Deva*’ implying Sakyan princes as recognized lords and ‘*daha*’ meaning a lake for watery games).

Later on, those Sakyan princes, who came to the lake for amusements, did not return to Kapilavatthu but built royal lodges near the lake. In due course, the area prospered and became a city by itself, earning the name Devadaha after the lake.

The Sakyans residing in that city were also named Devadaha Sakyans after the city.

(Based on the exposition of the Devadaha Sutta, **Uparipannāsa Aṭṭhakathā**).

The Descendants of Ukkāmukha The Sakyan King

The rulers belonging to Kapilavatthu are as follows:

- (1) Its founder, King Ukkāmukha (when the King spoke a brilliant light. sign of authority, came out from his mouth like his father King Okkāka),
- (2) his son King Nipuna,
- (3) his son King Candimā,
- (4) his son King Candamukha,
- (5) his son King Sivi,
- (6) his son King Siñjaya,
- (7) his son King Vessantara, the Bodhisatta,
- (8) his son King Jāli.
- (9) his son King Sīhavaṇa,
- (10) his son King Sihassara.

These ten Sakyan kings and King Sihassara's descendants down to Jeyyasena, eighty-two thousand in all, ruled successively in Kapilavatthu of the Sakyan Kingdom.

The last of these eighty-two thousand and ten Kings, Jeyyasena, had a son and daughter, Sīhahanu and Yasodharā respectively.

At that time King Ukkāsakka and Queen Yasavatī of Devadaha (also) had a son and daughter, Añjana and Kañcana respectively.

From the marriage of Prince Sīhahanu, son of King Jeyyasena of Kapilavatthu, and Princess Kañcana, daughter of Ukkāsakka of Devadaha, were five sons and two daughters, totalling seven children were born. The five sons were (1) Suddhodāna, (2) Amitodana, (3) Dhotodana, (4) Sakkodana, (5) Sukkodana (Mention is made according to the exposition of Sammāparibbājaniya Sutta, **Suttanipāṭa Aṭṭhakathā**, Vol. 2.) The two daughters were (1) Princess Amita and (2) Princess Pālita.

From the marriage of Prince Añjana, son of King Ukkāsakka of Devadaha, and Princess Yasodharā, daughter of King Jeyyasena of Kapilavatthu, were two sons and two daughters, totalling four children. (Herein, the name of King Añjana is also mentioned as Mahā Suppabuddha.) The two sons were Prince Suppabuddha and Prince Dandapāni. The

daughters were (1) Siri Mahā Māyā and (2) Princess Pajāpati Gotamī.

Prince Suddhodāna, son of Sihahanu, was married to the two daughters of King Añjana: Princess Siri Mahā Māyā and Princess Pajāpati Gotamī. The elder sister, Siri Mahā Māyā, gave birth to Prince Siddhattha and the younger sister, Pajāpati Gotamī, gave birth to Princess Rūpanadā and Prince Nanda.

On the authority of this brief statement, there were ten kings descended from King Ukkāmukha, founder of Kapilavatthu.

There were eighty-two thousand kings descended from King Sīnassara, down to Jeyyasena.

Then came King Jeyyasena's son King Sihahanu.

(1) his son King Suddhodāna, and

(2) his son Prince Siddhattha, the future Buddha.

Summing up all these three groups, there were 82,013 rulers, all being *asabhinna* Sakyan Kings and reigning in the city of Kapilavatthu. (This is a condensation of the series of kings in Kapilavatthu.)

If the number 82,013 of this line from King Ukkāmukha to Prince Siddhattha the Bodhisatta is added to the aforesaid number 252,556 of the rulers from the primeval Mahāsammata to Okkāka, the result will be 334,569.

[Here the author gives an extract from the **Mahā Sutamāyā Māgha-Deva Laṅkā** Second Part (1) Section on history, vv.32-33.]

From the marriage of Prince Suppabuddha, son of King Añjana, and Princess Amittā, daughter of King Sihahanu, were born Princess Bhadda Kañcanā or Yasodharā and Prince Devadatta.

From the marriage of Prince Siddhattha, the future Buddha, son of King Suddhodāna of Kapilavatthu and Queen Siri Mahā Māyā, and Princess Bhadda-Kañcanā or Yasodharā, daughter of King Suppabuddha of Devadaha and Queen Amitta, was born Prince Rāhula.

(Prince Siddhattha, the future Buddha, had only one son, Prince Rāhula. In the minor Chronicles there is some fabrication that Siddhattha's lesser wives gave birth to other sons. But there is no trace of such a statement in all other works of Buddhist-literature. Let us all, therefore, hold that there was only one son and that one son was none other than Rāhula.)

The Abolishing of The Era by King Añjana, Grandfather of The Buddha

King Añjana of Devadaha, the Buddha's grandfather (and Siri Mahā Māyā's father) abolished Goza Era, which was current in his time. He abrogated 8649 years, the new moon, Saturday, of the month of Phagguna (February-March) inclusive, (i.e. as required by astrology he did away with that era); and for its replacement he introduced another era commencing from the first waxing moon, Sunday, of the month of Citta (March-April), (He founded a new era to be used from that time onwards.) That era is referred to as Mahā Era in later times.

Such an account of abrogation of an era is a worldly tradition preserved in historical works. There is neither occurrence of repelling of an era nor use of such a term as *Sakkarāj* and such an expression as *Koza* or (*ioza*) in the books approved in Buddhist Councils. All this is stated only in secular treatises of astrology and history. These ways of calculation and expression contained in those mundane astrological and historical works have been borrowed by successive learned scholars throughout the Bagan Period, Pinya Period, and so on in Myanmar for the benefit of convenience in recording the number of years and the date of an event.

Orthography of Sakkarāj, Sakarāj and Koza, Goza

Much has been written about the orthography of Sakkarāj, Sakarāj and Koza, Goza by Monywa Zetawun Sayadaw in his **Samanta-cakkhu Dīpanī** Vol. 2. The Sayadaw's opinion in this connection is seen as follows:

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

Many ways of writing these terms have been met with. They are useful only for recording and calculating years. Any incorrect spelling in no way affect supramundane matters; any correct spelling would not help gain release from *samsāra* as it is no sense object in acquiring insight and right view. For these reasons, it is rational to hold that each form of orthography has its own merit.

Such a decisive statement is very satisfactory.

In short, **Sakkarāj** is so called because, as a system of chronological notation to be reckoned from a certain date, it is founded by kings who are able to protect the people; **Sakarāj** is so called because such a founding was accomplished by a *Saka* king. *Koza* or *Goza* signifies a period of time marked by the movements of the sun and the moon. (*Sakkarāj* comes from *Sakkaraj*, ‘*sakka*’ meaning ‘able’ and ‘*rājā*’, ‘king’; hence *Sakkarāj*, an era founded by a king who is able to give protection to his subjects. *Sakarāj* derives from *Sakarājā*, ‘*Saka*’ being the name of a people and ‘*rājā*’, ‘king’; hence *Sakarājā* an era introduced by a *Saka* king. As for *Koza* and *Goza*, ‘*ko*’ is a term for the sun and ‘*go*’ a word for both the sun and the moon; ‘*za*’ is used in the sense of ‘going about’. The time spent in making a complete round of the Zodiac by the sun and the moon is called a year of *Koza* or *Goza*. It is also written as *Gocar*.)

The Terms Kali-yug and Sakkarāj

In the expression saying “such and such year *Kali-yug Sakkarāj*” by putting *Kali-yug* as an adjective before *Sakkarāj*, *Kali-yug* and *Sakkarāj* are different in meaning. The expression means “the year of a certain era, in the length of time began with *Kali-yug*.” This will be explained briefly:

Of the pair of evolution and devolution aeons called *Antara-kappa*, an evolution aeon consists of four ages: *Kata-yuga*, *Treta-yuga*, *Dvāpara-yuga* and *Kali-yuga*. There are waxing and waning periods of these four *yugas*. When these periods complete sixty times, an evolution aeon comes to an end. The same is true of a devolving aeon, say mundane treatises. Of the four *yugas*, the first one, *Kata-yuga*, has 1,728,000 years. Then comes *Treta-yuga* which has 1,296,000 years. It is followed by *Dvāpara-yuga* of 864,000 years. Finally follows *Kali-yuga* of 432,000 years. (Note that, if the years of the *Kali-yuga* are double, the result is the years of the *Dvāpara-yuga*; if tripled, the years of the *Treta-yuga*; if quadrupled, the years of the *Kata-yuga*.) The total number of these four *yugas* is 4,320,000.

During the *Kata-yuga* years, all four quarters of beings (the whole lot of people) observe righteousness as though living things stand on four legs. During the *Treta-yuga*, three quarters of them observe righteousness as though they stand on three legs, one quarter does not. During the *Dvāpara-yuga* (one half or) two quarters do so and (the other half or) the other two quarters do not. During the *Kali-yuga* only one quarter does so and three quarters do not.

Our Teacher, Gotama the Buddha, rose in the 2,570th years of *Kali-yuga*, states Gotama Purāṇa. In the first Kaṇḍa (Chapter) it says:

*Kalerābbhato suñña satta pañcaduke gate
sāmvacchare babhuva ve Dhammavido Gotamabhidho.*

Two thousand five hundred and seventy years after the commencement of
Kali-yuga, there appeared Gotama who comprehended the Dhamma.

If one desires to know the present *sāsana* year and the present *Kali-yuga*, take the present year (Myanmar Era) and add 1,182 years; the answer is the year of the past *Sāsana* Era.

To get the *Kali-yuga* year take the present *sāsana* year and add 2,570; the total is the present *Kali-yuga* year.

In short, when one writes “in the year so and so *Kali-yuga Sakkarāj*”, one's idea is the year so and so of *Sakkarāj* in the age of *Kali-yuga*. The *Kali-yuga* lasts 432,000 years as has been said before. *Sakkarāj* is the calculation of years as determined by royal

promulgation.

(Again, an extract is given by the author from the **Mahāsula Kārī Maghā Deva Laṅkā** concerning the four *yugas* and the rise of the Buddha in the year 2,570 of *Kali-yuga*.)

Ref: 28. The Mark of The Voice having Eight Qualities as A Brahmā

The Sweetness of The Voice of The Karavika Bird and The Story of Asandhimittā

King Dhammāsoka's wife, Asandhimittā, asked the Sangha (with reference to the sweetness of the Buddha's voice): "Is there any one in this world whose voice is similar to the Buddha's?" The answer given by the Sangha was: "There is the voice of a *karavika* bird which is like the Buddha's." Again, the Queen asked: "Where do these birds live?" The Sangha replied: "They live in the Himavanta."

The Queen then said to King Asoka: "I would like to see a *karavika* bird, Lord." The King sent a golden cage with the command: "A *karavika* bird shall come in to this cage!" The cage flew and stopped before a *karavika* bird. Considering: "This cage came with the command of the King, I am not in a position to remain here against the King's command," the bird entered the cage, which flew back and stood in the King's presence.

Although they now had the bird, nobody was able to make it cry. The King asked: "O men, how could we make it cry?" The ministers replied: "These *karavika* birds cry, Great King, when they see their fellow birds." Asoka accordingly had mirrors placed around the bird.

When the bird saw its own image in the mirrors, thinking that his relations had come, it uttered a sweet cry slowly and pleasantly like the music note that came out from a ruby flute. As if intoxicated by the *karavika* bird-king's voice, Queen Asandhimitta and the citizens of Pāṭaliputta were wildly pleased. They revelled as though they were to start dancing.

Then the Queen reflected: "Even the voice of this *karavika* bird, which is just an animal, is so sweet. What would be the voice of the Buddha, highest in glory, like? There could have been no limit to its sweetness!"

Visualizing the Buddha, the Queen became filled with joy (*pīti*). Without giving up that joy, she developed Vipassanā Insight, stage by stage, and together with her seven hundred ladies-in-waiting, she attained *soṭāpatti* fruition.

Ref: Explanations of The Thirty-two Major Marks, Chapter One

Causal Deeds for The Thirty-two Marks

Since it is said in the **Jinālaṅkāra Tīkā** that only the explanation that deals with the four points, namely, (1) *kamma*, (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*, (3) *lakḥaṇa*, and (4) *lakḥaṇāṇisamsa*, of each of the aforesaid thirty-two marks of a Great Man is a well-defined one, the meaning of each of these four points will be briefly given first.

Of these four points, (1) *kamma* means the element of meritorious deed done in the past with an intention to attain of Buddhahood, bringing about the major mark concerned; (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka* means the power or ability of the mark that appears in accordance with the *kamma*; (3) *lakḥaṇa* means any of the thirty-two major marks, such as level soles, the hundred and eight sole-figures, etc. acquired in the present life on account of the relevant past meritorious deeds; (4) *lakḥaṇāṇisamsa* means the remote or subsequent effect of the past meritorious deeds which cause the appearance of the mark.

(For example, the Bodhisatta accumulates merit during his former lives, so firmly and resolutely that nobody else can check and destroy them. On account of that accumulation of merit, he enjoys divine bliss which excel others in the ten respects. When he is reborn as a human being, he wins the mark of his level feet resembling golden footwear. As he has won that mark, he is able to stand up and walk on steadfastly; nobody else, whether a human or a deva or Brahmā, can move him or make him unsteady. The merits also give him the subsequent effect: he is unshaken by such internal defiling enemies as greed, hate

and delusion and also by two external kinds: those who oppose him openly and those who do so but not openly.)

Herein, the aggregate of his past meritorious deeds done so firmly and resolutely that nobody else can check and destroy them is (1) *kamma*. The state of the level soles of the feet marking his acts of merit is (3) *lakkhaṇa*. His ability to stand up and walk on steadfastly as the immediate effect of his meritorious acts is (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The ability inherent in the mark, forming the effect, agrees thus with the power inherent in the meritorious act serving as the cause; such corresponding nature is called *kamma-sarikkhaka* (the nature of agreement with kamma). Just as carrying a vessel full of water means carrying the water in it, even so, speaking of a sign with power signifies speaking of that very power. Therefore, the exposition of *lakkhaṇa* and the exposition of *kamma-sarikkhaka* are found similar to each other in the commentary on the Lakkhaṇa Sutta in the **Pāthika-vagga Aṭṭhakathā**. The undisturbed and determined effort, put in performing good works in the past existences, brings the Bodhisatta not only the mark of the level soles but, as if it were not enough, also brings him the remote and subsequent effect, which is the ability to remain unharmed and undisturbed by his foes within and without; this subsequent and remote effect is (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(Now with reference to the Bodhisatta's major signs, those causal deeds of the past and other things will be described briefly as stated in the Lakkhaṇa Sutta, Text or otherwise, in a language easy to read and note.)

(1) The Level Soles

The Bodhisatta had performed extraordinary acts of merit in his numerous past existences, so firmly and resolutely that nobody else could check and destroy them. On account of those meritorious acts, he enjoyed divine bliss in the deva-world, excelling other devas in ten respects: longevity, beauty, happiness, authority, retinue, abundance of divine sense objects, such as sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Reborn again in the human world, he acquired the major mark of “the level soles of feet like golden Footwear.” Because he was endowed with that mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch (*Cakkavatti*) possessing the seven treasures and ruling the four continents as he did in the life of Mahasudassana Cakkavatti. As the subsequent effect, he would also have enjoyed the immunity from harm done to him by any human foes. On renouncing the world, as in his last existence as Prince Siddhattha, he attained Omniscience and became a Perfectly Self-Enlightened One, Chief of the Three Worlds. As the subsequent effect, his benefits could not be stopped, harmed or endangered by the hostilities brought by internal defiling enemies, such as greed, hate and delusion, and by external ones, be he an ascetic, a brahmin, a deva, a *māra* or a Brahmā, who opposed him openly or not openly.

(Here the author reproduces for the readers to learn by heart the verses composed by one Sayadaw U Ghosita of Mandalay South. The theme of the prayer is the thirty-two signs of a Great Man. Here the verses describe the first sign. Each of the remaining verses similarly follows a paragraph in prose by the author.)

(2) The Hundred and Eight Circles with Figures on The Soles

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta rendered service for the welfare of beings. He had driven away fear from those who were frightened. He had performed *dāna* together with supplementary gifts. (For example, when he gave away robes and garments in particular, he also offered alms-food as supplementary gifts to the recipients; he also gave them seats, honoured them with flowers and perfumes and provided them with drink. Thereafter he took upon himself the precepts and expressed his wish to attain the boon of Omniscience. Then only did he distribute the robes and garments most respectfully. In this way the Bodhisatta gave the main gift with extra ones.) As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss which surpassed other devas in the ten respects, as has been mentioned above. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 2 major mark of “the figures in circles on the soles of his feet”. Because he was endowed with that mark,

had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and would also have won great suite of retinue consisting of brahmins, men of wealth, etc. On renouncing the world, as in his last birth as Prince Siddhattha, he became an Omniscient Buddha and his great retinue was composed of monks, nuns, male and female lay devotees, devas, humans, *asuras*, *nāgas* and *gandhabbas*.

Herein, such meritorious act of *dāna* completed with additional gifts in his numerous past existences was (1) *kamma*. The perfection in all respects of the sole-figures as if they were indicating, “Let devas and humans know that the Bodhisatta had performed meritorious act of *dāna* completed with additional gifts” was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The sole mark was (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The great suite was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(3) The Projecting Heels, Long Fingers and Toes and Tire Upright Body

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from taking life. Never had he caught hold of a weapon with intent to kill. He had lived with loving-kindness and compassion, providing safeguard for the wellbeing of all others. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss which surpassed that of other devas in ten respect. Reborn a human being, he acquired the three major marks: the No. 3 mark of “the projecting heels”, the No. 4 mark of “the long and tapering fingers and toes”, and the No. 15 mark of “the upright body” like that of a Brahmā. Because he was endowed with these three marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and he would have lived long till the end of his life span as no one could do harm to his life (or kill him). On renouncing the world, as in his last birth as Prince Siddhattha, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he lived long until he had covered four-fifths of his life span as no one, be he an ascetic, a brahmin, a deva, a *māra*, or a Brahmā could threaten his life (or could kill him).

The Four Inviolable Assets of A Buddha

There are four assets of a Buddha that cannot be violated by others. They are:

- (1) the four requisites meant for and brought to Him,
- (2) His life,
- (3) His marks, and
- (4) His rays

— *Buddhavarṇsa Aṭṭhakathā*. Vol. 2 —

or,

- (1) The material gain of the four requisites brought to Him,
- (2) His life,
- (3) His eighty minor marks and his body rays, (the light of the moon, of the sun and of devas and Brahmās could not outshine or disturb the rays from his body), and
- (4) His Omniscience.

— *Vinaya Pārājika-kaṇḍa Aṭṭhakathā*, Vol.1 —

The Kamma, Kamma-sarikkhaka, etc, of The Aforesaid Mark

With reference to the above three marks, (1) *kamma* was the abstention from the wrong doing of killing, (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka* was the ability of the length and shape of the heels, fingers and toes and the uprightness of the body. To make it more explicit: those, who are bent on killing, approach their victim by tiptoeing lest the sound of their footsteps should be heard. Consequently, when they become human beings again, some of them have their feet curved inwardly like a bow; some of them have their feet curved outwardly; some of their feet with a curve in each sole; some have bandy toes; and others bandy heels; as if all those deformed shapes were to disclose, saying: “Let people know about our act of killing that involves tiptoeing.” But the Bodhisatta had the mark of long heels as if they were to disclose saying: “Let people know about my non-commission of killing that involved

tiptoeing.” Similarly, those, who desire to kill, approach their victim by bending their bodies, lest they should be seen by others. Consequently, when they become human beings again, some are hunchbacked, some are squat, some are crippled, as if all these deformed shapes were to disclose, saying: “Let people know about my commission of killing that involves body bending.” The Bodhisatta, however, had an upright body like that of a Brahmā, a mark of a Great Man, as if it were to disclose, saying: “Let people know about my non-commission of killing that involves body-bending.” Similarly, those, who desire to kill, catch hold of a weapon, say a club, and put their victim to death. Consequently, when they become human beings again, they have shorts hands, curved fingers, or have no visible fingers, as they look conjoined with one another and level with the palms as if they were to disclose, saying: “Let people know about their evil.” In contrast with them, the Bodhisatta had a long and beautiful fingers, a mark of a Great Man, as if it were to indicate, saying: “Let devas and humans know” that he had no experience of killing with a club in the grip of his hand. The ability of those marks to assure his long life was *kamma-sarikkhaka*. These three major marks, i.e. the projection of the heels, the length of the fingers and toes, and the straightness of the body, are (3) *lakkhāṇa*. His life lived to the full span was (4) *lakkhāṇānisamsa*.

(4) The Fullness of The Flesh at Seven Places of The Body

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta gave delicious food, such as cakes, meals, butter-oil, milk-rice, etc. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 16 major mark of “the fullness of the flesh at the seven places of his body”, namely, the two insteps, the two backs of the palms, the two shoulders and the neck. Because he was endowed with that mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he received plenty of delicious food, both solid and liquid, to eat.

Herein, such a meritorious act of offering choice food over the period of a hundred thousand aeons was (1) *kamma*. The occurrence of the fullness of the flesh at the seven places of the body, as if it were to disclose, saying: “Let devas and humans know” that the Bodhisatta had done the meritorious deeds of giving choice food, etc. in his past lives and its being the cause of abundant gains in that very life was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The fullness of the flesh at the seven places of the body was (3) *lakkhāṇa*. The acquisition of much choice food was (4) *lakkhāṇānisamsa*.

(5) The Soft Hands and Feet and Their Likeness of A Net

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta helped many with the four objects of support (*saṅgha vatthu*)²⁸. Those who are pleased with the gifts, which he had helped them by giving (*dāna*); those who were in need of a pleasant speech, which he had helped them with sweet words (*piyavācā*), another *saṅgha vatthu*; those who desired a beneficial talk, he had helped them with a beneficial talk or action (*atthacariyā*), a (third) *saṅgha vatthu*, by advising them: “This should be done.”, “This should not be done.”, “A man of this nature should be associated with.”, “A man of this nature should not be associated with.”, and so on. Those, who were happy to be treated on equal terms whether in weal or in woe, he had helped them with a sense of equality (*samānattatā*), a (fourth) *saṅgha vatthu*. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 5 major mark of “the soft hands and feet” as well as the No. 6 major mark of “their having likeness of a golden net”.

Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he had a suite at his service, as if it were properly held and collectively placed

28. Objects of support (*saṅgha vatthu*): refer to Chapter VII: What are the factors for accomplishing the *Paramis*: (a) extinction of self-love Previously it is translated ways of gaining friendship, pg 89, *ibid*.

in his hand.

Herein, such meritorious acts of helping many through the fourfold *saṅgaha vatthu* in his numerous past existences were (1) *kamma*. Those, who used not to do so, have rough hands and feet and uneven fingers and toes. The Bodhisatta, however, had soft and tender hands and feet; his fingers and toes were even like that of a golden net in order to let devas and humans know of his help given to many through the fourfold *saṅgaha vatthu* in his past lives. The quality of the softness of the hands and feet and also of the evenness of the fingers and toes was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The quality of the soft hands and feet and of the even fingers and toes was (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The gain of the suite properly held and collectively placed, so to speak, in his hand was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(6) The High Ankles and The Curling-up Body Hair

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from frivolous talks. He had given religious talks which are beneficial here as well as hereafter. He had made only Dhamma-speeches concerning the ten acts of merit leading to emancipation from *saṃsāra*. By delivering to a large number of people religious sermons that would raise them to higher stages of prosperity with the ten deeds of merit, he had given the gift of Dhamma. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 7 major mark of “the slightly higher dust-free ankles” and the No. 4 major mark of “the body-hair with its tips curling upwards”. Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and would be superior to others. On renouncing the world, as in his life as Prince Siddhattha, he became an Omniscient Buddha and reached the top, excelling all other beings in pre-eminence.

Herein, such a meritorious act of delivering Dhamma-sermons that lead to higher stages was (1) *kamma*. Those, who used not to do so, have low ankles and stooping downy hair, as if they were to disclose, saying: “Let people know” about their failure to speak of the Dhamma. The Bodhisatta, however, was endowed with these two marks, namely, the high ankles and the curling up body-hair, as if they were to disclose, saying: “Let devas and humans know” that he had given discourses that would raise them to higher spiritual positions. Therefore, the ability of these two marks to indicate thus was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The two marks were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The Bodhisatta's being above all others in rank was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(7) The Eni-like Round Legs

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta seriously and promptly taught his close pupils who had come to him for education. He had taught them in such a way that they might learn and train quickly and without trouble; he had instructed them in different arts and crafts, in various modes of moral conduct (*caraṇa*), such as the Five Precepts, the Ten Precepts and the *Pātimokkha* as well as on the doctrines such as *Kammasakatā* (the truth that everybody has kamma as his or her own property). In his teaching, he had never held back anything for his own sake. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 8 major mark of “the legs round and full, lengthy and comely, like those of an antelope called enī (or like husk of paddy)”.

Because he was endowed with this mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and he would have obtained all royal paraphernalia both animate and inanimate. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he possessed the requisites of a monk fully and rapidly.

Herein, such a meritorious act of serious and prompt teaching of arts and crafts, etc. in his numerous past existences were (1) *kamma*. Those who did not teach their pupils seriously and promptly but used to waste their time by asking them to wait upon them respectfully, or by sending them on errands, and thus making them weary, have their calves which are bulging at the back of the leg as though the muscles were cut off on the other side. In contrast, the Bodhisatta's calves were high and round as if they were to disclose,

saying: “Let devas and humans know about his serious and prompt teaching, which is without holding back anything for his own sake. The ability of that particular mark to disclose thus was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The calves of that beauty were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The rapid possession of the appropriate requisites was (4) *lakkhaṇānisam̐sa*.

(8) The Smooth Skin

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta approached wise ascetics and brahmins and discussed with them questioning: “Venerable Sirs, what is merit?”, “What is demerit?”, “What is faulty?”, “What is not faulty?”, “What should be followed?”, “What should not be followed?”, “What when done leads to lasting sorrow?” and “What when done leads to lasting happiness?” As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 12 major mark of “the smooth skin”. Because he was endowed with this mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and a great wise man. Among those, who enjoy sensual pleasures, there would have been none equal to him or higher than him in wisdom. On renouncing the world, as in his last birth as Prince Siddhattha, he became an Omniscient Buddha with great wisdom. He possessed *puthu-paññā*, knowledge of the aggregates, the sense-spheres, the elements, etc; *hāsa-paññā*, knowledge born together with zest and joy, *javana-paññā*, knowledge of swift occurrence; *tikkha-paññā*, knowledge that quickly eradicates defilements; and *nibbedhika-paññā*, knowledge that penetrates the impenetrable mass of greed, hate and delusion; as the subsequent effect, he was endowed with intelligence higher than that of others.

(Here the author's analysis of this particular major mark as to its *kamma*, etc. is missing. But it may not be difficult for the reader to make his or her own.)

(9) The Yellow and Bright Complexion Like Gold

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta showed very little anger. If there were in him anger at all, he quickly quenched it. He also display little anxiety. Though someone should speak to him angrily, he was absolutely free of hate, anger, aversion, disturbance or grudge. Besides, he donated fine clothing, robes and coverlets to people. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 11 major mark of “the yellow, bright skin like that of pure gold of *siṅgī-nikkha*”. Because he was endowed with that mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he quickly obtained fine clothings, robes and coverlets.

Herein, such a state of his being free of anger and such acts of distribution fine clothings, robes and coverlets in his numerous past existences were (1) *kamma*. The complexion of a person in anger lacks serenity; his or her face is terribly ugly. There is no adornment like clothing in the world. Therefore, those who used to show anger and not used to give clothings, robes and coverlets are not good looking, as if they were to disclose their former ills. The face of one who does not lose temper is beautiful; his or her complexion is serene. There are four ways for beings to acquire beauty and splendour:

- (1) giving alms-food in the past existences,
- (2) giving clothing in the past existences,
- (3) giving service by cleaning with a broom, and
- (4) showing no anger.

All these four requirements, the Bodhisatta had fulfilled in his countless former lives. He therefore, acquired the No. 11 major mark of the yellow skin. Therefore, the bright yellow complexion comparable with the colour of *siṅgī-nikkha* gold and which, so to speak, informed devas and humans of his fulfilment of the four requirements was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The golden skin was (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The gain of fine clothing etc. was (4) *lakkhaṇānisam̐sa*.

(10) The Male Organ concealed in A Sheath

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta brought about reunion in amity to those relatives and friends who had been long separated; he had created harmony between estranged mother and son, between estranged father and son, among estranged brothers, between estranged brothers and sisters and among estranged sisters. He rejoiced in the harmony thus caused by him. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 10 major mark of “the male organ concealed in a sheath”, like that of a Chaddanta Elephant King. Because he was endowed with that mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and would have begot thousands of brave scions who were able to crush enemy forces. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and gathered thousands of sons in his noble disciples who were capable of crushing enemy forces of defilements.

Herein, his meritorious performance of bringing about unity among relatives in the numerous past existences was (1) *kamma*. When kinsmen are united, one overlooks another's fault. Even when they are at quarrel, they do not like let others know of the wrong done by a man of their blood. If one were to say: “This is his fault,” they would rise up and refute, “Who has seen that? Who has heard of that? There is nobody among us who would have done such a misdeed!” In this way, they all would give cover to his fault. It may be said that the Bodhisatta had disregarded such a fault and thereby brought about unity to his kith and kin. Therefore, the male organ in a sheath that was indicative to other of his past deed of bringing unity to his relatives by preventing their fault from being seen so that they may live in happiness was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The male organ thus concealed in a sheath was (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The gaining of thousands of son-like noble disciples was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(11) The Symmetrically Proportioned Body and The Long Palms that could touch The Knees without stooping

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta gave honour to members of his retinue after personally scrutinizing their virtues and qualities. Only when he had known their qualifications did he show his appreciation to them according to their merit, deciding: “This man deserves this much of reward.” “This man is worthy of this amount of reward.” The Bodhisatta honoured a man fairly and honestly according to what he deserved. As a result, corresponding to such act of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 19 major mark of “the symmetrically proportioned body (round and beautiful) like the circular spread of a banyan tree” and the No. 9 major mark of the “long palms which can touch the knees while standing without stooping.” Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch; and he would have had abundance of bliss and wealth, such as gems, gold, silver, useful objects, treasure-houses and granaries. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he owned abundance of the wealth of the pious: faith (*saddhā*), morality (*sīla*), knowledge (*sutī*), sacrifice (*cāga*), wisdom (*paññā*), shame (*hiri*) and dread (*ottappa*) of doing evil.

Herein, his honour shown according to one's value was (1) *kamma*. The equal length of his stretched out arms and height and the equal measurement of the upper part and the lower part of his body in accordance with his performance were (2) *kamma-sarikkha*. His body like a round banyan tree, and its upper and lower parts being of equal measurement were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. His abundance of sevenfold wealth of the pious was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(12) The Well-developed Body, The Back without The Spinal Furrow in The Middle and The Round Neck

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta wished for the welfare of the multitude. He had wished for the safety of the people's four modes of happiness. He had done a lot of contemplation: “How could these beings prosper through *saddhā*?”, “How could they prosper through *sīla*, observing the Five Precepts or the Ten Precepts?”, “How could they

prosper through *suta*, following the advice of the wise and pious?”, “How could they prosper through *cāga*, giving up (what they own)?”, “How could they prosper through *paññā*, the truth and knowledge that all beings have their *kamma* as their own property?”, “How could they progress in terms of wealth and paddy, field and land, bipeds and quadrupeds, children and wives, servants and employees, relatives and friends?” As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the three major marks, namely, the No. 17 mark of “the full and well-developed body like a lion's front portion”, the No. 18 mark of “the well-developed back of the body extending from the waist to the neck like a golden plank without any trace of the spinal furrow”, the No. 20 mark of “the proportionate and round neck”. Because he was endowed with these three major marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and he would have obtained royal paraphernalia and his blissful life would never have diminished. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and his mundane and supra-mundane virtues, such as *saddhā*, *sīla*, *suta*, *cāga*, *paññā*, etc., never decreased.

Herein, his wish for the welfare of the multitude was (1) *kamma*. The fullness, roundness and development of the body, of the back and of the neck as if they were indicative of his wish for the prosperity of others was (2) *kamma-sarikhaka*; the fullness, round and development of the body, the back and the neck were (3) *lakkaṇa*. The non-decrease of his wealth both mundane and supra-mundane was (4) *kammānisaṃsa*.

(13) The Seven Thousand Capillaries at The Throat

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta had never hurt other beings with his hands, with a stone, a stick, a sword or with any other weapon. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 21 major mark of “the seven thousand capillaries occurring at the throat and diffusing throughout the body the taste of the food, be it as small as a grain of sesame.” Because he was endowed with this major mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and his ailments were few and far between.

Herein, his meritorious performance of refraining from hurting beings was (1) *kamma*. He who has been hit by another with hands, etc. will have bruise and blood clot on the spot his body which has been hit, from which suppuration and more suffering would occur. As for the Bodhisatta, as if they were clearly indicative of his past, observance of non-violence towards others, an act of merit that would result in good health, he acquired the mark of the capillaries at the throat. Such an irregularity of the capillaries for taste lying upright was (2) *kamma-sarikhaka*; the upright capillaries at his throat were (3) *lakkaṇa*. His good health was (4) *kammānisaṃsa*.

The capillaries distribute the taste all over his body, even if it is of the food as tiny as a grain of sesame. His digestive power was neither too high nor too low but just right to digest whatever is eaten: Therefore, the Bodhisatta's health was better than that of others.

(14) The Clear Blue Eyes and The Soft Eyelashes

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta had never angrily looked at others with his eyes protruding like those of a lobster. Never had he, in anger, looked sideways at another person. When that person angrily looked at him, he simply closed his eyes. Only when that person looked the other way round did he glance at him or her with a loving and sober heart but never with a hateful one. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 29 major mark of “the very clear blue eyes” and the No. 30 mark of “the soft and tender eyelashes, like a newly born calf.” Because he was endowed with these marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he was looked upon by beings, as such devas, humans and Brahmās, lovingly and trustingly.

Herein, his viewing of other beings with loving eyes in the countless past existences was

(1) *kamma*. Those angry ones, who look sideways or frown at somebody else, have their eyes set in that manner. Those, who look at others in an affectionate and respectful manner, have their eyes serene in five ways of beauty. The Bodhisatta was endowed with the eyes, blue and clear; the eyelashes, soft and curling up, as if they were indicative of his affectionate, respectful glances in the past: all this was (2) *kamma-sarikhaka*. The extremely clear blue eyes and the extremely soft curling-up eyelashes were (3) *lakkhana*. The love and respect shown to him by other beings was (4) *kammānisaṃsa*.

(15) The Thin Layer of Flesh on The Forehead

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta led group performance of good physical practices, good verbal practices, good mental practises, alms-giving, moral observances, fasting, service to parents, etc. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No.32 major mark of “the thin layer of flesh that appeared by nature, like a gold headband on the forehead.” Because he was endowed with this mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he gained a large number of beings as his followers or he became leader of them all.

Herein, his meritorious act of giving leadership to others in the group performance of good deeds was (1) *kamma*. He who gives leadership to a performance of good deeds, such as giving in charity, etc. never wears a sad face in the gathering, instead, he moves about among the people with his head upright without fear but with joy and satisfaction. He also has a large number of followers. The Bodhisatta, in his many previous births, had given guidance in doing all acts of merit. In order to make devas and humans know of this, the Bodhisatta was born with the thin layer of flesh on his forehead (or the full round head); therefore, the ability of the thin layer of flesh (or, the full round head) to let others know of those past meritorious act was (2) *kamma-sarikhaka*, The thin layer of flesh (or, of the full round head) was (3) *lakkhana*. The large numbers of beings immediately following after him was (4) *lakkhānisaṃsa*.

(16) The Body-hair and The Hair between The Two Eyebrows

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from telling lies (*musāvāda*); he had told what was true; (with no insertion of falsehood,) his first truthful words had agreed with his last; he had been of firm speech; he had spoken reliable words which people trust and referred to. As a result, corresponding to such act of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 13 major mark of “the body hair, each in one pore of the skin” and the No. 31 major mark of “the hair between the two eyebrows”. Because he was endowed with these two major marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he had his wishes fulfilled by many.

Herein, his meritorious act of speaking only what was true in his numerous past existences was (1) *kamma*. The ability of his body-hair, each growing in one pore of the skin and of his hair that strangely grew between the eyebrows to disclose his acts of speaking the truth was (2) *kamma-sarikhaka*. The body hair and the hair between the eyebrows were (3) *lakkhana*. The fulfilment of his wishes by many was (4) *lakkhānisaṃsa*.

(17) The Forty Teeth and Their State of touching One Another

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from any mischievous speech that would cease friendship among people; he had brought harmony to those who were separated; he had helped maintain unity of those who were united; he had taken delight in unity among friends; he had been very pleased to see or hear of those in unity; he had spoken only what would create unity of friends, As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 23 major mark of “the teeth numbering exactly forty” and the No. 25 major mark of “the teeth touching one another with no space in between.” Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On

renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he gained followers whose unity could not be destroyed by others.

Herein, his abstention, in his numerous past lives, from mischievous talks (*piṣuṇa-vācā*) and his speech that would create unity were (1) *kamma*. Those who used to speak mischievous words, have no complete set of forty teeth, and they have their teeth with gaps, for they destroy unity of others and separate them. The Bodhisatta, however, had forty teeth and they were touching one another as if to tell devas and humans of his abstention from mischievous words in his countless former lives in *saṃsāra*. Therefore, the ability of his teeth to be indicative of his said abstention was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The complete set of forty teeth and the absence of gaps in them possessing the very ability were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. His gaining of followers whose unity could not be destroyed by others was (4) *lakkhaṇāṇisaṃsa*.

(18) The Long Tongue and The Voice with Qualities like A Brahmā's

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from speaking harsh and abusive words; he had spoken only what was polite, faultless, pleasing and appealing to the hearts of many. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 27 major mark of "the long, flat and tender tongue" and the No. 28 major mark of "the voice having eight qualities like a Brahmā's." Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and his words were effective, influential and authoritative.

Herein, his abstention from harsh and abusive words (*pharusa-vācā*) and his speaking only sweet, pleasant and polite words in his numerous past existences in *saṃsāra* were (1) *kamma*. Those who used to indulge in harsh and abusive terms have their tongues faulty with thickness, droopiness and a slit so that others may know of their indulgence in bad language by twisting their tongues. The Bodhisatta, however, had the primary benefit of having his tongue long, flat and tender so that devas and humans might know that he had never uttered such bad language but had spoken what was sweet, pleasant and polite. Those, who used to speak abusive language, have their voice cracked, rough or faulty in other ways so that many might know of their swearing in a cracked, rough voice. The Bodhisatta had the benefits of having a voice of eight qualities, as if they were to tell "Let devas and human know" of his abstention in his numerous past existences in *saṃsāra* from cursing, a cause for a cracked, rough voice. Therefore, the length, flatness and tenderness of the tongue and the completeness of his tongue with the eight qualities were (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The long, flat and tender tongue and the voice complete with the eight qualities were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The obedience shown to his word by devas and humans and his verbal effectiveness, influence and authority were (4) *lakkhaṇāṇisaṃsa*.

(19) The Lion-like Chin

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from frivolous talks that were like unsuccessful paddy lacking substance. He had spoken what was right and suitable for the occasion; he had talked beneficially, truthfully, and with reference to the Dhamma, and advised in accordance with discipline. He had uttered solemnly what was meaningful with evidence as in judicial proceedings, worthy of keeping in the casket-like hearts of all hearers. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 22 major mark of the "well developed chin (suggestive of his imminent smile) like that of a lion." Because he was endowed with this major mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he was invulnerable to attacks by his enemies within and without.

Herein, his abstention from frivolous talks (*sampha-palapa*) was (1) *kamma*. Those, who used to talk about foolish things, have their chins concave, crooked or in any other unseemly shape so that many might know that they had spoken insubstantial language with their jaws moving. The Bodhisatta, however, had well developed jaws so that devas and

humans might know of his abstention from frivolous talks and of his practice of speaking only what was fruitful. Therefore, the ability of the development of the jaws to disclose his practice of speaking, in the past, what was fruitful was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The developed jaws with that ability was (3) *lakkhaṇa*. His invulnerability against any of his enemies whether within or without was (4) *lakkhaṇāṇisaṃsa*.

(20) The Proportionately Set Teeth and The Four White Pointed Teeth

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from wrong livelihood but had earned his living by clean trade; he had avoided various dishonest method, such as deceptive scales, deceptive baskets, deceptive coins; such as being unethical by taking bribes, immoral persuasion by cheating; convincing others with imitations; such as violence by cutting hands and legs, by taking life, by binding, plundering, destroying towns and villages. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the two major marks: the No. 24 mark of “the proportionate set of teeth” and the No. 26 mark of “the four pointed teeth as white and brilliant as the morning star”. Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he gained hosts of followers and attendants.

Herein, his pure livelihood in his numerous past existences was (1) *kamma*. Those, who used to have impure livelihood, possess no proportionately set teeth, upper or lower, inside or outside; and their four pointed teeth are dirty so that many might know of their misdeeds. The Bodhisatta, however, had even teeth and four pointed ones, which were very brilliantly white as if they were to disclose, saying: “Let devas and humans know” of his pure livelihood, maintained throughout his countless past existences in *saṃsāra*. Therefore, the evenness of his teeth and the brilliant whiteness of the four pointed teeth that disclosed his purity of livelihood in his countless past lives in *saṃsāra* were (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The even teeth and the white pointed ones were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The hosts of followers and attendants were (4) *lakkhaṇāṇisaṃsa*.

(Here is given the Sayadaw U Ghesita's last verse-prayer with reference to the forty teeth and the four pointed ones, followed by the concluding stanza. Also for the benefit of the reader in Myanmar: a shorter poetical, composition about the 32 Major Marks and the Buddha's past kamma as their causes, by the Mahā Visuddhārāma Sayadaw is added. This, too, we propose to leave untranslated.)

BRIEF GENERAL SURVEY

SYNOPSIS of the original six volumes, eight books of the Great Chronicle of Buddhas.

Volume One Part One (Chapter I to VI): SUMEDHA the future Buddha, His Renunciation, the Prophecy, Reflections on Perfections, elaborate expositions on Pāramīs.

Volume One Part Two (Chapter VII to IX): Chronicle of Twenty-four Buddhas Dīpaṅkarā Buddha to Kassapa Buddha; future Buddha Gotama receiving Prophecy.

Volume Two (Chapter 1 to Chapter 15): Beginning of Buddha Ratana: From Conception of the Bodhisatta to attainment of Buddhahood, and events during the 1st rains-retreat.

Volume Three (Chapter 16 to 27): Events from the 2nd rains-retreat to the 9th.

Volume Four (Chapter 28 to Chapter 37): Events from the 9th rains-retreat to the 20th.

Volume Five (Chapter 38 to Chapter 42): Events from 21st rains-retreat to Parinibbāna of the Buddha. End of Buddha Ratana. One chapter on Dhamma Ratana

Volume Six Part One (Chapter 43): Sangha Ratana begins: Stories of Foremost Bhikkhus. Theras from the Venerable Sāriputta to the Venerable Mogharāja.

Volume Six Part Two (Chapter 44 to Chapter 45): Sangha Ratana continues: Stories of Foremost Bhikkhunīs. Therīs from Mahāpajāpati Gotamī to Siṅgālakamātu. Stories of Foremost lay male disciples and lay female disciples. Epilogue.

In 1954, the then Prime Minister of Myanmar, U Nu, requested the Late Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṃsa, Venerable Mingun Sayadaw, to compile the Mahābuddhavaṃsa, being the Myanmar exposition on the lives of the Buddhas as related mainly in the Buddhavaṃsapāli Text of the Khuddakanikaya. This compilation entitled “The Great Chronicle of Buddhas”, resulting in six volumes in eight books, commenced in 1956 and ended in 1969. The work, being the author’s magnum opus and a colossal contribution to Myanmar Buddhist literature, has been received with enthusiastic acclaim by members of the Saṅgha and the laity alike.

This Chronicle made its appearance in commemoration of the convening of the Sixth Buddhist Council. It was subsequently translated into English by Myanmar scholars for the benefit of the English speaking readers. In this present Edition, the six volumes have been combined into two books.

The Chronicle vividly describes, for the benefits of those who are virtuous devotees of Buddhism, how the Buddha, the true friend of the three classes of beings, had performed unique, meritorious deeds beginning from His existence as the Hermit Sumedha. Sumedha met Buddha Dīpaṅkara and obtained assurance from the Buddha that he would, in time to come, gain Supreme Enlightenment as Buddha Gotama (which is during our present cycle). In his quest for Enlightenment in the cycle of births and deaths, the Bodhisatta met the past twenty-four Buddhas which are described in detail. This book will appeal not only to the casual reader but also to the intellectual student of Buddhism.