

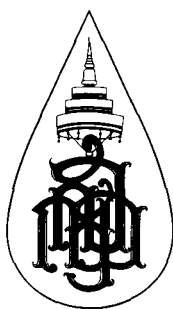
# **FORTY-FIVE YEARS OF THE BUDDHA**

**(BOOK ONE)**

**H.H. SOMDET PHRA NYANASAMVARA**

# FORTY-FIVE YEARS OF THE BUDDHA

(Book One)



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The Eightieth Birth Anniversary of His Holiness  
the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand.

# **FORTY-FIVE YEARS OF THE BUDDHA**

(Book One)

by

**His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara**  
the Supreme Patriarch of the Thai Sangha

Published on the occasion of

The Eightieth Birth Anniversary of His Holiness  
the Supreme Patriarch  
October 3, 2536/ 1933

English version

by

Siri Buddhasukh,

English lecturer of the Mahāmakuta Educational council,  
The Buddhist University, Thailand.







This publication is published by the Office of the Attorney General in honor of His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara the Supreme Patriarch, on the occasion of his 80th birthday anniversary, October 3, 1993. The warm generosity and kindness His Holiness has graciously extended to us are very much appreciated and will always be cherished by each and every public prosecutor.

# PREFACE

The present work entitled "FORTY-FIVE YEARS OF THE BUDDHA" owed its existence to the instructions given to the newly ordained Bhikkhus of Bovorn Nives monastery starting from the Rains Retreat period of the year B.E. 2504 and continuing for a time after that. There used to be, in fact, some years during which other themes were explained, also other years when there was something preventing the continuity of the original theme. It was because of this fact that there had not been much progress in going on with the theme "Forty-five Years of the Buddha". This was due to the fact that the main purpose was to discuss and explain the Buddha's Dhamma teachings in general, which could be supplemented by the current circumstances, but not to stress the historical truths or data. However, whenever there was something worth mentioning that had some connection with historical or biological facts, they were also included in the process of explanation. This as far as it was made possible. This, therefore, is the essential and original purpose of the work here presented, which stressed first of all the meanings of the Buddha's Dhamma instructions during the forty-five year period of his spreading and Message to the world.

Its first edition was first published some years ago and was welcomed by the public, who undertook to have it re-printed several times. This despite the fact that it comprises only the first ten years of the Buddha's pioneer efforts.

Its English version was attempted by Mr. Siri Buddhasukh, an English lecturer of the Mahāmakut Educational Council, the Buddhist University, Thailand. His efforts started in the early part of the year B.E. 2533, when it was published in instalments in the January--March 2533/1990 issue of the quarterly journal of the World Fellowship of Buddhists called WFB REVIEW, until it has been completed in book-form as it appears at present. It is due to be distributed to those who take part in the occasion of the third of October this year (B.E. 2536). The translator's painstaking and devoted efforts are to be highly appreciated. However, the generous contributors through whose kind cooperation the publication of this book has been made possible deserve no less thought of thankfulness and appreciation.

It is hoped that the work here presented will be conducive to the benefits of the readers, fulfilling to a certain extent thereby both the translators' and the contributors' purpose and intention.

*Sd. Phra Nyanasamvara*

(His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara)

Supreme Patriarch of Thailand

## ABOUT THE BOOK

In B.E. 2502 starting on the seventh of March I was invited to deliver a sermon in a course of instructions for the purpose of fund-raising in aid of the students at the office of the SŪ SAPPADĀ journal. This had been done on a monthly basis until September 2, 2504. The theme of the sermons during this period was "*Fundamentals of Buddhism*". However, during this period there was a request on the part of the '*SŪ Sappadā*' Journal to write a serial on Buddhism for inclusion in each of its issues. It was then that the theme 'FORTY-FIVE YEARS OF THE BUDDHA' was decided upon. Thenceforward began the research for the instructions given to newly ordained Bhikkhus in the Convocation Hall of Bovorn Nives Monastery B.E. 2504. The instructions were tape-recorded, to be later published serially in the SŪ Sappadā periodical. The series was started therein since October 2504 to February 4, 2509, in which the contents continued to the ninth Rains Retreat period. It was some time later that the serial was published in the Dhammacakkhu periodical of the Mahāmakut Foundation, to which the copyright was given for its publication.

There is still the intention to continue this series whenever possible. Even in what has already been published there might be something that should be altered, corrected or added. A work of this kind and magnitude cannot be hoped to be flawless at the first start. With more research there are certainly some 'E. & O.E.s' to be detected and added or corrected in the future.

***Ven. Phra Sāsanasophon***

(Former ecclesiastical title of the present Supreme  
Patriarch Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara)

Wat Bovoranives Vihara  
April B.E. 2510

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# INTRODUCING SOME NOTEWORTHY, SALIENT POINTS IN THE BOOK

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**Notes** : The inclined stroke like this / refers the readers to the Headword printed in bold type. The number refers to page

For example

**Army** , General of the merciless Dhamma / 100  
means the information concerning General of the merciless  
Dhamma army can be found in page 100

**Born Free** , Aggregates (Khandha) are / 37  
means the information concerning Aggregates are 'born free'  
can be found in page 37

---

## A

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remembering their names 39

**Army** , General of the merciless Dhamma / 100

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## Y

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**For more details please consult the INDEX**

# A JIG-SAW PUZZLE

**It's** difficult putting events  
In chronological order.  
The years and points of time absent,  
Nothing is known : before or after.

**Nothing** was told in the Pali.  
Only "At one time" was mentioned.  
So we can't know with certainty  
Without the years and months given.

**So** difficult it is to know  
Which was **before** and **after** which.  
This task I try to undergo  
Often with nothing established.

**We** know enough 'how, what, why, where',  
But as regards '**exactly when**'  
So with others we may compare  
We are left in a trackless den.

**Commentaries** tell us some more,  
But it's scanty and rare and rough.  
What those sources offer, therefore,  
Is too little and far from enough

**This** is solving a Jig-saw puzzle,  
Gleaning data from here and there.  
If it should be a losing battle,  
May those scholars from everywhere

**Accept** my humble apology  
And help correct errors thereby  
So readers know the reality  
That I so far cannot descry.

**My work**, therefore, far from perfect.  
It's replete with E. & O.E.  
This I know and will not object  
To those errors kindly shown to me.



# **TRANSLATOR'S APOLOGY FOR THE “PRÉSENT IMPARFAIT”**

.....

My apology is hereby conveyed to the readers for the mistakes, both in the spelling and in the inappropriate use of English terms rendered from the Thai and the Pali counterparts, that have made the present work imperfect in a variety of ways, including, in some places, the discrepancies in the use of the same words in some places.

This despite the fact that I have exerted the utmost efforts to at least reduce to a minimum the imperfections occurring through my own delusion and lack of mindfulness. But, as a 'lone wolf' walking a lone trail, both in the translation attempt and proof-reading process, those items of 'present imperfect' are inevitable. What I can do at present is to submit my 'E. & O.E.' to the readers, hoping for their understanding and forgiveness and looking forward to their comments and suggestions.

Should there be something for correction or addition, it would certainly be included, unless I have not yet reached the end of my sojourn here by that time, in the next edition of this work.

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# PREAMBLE

**Referring** to the late Supreme Patriarch's annual instructions to the newly ordained Bhikkhus which have been already compiled in book-form , it will be seen that he had started from the beginning such as the ordination, the virtues of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. In addition to these, he had also elaborated the Dhamma topics in the books called Navakovāda (*Instructions for the newcomer Bhikkhus*) and the '*Numerical Sayings of Dhamma Section Two*'. Other subject-matters that could be classified were then grouped together such as the themes in the Bodhipakkhiyadhamma (*Practices leading to Enlightenment*) and those that concern the 'body as a living machine.' Those interested in this field are sure to gain a sufficient knowledge of this section of the Buddha's teachings.

The following descriptions, however, may sometimes cover part of some of those topics, while at other times differ from them to a certain extent. But all cover essentially the same grounds. This is due to the fact that the writer used to study and practise under his supervision for a time. Were there to be some explanations on the same topic that seem to differ in details, let it be understood that they are mere additions or extensions.

## **Pabbajjā : Ordination**

The term 'Ordination' is translated from the pali term 'pabbajjā', literally 'to go out' . This 'going-out' referred first of all to the physical aspect, implying the going-out from the life of a householder to one of homelessness. Hence the name for such people as 'Anāgāriya' : the homeless one who had voluntarily left the home or the home affairs. The way of life of such people was called 'Nissaya', of which there are four.

This 'Nissaya' is again of two kinds or levels : the outer and the inner. The former refers to the necessities of life, which, of course, are indispensable, whereas the inner one implies a way of behaving -- physical, verbal and mental, which has become fixed or involuntary by constant repetition. Briefly speaking, it refers to what is generally called habit. However, the latter i.e. the inner one will not be discussed here. Only the former i.e. the outer one is to be described. This, as earlier mentioned, are of four kinds viz. going for almsfood, wearing rag-robles, staying under the tree-shade and taking fermented urine as medicine.

## **The Four 'NISSAYA' for a homeless life**

Now, what role do these four 'Nissaya' play for a person with a homeless

life? Without a home and a family, what was he to do to keep himself alive? First of all, he is to beg from others. This means to go for almsfood. How, or where, can he have himself clothed? -- It is to collect the unwanted pieces, the rags, thrown away, say, on a refuse heap. Where should he dwell? -- In such places as under the tree-shade. What can he do in time of illness? -- Already dwelling under the tree-shades, he is free to collect whatever fruits with herbal qualities there are or use his own fermented urine as medicine. These, therefore, were originally the 'way of life' of the homeless persons.

When later on they came to associate with householders or villagers, in their capacity as teachers or instructors, being the 'field of merit' for householders, those pious people managed to construct sheltering places called monasteries for the sake of the homeless ones, who then became the homeless in monasteries. When the pious householders were more devoted, they again undertook to provide the 'homeless ones' with a variety of comforts and conveniences, as can be seen nowadays. Now these facilities tend to obscure the original meaning and aim of the 'going-out' to live a homeless life, making the homeless ones forget the four 'Nissaya,' becoming thereby over-confident and accumulating evil and unwholesome Karmas. To counteract this tendency, it is advisable we should recollect the original aim of the 'going-out', together with the accompanying four 'Nissaya' as an acceleration towards greater devoted efforts as much as possible.

### **Why this offering of comforts and conveniences?**

The householders' purpose of offering the homeless ones so many comforts and conveniences is to provide them with what is called 'Sappāya' i.e. what is conducive serviceably to the study and practice of Dhamma, being thereby the virtuous and beneficial recluses i.e. Samana. It is therefore imperative for us to remind ourselves that, the more we are provided for, the more efforts we have to put forth towards accumulating wholesome Karma. This is to live up to their expectations and not to be carried away by over-confidence.

Such is what is called the physical going-out. There are also more requirements concerning the ordination procedure for a Bhikkhu and a Sāmaṇera. Having been so ordained, he is duty-bound to observe the disciplinary rules as the stepping-stone for the *mental* going-out, the calming and purification of the mind in conformity to the Buddha's Dispensation.

Of the two methods, or levels, of going-out, the mental one is fundamentally important. If after the physical going-out the mind still refuses to 'follow' the body but always gravitates towards the affairs of the home the body had left or towards other worldly affairs, the mind will become restless, being unable to observe the disciplinary rules for the homeless. This means that for the 'going-out' to be complete and productive, the mind must

resignedly accept the transition.

### What is the ordination for ?

Referring to the life-story of the Buddha before he was enlightened i.e. while he was still a Bodhisatta or Buddha-to-be, we shall see that, despite being pampered by all kinds of pleasures and entertainments, he nevertheless was able to penetrate the camouflages of those 'pleasures', seeing behind them the sufferings of old age, illness and death, which govern all beings without exception. It was this penetrative insight that had spurred him to find the Dhamma of Deliverance or Freedom from such mundane conditions. And it was when he saw the recluses or Samana, those who lived the homeless life at that time, that he was moved to being impressed by their way of life, being convinced that it would lead him to the achievement he looked forward to. With such an aim in mind, he renounced the life of a layman, accepting the homeless life that he was sure would be conducive to that attainment.

Such was the Buddha's real purpose of renouncing the worldly affairs and worldly nature. So also was the intention of other disciples of his in the early days of Buddhism. An instance can be seen in the case of a youth by the name of Rattapāla\*, son of a millionaire. He renounced all his wealth and worldly pleasures for the sake of a homeless life and was soon rewarded with the achievement of the Arahatsip. He was later questioned by a king named Korabya, who was king of that state, who asked him what was his motive of living such a life. As far as he had known, said the king, most other people renounced the world because of various kinds of decline such as old age, illness, loss of wealth, and loss of relatives. But Rattapāla, continued the king, could not be included in any one of the above-mentioned categories, so he (i.e. the king) wished to know what was Rattapāla's motive in doing so.

In reply to the king's question, Venerable Rattapāla said that the Buddha had declared four kinds of what was called the Dhammuddesa as follows :

1. The world (i.e. beings in the world) is unstable, being led onwards by old age ;
2. No resistance is there for the world (against illness and death). It has no sovereignty of its own.
3. Nothing really belongs to the world. It is bound to leave all things and depart,
4. Always deficient, the world is insatiable, being slaves of Desire.

It was through recollecting those four truths, he said, that he was inspired

---

\* Rattapālasutta 13/402

to accepting the homeless life as the way of Freedom or Deliverance from such mundane conditions.

However, it has to be admitted that not all who have been ordained have done so with this aim in mind. In the text called Milindapañhā, a king by the name of Milinda was recorded to have asked Venerable Nāgasena what the highest benefit to be obtained from ordination was.\* Answering the king's question, Venerable Nāgasena said that it was the realization of Nibbāna, the complete Extinction through not being attached to anything whatever. But, the Elder went on, not all who were ordained aimed at this target. Some there were who had done so to escape the danger from the king or from the robbers. Then there were others who were ordained in compliance with the king's wish or any other person's wish, or who wanted to evade the payment of debt they had incurred, or who seek for prominence, who wanted to live of ease and comfort, or even to stay away from dangers of other kinds. The king then asked the Elder what was his motive in being ordained. In reply the Elder said to the effect that he was still young when he was ordained. Strictly speaking, he did not yet look forward to the highest achievement. But he saw how those recluses who were Sons of the Sākyans were pundits, being wise and thus able to educate him. Later on, having been educated in the Dhamma, he came to realise what the highest benefit was. In this sense, therefore, he said, he could also be regarded as having been ordained with the highest benefit and achievement in mind. Such was how the Elder answered the king's searching question.

### **Different Benefits Obtained by Various People from Being Ordained**

Although not all those ordained today have the purpose of doing away with sufferings, yet it can be said that quite a number of them wish to come to study and practise the Buddha Dhamma in a more refined manner as much as is possible for them during the ordination period. This is not a wrong attitude of mind. In a Sutta\* there were described good-intentioned people who sought ordination and who, having been ordained, reaped different kinds and degrees of harvest therefrom as follows :

1. *The leaves and twigs' of a chaste life.* This implies the ordination in order to gain wealth and fame. And having been successful, the person is satisfied with just those things, which may be likened to the 'leaves and twigs' of the tree of a chaste life.

2. *The 'outer bark' of a chaste life.* This refers to the observance of Precepts in addition to the intention to acquire wealth and fame. Having done so and being so successful, the Bhikkhu rests in self-complacency with just that, which is something like the 'outer bark' of a chaste life.

3. *The inner bark of a chaste life* is compared to the attainment

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\* Milindapañhā, Pabbajjapañhā page 45

\* Mahāsāropamasutta 12/326

of Samādhi or Meditation in addition to the observance of Precepts. This implies the Bhikkhu who stops at that, not striving for further, higher attainment.

4. *The outer core of a chaste life*, being deeper results and nearer to the hardcore is compared to the achievement of a degree of Insight Wisdom i.e. Nānadassana, which a Bhikkhu has rejoiced in. But he is satisfied with that and does not strive for further, final success.

5. *The core (or the hard core) of a chaste life* belongs to a Bhikkhu who strives towards and achieves the final goal of Deliverance or Freedom from the tyrannical influences of all sufferings and Defilements, there being then nothing more for him to study and practise. This, therefore, is the real benefit to be gained from ordination, as declared by the Buddha.

### **What can be gained from ordination?**

As a matter of fact, a person is said to have acquired the results of ordination as soon as he has strived to strictly observe the Precepts or rules of the monastic discipline. However, there are further, higher practices that he is required to follow, not to stop or be satisfied with just that. This implies the 'mental' ordination to supplement the 'physical' one. With both kinds combined, the Bhikkhu will certainly acquire a great deal of merit, which is to wash off the evils, which again is what a wise man undertakes to do. All these for the sake of himself, with his mind freed of evils and becoming wise and purified thereby.

It is therefore advisable for the new Bhikkhus, even though they remain in this condition for the time being, to strive to make the maximum benefit of their own temporary transition.

## **BUDDHISM**

The term BUDDHISM, translated from Buddha Sāsana, derives from Buddha, meaning the Knower or the Enlightened One, and the term Sāsana, meaning the teachings. Combined, they imply the teachings of the one who knows or who is enlightened. However, the term 'Buddhism' should imply, or connote, more than what is suggested by its literal meaning. It should therefore cover the manners of practice and the group of persons who follow such practice. Hence its wider, and deeper, meaning than just the sound of speaking and the written record in the texts and scriptures.

With that acceptance, we shall be able to know that what we have obtained from Buddhism is twofold, the first being the texts or scriptures and the second the exemplary persons in the form of both monks and lay disciples. This group used to be of four kinds viz. Bhikkhus, Bhikkhunīs, male lay disciples and female lay disciples. What is missing now is the Bhikkhunī group. However, the texts or books owe their existence to the persons who had handed them down to us ever

since the times of the Buddha. These books have been spread to countries foreign to the Buddha's birth-place such as Thailand. It has been through these two factors combined that we have come to know and to be Buddhists as we are today. After our departure, the younger generations will inherit all these from us to bequeath them to their descendants in the same manner.

### **How the Buddhist Scriptures Have Come To Be**

It was said that the Buddhist Scriptures first came into existence more than four hundred years after the Buddha's passing away. The Bhikkhus in Sri Lanka who were well versed in the teachings expressed their concern over the decline of memory of the people at that time. They were filled with apprehension about the future of the Buddha's teachings, knowing that there would not be any one person who was able to memorise the whole of the Buddha's sayings. To avert this decline and the consequent disappearance and distortion of the Dhamma, they held a Saṅgāyana or Synod i.e. the General Meeting to review, classify and standardise the Buddha's sayings each and all had orally inherited from the former teachers and to commit them to writing. These original texts being the actual sayings of the Buddha were called Pāli. It was of the fundamental, essential value. Some time later there were the texts explaining the difficult points in the 'Pāli' by later compilers. These second-class texts were called Atthakathā, meaning explanations. Still later, there were more texts explaining the difficult points in the Atthakathā. These were called Ṭikā and were regarded as third-rate, followed by the fourth-rate called Anuṭṭikā compiled by various teachers still after that. Even after this there were more books collectively called Pakaranavisesa, dealing with various specific points, some being significant issues, while others dealing with more and further explanations. Of all these, the Pāli, Atthakathā, Ṭikā and Anuṭṭikā are considered fundamental. These useful texts were compiled in Sri Lanka and were said to have been written in the Sri Lankan language.

After a time there was an Elder by the name of Buddha Ghosācāriya, who undertook to translate them into Pāli language, which is now regarded as the formal language of Buddhism. So now all the texts have been translated into Pāli in Sri Lanka, from where Thailand has obtained her Scriptures, especially the Pāli Canon, the complete set of which we have already in possession. These include the second-class called Atthakathā. With regard to the Ṭikā and the Anuṭṭikā, most, if not all, are in Thailand.

As far as the transliteration attempts are concerned, we have now the Pali Tipiṭaka or Pāli Canon in Thai alphabets, which had been published twice, once in the reign of King Rama V (*Chulalongkorn*) and again in the reign of King Rama VII on the occasion of the cremation of the remains of King Rama VI. There were also later editions, which were only supplying the missing or damaged issues.

Another attempt was ventured later when the Pāli Canon in Thai alphabets were translated into Thai language, known as the Religious Affairs Department version. Many of the Atthakathā have also been translated into Thai, but only a small part of the Tīkā has been so far attempted. It is for this reason that with a genuine wish to understand and study the Buddhist texts firsthand, it becomes inevitable that one should study the Pāli language. The Bhikkhus, in their capacity as the guardians of Buddhism, are then duty-bound to study the Pāli language in order that they may be able to share their knowledge and understanding gained from such study for the benefit of those others who have no time nor ability to do so firsthand.

From what was earlier discussed, we now come to know how we are informed of Buddhism from the two sources mentioned above. And it is through these sources that we now know about Buddhism and also about the founder i.e. the Buddha.

The term BUDDHA means the Knower. In Thailand we have taken for granted that this is the name of the founder of Buddhism. According to his life-story recorded in the above-mentioned texts, he was also a human being like ourselves, the difference, or rather the exceptional quality of his, being that he had searched for the supreme knowledge and later had realised it in the form of the Supra-mundane i.e. one beyond the realm of the mundane world. Generally speaking, the nature of the mundane realms can in some cases be constructive, whereas in others be sustaining, and still in others be destructive. All these, however, are governed by the worldly nature i.e. decline, decay and disappearance. Furthermore, such a knowledge is at all times enslaved by the tyrannical power of Desire, the endless and insatiable craving. It may give a person power over the world, but never over the desire within his own mind. He is at all times at the mercy of such Desire, binding him to the world or transient nature. For the knowledge to be supra-mundane, it must deliver him from the influences of sufferings and defilements. Now the Buddha was the first person who declared that he had realised the Dhamma raising him beyond the mundane conditions. It was therefore the supra-mundane, making him transcend all the sufferings and defilements. Now he, having realised the highest Dhamma himself, undertook to share that knowledge with others in the world. This, therefore, was the Buddha, the founder of Buddhism.

THE DHAMMA. First of all, the Dhamma was the sound uttered from the Buddha's mouth, being the voice declaring to the people the Truth that he had discovered. This sound, or rather voice, declaring such Truth can therefore be regarded as part of the Dhamma. It is included in the term Buddhism, being the teachings, the orders or regulations. Thus the manners of practice pointed out by those teachings can also be called part of the Dhamma. When an aspirant follows those practices and has experienced their results, such results are also the



Dhamma.

THE SANGHA is the group of people who, having listened to the voice uttered by the Buddha and realised the truth therefrom until they were able to attain the Supra-mundane conditions like the Buddha. Being the Buddha's disciples able to achieve the same attainment as the Buddha, they are called the Ariyaśaṅgha, the Noble Śaṅgha. This term implies the knowledge or realization of the Dhamma, irrespective of the person's status as a monk or a lay disciple. Having realised the Dhamma, they declared themselves the Buddha's disciples. Some with complete devotion asked for ordination, whereas others, not yet in a position to do so, declared themselves male or female lay disciples. Hence the four groups of disciples viz. Bhikkhus, Bhikkhūṇīs, Upāsaka (*male lay disciples*) and Upāsikā (*female lay disciples*). A group of (*ordinary*) Bhikkhus are also called Śaṅgha, or rather the sammati Śaṅgha i.e. the Śaṅgha through ordination procedure in conformity with the disciplinary rules and regulations, being thereby a formal admission into the group. In another sense, when a number of Bhikkhus gather together to perform some activities, they are also called Śaṅgha in the disciplinary sense of the Term.

Thus the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Śaṅgha are collectively called the Triple Gem, the highest Refuge for the Buddhists.

The condition of a Noble Disciple or Ariya Śaṅgha is individual or private. Of the four groups of Buddhists bequeathing the Dhamma to us, the Śaṅgha plays a significant role. They are the group of people, or disciples, who have devoted their lives to preserving and maintaining Buddhism to their descendants until today.

## THE FIRST SERMON

The texts on *Life of the Buddha* in Thailand abound in both Pali and Thai languages, the latter as sources of reference being *Pathama Sambodhi Kathā* by the Supreme Patriarch Kromphra Paramānujajit-anorasa, *Pathama Sambodhi* by the Patriarch Sā Pussadeva, *Life of the Buddha* by the Supreme Patriarch H.R.H. Prince Vajirañāṇavarorasa. The purpose of each, however, varied, the first emphasizing psychic powers as a means by which to intensify faith in the Buddha, the second stressing the doctrinal aspect, with little to do with events in the Buddha's life, while the third laying great stress on historical facts and data concerning the Buddha's life. With such different aims in view, each version is valuable in its own right. It should be noted, however, that such facts and data are profusely scattered in various places within the original Scriptures i.e. the Pali Canon. In order to collect as many of them as possible to form a unit whole describing respectively the events of the Buddha's life, it is necessary to go through them before one can dovetail them into a complete story of reliable chronological events. Of course, the undertaking must be based on scriptural sources that can be referred to as much as possible.

It cannot be denied that the Buddha's life-story, describing his activities selflessly performed for the sake of trainable beings, is sure to be of great benefit to the scholars who pursue their study with the purpose of applying them to their life. This certainly is conducive to both self-development and selfless service. The present work entitled *Forty-five Years of the Buddha* is the result of such purpose. Besides describing the events in chronological order, the work is intended to serve as something like a discussion on the theme of Dhamma the Buddha preached to those persons on those occasions. The discussion is again supplemented, wherever possible, by references of relevant events that can be found in the Mahāyāna tradition as well as those in the Theravāda counterpart, both those that were contemporary and others that occurred some time later. The work, therefore, can

be considered a mixture of various elements mentioned above.

The sources of references include the original scriptures i.e. the Pali Canon, the Commentaries and the later texts called *Ṭīkā*. Part of them—particularly those that may serve the purpose intended—are collected, extracted and digested.

It should be noted that the Pali Canon did not purport to put in chronological order the events taking place during the 45 years of the Buddha's preaching the Dhamma. They have to be carefully studied before they can be dovetailed to draw a conclusion therefrom, such as to know for certain when (i.e. which of the 45 years) an event took place. A more precise evidence can be known from later text called *Manorathapūraṇī*—Commentary of the *Aṅguttaranikāya* of the *Suttapiṭaka*, which was compiled by Venerable Buddhaghosā. Others are the text called *Jinamahānidāna*, the author of which was unidentified, and the *Paṭhamasambodhikathā* compiled in Thai by the late Supreme Patriarch Kromphra Pāramānujittajinorasa. Those later texts were compiled more than 1,000 years after the Buddha's passing away. According to the text called *Manorathapūraṇī*, the chronological order of the Buddha's Rains Retreat dwelling was described as follows :

The first Rains Retreat The Deer Park of Isipatana, Benāres.	
The second to the fourth the city of Rājagaha	
The fifth	Kūtāgārasālā, Mahāvana Grove, Vesālī
The sixth	Makula Pabbata (i.e. Mount)
The seventh	Tāvātimsa celestial realm.
The eighth	Bhesakalāvana, Sumsumāragīra
The ninth	The city of Kosambī
The tenth	Pārileyayaka forest
The eleventh	Brahmaṇagāma, the city of Nālā
The twelfth	The city of Verañjā
The thirteenth	Cāliya Pabbata (i.e. Mount)
The fourteenth	Jetavana Grove, the city of Sāvattthī
The fifteenth	The city of Kapilavatthu
The sixteenth	The city of Ālavī
The seventeenth	The city of Rājagaha

The eighteenth and nineteenth	Cāliya Pabbata (i.e. Mount)
The twentieth	The city of Rājagaha
from the twenty-first to the	Sometimes at Jetavana Grove,
forty-fifth	while at other
	times at Pubbā Grove, in the city
	of Sāvattḥī

There appear also in other sources some small discrepancies in connection with the order of Retreat periods and the names of some places. However, all these show that they derived from the same source.

The first edition of this book (in Thai) was rather hurriedly published in B.E. 2510 and as such there were a number of inaccuracies. In the present edition they have been corrected. There are also additions to clarify the matter.

But it should be noted that even so far the work cannot be expected to be perfect or infallible. It is still subject to change, alteration, correction and addition.

## THE FIRST RAINS RETREAT AT THE DEER-PARK OF ISIPATANA, THE CITY OF BENARES

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**Forty-five years** before the passing away of the Buddha, on the day when the full moon passed the cluster of stars called Visākha, the prince-monk Siddhattha was enlightened into Dhamma. Before that time he had been called Bodhisatta, literally one who is attached to Knowledge. This connotes the fact that he had not been attached to anything else. It was because of his *'attachment', or looking forward, to Knowledge* that he had all those times been searching for it until he became finally enlightened and was henceforth called Buddha, the Knower. The place where he attained Enlightenment was under the shade of a tree by the name of Assattha, later called Bodhi, meaning

to know'. Thus this tree, under which the Buddha seated himself when he attained Enlightenment, was called Bodhirukkha, the tree of Enlightenment. The locality was by the side of river Nerañjarā, in the district of Gayā, the state of Magadha.

Having been enlightened<sup>1</sup>, he seated himself bathed in the bliss and ecstasy born of Deliverance at a number of other places nearby for several weeks. Contemplating the Dhamma of his discovery, he was convinced of how it is so subtle and refined and as such would be practically beyond the grasp of most people. He was thereby inclined towards contentment, not taking pains to make it known to sentient beings. However, upon subsequent contemplation, looking clairvoyantly into the potentialities of various beings, he came to know how they were varied in tendencies and the degrees of maturity much the same way as there were various kinds of lotuses within a lotus-pond. A number of them, like the lotuses ready to open their petals to greet the sun at dawn, were able to understand the Dhamma within a short time. Then there were others who, like the lotuses still under the surface but to emerge the following day, would also be able to realise his teachings some time later. Besides, there were a number of people who, like the lotuses that would never surface, were unable to understand. It was described in a personified manner that he was invited, by a highly evolved being of the Brahma realm by the name of Sahampati, to preach the Dhamma for the sake of mankind. Whereupon he accepted the invitation. Figurative speaking aside, this can be regarded as the call, or 'invitation,' on the part of the Buddha's own compassion that spurred him to deciding to preach the Dhamma of his discovery to sentient beings.

### **The Five Ascetics**

**Having** made the decision, the Buddha resolved to preserve the life of his body until his Message was firmly established, with the

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1. *Vi. Mahā* 4/4-17/4-12.

four categories of Buddhists (viz. Bhikkhus, Bhikkhunis, male and female lay disciples) well-grounded on the Dhamma. Now contemplating the person who would benefit by his teachings first of all, he thought of the two hermits, Ālāra and Uddaka, in whose denominations he used to dwell and study. But he came to know clairvoyantly that they had earlier passed away. Then he recalled the Five Ascetics attending upon him while he was arduously practising self-mortification but leaving him after he had stopped that practice in favour of spiritual exertion. In the same manner he knew they were at that time residing in the deer park of Isipatana, in the city of Benares. He then set out from Uruvelā, heading for the deer park. Here by the Commentators it was recorded that the Buddha left Uruvelā in the morning of the fourteenth day of the waxing moon, in the eighth lunar month, one day before the (later) period of the three-month Rains Retreat. He was said to arrive at his destination *late in the afternoon of the same day*. However, according to the map, the distance between Uruvelā, now known as Buddhagayā, to the deer park of Isipatana, now called Sarnath, is more than one hundred miles. The Pali Canon, however, did not mention the time the Buddha spent for his journey, there being only the passages that he proceeded respectively (passing through various locations on the way).

As for the Five Ascetics, they were called Koṇḍañña, Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahānāma and Assaji, the first being leader of the rest. He was said to be one of the 108 Brahmins being invited to give prediction for the life of the infant Siddhattha when he was five days old. The other Brahmins prophesied two alternatives for the royal infant : either to become a Universal King or to be a World Religious Teacher. This was up to whether he preferred the secular life or the monastic one. The Brahmin Koṇḍañña, the youngest of them all, predicted confidently that the infant would certainly choose the religious life and thus become a Universal Religious Teacher. It was because of this confidence that the Brahmin Koṇḍañña had been listening hopefully to whatever happened to the royal infant. Having learned that prince Siddhattha had renounced the world in favour of the religious life, he

was more confident and thus suggested the other 4 Brahmins—all being sons of those predicting the destiny of the infant Siddhatta—that they accompany him to follow the example of the prince-monk. It was when the royal recluse undertook the practice of self-mortification, which was highly agreeable to their belief, that they came to attend upon him faithfully. This in the hope that once he was enlightened by that means, he would teach them what he discovered. But to their dismay, they saw the royal recluse gave up the practice of self-mortification, which to them was the *only* path toward *their* enlightenment. Certainly they regarded this as a reverse to the life of indulgence and so, having lost whatever confidence they had in the prince-monk, they left him and departed to dwell in the deer park of Isipatana.

On that eventful day, seeing the Buddha coming from afar, they made an agreement among themselves that they would not get up nor pay homage to him. However, as a token of previous respect, they prepared a seat for him so that he might decide for himself whether he should take it or not. But upon his arrival they were moved to forget their agreement and got up and paid obeisance to him the way they used to do before. This led them to washing his feet with water, laying a seat upon which to rest his feet and also to securing a piece of cloth to rub his feet with. The Buddha seated himself there and, having washed his feet, dried them with the cloth prepared. Now the Five Ascetics, still not convinced, addressed him with the term 'Āvuso', which was one to be used among equals, not for a superior. Here the Buddha stopped them, saying he was coming to give them the Dhamma of Immortality. If they should listen to it attentively and live up to it earnestly, they would be blessed with the Extinction of Suffering they had been looking for. They refused to believe, arguing how even while practising self-mortification he had failed in his attempt. Why, then, they argued, should it be possible that he, having given up such practice, was rewarded with the achievement? Once again the Buddha confirmed his attainment and again the Five Ascetics confirmed their disbelief. This went on for three times when, after that the Buddha suggested that they recall whether or not he

used to say like that before. Of course, they answered in the negative and with the answer their minds became less obstinate, being more pliable and ready to listen. Knowing clairvoyantly how their minds were now receptive, the Buddha delivered to them what was later known as the Wheel of the Law or, in Scriptural terms, the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta, his First Sermon. Here it was recorded that the sermon was delivered on the following day i.e. the day after he arrived at the place where the Five Ascetics were residing. This was on the fullmoon Āsālha day, which was the eighth of the lunar month by that name. It was later known as the day before the three-month period of Rains Retreat and was established in Thailand as the day of the Saṅgha, an auspicious occasion when there occurred in the world of human beings the third of the Three Gems in the person of Koṇḍañña, who as a Sotāpanna or a Stream-Enterer became the first material witness to the Buddha's Enlightenment.

### **The First Sermon : Wheel of the Law<sup>2</sup>**

**The Sermon**, or the Wheel of the Law as it is generally called,—after its name in Pali terms, can be regarded as answer to the searching questions *what it was* that made the Buddha satisfied he was enlightened, *what it was like*, and *in what manner* the Buddha had practised so he could be blessed with such an attainment. The sutta (Discourse) on this sermon is therefore of great importance and is worth the study in depth and details.

**In the first part** the Buddha pointed out the manners of practice that should be avoided by the monks or those who renounce the world, who aspire for the disillusioned weariness, the elimination of enjoyment and attachment i.e. the Enlightenment or Nibbāna. These are the two extremes of sensual indulgence and self-mortification, both to be avoided by the aspirants with the above-mentioned purpose. His discovery, so he informed the Five Ascetics, is between the two extremes, being not associated with any of them. It is the practice

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2. Vi. Mahā. 4/17–23/13–17.



conducive to the 'Eye' (of Wisdom), the Insight, the Peace, the Supreme Knowledge, the Self-Enlightenment, the Nibbāna (Extinction of Defilements). This is the Noble Eightfold Path, which consists of Right Views, Right Aspirations, Right Speech, Right Actions, Right Livelihood, Right Efforts, Right Mindfulness and Right Meditation.

**In the second part** he told the Five Ascetics the Dhamma by which he was enlightened. This was the result of his avoidance of both extremes and treading what he called the Middle Path. That Dhamma is called the Four Noble Truths. This may imply either the Truths of the Noble persons or the truths that ennoble a person. Those Four Truths are :

The First Noble Truth of Dukkha, generally translated Suffering. While elaborating its manifestations, the Buddha pointed to the phenomena of birth, old age, death, grief, lamentation, illness, sorrow, despair, to associate with the unpleasant, to be dissociated from the pleasant or the beloved and finally, as a synthesis, not to get what is desired for. In summary, the Five Aggregates of Existence that are attached to are (the seat of) Suffering.

The Second Noble Truth of Dukkhasamudaya, the Cause of Suffering. The Sutta pointed out to Tanhā or Desire as the cause thereof. It drags the person to re-becoming or re-existence, being thereby accompanied with Nandi or Enjoyment and with greed or lustful emotions. This Desire is of three kinds viz. the Desire to have objects of sensual pleasure, the Desire to be or to have re-becoming and the Desire (on the negative aspect i.e.) not to have nor to be (as opposed to the second category).

The Third Noble Truth of Dukkhanirodha, the Extinction of Suffering. According to the Sutta, it is made possible through the disgorging of Desire with nothing of its remnants left, the parting with, the giving up of and the deliverance from Desire, with no lingering attachment to it.

The Fourth Noble Truth of Dukkhanirodhagāminiṭṭipadā or, in short, of Magga. This is what is called the Noble Eightfold Path as afore-mentioned and already elaborated.

***In the third part,*** the Buddha explained what it was like that can be called Enlightenment. This implied the Knowledge arising spontaneously, or intuitively, in three rounds or phases of each of the Four Noble Truths. Hence the spontaneous or intuitive Wisdom knowing that

1. *(regarding the First Truth)* this is Suffering, then this Suffering is to be determined, and then it has now been determined;

2. *(regarding the Second Truth)* this is the Cause of Suffering, then this Cause is to be eradicated, and then it has now been eradicated;

3. *(regarding the Third Truth)* this is the Extinction of Suffering, then this Extinction is to be realised, and then it has now been realised;

4. *(regarding the Fourth Truth)* this is the Path leading to the Extinction of Suffering, then this Path is to be developed, and then it has already been developed perfectly i.e. in all respects.

***There is another term*** referring to such Knowledge, which is synonymous to Enlightenment. It was called *Nāṇa* or Insight and involves the three rounds or levels of refinement or profundity called

a) *Saccañāṇa* : the Insight into the nature of the Truths themselves. This implies the Knowledge **how** this really is Suffering, this really its Cause, this really its Extinction and this really the Path leading thereto.

b) *Kiccañāṇa* : the Insight into **what is to be done** for each of them. Thus Suffering is to be known or determined; its Cause is to be removed or eradicated; its Extinction is to be realised; and the Path thereto is to be developed or perfected.

c) *Katañāṇa* : the Insight into **what has been done** regarding each of the Four Truths. Thus it implies the Knowledge that whatever Suffering there is has been known or determined, there being nothing left of its kind. As regards the second truth, it implies the Knowledge that whatever cause of Suffering there is has been eradicated once for all, there being nothing left for further removal. Where the third truth is concerned, it refers to the Knowledge that whatever Extinction

of Suffering there is has been realised, there being nothing left for more realization. And as for the fourth truth, this denotes the Knowledge that whatever Path (i.e. practice) there is that leads to the Extinction thereof has been followed out, there being nothing left for further development.

### **Three Spiralling Levels Covering Four Truths in Twelve Points**

**Thus** in the Sutta was described the Buddha's Enlightenment as the Insight that was to be three spiralling levels covering twelve points. The three levels referred to the Knowledge of the Insight into, firstly, the *nature* of the Four Truths; secondly, his *assessment* of them; and thirdly, his *full-final accomplishment* regarding those assessments. With such Insight spiralling over the Four Truths thrice, what results therefrom is the twelve manifestations of Insight conducive to his Enlightenment. It is one blessed with this full, perfect Insight that entitled him to be called Buddha, the Enlightened One. His Paññā (Wisdom or Insight) is therefore called Bodhi, meaning Enlightenment.

From what has been discussed, it may be said that the study of this Sutta can answer three searching questions on the part of Buddhists. Firstly, *what kind of practice* it was that the Buddha had followed until he was enlightened; secondly, *what Dhamma* it was that the Buddha was enlightened in; and thirdly, *what Knowledge* (or Insight) it was that characterises the Buddha's enlightenment. Obviously, the three questions can be answered by their corresponding parts of the First Sermon earlier discussed. It was because of this fact that, after the third part of the Sermon, the Buddha was able to declare, like a lion's roar, that as long as his Insight with the three spiralling circles covering the twelve points had not been completely and perfectly developed and purified, so long was he not in a position to declare himself enlightened. It was when such an Insight had been perfectly purified that he was able to declare himself Buddha, the Enlightened One, by virtue of his own discovery. That it was self-enlightenment was due to the fact that such an Insight was spontaneous, taking place from within, not heard, studied or suggested by anybody.

Considering the contents of the Sutta, we can find that even the manner of renunciation or non-attachment was also due to his own determination and resolution. He had given up one mode of practice after another of various traditions and teachers of that time during his earnest search for the 'Right' way. This until he had found it out and followed what he was sure was the correct one. It was not until he had followed it out, having developed it to the full and final degree, that he was crowned with the Insight into the Four Noble Truths he had never heard nor learnt from anybody. That Insight was spontaneous, independent of others' instructions, resulting from the supremacy of practice. It culminated in rightfully earning him the title of the Self-Enlightened One, the climax of his search and achievement, the Buddha.

With the First Sermon at the Isipatana deer park in the town of Benares (OR Bārānaśī) in the state of Kāśī referred to, it is advisable to explain in more details the background stories in connection with those places.

**The State of Kāśī.** According to the Buddhist Scriptures, the state of Kāśī used to be flourishing even before the time of the Buddha. This together with the adjoining state of Kosala. It is understood that the term Kāśī refers either to a tribe of Aryan people who had settled in that region or to a king who used to rule over that region some time in the past.

**The term Bārānaśī** was thought by some to come from 'baraṇā' and 'Asī'. This referred to the river Baraṇā in the north and river Asī in the south. But by others it was believed to be the point of convergence of river Ganges and river Varuṇa, with the additional belief that there was still another river flowing underneath and converging on the two above-mentioned rivers there. Apparently, however, it is the convergence of two rivers, the combination of the names of which produces the term 'Bārānaśī.'

**The term Isipatana**<sup>3</sup>, literally the falling place of the hermits or

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3. Pa. Sū. 2/253,86

rishis. Two interpretations there are for this meaning. One was that it was where five hundred private Buddhas arrived by air and suddenly passed away, with their bodies all falling down at the same time. Another was that it was where five hundred private Buddhas,—which term connoted a great number but did not necessarily imply that round number—came out from the forest to have a rest. According to this sense, the ‘falling place’ can be used to imply the ‘meeting place’ or ‘resting place.’ The term ‘rishi,’ literally one who searches, implies those who search for the Noble Virtue. It was formerly used to refer to the Buddhist monks or Bhikkhus. Later on, in some of the Buddha’s sermons, the term was used also to imply those who searched for the Noble Virtue in Buddhism. Hence the reference to the Buddha’s disciples as ‘rishi’ or ‘isī’ to mean those who searched for the Dhamma.

**As regards the compound ‘migadāya’,** the term *dāya* was sometimes translated ‘forest’. Thus *migadāya* means the forest where dwelt the deer. In another sense, the term ‘*dāva*’ was also used to mean forest. Thus the *migadāva* also means the forest where dwelt the deer. In still another sense, ‘*dāya*’ means ‘give’. Therefore the term ‘*migadāya*’ means the place where the deer were given protection. This means the deer, including the birds, in the area were allowed to live in security, their hunting or killing being strictly forbidden. In other words, the place was a sanctuary for the deer.

**The prosperity of the state of Kāśī.** There were mentioned in several places in the Jātaka the high level of moral prosperity of Kāśī. In the Rājovāda jāta<sup>4</sup>, there was a king of Kāśī by the name of Brahmadatta. This name, however, referred to the dynasty ruling over the state rather than a particular king. He was said to rule over his state with righteousness, being himself established in strict justice and judging the cases with all the fairness and impartiality. His was the reign of peace and bliss which was known and praised far and wide. He often travelled incognito in order to know firsthand how his citizens lived and fared, and so far did not find anybody complaining.

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4. Rājovādajātaka 3/1

On one occasion he went out on a chariot driven by his charioteer to an area bordering the adjoining state of Kosala. Its king was named Bhallika, who, like Brahmadatta, was a righteous king and preferred to travel in disguise to learn about his citizens' welfare himself. On that same occasion King Bhallika's chariot happened to meet king Brahmadadatta's on a narrow pathway at the border area. Both charioteers refused to give way to each other. To settle the matter, they questioned each other about the statuses of their kings and learned that both monarchs were of the same age and possessed the same amount of wealth and military power. These, therefore, could not be the criteria to judge who should be superior and be given the right of way by the other. What remained was therefore the Dhamma or level of virtues of both kings, which would be the basis for judgment.

Explaining the virtue of his king, the charioteer of Ballika of the Kosala state said that his king returned force with force and kindness with kindness. He also answered good with good and repaid evil in kind. Such was the way of king Ballika, said his charioteer.

At this king Brahmadatta's charioteer said that his king conquered anger with non-anger, evil with good and miserliness with charity.

His statement settled the question, with Ballika's charioteer acknowledging the moral superiority of king Brahmadatta and agreeing to give the right of way to him.

**Another story.** There is another background story concerning the protection given to the deer<sup>5</sup>. This referred to one king Brahmadatta of the state of Kāśī who was fond of deer-meat and regularly went out deer hunting. He also commanded the people to assist him in every deer-hunting trip. So much so that the people were very tired of this, since they were forced to abandon their work every time the king was out hunting. So they planned to have a particular area or enclosure into which a great number of deer would be driven, waiting to be killed each day. This being done, the deer imprisoned therein

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5. Nīrodhamīgajātaka 1/221

were divided into two groups, the leader of one group being called Nigrodha, whereas of the other Sākha. Both were so beautiful animals that when the king saw them he was moved by their beauty and granted them royal pardon, excepting them from being slaughtered.

With those deer in the enclosure, sometimes the king came himself, whereas at other times he ordered the royal cook to come on his behalf, in order to have the deer killed for food each day. Of course, the animals sensing their fate tried to run for their lives, even within the enclosure. It was a long and painful struggle in which several other animals were wounded before one of them was caught. Seeing this, the two leaders came to consult each other and finally agreed that, since they had to die anyway, it would save them an unnecessary trouble and confusion should one of them resignedly meet its fate each day when the turn came. This would be done by one of them waiting at the slaughter stake. With this unanimous agreement, all went well for a time during which one of the animals went to wait calmly at the stake each day.

Now it happened one day that the turn came to a female deer who was pregnant and whose delivery was fast approaching. She went to see the leader to ask for the postponement until she delivered her offspring. But the leader was at his wit's end, being unable to find any substitute for her. Seeing this she went over to the leader of another group whose name was Nigrodha. Having learnt of the matter, Nigrodha, moved by pity and seeing there was no other substitute for her, volunteered to offer himself in her place and went to the stake to await his doom. When the cook came and saw Nigrodha there, he dared not touch the animal, having known how it had been granted royal pardon. He went to the king and related the matter to him. When the king went to the place and was told of the background story, he was moved by the leader's self-sacrifice and came to think that even an animal could be endowed with such a noble virtue. Why, then, he thought, should a human being be deprived of the same thing? With such conscientious conviction he granted pardon to all the deer, prohibiting their slaughter from then on.

**The Jātaka stories in Buddhism.** It is noticeable that most Jātaka stories in the Buddhist scriptures were told to have happened in the state of Kāśī. This should indicate the fact that it used to flourish highly before the time of the Buddha. However, its power later appeared to have declined until it was annexed to the state of Kosala, which was a superior state at the time. However, it was still not clear whether, during the time of the Buddha, it should remain independent or not. But obviously, it had something to do in connection with the states of Kosala and Magadha, something of both of which is worth noting as follows.

**The state of Magadha** was during the time of the Buddha ruled over by the king named Bimbisāra, with the capital at the city of Rājagaha, whereas at the same time Kosala had Sāvattihī as its capital and Pasendi as its king. Both states were bound together by inter-marriage, each king being the younger brother-in-law of the other. This meant king Pasendi's younger sister was the queen of king Bimbisāra, whose younger sister was Pasendi's queen. At the time of marrying Pasendi's younger sister to Bimbisāra, king Mahākosala or Mahāpasendi, the present king Pasendi's father, granted Kāsikagāma or the town of Kāsika as token of dignity and private property for his princess daughter.

The ruler of the state of Kāśī, however, was not clearly known. This was because there was little of its relationship with Buddhism, which had made its accounts scarcely mentioned in Buddhist scriptures. However, according to the Commentary of the Vinaya (Discipline)<sup>6</sup> a king of Kāśī was blood brother to the then king Pasendi of Kosala. Also in another place<sup>7</sup>, the king of Kāśī was said to have sent a cloth of extra fine fabric as a present to the physician Jīvaka, who had cured his chronic disease. This Kāśī cloth was generally known to be highly valued and consequently to secure a very high price. The state was also renowned as a centre of religious activities, particularly in

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6. Samanta. 2/226

7. Vi. Mahā. 5/192/138



the city of Bārāṇasī in the time of the Buddha. It was known as the convergence of various religious teachers, especially the six famous teachers at the time, each of whom had a large number of disciples. From the scriptures, we know how Brahmanism and Jainism prospered side by side. It was at this hub, or heart, of religious doctrines and practices that the Buddha presented the result of his noble quest and discovery.

## THE FIRST SERMON : 'WHEEL' OF THE LAW

**This** Sermon in the Park,  
Sanctuary of those wild deer,  
To Buddhists is the mark  
of Buddha's pioneer,

**Turning** the Wheel of Law  
For those Ascetics Five  
To lead them to the shore  
Of Nibbāna for life.

**'Twas** Āsālha fullmoon  
When Brahmin Koṇḍañña  
Blessed with superior boon  
Became Sotāpanna.

**Being** Buddha's witness  
Of the Dhamma supreme,  
Crowned with brilliant success  
Transcending both extremes.

**Thus** born third of the Gem  
Marked as Day of Saṅgha  
Glorious like a diadem  
In person of Koṇḍañña.

**Based** on Noble Truths Four  
Was Buddha's First Sermon  
Proclaimed like "lion's roar"  
Rending the far horizon.

**This** for Buddhists to remind  
Themselves of their priceless  
Treasure that they can find  
And be Buddha's witness.

**Do** not be like those deer,  
Which couldn't appreciate  
Despite that they did hear  
Yet could not penetrate

**Meaning** of Buddha's words,  
Which were just like a sound.  
However much they heard,  
No meaning could be found.

**Let** faith be established  
On Buddha's Enlightenment  
Before our breaths vanish  
And thus our life's spent.

## THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

**Following** is a brief explanation of the First Sermon.

*The First Noble Truth of Suffering.* The term *Dukkha*, etymologically referring to what cannot remain stable or unchangeable, can be interpreted in two categories.

Firstly, the term points to whatever, having taken birth, is subject to change, deteriorate and finally dissolve. To put it simply, this refers to the truth that whatever is born is destined to die. This is truly *Dukkha* (*no matter by what term it is rendered in English*) since it just cannot remain stable at all times. Should it be able to continue existing unchanged it would not have to deteriorate and dissolve. This is the natural *Dukkha* (*call it the natural suffering, pain, ill or unsatisfactoriness if you will*), which covers everything in the world, with the world itself included. Never is there anything that, having taken birth, is not destined to dissolution or death, the difference being how rapid or slow the process is going on.

In the *Sutta* or Discourses, the concept of *Dukkha* is more specific. It points directly inward, aiming at the *Dukkha* governing the body, elaborating it as the birth, old age and death. Such manifestations used to be explained, for instance, as the sufferings and pains to be encountered during delivery (by both mother and infant). This is more obscure than obvious. It is retrospective, being plain to see only with the benefit of hindsight. Even what is called 'growing old' has some positive, enjoyable aspects in itself as well. This refers to the primary, or preliminary, aspect of growth—from childhood to adulthood, which is euphemistically called 'growing young'. Such changes, obvious as they are in a variety of ways, are accepted as the aesthetic, delightful aspect of change instead of being admitted as an aspect of *Dukkha*. It is only when the change has started going downhill that the real, negative aspect of *Dukkha* becomes more con-

spicuous. The *Dukkha* of death is, strictly speaking, to some extent misleading. For the truth is that whatever *Dukkha* there is (i.e. the pain, however excruciating) is to occur *before* the moment of death. At that critical moment it cannot be known how *Dukkha* takes place. The fear of death, realistically speaking, is therefore the fear *before* death. As long as there occurs a fear, so long there cannot be a death. But at the moment of death, there is no such fear i.e. no feeling of fear, no more feeling that it is a *Dukkha*. All these show how there is still an undertone of meaning to be uncovered for the sake of a more direct, clearer understanding of what *Dukkha* is really intended to mean.

It could be, therefore, that the precise meaning implied by *Dukkha* is basically its literal sense, with the mental attitude or reaction added to or connected with it. To repeat, the literal or etymological meaning denotes the natural, inherent condition of its being in the condition of flux, unable to remain stable or secure. This, as earlier mentioned, covers the world itself and everything *in* it and *of* it. Now this, as a matter of course, includes what is supposed to be *our* body, which, having taken birth, undergoes the process of growing young, then growing old, deteriorating and decaying i.e. death. This is the basic, fundamental sense of the term *Dukkha*.

**Now comes the second,** concomitant aspect of the term. This originates from a person's own reaction or attitude towards the natural, fundamental aspect described above. This reaction is based on *Tanhā* or Desire (or *Craving, call it what you will*), from which comes the twin aspect i.e. *Upādāna* or Attachment or Clinging. It is this twin i.e. Desire and Attachment that collectively gives birth in turn to a train of mental *Dukkha* such as Sorrow, Lamentation, Grief and Unrest. Without the twin culprit, as in the case of the Buddha and his Arahant disciples, there is no *Dukkha* of the second, concomitant category to affect them in any way or by any degree. They have come to realise firsthand how all those conditioned things, their bodies included, are to be governed by the law of events or nature. Such a natural event, having been conditioned to birth or coming into

being, is intrinsically—and therefore irresistibly—destined to change, decline, decay and disappearance : going to nothing, so to speak. Without Kilesa (Defilements in general) or Tanhā (Desire in particular) to serve as a connecting link, the bond is severed and the Dukkha of the second category becomes extinct.

It is because of this fact that another aspect of Dukkha called Tanhā or Desire is mentioned. Through it comes its 'double' called Upādāna or Attachment, bringing with them a variety of mental sufferings. This second Truth is called *Samudaya*, the origin of sufferings i.e. Dukkha.

***Now, with the extinction of Desire and Attachment*** comes the extinction of Dukkha. Whatever occurs cannot affect the mind. This can be seen when we look around, surveying things, and events, as they are taking place. With the intervening factor of Desire and Attachment (including Aversion and Repulsion as a matter of course), the occurrences are sure to breed obvious Dukkha if they belong to the 'unpleasant' category. On the contrary, without such culprits, there would be just a disillusioned, disenchanted Equanimity in the midst of all circumstances, be they of the supposedly pleasant or unpleasant ones. As such, there would be no Dukkha, particularly one of the mental origin. The 'events' are seen, and regarded, as they are—as taking birth, existing, declining and disappearing.

***By Magga or the Path*** is meant the process of having the mind developed or refined to the extent that there occurs the Wisdom (among other virtuous qualities) by which the above-mentioned Desire and Attachment are eradicated. This is the summary meaning of the Noble Eightfold Path, fourth of the Four Noble Truths. What is worth noting is that the knowledge as a result of that Wisdom must enable the aspirant to overcome and conquer such Defilements as Desire and Attachment. It must therefore be practical enough and powerful enough. In case this requirement is not met, the aspirant will be merely knowing them by names but still helpless in overcoming and uprooting them. What enables the aspirant to do so is, according to the First Sermon,

the Three Levels covering each Noble Truth, resulting in the Twelve Spiralling Aspects of Ñāna or Insight.

**Now, the Three Levels of Insight** are as follows :

1. First comes Saccañāṇa, Insight into *what* the Four Noble Truths are.
2. Second is Kiccañāṇa, Insight into *what is to be done* regarding each of the Four Truths.
3. Third is Katañāṇa, Insight into *what has been perfectly done* regarding each of the Four Truths.

**Understanding** of the three successive levels of Insight may be made clear by way of comparison with performance of one's duty in some aspects of a person's life. Firstly, one is required to know *what* it is that constitutes one's duty or responsibility. In other words, this is to know the extent of responsibility one is committed to shoulder. It can be done by studying from the facts and data collected from as many sources as possible. This is required of one concerning one's duty towards the work, the family and other aspects of social status. It is something like the "Saccañāṇa"—on the secular level, to know what there are that constitute the extent of one's duty and performance.

Having known this, a person manages to fulfil to the best of his ability what is required of him. This may be likened to the Kiccañāṇa on the secular level. His self-survey giving him the assurance that there is by him nothing left undone is correspondingly the Katañāṇa earning him a justifiable pride and delight.

Another instance on the secular level may be seen in the case of a physician, who first of all has to know *what* kind of disease it is that he is going to treat,—also its causes and symptoms in details. Then he makes use of what he has learnt from his experience, knowing *how* best to cope with the syndrome and bring about the best result for curing the disease. After that, through his practical, professional experience, he was able to control, and later to cure, the disease,

restoring the patient (who could be himself) to health. This he has realised and, of course, has a right to be proud of his performance. All these may serve to give a remote idea of the three Nāna concerning the Four Noble Truths.

**Now to come back to the Four Noble Truths themselves.** It is evident that the Buddha had clearly given his explanation for each of them, showing what is comprehensively implied by, first of all, Dukkha or Suffering, then by its cause or origin. In referring to the extinction of Dukkha, he clearly pointed out what it is that is to be extinguished and while mentioning the Path leading to its extinction, he again systematically elaborated it for his listeners. Now, for Buddhists it is therefore advisable to decide whether or not his descriptions are acceptable to us, be they those of Dukkha such as birth, old age and death, or those of the origin of Dukkha i.e. Desire, then its extinction and finally the Path leading thereto. The criterion on this level is acceptance of those phenomena by oneself, through one's own conviction, regardless of whether they were mentioned by the Buddha or any other teacher. Such acceptance through one's own conviction is, in other words, one *from within*. This is because the Four Truths, whether they are the Dukkha, its cause and so forth, refer **not to what is outside**. Their realization, therefore, is to start from, or to be based on, where the whole theme originates, otherwise it cannot be called Saccañāṇa, Insight into the nature of each of the Four Truths. A comparison may be made of, say, seeing four persons walking along together. To know everything of them such as their features, habits, tendencies and capacities is comparable to what is called Saccañāṇa in connection with the Four Truths.

The second step is called Kiccañāṇa, Insight into what is to be done towards those Truths. Dukkha i.e. all its manifestations earlier described must be known i.e. determined or detected to the fullest, or deepest, degree. This borderline is definite,—not to be over-stepped. Now, its causes, be they in any form or degree, are to be absolutely abandoned or eradicated. Its Extinction is to be realised, whereas the

Path leading thereto is to be developed or cultivated,—again to the fullest, or highest, degree. All these constitute the right attitudes of mind towards each of the Four Truths, with each attitude to function within what is an appropriate approach or commitment without overlapping the rest.

### **Misguided Efforts**

**The** trouble encountered in several cases is the misguided, although well-meaning, attempt which confuses the function of one Truth with the others. Of course, this results in more, not less, trouble or Dukkha. Instances may be seen in the cases of those overwhelmed by grief due to some disappointment. Being at their wit's end, they often commit suicide, concluding naively that it should be the better, or even the best, way out. They are ignorant of the fact that the body they are going to kill is not the original Suffering. Instead, it is included, as far as its nature of old age, illness and death are concerned, in the manifestations of Dukkha or Suffering, which are to be **determined as such**, never to be destroyed or killed. What is to be killed or eliminated is the Cause or Origin of Dukkha i.e. one's own Desire in various forms and degrees. Collectively speaking, it is what is scripturally called *Kilesa* or Defilements, which may in one sense be classified as Greed (*or Lust*), Hatred and Delusion. All these, to repeat, are ingrained within one's own mind. To remove, or at least reduce, the symptoms of Dukkha, it is imperative that one should deal directly with their fountain-head, which is one's own Desire allowed to run wild, — to the detriment of oneself.

That many quarrels oftentimes end in such violent crimes as assault and murder is another instance of an erroneous diagnosis, followed as a result by wrong treatment, so to speak. Both sides have taken to increasing their Dukkha and vented their anger on each other's bodies, which are *not* the cause of those quarrels. What they are required to fight against, or even to kill, is their own anger or hatred within their own minds, which is the *Samudaya* or real cause of Dukkha in their cases.



**As for** Nirodha or the Extinction of Dukkha, it is advised that when the aspirants have progressed in their practice until they are able to calm down the mind to a degree, they should carefully determine and nurture it first of all. Thereafter they are to strengthen or intensify its degree steadily. However, it is to be regretted that most people care little of the inward calm or tranquility. This despite the fact that such a state of mind is to be attained, more or less, at times although without their knowing it. Such Defilements as Desire do not actively overwhelm the mind at all times, otherwise the mind, given no respite whatever, would be too much exposed to the burden and thus find it intolerable. That people can occasionally relax and find some rest thereby is due to the 'relaxation' moments interspersed now and again between those 'occupied' periods. This is a fact Buddhists should take note of first and then endeavour to 'insert' more and longer relaxed moments when tranquility or peace can substitute those Defilements. In short, they are advised both to mindfully determine the naturally relaxed moments and to diligently intensify the power of acquired tranquility through persistent efforts.

**MAGGA** or the Path is the last, but not the least important, of the Four Noble Truths. How well it will function for the aspirants is as a matter of course dependent on how much they have developed it—within their own minds. This requires a sincere self-survey, determining how much, or how strong, is the body of the eight elements therein viz. Right Views, Right Aspirations, Right Speech, Right Actions, Right Livelihood, Right Efforts, Right Mindfulness and Right Meditation. This self-survey is to be followed by self-correction and self-improvement. However, there have been found in many cases Buddhists who prefer to survey and correct what they believe is *other people's* faults and deficiencies. This is highly inadvisable, particularly as far as the practical aspect of Buddhism is concerned. If they should criticize at all, it is their own qualities of mind that must come under an impartial criticism. After that, they are required to shoulder the twofold task of negative, abandonment aspect on the one hand and

positive, cultivation aspect on the other in order to fulfil what is expected of them.

Such function is called Kiccañāna, Insight into the function or commitment as regards each of the Four Truths.

When those functions have been readily accepted as responsibilities which the aspirants assume and undertake to fulfil as best they can, there will come a time when there arises to them the Katañāna, Insight into what has been done i.e. fulfilled with regard to each of the Four Noble Truths. It is through having done so that the Buddha was able to declare himself as such, with all manifestations of Dukkha detected and determined, those of their Origin abandoned and uprooted, their Extinction realised, with the means for their realization completely developed.

### **Epitome of Teachings**

**These** Four Noble Truths are the epitome, or the core, of all other themes of the Buddha's teachings in the same manner as, so it was said, in the elephants's foot-prints are embraced those of all other animals. By the function of each are divided the four kinds of what is to be done as follows :

1) *Pariññeyyadhamma* (What is to be known or determined). This refers to the phenomena of Dukkha in the First Noble Truth, including whatever is destined to take birth, decline and die or disappear such as the *Khandha* (Aggregates of Existence), *Āyatana* (Sense-doors and sense-objects), *Dhātu* (what is called 'elements' or properties of matter).

2) *Pahātabbadhamma* (what is to be abandoned or uprooted). This is all the *Kilesa* (Defilements), by whatever names they are called (in pali and English). Thus all the unwholesome qualities such as the Three Roots of Evil, Five Mental Hindrances, Nine Pollutions and Sixteen Defilements are to be included in this category.

3) Sacchikātabbadhamma (what is to be realised) i.e. the results of practice and exertion in accordance with the Buddha's teaching such as Mental Tranquility.

4) Bhāvetabbadhamma (what is to be developed or cultivated). This points to the practice of wholesome qualities such as those classified in Groups of Two, Three and so forth (in the booklet entitled 'Elementary Numerical Sayings or Navakovāda by the late Supreme Patriarch H.R.H. Prince Vajirañāṇavarorasa).

**What is worth noting in addition** is that in the First Sermon the phenomena of Dukkha described did not refer to illness, possibly on the grounds that it was mentioned later in the compound term "Soka-parideva-dukkha-domanassa-upāyāsa", wherein the middle term '*dukkha*' was meant to refer to the illness of the body. In other sources, however, only the physical sufferings viz. birth, old age, illness and death are mentioned in full, with the mental counterparts viz. Soka i.e. Grief and the others that follow being deleted.

After the First Sermon, it was recorded that there occurred the 'Eye of Dhamma' to Koṇḍañña, leader of the Five Ascetics, enlightening him to the Truth that whatever is of the nature to be born is by that very nature destined to die or disappear. This connotes the fact that he was enabled thereby to realise or penetrate the implication of the term Dukkha viz. whatever cannot remain stable or secure. Thus birth itself leads to death, the former being unable to remain secure or immune to the latter. Having obtained the Dhamma-Eye, Koṇḍañña asked for ordination from the Buddha, who then gave permission through the passages beginning with Ehi, meaning "Come, be a Bhikkhu. Well-expounded is the Dhamma. May you practice for the sake of the Extinction of Dukkha." With such permission he was admitted ordination by the Buddha himself. This manner of admitting ordination was therefore called Ehibhikkhu-Upasampadā, Ordination through the Buddha's sayings beginning with 'Ehi Bhikkhu'.

**This Sermon** is called Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, the Discourse of Turning the Wheel of Law. It is compared, but not equivalent, to the powerful disc of a Cakkavatti or universal king, who is believed to have in possession seven Gems viz. the disc (*something like a guided ballistic missile*), the elephant, the horse, the jewel, the woman (i.e. queen), the millionaire and the versatile, all-purpose chief minister. These are said to be indispensable instrumental factors, or regalia, of that exalted personage. This has been the dream of ambitious persons, the zenith of temporal achievements, from the ancient to the present time, the difference being only in the manner and the instruments applied. Of the seven gems, the *Cakka* or disc (*comparable to the guided ballistic missile*) is believed to be the most prominent one, possibly because it gives the possessor supreme power by which more territories can be absorbed or annexed. Now, in the case of the Buddha, his First Sermon may be considered as laying the foundation for the establishment of the Buddhist kingdom and thus served as his gem of the Universal King's disc. But the Buddha's Kingdom is not established or expanded by means of force or any temporal power. It is based on his Dhamma of peace and bliss.

## THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

**The** Buddha's Four 'Sacca'

Must be realised firshand  
So they'll become *Ariya*  
To aspirants who can

**Take** pains to cultivate

Tranquility-Insight  
Thereby eliminate  
Desire with all their might.

**Of** course this to include  
Aversion as its reverse  
Of the same coin of truth  
Both to be conquered first.

**Also** its pair of twins  
Attachment-Repulsion,  
Both as the nearest kin,  
The temptor and villain.

**Three** spiralling movements  
With each Truth covered thrice  
In their winding ascents  
With all Four Truths realised.

**Knowing** what each is like  
Then what is there to do,  
Thereafter how to strike  
The right means through and through.

**May** we Buddhists take pains  
Struggling for Dhamma-eye,  
Which is excellent gains  
By which to verify

**How** our Buddha's teaching  
Is unexcelled, timeless,  
—Refuge of all beings,  
Through us as His witnesses.

## ANATTALAKKHAṆASUTTA

### (Discourse on Characteristics of Non-selfness)

**Venerable** Koṇḍañña having obtained the Dhamma-eye and been admitted as the first Bhikkhu in Buddhism, the Buddha continued to instruct the four other Ascetics with sundry Dhamma themes until two other Ascetics, Vappa and Bhaddiya, also obtained the Dhamma-eye, then asked for ordination and were likewise admitted by the Buddha. Thereafter the three Ascetics, now the newly ordained Bhikkhus, went on their almsround for food for the group of six. Some time after, the Ascetics Mahānāma and Assaji also became Stream-Winners and were given ordination in the same manner as the three other Ascetics. According to the Commentary, it was recorded that the ascetic Vappa obtained the Dhamma-eye and was ordained by the Buddha on the first day of the waning moon, Bhaddiya on the second day, Mahānāma on the third day and Assaji on the fourth day. This was somewhat different from the Pali source, which described each pair as having obtained the Dhamma-eye and been ordained on the same day as mentioned above.

Now, on the fifth day of the waning moon of the Sāvana lunar month, which was equivalent to the fifth day of the waning moon of the eighth lunar month in Thailand, the Exalted One preached to the Ascetics the second Discourse called Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta, literally the Discourse on (how to determine) the characteristics of Non-selfness, which can be summarised as follows.

**Section One** : By the Exalted One the Five Aggregates of Existence (Khandha) viz. Form (body), Sensation, Perception, Mental Conditioner and Consciousness were described as being non-self. Were they to be self, they would not have been conducive to illness and possible would have been one's wish for those five : may they be like this, and not like that. But, since those five are non-self, it follows

that they are always conducive to illness and impossible is one's wish : may they be like this, and not like that.

**Part Two :** Checking how much they were able to accept his instructions, the Blessed One asked them whether the five Aggregates were permanent or not. Whereupon they answered in the negative. Upon being asked once again whether the impermanent things should be regarded as being conducive to happiness or not, as before they answered negatively. Thirdly, the Buddha inquired them whether or not they should regard as self whatever is impermanent, being the source of suffering and subject to change and decline. In like manner they answered to a man that it should never be so.

**Part Three :** To conclude, the Blessed One gave them an overall view of the five Aggregates, saying that whatever Aggregates there are, be they in the past, future or present, the internal or external, crude or refined, evil or good, and far or near, are *mere* Aggregates—of Form, Sensation, Perception, Mental Conditioner and Consciousness, which should be regarded, through Right Knowledge, that they do not belong to us, that we are not those Aggregates, and that they are not our self.

**Part Four :** Illustrating the results of the above-mentioned Right Knowledge, the Blessed One went on to say that a Noble Disciple, having thus been convinced, is blessed with Nibbidā i.e. Disenchantment in those Aggregates. With Disenchantment comes Dispassionateness, which brings with it Deliverance, together with the Insight comprehending that Deliverance. Henceforward there is the Knowledge that birth has been eliminated, perfected is the chaste life and whatever there is to be done has been done, there being no more to be done for the sake of this (achievement).

According to the compilers of the Pali scriptures, there was mentioned at the end of this Discourse that the five ascetics, having heard this sermon, were all blessed with an ecstatic delight, whereby their minds were delivered from all Defilements. They were all transformed into 5 Arahants i.e. Fully Liberated Ones.

*Such is the summary of the second Discourse, the in-depth meaning of which will be discussed as follows :*

This Discourse is focussed on the point of Anattā, which may be translated No-selfness or Non-selfness. Probably this was due to the then existing beliefs regarding 'self', of which there were two main streams viz. Sassataditthi : the belief in permanence or Eternalism, and Ucchedaditthi : the belief in nothingness or Annihilationism. According to the former i.e. the doctrine of Eternalism, there is within this life something called Attā or self, which survives even after the death of the body. It is permanent and deathless. The latter i.e. one of Annihilationism regards the Attā as existing only within this life-time, there being none left to survive the body's death.

Buddhism strikes a middle way between the two 'extremes', arguing that both have a flaw in themselves. There is in Buddhism no emphasis on anything to be called Attā or self, which is always the seat of Upādāna or Attachment. Where there is Attachment, so says Buddhism, the extinction of Defilements and sufferings cannot be attained. This is because Attachment is nothing but a kind of Defilement itself.

In the Patīccasamuppāda or Dependent Origination, however, is described a chain of inter-related links such as there being, for instance, Ignorance, there are such concomitants as birth. With the extinction of Ignorance comes the extinction of , among others, birth. However, there is no mention pointing whether it is meant to refer to birth in the past, the present or the future in particular. Possibly it connotes the fact that as long as there are those inter-related links functioning as causes and effects to one another, so long will there be the process going on. Hence the emphasis on the functioning of cause and effect, without the mention or determination of time i.e. 'when.'

As for those clinging to the concept of Attā or self, be it the Attā for the present life-time or one to survive the body's death, it is inevitable that there should be the definition of self as basis of such



a belief. As such the concept is to be based on any of the five Aggregates or Khandha, pointing to any one of them as being the 'self.'

### **Bases for self-concept**

**The first Aggregate** of Rūpa or Form. This refers to the body and its manifestations which may total thirty-two as pointed out in the scriptural texts or which may be more than that if it is enumerated by modern physiology. According to the former's summary description, there is the Mahābhūtarūpa i.e. what is called the main characteristics viz. the properties of matter (solid, liquid, air and heat), together with the Upādāyarūpa or the concomitant functions such as the nervous systems. All these are called the Aggregate of Form or Rūpakhandha, consisting of several co-working parts. From the etymological legends, we learn how it had been observed that, whenever there was still the throbbing of the pulse, or the heart, there was as a result the Jīva (vitality) or Attā. Without these pulses or breaths the Jīva could not exist and the Attā was automatically lost. Thus the breaths were named Attā in Pali, or Atman in Sanskrit. The term Atman corresponds with the same verb in German meaning the breaths. This shows that there used to exist a general understanding that the 'Attā' has its seat in the breaths. This is how understanding of Attā or self is connected with the body or 'Form.'

Another concept there is that equates Attā with Vedanā (Sensations or Feelings), which may be divided into three kinds viz. the pleasant, the unpleasant and the neutral. This may be due to the fact that, with a deeper thinking, men have come to observe that, even with the Form or body still breathing, it could not be activated without Vedanā. Thus it is Vedanā that is the factor determining its existence, that experiences or 'eats' those feelings. Hence another implication of Attā, meaning the 'eater' of happiness and suffering.

Then there is another shade of understanding, this time pointing to the Aggregate of Saññā, which may be translated Perception or, in simpler term, the determining or distinguishing factor i.e. memory.

The idea was that such an '*eating*', once occurring and then fading away completely, would be of no lasting value should there not be an ability to recollect them later on. It was this meaning of Saññā that makes for the permanency and unchangeability.

The analytical thought does not end here. There was a ramification determining that merely the Saññā as mentioned above would be of little practical use without the consequent thought (and emotions) conditioning or colouring what was already remembered. It was therefore this 'conditioner' that adds value and 'colours' thereto. Hence the Attā or self to be equated with this function, which is the implication of the Aggregate of Saṅkhāra.

But this is not yet final. There is still another point of view which appears to take a definite turn, determining Viññāṇa as being the most probable seat of Attā. However, the term Viññāṇa admits of more than one possible meaning. In one sense, it means whatever is to experience rebirth after the body's death, whereas in another sense it implies the awareness through the sense-doors called eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness and so forth. The reason for this concept is that consciousness is free and unlimited, being able to travel wherever it wants to. The body may be here, for instance, but the Viññāṇa can be anywhere, everywhere, in an instant. This concept backed by the understanding that Viññāṇa is the agent to experience rebirth serves to confirm that it is certainly this Viññāṇa that is the Attā or self. It should also be noted that this concept is acceptable for most people, who take it for granted that Viññāṇa is an entity that is free to travel wherever it wants to and is destined to experience rebirth.

### **Logical, understandable reason for 'self'**

**Now** a living human being is obviously composed of these five Aggregates of Existence, which are the seats or the bases of understanding of self. As long as the five are in perfect condition, it is understood that the self is consequently perfect. If any of them is deficient or develops some flaws, the 'self' is regarded as having

some flaws or being crippled. Thus when one is blind, deaf, or cannot smell, cannot taste, touch or move about, then the 'self' is seriously deficient. In case the body falls into a faint, then the 'self' is practically lost. These show how significant is the body alone to the concept of self, since it is the most obvious and tangible manifestation whereon the idea of self can be anchored. The remaining four, though less obvious, are, comparatively speaking, not less significant. Through Vedanā the various feelings can be experienced and the person can feel happiness or suffering, as the case may be. Again, it is by means of Saññā that the determining power or memory can exist and with Saṅkhāra there occur the conditioning thoughts and emotions. Through Viññāna a person can be aware of the world outside through the sense-doors. Supposing one of them is lacking, then the body becomes imperfect in its reaction to sense-objects. If all are lacking, then there is no awareness by any means. That a person is still conscious of his or her body, with the force of vitality functioning normally, is because the five Aggregates can work harmoniously as one unit whole. It is therefore logical enough to regard all these Aggregates as self or Attā. *Without these five combined there would be nothing to cling to; nor can there be any thought of clinging to.* Such has been the logic prevailing through all the times, be they before, during and after the times of the Buddha. As regards the five Ascetics, it was a matter of course that they should be influenced by such a dominant concept. That was why Koṇḍañña was the only one able to obtain the Dhamma-eye at the end of the First Sermon. It was when the remaining four ascetics had been instructed further by other sundry themes that they were likewise endowed with the Eye of Dhamma. That, however, was but realization of the Truth of Dukkha, the first stepping-stone to a deeper understanding which culminated in their realization of the Truth of Anattā at the end of the second Discourse.

### **Further Explanation of the Five Aggregates**

It is worth noting that each of the five Khandha is treated

something like a collective noun, being termed 'aggregate' i.e. things brought together and considered as a group. Hence the names of the aggregates of Rūpa, Vedanā, Saññā, Saṅkhāra and Viññāṇa. They are the terms most frequently mentioned in Buddhist scriptures.

In normal, everyday language, it is a matter of course that the 'self' referred to must be directed towards the collection of these five Aggregates, without which there would be nothing for reference. It is these Aggregates that are the supposition for, the understanding of, and the seat of attachment to, what is termed 'self'. Hence another term with the pre-fix 'Upādāna' is added to the word, which becomes Upādānakkhandha', the Aggregates as seat of Attachment. With the number 'pañca' meaning 'five' added once again, the term becomes 'Pañcupādānakkhandha', the Five Aggregates as seats of Attachment (as Attā).

In this Sutta the Buddha pointed to the five Aggregates as being non-self or Anattā. This was obviously contradictory to the people's and the five ascetics' belief. The reason he advanced was that should the Aggregates be Attā, they would not be conducive to 'illness' and fulfilled would be a person's wish concerning the Aggregates : may they be like this, and not like that. But, inasmuch as the Aggregates are conducive to illness and fulfilled cannot be a people's and the five ascetics' belief, the reason he advanced was that they are Anattā i.e. cannot be regarded as self.

The passage 'to be conducive to illness' can be interpreted literally and connotatively. In the former case, the meaning is clear enough. In the latter case, however, the term may be interpreted as '*being exposed, and subject, to harmful or destructive elements.*' Through this connotation, it is possible to extend the meaning, making it to point to the fact that the five Aggregates, once being born, is exposed to the destructive forces of old age, illness and death. In other words, their birth is to be followed as a result by deterioration, decline and disappearance. They just cannot be immune to the ravages of those destructive forces.

Referring specifically to the Aggregate of Form or the body, it is obvious how it has been undergoing a considerable degree of changes and deterioration. That it does not cease to exist despite those changes is because of the replacement growth provided by the food and drink consumed. It is this process that has contributed to its continuity. Modern medical knowledge has also affirmed that even the hardest part of the body i.e. the bone is not an exception to this fact. It can be said that the skeleton when a person was born and its counterpart when he or she is grownup are *entirely* different. This is not to mention the other, softer parts such as the skin and flesh, the replacement process of which is sure to take place far more rapidly. This shows how the Aggregate of Rūpa has been undergoing births and deaths continuously. And it is because of this continuity, called Santati in Pali, that it appears to live on despite its changes and transformation.

The Aggregate of Vedanā, call it Sensations or Feelings, although non-material, proves to be more conspicuous and more fleeting in this regard. Just recall how many times a sensation of happiness arises and fades away, to be superseded by one of suffering, only to be replaced by one of neutrality, which is sure to disappear before long. The same can be said of other incorporeal Aggregates viz. Saññā, Saṅkhāra and Viññāṇa. Our memory or determining power arises and fades away, sometimes playing tricks on us. The Saṅkhāra is no less fleeting. One thought arises, only to be replaced by another in an instant. Even Viññāṇa as an Aggregate suffers the same fate.

**Now**, the term Viññāṇa deserves a special attention. As earlier mentioned, the term admits of a variety of interpretations, sometimes being equivalent to mind, at other times to whatever is destined to experience rebirths, and still at other times to awareness through sense-doors called, for instance, eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness. These depend on the contexts wherein it is used. Generally it is understood to refer to what is destined to take (re)birth. This occurs

in several places in the Buddhist scriptures themselves in the cases of story-telling. These make the understanding logical enough. However, as the fifth Aggregate, Viññāṇa takes on a different meaning. It refers to the consciousness as a result of the eyes reacting upon the sight and is called Cakkhu Viññāṇa or Eye-consciousness. Through other sense-doors such as the ears, as reaction of the ears upon the sound, it is called Sota Viññāṇa or Ear-consciousness. In like manner, the reactions or awareness through other sense-doors viz. between the nose and the smell, the tongue and the taste, the body and the contact are called Ghāṇa Viññāṇa (Nose-consciousness), Jivhā Viññāṇa (Tongue-consciousness), Kāya Viññāṇa (Body-consciousness) respectively. The remaining one is called Mind-consciousness or Mano Viññāṇa, being the reaction of the mind on the theme or subject-matter of thought. In this sense the Aggregate of Viññāṇa can be viewed as being plural in number as far as the channels of its arising are concerned. Like other Aggregates, Viññāṇa in this sense also is no exception in having to undergo the ceaseless arising and falling away i.e. births and deaths.

Such is how the five Aggregates of Existence are exposed to 'illness', being irresistibly subject to old age, decline, death or arising and fading away. They cannot be under the dictatorial order or wish of anything or anyone, be it in the positive or the negative sense. The Aggregate of Rūpa, for instance, keeps changing ceaselessly, never remaining at the point where one wishes to have it do so. Vedanā is similarly in the condition of flux. Happiness, despite our wish to have it remain stable, and suffering, despite our wish to have it disappear, obey their own natural courses rather than our desire and aversion. Saññā (call it Perception or memory if you will), Saṅkhāra (conditioned thought) and Viññāṇa (Sensory consciousness) are also in the same boat. Since they are all '*born free*' so to speak, being thereby independent of everybody's will or control, it follows that they are, in Buddhist sense, 'exposed to illness'. Being always changeable and exposed to illness, they are to be considered non-self or Anattā, being nobody's self and belonging to nobody.

Such being the case, should there be anything worthy of being regarded as Attā at all, it should not be exposed to 'illness' and should be under a person's controlling power. Otherwise, it could not be termed Attā or self. This is how the five Aggregates cannot be Attā.

### The First Test

**Having** pointed out how the characteristics of Anattā can be known, the Buddha checked the five Ascetics' understanding and acceptance of the truth, asking them whether or not the five Aggregates should be permanent. They answered in the negative. He asked further whether what is impermanent should be regarded as producing suffering or happiness. Whereupon they admitted that it is suffering. In the third time, the Exalted One questioned them on their attitude, asking whether, as far as what is suffering and is subject to decline and deterioration is concerned, it should be advisable or not to regard it as their Attā or self. To which they answered, as before, in the negative.

Such may be regarded as the first test occurring in the Buddhist Dispensation, being a test just after the instruction given. The test questions herein were based on the Three Characteristics viz. Changeability, Destructibility and Non-substantiality or Non-selfness. It was after the Buddha has already elaborated the characteristics of the Aggregates that he recapitulated what had been instructed so far, questioning their attitude towards these Aggregates. Having realised those characteristics, they readily admitted the changeability on the grounds that the Aggregates are subject to 'illness' and thus are beyond control. It follows, therefore, that those Aggregates are destined to produce Dukkha,—*what cannot remain stable or cannot be indestructible*. This is called Vipariṇāma-dhamma, what is of the nature to shift and change. The term can be seen frequently in the scriptures. As such it is inadvisable to regard those Aggregates as 'Etaṁ mama'—this is mine, 'Eso hamasmi'—I am this, and 'Eso me attā'—this is my self.

Having questioned the five ascetics and known their attitude, the Blessed One recapitulated his instruction, leading them to the all-inclusive conclusion that all the five Aggregates, be they in the past, present or future, internal or external, crude or refined, good or evil, far or near, are *mere* Aggregates of Rūpa, Vedanā, Saññā, Saṅkhāra and Viññāna. They should be considered, by means of the right attitude of mind, that they do not belong to anyone, that anyone is not they and that they are not anybody's self.

Then the Blessed One went on to tell them the results of that realization to the effect that a Noble Disciple, having thus heard i.e. having been endowed with such a Right Knowledge, is disenchanted from the five Aggregates. With Disenchantment comes Dispassionateness (Virāga). After that comes Deliverance (Vimutti). Then in its train there arises the Insight realising that Deliverance. These are supra-mundane results consisting of Sammappaññā (Right Knowledge), Nibbidā (Disillusioned Weariness), Virāga (Dispassionateness), Vimutti (Deliverance or Emancipation) and Vimuttiñāṇadassana (Insight realising that Deliverance).

This is how Right Knowledge involving the five Aggregates is the stepping-stone leading to steadily higher attainments, culminating in the Insight realising all previous attainments. They are worth noting for the sake of a better understanding of the instructions on this level in other works and sermons.

### **To 'recognise the faces'**

It will be seen how significant it is for Buddhists to "*recognise the faces*", so to speak, of the five Aggregates whenever any of them occur in the mind. This is in addition to *remembering their names*. Thereafter it is imperative to know their nature i.e. the Three Characteristics by which they are governed viz. Changeability, Destructibility and Non-substantiality or Non-selfness. This will be of far greater benefit than to know them through Saññā i.e. through memorising their names. It is through knowing i.e. realising their nature, after



knowing their 'faces', that the first stepping-stone to supramundane results i.e. Nibbidā (Disillusioned Weariness or Disenchantment) can take place. A Buddhist understanding this process is in the position to understand more profound truths along this line of practice.

According to the Sutta, the five Ascetics having listened to the Buddha's instruction, their minds were overwhelmed by an ecstatic delight, with the result that they were absolutely delivered from all the latent Defilements embedded therein. Thus there were at the moment six Arahants in the world, with the Blessed One himself as the first of the group. With such attainment there occurred on that day the Three Gems in the highest sense of the term. They are the Buddha, the Dhamma and at this moment, the Sangha in the person of the five Ascetics. It was mentioned that the day was the fifth of the waning moon in the Sāvāna lunar month, being equivalent to the fifth day of the waning moon in the eighth lunar month of Thailand.

*As for the fullmoon day five days ago, when the Buddha preached his First Sermon, only the ascetic Kundañña obtained the Eye of Dhamma, being thereby a Stream-winner, not yet an Arahant. It may be regarded as being the day when the first stepping-stone leading to the Arahantship was laid. It was five days later, when the five Ascetics became full witnesses of the Buddha's Enlightenment, that the Kingdom of Buddhism was for the first time securely established in the world.*

## THE THREE CHARACTERISTICS

**It's** always necessary  
To recognise the 'faces'  
When'er one comes to 'see'  
Each of Five Aggregates.

**This** will be conducive  
To their contemplation  
It's far more productive,  
Yielding fruits more certain

**Than** just to memorise  
 Knowing merely their names,  
 Ignorant of their size,  
 And face, and form and fame.

**The** Khandha Viññāna  
 Is like a magician  
 'Twas called by Lord Buddha  
 In one of his sermons.

**Its** fame and its influence  
 Dominate all Three Realms  
 With all individuals  
 Under it at the helm.

**How** all these Aggregates  
 Merge in body-and-mind  
 Take birth, function and fade  
 With Attachment entwined

**An** aspirant must 'see'  
 Based on contemplating  
 Characteristics Three  
 Without Desire to cling.

**With** each 'face' remembered  
 And all tricks recognised  
 There's no burden shouldered  
 Nor clinging by the wise.

**Such** is the stepping-stone  
 At least for Stream-Winner.  
 The Noble Seed is sown  
 No backward move for ever.

## AGGREGATES PROGRAMMED

**All** Aggregates have been programmed  
By Group of Three 'Tilakkhaṇa'\*  
Their existence merely a sham.  
This proclaimed by our Lord Buddha.

**Thus** there is none that can be owned.  
There're merely things having been 'lent'.  
One day they must be left alone  
To be 'returned' with Detachment.

**Let** not Buddhists identify  
Themselves with any Aggregate,  
Clinging to them as "I, me, my."  
This so they can cast off the weight

**That** overwhelms their lives and minds.  
Thereafter they will be blessed with  
Their mental eye no longer blind,  
Their task completed and finished.

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\*the Three Characteristics of the Conditioned viz. Changeability, Flux or Destructibility and Non-substantiality or Non-selfness.

## VENERABLE YASA

**There** was at that time in the city of Benares a wealthy householder's son by the name of Yasa, who was the apple of his parents' eye. His doting parents had (*as in the case of the Buddha*) three residences built for him, one for each season. From his birth he had been pampered by whatever a boy or a youth of his age and status should wish for. His was a life of comforts and conveniences amidst the pleasures of music and entertainments offered him by young maidens. The most significant day of his life came one night when he, having gone to sleep first, woke up late at night, only to see what was to be a watershed for his life. This was the sight of his own concubines who were sleeping in his chamber with various indecent and careless postures. The youth was suddenly overwhelmed by the feeling of repulsion, which prompted him to exclaim, "How unwholesome is this place ! How doleful it is !" Spurred on by such a feeling of disgust he went forth into the night, incidentally heading towards the Deer Park of Isipatana, where the Buddha was engaging in walking meditation. Hearing the youth still expressing his displeasure, the Buddha called out to him, saying, "The place is not unwholesome here; nor is it doleful..." Having heard such words, the youth was delighted, saying to himself, "It is good that this place is not unwholesome nor doleful." He took a proper seat before the Buddha, who then instructed him with the Discourse on the progressive importance of the Five Steps of Practice. This was in pali terms called Anupubbīkathā. The instruction was followed by the sermon on the Four Noble Truths, at the end of which the youth was blessed with the Dhamma-Eye, being transformed thereby into a Sotāpanna or Stream-Winner.

The youth was missed when his mother went to see him in the morning and did not find him in his chamber. She told his father, who sent out search parties to various directions. Going himself along

the way to Isipatana, he saw his son's sandals and, following their trace, approached the Buddha and asked him whether he saw his son there. Whereupon the Buddha told him to be seated, so that he could see his son. Then the Buddha preached to him the Five Themes of Progressive Importance and the Four Noble Truths in the same manner as he had done to Yasa. At the end of the sermon Yasa's father became a Stream-Winner and declared himself an Upāsaka or male lay disciple, taking as Refuge for the rest of his life the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. He was thereby the first male lay disciple taking the Three Jewels as his refuge.

What is worth noting here is that, while the Buddha was instructing Yasa's father, the youth was also listening to the same sermon, reviewing and intensifying his understanding of the Dhamma while being seated nearby (*both father and son not seeing each other*). At the end of the sermon, the youth with his realization deepened was able to attain the Arahathood, being thereby an Arahant. It was by this time that Yasa's father was able to see his son and asked him to go back home in order that he could save the life of his mother, who was all the time mourning his loss. The Buddha then told the youth's father that his son has already attained the Arahathood and was therefore not in a position to go back to the life of a layman as before. At this Yasa's father gave his appreciation and invited the Buddha, together with Yasa his son as an attendant Bhikkhu, to have a meal at his home. He then went back to tell his wife of the great news, while Yasa asked the Buddha for ordination,—which the Buddha readily gave in the manner of what was earlier called Ehi Bhikkhu admission.

In the morning the Buddha and Venerable Yasa as attendant Bhikkhu proceeded to have their meal at Venerable Yasa's house. There he preached to Venerable Yasa's mother and his former wife, who in pali was called Purānadutiyikā, the woman who used to be his wife. Both were transformed into Stream-Winners through the same sermon of the Five Themes and the Four Noble Truths. Both women

declared themselves Upāsikās, women lay disciples taking the Triple Gem as Refuges for the rest of their lives. They were regarded as the first women lay disciples in Buddhism.

There were later four friends of Venerable Yasa. They were also sons of wealthy families who had been long-time acquaintances to one another. Having heard of Yasa's renunciation they came and approached the Buddha, who preached to them the same themes and were admitted into the Order in the same way, having been all Arahants. Thus there were at the time eleven Arahants in the world. Still later another group of fifty friends of Venerable Yasa, having heard of their friends' renunciation and concluded that it was to be based on a superior goal and rewarded with a superior achievement, came to see the Buddha, were given the same instructions followed by other sundry sermons and later attained the Arahathood as before, thereby bringing the total number of Arahants to sixty-one. This being a sizable number, the Buddha called them together and gave them a special instruction, saying,

“The Tathāgata is delivered from all bonds, be they divine or human. Even so are you all. Now go forth for the benefit, advantage and happiness of the many, divine as well as human beings. May not two of you go together in the same direction. Let each of you go alone, in a particular direction. Preach the Dhamma, which is beautiful in the beginning, in the middle and in the end, both in the contextual meaning and the literal one, declaring thereby the chaste life which is absolutely perfect and purified. Sentient beings there are whose wisdom eye is not so much clouded by the dust of Defilements. Such beings, not having listened to the Dhamma, would be bereft of achievement. Thus there are those who are able to understand the Dhamma. As for the Tathāgata, I am going to the district of Uruvela to preach the Dhamma.” Such was how the Buddha first sent forth his Arahant disciples on their missions, with each proceeding in one direction and destination.

Having been sent forth in the manner earlier described, the Arahant disciples going on to different directions and destinations were successful in inspiring and impressing the people of various lands with the Dhamma they preached. However, upon being asked for ordination, each had to bring those people to the Buddha himself so they could be admitted into the Order in the formal manner as before. This had incurred much time and trouble due to their having travelled a great distance. The Buddha seeing this later gave his proxy to the Bhikkhus so they could be authorised to give ordination to the faithful themselves. This could be done by another kind of ordination called *Tisaraṇagamanūpasampadā*, meaning ordination through expressing one's faith in the Triple Gem. By this method an applicant was required to shave his hair and beard, don the *Kāsāya* robe with one shoulder covered. He then prostrated at the Bhikkhu his teacher's feet, squatted and joined hands in token of reverence, thereby reciting the passages expressing his faith in the Triple Gem three times. Such was therefore the second, more formal kind of ordination.

### **Anupubbikathā : Five Themes of Progressive Importance**

**Following** are explanations for what was called the Five Themes of Progressive Importance and the Four Noble Truths with which the Buddha instructed Yasa and other disciples.

The *Anupubbikathā*, literally the themes of progressive importance, of which there are five, are : *Dāna* (Charity), *Sīla* (Precepts or Morality), *Sagga* (Celestial realms), *Kāmadīnava* (Disadvantages of sensual pleasure) and *Nekkhammānisaṁsa* (Advantages of renunciation i.e. the giving up of sensual pleasure).

*Dāna* has two meanings viz. as a reference to matter, it means the matter or material things that are given or dispensed with, whereas referring to the *Cetanā* it means the will to give or to part with. The purpose of *Dāna* in Buddhism is to encourage people to take delight in giving, which may sometimes be a giving of help and at other times a form of worship. Both cases are, however, intended to reduce

greed and miserliness defiling the mind and at the same time to share one's possessions or wealth with others. This is equivalent to sharing one's happiness, not hoarding them all for oneself.

However, for an act of charity to yield the maximum result there are three factors involved. First is *Vatthusampatti*, the perfection of the things to be given. They must be beneficial to the receiver to some degree, being thereby not, for instance, a poison. Second is *Cetanāsampatti*, the perfection of will or intention. This refers to the right, unselfish intention before, during and after the act of charity. Third is the *Paṭigāhakaśampatti*, the perfection on the part of the receiver. This means that the receiver must also, by virtue of his quality, deserve to be given the charity such as being one in need or one worthy of worship. From this it is obvious that the charity praised by the Buddha is to be based on the scrutinising wisdom. In other words, it must be selective or analytical, not to be done at random. As earlier mentioned, the person dispensing charity must select the things to be given, analyse one's own intention and make a careful note of the receiver. This is to prevent the giver from regret or being troubled later on. Such is the first of the five themes of progressive importance.

**Second** in the series comes *Sīla*, Precepts or Morality, literally meaning 'normal'. The term refers to the normal physical, verbal and mental condition in that neither of them is overcome by Defilements or *Kilesa*, being thereby not doing evil in words, deeds and thoughts. To achieve this end, there must be what is called *Viratticetanā*, the will to abstain from doing so. *Sīla* in Buddhism is of various kinds or levels, such as the Five Precepts, the will to abstain from the five kinds of harming others. Thus the Five Precepts are the condition of having no harm or being in no dangerous position to others. To observe Precepts is therefore equivalent to giving the *Dāna* of harmlessness to all sentient beings. The Precept-observers themselves also enjoy the benefit of producing no hatred or danger towards themselves on the part of others. This is second of theme of progressive importance.



**Next** comes the theme of Sagga or celestial realms. The etymological root of the term is worth noting, for it can be interpreted to mean either bondage or superiority of pleasure. It is generally understood that a celestial realm is actually another realm or dimension apart from the present life here. It is to be the attainment after the dissolution of the body on the part of those who have accumulated merit within this life-time. There are several references in the pali scriptures such as the Cha-kāmāvacara Sagga i.e. the six celestial realms of sensual pleasure. This concept belonged to the scriptures that ante-dated Buddhism. The concept was partly incorporated in Buddhism in later times.

In another sense, the Buddha was recorded to have also interpreted the meaning of 'realm of bliss' (in Saṃ. Sālā. 18/159/215), concentrating on the obvious conditions of the moments of mind, to the effect that

"Whenever there occurs a pleasant, enjoying experience through the eyes, that is the Phassāyatana (contact through the sense-doors) celestial realm through the sight.

"Whenever there occurs a pleasant, enjoying experience through the ears, that is the Phassāyatana celestial realm through the sound.

"Whenever there occurs a pleasant, enjoying experience through the nose, that is the Phassāyatana celestial realm through the nose."

"Whenever there occurs a pleasant, enjoying experience through the tongue, that is the Phassāyatana celestial realm through the tongue.

"Whenever there occurs the pleasant, enjoying experience through the body, that is the Phassāyatana celestial realm through the body.

"Whenever there occurs recollection through the mind of the pleasant, enjoying experience through the eyes, ears and so forth, that is the Phassāyatana celestial experience through the Dhamma (herein meaning the mind)."

The above passages of the Buddha appear to have pointed out the general, overall meaning of the term 'heaven' or 'celestial realm',

being unlimited by space and time. Thus it may refer to the present or the future, to the here or the hereafter. Whenever there occurs such an experience, there it can be interpreted as Saggā or celestial since it is of the superior kind or level and since it is also the seat of attachment to a considerable degree, being as it is the fulfilment of a person's wishes. However, the celestial realm in the sense referred to above is to be based on the wholesome acts of Dāna or charity followed by one of Precepts or Morality i.e. Sīla. In the present, practical concept, the Buddha's explanations are not unreasonable. If people are delighted in sharing whatever they possess as a means of sharing happiness and if they are established in the Precepts, not resorting to the practice of harming or violence in any way, but being ready to forgive and forget, they are sure to live a life of harmony and amity. In whatever direction they turn to, it is obvious how they will always be blessed with the experiences that are peaceful and pleasant through all the sense-doors, be they the eyes, ears and so forth. Never will there be any trouble or suffering as a result of taking an unfair advantage of others by whatever means, which would sow the seeds of anger, hatred or violence. Such is the obvious, practical characteristic of being in a 'celestial realm.' This is the third of the five themes of progressive importance.

**The fourth theme** is called Kāmādinava, the disadvantages or dangers of sensual enjoyment. That the celestial realm is called Kāma or realm of sensual pleasure is because it is still engrossed in the pleasure of the senses that is extremely satisfying, desire-fulfilling. The term 'Kāma', literally translated sense-pleasure, can be used to refer either to the external objects producing pleasure or to the feeling of pleasure caused by those objects. As a matter of fact, what produces the feeling of pleasure in the external objects is nothing but the defilements embedded within the mind itself. It is therefore this internal factor that is the original cause of delight. Without such defilements in the mind the external would become neutral. For worldlings, therefore, wherever they go and dwell, such places can offer them

something of sensual pleasure and delight. On the contrary, for the Arahants, who have uprooted all desires in sensual pleasure, they will find nothing to arouse sensual delight, which they have done away with, once for all. It is because of this fact that the term Kāma can be used to refer either to the external objects or to the inward defilement although in many cases the former sense is often implied.

**Now the celestial realm** of Sagga, whatever superior or refined delight it offers, is still a kind of sensual pleasure. It is therefore subject to change and decline, being within the cycle of births and deaths, no matter how extremely slow is the process of change there as compared with that of the human world. With the desire and consequent attachment to those giving much pleasure and delight, it is certain that, when the time comes for them to suffer the inevitable destiny of decline and disappearance, the grief and sorrow as a result of strong desire and attachment is sure to be correspondingly strong and poignant. This, therefore, is the eventual disadvantage and danger of sensual delight, which comes as the fourth in the five themes of progressive importance.

**Finally** comes the theme of Nekkhamma, the benefits of renouncing the desire for and attachment to the supposed pleasure in those sensual objects. This can be divided into two kinds viz. physical and mental. The former implies the giving up of household life for the sake of one of homelessness, whereas the latter refers to the efforts to make the mind tranquilised and one-pointed. It is then rid of the unwholesome qualities i.e. unskilful thoughts and emotions. As a result of this, the mind will be clothed by a peaceful bliss, being thereby detached from a lingering attachment to the 'delight' supposedly offered by those objects of 'pleasure'. This is the fifth theme in the series of what was called Anupubbikathā.

It was when the Buddha proceeded to this point that he observed (*clairvoyantly*) that the minds of the listeners were blessed with radiance, being thereby freed of mental hindrances and thus ready for a higher instruction. This was like a piece of cloth washed

off its stains, being ready to absorb the dye. He then proceeded to instruct them further with the Four Noble Truths, pointing out to them the Truths of Suffering, its Cause, its Extinction and the Path leading thereto, all this in the manner already described in the First Sermon. This theme of the Four Noble Truths was called *Samukkaṅsika dhammadesanā* i.e. the sermon the Buddha applied to instruct the people himself since he had realised it by virtue of his own Enlightenment. Usually, after the Buddha had instructed the listeners with these themes one after the other, the listeners would as a rule achieve the Dhamma-eye called the Path of the Stream-Winner or *Sotāpanna*.

It may also be noted that these Five Themes followed by the Four Noble Truths were given by the Buddha only to human beings who were lay people. Never was he recorded to have applied them to bhikkhus or celestial beings. Moreover, those lay people must have been seen (*clairvoyantly*) to be mature enough to be blessed with mental radiance and delight after having listened to the sermon. As a result, the instructions never failed to bring about the result foreseen : attainment by the listeners of the Dhamma-Eye or the stage of the Stream-Winner.

The term *Dhammacakkhu* was used to imply realization of the truth that whatever is of the nature to take birth is also destined to decline or to be extinct. Since this characterises the condition of a *Sotāpanna*, it follows that, no matter by what sermon the people were instructed, if they were able to win through to this level of attainment, they were sure to be rewarded with this realization. By virtue of this it may be surmised that this is nothing but penetration into the truths concerning suffering. For realization of birth and decline means realization of suffering, and *vice versa*. In the cases of wordings, only the birth can be known i.e. recognised or accepted since it is a process already undergone. However, there is still no recognition or acceptance of decline or death, since for them this is something ahead i.e. in the future, not yet occurring to them. This means a partial or one-sided recognition. It is a lop-sided knowledge, being

bereft of the other half, which is its supplement or complement. Thus the Dhamma-Eye, one seeing the Dhamma or the Truths, necessarily implies the double, inseparable aspect : the instantaneous birth and death alternating each other in the unending process. It is when an aspirant is able to see through this process continuously i.e. uninterruptedly that the throne of Defilements can be pulled down, there being no foundation on which they can rest. Henceforward there is no room for love and hate, or for desire and aversion, both of which thrive on the concept that there *is* something really *existing*. Without anything seen as existing, there would be nothing as an anchor or foundation for Defilements to hang or rest on.

For this reason worldlings cannot be said to have penetrated the Truth of Suffering. If they should see or recognise it at all, it would be but partial,—only a negligible degree of it. For the Dhamma-Eye to occur, an aspirant is required to see or recognise the process through and through, realising thereby its decline or death simultaneously i.e. the moment the birth is seen. This is called ***the present***, being something like telescoping both aspects of the truth and synchronizing them into the ***one and present*** moment, when Defilements are destined to lose their anchor or foundation. This is what is meant by the term Dhamma-Eye. It does not matter, therefore, what is the theme of the sermon delivered, what is its beginning, middle and the end. In other words, there is no stress for the ability to memorise the ***words*** of the sermon or instruction. The purpose here is only the meaning implied by those words, which may vary with the context, and by the consequent realization thereof, which means the depth of understanding those words are meant to lead the aspirants to. The first achievement in Buddhism is this Dhamma-Eye attainment, which is the stepping-stone leading to higher, or the highest, attainment through some other instructions that the Buddha saw should be appropriate for such an aspirant.

**DHAMMA** is not a precipice;  
Instead, it is a gentle slope  
With system of gradual practice  
For all of us to have a hope

**If** only we can be sincere,  
Correcting our deficiency,  
Not discouraged by any fear,  
Attempting ascent gradually.

**While** enjoying sensual pleasure  
Don't be completely carried away.  
Let's be mindful of its danger  
So we may give it up one day.

**Contemplating** the Noble Truths,  
We shall accomplish our ascent,  
Winning through to the Absolute  
To be blessed with Enlightenment.

**This** process has been undergone  
By determined, courageous minds.  
They didn't despair feeling forlorn  
But struggled on till they could find

**At** least the point along the 'Stream'  
Where aspirants don't retrogress—  
The first step to the Bliss supreme—  
Criterion, climax of success.

**This** cannot be monopolised,  
Being inward, persistent call  
Beckoning us to scale the heights  
And win the bliss highest of all.

## THE MATTED-HAIRED HERMITS

**The Blessed One** having spent the period of Rains Retreat in the Isipatana deer park went back, according to a Commentary, on the first day of the waning moon, towards the district of Uruvelā Senānigama, where he had attained enlightenment. His purpose was to enlighten the group of matted-haired hermits, totalling one thousand, who built their hermitages there. While on his way he took a rest under the shade of a leafy tree in a cotton field. It happened that there were a group of 30 youths called Bhaddavaggiya who were having fun with their wives nearby. However, there was one youth who, without a wife of his own, hired the service of a prostitute to act as his temporary wife. At the moment when they were all off guard, the prostitute made away with their valuables. Having known this later on, they went out in search of the woman and soon came across the Buddha. Upon being asked about the woman they were looking for, the Buddha questioned them whether it would be more advisable to look for the woman or for themselves. Possibly being perplexed, they answered, out of curiosity, that they would prefer seeking whatever they themselves were. Thenceforward, the Blessed One preached to them, as in the case of Yasa and his family, the Anupubbākathā i.e. the Five Themes of Progressive Importance and wound up with the doctrine of the Four Noble Truths. These resulted in the youths obtaining the Dhamma-eye and asking for ordination. The Buddha having given them the Ehi-ordination sent them forth on the Dhamma propagation mission while he himself proceeded to the district of Uruvela, where there dwelt the group of one thousand matted-haired hermits.

**Of those one thousand** there were three leaders. The eldest of them was called Uruvelakassapa, with five hundred disciples of his own, all residing in a hermitage by the side of the river. The younger one by the name of Nadīkassapa, with a retinue of three hundred, established the hermitage some distance away downstream. The youngest of all called Gayākassapa had his hermitage some distance

further downstream with the retinue of two hundred hermits.

The Buddha went first of all to the hermitage of Uruvelakassapa, the eldest brother, and asked for his permission to take lodging there. He was admitted. Thereafter followed a long series of the display of psychic powers by the Buddha, who wished to bring home to Uruvela the fact that he was not, as he so thought, an Arahant. Here we learn from the Scriptures how the Blessed One had for quite some time made use of what was called Iddipāṭihāriya and Ādesanāpāṭihāriya in the course of his attempts. The former referred to the dramatic psychic feats as a result of the powerful mind, whereas the latter to his capacity to read the mind i.e. the thoughts and emotions of the hermit Uruvela.

At long last the Buddha's efforts bore fruits. The hermit was finally convinced of his erroneous assumption and of the Buddha's supremacy. He requested to be admitted into the Order of Sangha. The Buddha then told him to first make it known to his disciples, whereupon he did so. The hermit's disciples being similarly convinced floated their paraphernalia down the river and were later on, along with Uruvela their leader, admitted ordination by the Buddha himself. When Uruvela's two younger brothers, Nadi and Gayā, saw their elder brothers' equipment being floated down the current, they likewise thought that some kind of danger must have occurred to their elder brother. They rushed to see their brothers and were thereby convinced of the Buddha's Enlightenment. They all asked for ordination and were similarly admitted by the Buddha himself. Such was how the one thousand matted-haired hermits, together with their three leaders, were admitted into the Order of Sangha in Buddhism.

**Now it was time** for those hermits to be taught higher themes of Dhamma through the Anusāsanīpāṭihāriya i.e. Miracles of the Teaching for their higher attainment. With that aim in mind, the Blessed One led them to the district of Gayāsīsa by the side of the Gayā river and delivered to them a sermon which by the Ancient Compilers was called Ādittapariyāyasutta, literally the Discourse on the burning power of fire.



## Ādittapariyāyasutta

**At the beginning** of the Discourse the Buddha reminded the hermits of the burning power of what he called "All Things".

Following was his elaboration.

**Part One : Group One :** The eyes, the sight to be seen by the eyes, the eye-consciousness, the eye-contact, the sensations or feeling produced thereby.

*Group two :* The ears, the sound to be heard by the ears, the ear-consciousness, the ear-contact and the sensations produced thereby.

*Group Three :* The nose, the smell to be conceived by the nose, the nose-consciousness, the nose-contact and the sensations produced thereby.

*Group four :* The tongue, the taste to be conceived by the tongue, the tongue-consciousness, the tongue-contact and the sensations produced thereby.

*Group Five :* The body, the touch to be felt by the body, the body-consciousness, the body-contact and the sensations produced thereby.

*Group Six :* The mind, the subject-matter to be conceived by the mind, the mind-consciousness, the mind-contact and the sensations produced thereby.

**All these 'things', he concluded, are burning.**

**Part Two.** The Blessed One went on to describe *why* they are burning and *what* it is that burns them. In his elaboration he told them they all are burning because of the fires of lust, hatred, delusion, decline, death, grief, lamentation, physical diseases, sorrow and despair.

**Part Three.** Here he informed them of the advantages to be obtained from such a realization. For a Noble Disciple, having thus been informed. having thus been convinced, becomes weary of them all. Being weary, he gets rid of his lustful desire. Without a lustful desire, he is delivered therefrom. Being delivered he is equipped with the Insight whereby he is able to know he is now delivered, there being no more of his birth, his chaste life having been finished, there being no more to be done for the sake of that achievement.

It was recorded that the one thousand hermits having listened to this Discourse had their minds delivered from the bonds of Defilements, becoming thereby one thousand Arahants.

### NOTES

**It should be noted**, as a means of comparison, that there are in this Discourse more elaborate details of various parts of the body than in the former two Discourses. In the Dhammakkappavatanasutta and Anattalakkhanasutta the Blessed One preached to the Five Almsmen, pointing out the Five Aggregates of Form, Sensation, Perception, Mental Conditioner and Consciousness, but did not go into *how*, or through what channels those Defilements take birth. In this Discourse, however, as far as the Five Aggregates are concerned, he appeared to lay stress on the Aggregate of Sensation or Vedanā. It is therefore advisable to discuss this point as follows.

From the Buddhist point of view, it can be concluded, in accordance with the various Discourses, that a person is composed mainly of two parts viz. the body and the mind, the former referring to the tangible, visible part, whereas the latter to an entity, or something, that performs the function of thinking and knowing. It is, in other words, the element of knowing. Now the Buddhist doctrine, especially the practical aspect, stresses training and controlling the less obvious but more significant part of the body i.e. the mind. In case of the Buddha himself, it was not until he had discovered, while still a Bodhisatta, the means by which to deal rightly with the mind, that he was said to have discovered the Right Path. It was on such a path that he steadfastly followed until he finally attained Enlightenment. This shows how in Buddhism the mind is of the utmost importance.

The term *citta*, or mind, however, does not mean the body nor any part thereof. In brief, it is not the Rūpa i.e. not what is called Form. One of the Buddha's sayings points clearly to this fact. It is "Asarīraṃ, not the body, that is to say, not having form. It is Guhāsayāṃ : dwelling in the cave i.e. the body. A person's life can go on functioning as long as his body and mind are still working in harmony. When what is called the mind has left the body or when the body

has dissolved until the mind cannot function within, life ceases to exist. How the existence of what is called mind can be confirmed in accordance with the Buddhist teaching will be discussed later on. Following is the description of *Vithicitta* or mind manifesting through the sense-organs.

It is true that the mind, or *citta*, being the element of 'knowing', displays its ability to 'know' through the *āyatana* or sense-organs. As such it 'knows', or in this sense 'becomes aware of', the sight through the eyes or, to be more precise, the nerves of the eyes. In the same manner, it is aware of the sound through the ear-nerves, the smell through the nose-nerves, the taste through the tongue nerve-system, the touch through the body nerve-system and then the *dhamma*, herein referring to the inner phenomena (of thoughts) through the '*mana*', which also refers to the mind. Hence the six *āyatanas* viz. eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and *mana* serving as the doorways through which the *citta* can be aware of the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and can manifest the thinking function. Without these six 'doorways' the *citta* would be like being engaged within a doorless and windowless room. It is thus oblivious to everything. Of the six sense-doors, the first five are obvious enough, whereas the sixth i.e. the *mana* necessitates some more details for a clearer understanding.

The term *mana* is generally translated *mind*. Etymologically, however, it means 'to be aware of'. Its object here is the term *dhamma*, which could be rendered (in English) subject-matters of various kinds viz. those of the sight, the sound, the smell, the taste, the touch that used to be experienced some time ago *but* that are recalled at the present moments. Obviously, that these are possible is not through the eyes, ears and so forth. Yet they can be recalled, can be made to come to mind, as it were. An instance may be seen in the case of the sight and the sound that were seen and heard previously, say, this morning. However, they can be recalled even now. ***This even though there is no function whatever of the eyes and the ears at the moment.*** It is vastly different from those experienced previously, which occurred by means of the eyes and the ears. This

agent functioning in place of the eyes and the ears is called *mana*, which may be translated *mind*, which may be described as 'to be aware of', or 'to recollect', being as it is the sixth sense-door in Buddhism. However, it is not equivalent to what is called the nerve or nerve-system. According to the late H.R.H. Prince Vajirañāṇavarorasa's viewpoint, it was supposed to be the brains.

From the Commentary of the Abhidhamma, *mana* as the sixth sense-door has the following function described therein.

With the contact of the eyes and the sight arises the eye-consciousness. By the term 'consciousness' is meant the awareness of the sight through the eyes.

With the contact of the ears and the sound arises the ear-consciousness i.e. to be aware of the sound through the ears.

With the contact of the nose and the smell arises nose-consciousness i.e. to be aware of the smell through the nose.

With the contact of the tongue and the taste arises tongue-consciousness i.e. to be aware of the taste through the tongue.

With the contact of the body and the touch arises the touch-consciousness i.e. to be aware of the touch through the body.

With the contact of the subject-matter and the mind arises the mind-consciousness i.e. to be aware of the subject-matter through the mind (i.e. *mana*).

According to this sutta or Discourse, Viññāṇa (Consciousness) come first, followed by Samphassa (Contact), of which there are correspondingly six kinds or channels based on the six sense-doors. There is explanation that the term samphassa refers to the coming together of the three factors for each channel viz. eyes, sight and eye-consciousness, the three being collectively called eye-contact (Cakkhu-Samphassa).

Similarly, the coming together of ears, sound & ear-consciousness forms the ear-contact (Sota-samphassa). The coming together of nose, smell and nose-consciousness forms the nose-contact (Ghāṇa-Samphassa). The coming together of tongue, taste and tongue-consciousness forms

the tongue-contact (Jivhā-samphassa). The coming together of body, touch and body-consciousness forms the body-contact (Kāya-samphassa). The coming together of mana, dhamma, and mano-consciousness forms the mind-contact (Mano samphassa).

Third comes the group of Feelings (Vedanā), the experience of happiness, suffering and neutrality. corresponding to the six contacts. There are likewise six channels through which Vedanā can take birth. One occurring through the eyes is called Cakkhusamphassajā Vedanā; one occurring through the ears is called Sotasamphassajā Vedanā; one occurring through the nose is called Ghānasamphassajā Vedanā; one occurring through the tongue is called Jivhāsamphassajā Vedanā; one occurring through the body is called Kāyasamphassajā Vedanā; and one occurring through the mind is called Manosamphassajā Vedanā.

Fourth comes what is called Saññā i.e. Perception, or the Determining faculty. It is also of six corresponding kinds in accordance with the six channels as before. They are: Rūpasaññā: to determine or remember the sight; Saddasaññā: to determine or remember the sound; Ghānasaññā: to determine or remember the smell; Rasasaññā : to determine or remember the taste; Photthabbasaññā: to determine or remember the touch; and Dhammasaññā: to determine or remember the thoughts coming to mind.

Next comes the Saṅkhāra, here meaning the conditioning thought as a result of the previous Saññā. It is divided into three kinds viz. what is Kusala or wholesome, what is Akusala or unwholesome and what is Abyākata or neutral, being neither wholesome nor unwholesome.

Thus Consciousness, Contact, Feeling, Perception and Conditioner are all the Nāmadhamma, literally the 'name' i.e. intangible or incorporeal. The pali term 'Nāma' refers to whatever is inclined towards (something else). In the practical sense, this means the function of the mind that inclines, or bends, towards being aware of something through the six sense-doors as earlier mentioned. When the mind i.e. citta inclines, or rather moves, forwards, the first result therefrom is

to be aware of. This is characteristic of Viññāṇa, which is generally translated Consciousness. What follows as the second result is Contact or Samphassa, then Feeling or Sensation, which is the word for Vedanā. The fourth to occur is Saññā or what is generally translated Perception, and the fifth is Saṅkhāra or Thought, which can be called the Conditioner.

In the group of Five Aggregates, however, Samphassa or Contact is left out, while Rūpa or Form i.e. the body comes first and Viññāṇa is the last. Hence another arrangement as Rūpa, Vedanā, Saññā, Saṅkhāra and Viññāṇa. As far as the priority of their respective births is concerned, Viññāṇa must come first of all. That should be Viññāṇa, Vedanā and Saññā and Saṅkhāra. The reason why Viññāṇa is arranged to come last is the intention to make a complete cycle of the group. This is because the inclination or movement process of the mind—what is called Nāma—starts with Viññāṇa. Excluding Contact, the second to come is Vedanā, the third Saññā and the fourth Saṅkhāra, — the latter being the conditioning agent, producing the wholesome, unwholesome or neutral mental reaction, as the case may be.

Now, while the conditioning process occurs, there is simultaneously, or rather synchronically, the awareness, or being conscious, of the process. This is the manifestation of Consciousness or Viññāṇa once again. This completes the cycle and starts it anew in an unending process. Such is how the Five Aggregates viz. Rūpa, Vedanā, Saññā, Saṅkhāra and Viññāṇa go through the process of 're-births' and the consequent 're-deaths', both being ceaseless. As is already known, the Five Aggregates can be divided into two groups i.e. the Rūpa or form, meaning the body, and Nāma, literally the 'Name', — what is intangible or non-material, referring to the inclination or movement nature of the *citta* or mind.

### **Sensory Consciousness or Sensory mind (Vithīcitta).**

**The** Vithīcitta is the manifestation, or passage-way of the *Citta*, which is intangible or incorporeal. As such it needs

something material for its expression. In other words, the *citta* manifests itself through the form (i.e. body), thereby moving towards being aware of the sight, the sound and so forth. Its first movement is characterised by, or is in the form of, *Viññāṇa*,—Consciousness or Awareness, followed by *Vedanā* (Feeling or Sensation), *Saññā* (Perception), *Sanḥāra* (Mental Conditioner) before starting the process of *Viññāṇa* once again.

Now to discuss the nature of what is called *Mana*. What has been explained so far regarding the six sense-doors and the six sense-objects, along with the *Vithīcitta* is in accordance with the Pali Tipitaka. There are some passages from the Commentary of the *Abhidhamma* dealing with *Mana* which should be discussed in more details as follows:

From the said Commentary, we learn that the *Mana*, as the sixth *Āyatana* or sense-door, is always to be coupled with the previous five counterparts. This so that the sensory consciousness along those channels can take birth. Thus, at the contact of the eyes and the sight, there is to be an effect on the *Mana* accompanying, otherwise the eye-consciousness cannot occur. This is true also of other sense-doors and sense-objects. There must be an effect on *Mana* whenever there is a contact between the ears and sound, the nose and smell, tongue and taste, body and touch, otherwise there would not be ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness and body-consciousness, as a result.

With regard to the sixth, whenever *Mana* and *dhamma* come into contact with each other, there arises at once the mind-consciousness (*Manoviññāṇa*). It is because of this fact that *Mana* is to be always involved in the former five channels of sensory consciousness.

**In the *Abhidhamma*,** there is more detailed explanation. It was mentioned therein that, in the case of the eyes, the sight was

said to have also a Vanna or colour, to be accompanied by the light (by which it can be seen), and then the Manasikāra, literally to keep it in the *mana*. This before there can arise the eye-consciousness. From this explanation, of the first five channels, the sight, for instance, must come into contact with the nerve system of the eyes and then act on the *Mana* simultaneously. This process was said to occur very rapidly,— to the extent that the moment there is a contact of the sight and the eyes, the *Mana* is instantaneously effected. An analogy was given of a bird alighting on a branch of a tree. The moment the bird perches on the branch, its shadow is cast on the ground suddenly, — in no time, that is.

From the explanations at length, it is worth noting the difference in usage and meaning of the three words viz. Viññāṇa, *Mana* or *Mano*, and *Citta* as follows:

**VIÑÑĀṆA.** The term is used to refer to awareness or, as is generally translated, consciousness in such cases as eye-consciousness. Never has it been used to mean whatever is destined to undergo the process of rebirth (after the dissolution of the body) or to mean something that is permanent.

**MANA or MANO.** The term is meant only to refer to the sixth sense-door or Āyatana. It functions in connection with the five former sense-doors and also with the 'dhamma', in the sense of whatever concerns such subject-matters as the rūpa (sight seen through the eyes) as earlier described. It is, in other words, the connecting link, or the doorway, or the channel by means of which the *citta* functions, in the same manner as the five former counterparts.

**CITTA.** This term refers to an entity that is formless but which dwells, so to speak, within the 'cave', which means the body. It functions as the agent that knows, that displays the cetanā i.e. will, which is behind all Kammās (actions, — physical, verbal and mental.). Thus it functions as a movement towards 'knowing' along the said channels. It is this *citta* that must be trained to be Precepts (Sīla),



Meditation (Samādhi), Wisdom or Knowledge (Paññā) and finally to be delivered (Vimutti), as was already mentioned in the Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta and the Ādittapariyāya Sutta. Those passages at the end of both Suttas point to the truth that the minds (i.e. *citta*) of those Bhikkhus were delivered from all the dormant Defilements (Āsava) by which their minds used to be overwhelmed. Here it is worth noting that never has there been anywhere the Buddha's saying that the *citta* is the Attā or self. On the contrary, there is the saying of the Buddha himself to the effect that even the *citta* should not be regarded as the self or attā. In the Saṃyuttanikāya, Nidānavagga (16/114/231–2) the Buddha was recorded as saying that it is better, should there be any attā at all, to regard the body as such. Like a restless monkey, which is always flitting from branch to branch, the mind is obviously flitting and fidgety. Should it be Attā or self, that self would be less stable than even the body. Hence, the inadvisability of regarding the *citta* as self.

As a matter of fact, the Buddhist doctrine is wholly based on grasping nothing whatever as self, such grasp being manifestation of Upādāna or Attachment, with the consequent desire to control it, to make it obedient to one's desire. Such being the case, it is the characteristic of Bhava or Becoming. Now Bhava or Becoming is inevitably conditioned, being thereby subject to arising and falling away. It is because of this truth that Detachment is recommended. This is the giving up of what is subject to its own nature, being uncontrollable through anybody's desire or attachment.

To return to what is called Nāma, the intangible or incorporeal, for a better understanding of its process. As earlier described, the Nāma refers to the Viññāṇa or the 'working' mental force undergoing the endless cyclic process or endless births i.e. rebirths. That it undergoes endless rebirths automatically suggests the axiomatic truth that it also has to undergo endless redeaths. When, for instance, we see a book, then there arises the eye-consciousness. What follows is the feeling or sensation, which may be pleasant, unpleasant or neutral, as the case may be. Next comes the Saññā or recognising (that it is a

book, not a box). Thereafter follows the Saṅkhāra, the mind-conditioner (depending on the preceding Vedanā and Saññā.) Then comes the Mano-viññāna, mind-consciousness in response to the preceding Aggregates. Thus the cycle starts once again, with Vedanā, Saññā and Saṅkhāra following one another in succession.

Now, if at the moment a sound, say, the chime of a clock sends its waves to the ears, which respond to it, there is inserted the ear-consciousness instead. The book-subject is dropped here. What follows is the succession of Vedanā, Saññā and Saṅkhāra as before. This cycle may be interrupted by, for instance, the smell of incense-sticks. Then the incorporeal Aggregates, with the nose-consciousness as leader, start their cycle anew in the same manner. The cycle of sound-consciousness then disappears automatically. The nose-consciousness cycle can be interrupted, as before, by, say, the tongue-consciousness when a person starts to eat food. This cycle may give way to the body-consciousness whenever there is another channel of consciousness inserting itself in, as when the person starts to have a bath, when the body-consciousness cycle steps in to do its duty. Occasionally, when the mana (i.e. mind) happens to recall something in the past the mind-consciousness will have an opening for coming in to perform its function.

It will be seen how these incorporeal Aggregates, or Nāma in Scriptural term, have to undergo the countless and endless successions of arising and falling away within even one day, depending on whatever comes to arouse them to action. In case there is a special attention on any theme, or when the theme is powerful by nature (such as an excruciating pain), the Nāma will be focussed longer on that subject. If it is of small importance, the Nāma will drop it out of focus within a short time. These show how the Nāma and Rūpa are everybody's personal effects or dwellings i.e. those for functioning purpose. Their rising and falling away go on in a continuous, uninterrupted stream.

It is true that the rising and falling away of the Rūpa or body are more obvious; nevertheless the corresponding process of the Nāma

is not too difficult to be followed. It is more fleeting, yet not too fleeting for a person's detection ability if he wills it so.

**It is worth noting** that in the Fire Sermon the Blessed One singled out Vedanā or Sensations, pointing to the hermits how their Vedanā are at all times burning. This, in other words, is nothing but the First Noble Truth i.e. one of Suffering. He then went on to explain the Second Noble Truth i.e. one of the Cause, pointing especially to Lust, Hatred and Delusion and describing how they are the 'Fires' within themselves. It is through these 'Fires' that they are always burnt by such sufferings as grief, old age and death, which are to be expected as a matter of course. Next he introduced the Noble Truth of the Path, referring to the Wisdom as the leading element by which to develop Insight. Finally he explained the Truth of Extinction, starting from Nibbidā or Disillusioned Weariness, to be followed by Virāga or Dispassionateness, Vimutti or Deliverance and finally Vimutti-Ñānadassana or the Insight by which to recognise or realise that Deliverance. These were in the same manner as in the Anattalakkhaṇasutta he preached to the Five Ascetics.

## THE SERMON ON FIRE

**Such** was Lord Buddha's Fire Sermon  
 Delivered to thousand hermits  
 --An outstanding phenomenon  
 Adapted for their own benefit.

**Remarkable** was its result;  
 The sermon was for their own gain.  
 They gave up fire-worshipping cult  
 And then Enlightenment attained.

**Here** was instance of trail-blazing  
 By One who dared to pioneer,  
 Who offered them a new teaching  
 In place of what they used to revere.

**The** burning aspect of the 'fire'  
 Within their minds always consumed,  
 Being smothered by Dhamma-Eye.  
 They're saved from what should be their doom.

**With** heat removed, poured forth the 'Light',  
 Another aspect of the fire,  
 By Lord Buddha it's called Insight,  
 Destroying all 'darkness' thereby.

**This** shows Buddha's skilful finesse  
 How he their attitude manoeuvred,  
 Knowing what would be for their best:  
 To be no more 'consumed', as 'twere.

**Changing** the heat into the light,  
 The Buddha was the 'Transformer',  
 From darkness black to starry bright  
 Toned down the one, stepped up the other.

**Let's** start this our ignition key  
 To run the 'transformer' within  
 So it become a guarantee.  
 Through to Attainment we can win,

**To** be always on the *qui vive*  
 Against the heat, which boils and burns,  
 Thanks to Mindfulness intensive  
 At least we'll no longer be churned,

**Bubbling** within boiling cauldron  
 Afflicted with spiritual AIDS,  
 But immune to virulent poison  
 Never again rising to the baits.

**Such** how the 'transformer' Noble  
 Tones down the 'heat', steps up the 'Light'.  
 It is the art simple, subtle.  
 By Lord Buddha it's called Insight.

***Built-in*** is this great 'Transformer'  
Waiting for our 'ignition key'  
To start and then 'click' it for ever  
For progress to the fullest degree.

## THE SECOND, THIRD AND FOURTH RAINS RETREATS:

**At the Veluvana Grove, the city of  
Rājagaha**

**THE STATE OF MAGADHA. KING BIMBISĀRA**

**The Blessed One** having instructed the former matted-haired hermits and enlightened them into the Arahathood dwelt at the district of Gayāsīsa for some time. Then he proceeded, together with those newly ordained Bhikkhus, to the city of Rājagaha, capital of the state of Magadha.

MAGADHA STATE. According to the Scriptural texts, Magadha was a flourishing and powerful state, with its capital of Rājagaha. During the time of the Buddha, its king was known to be Bimbisāra, which in pāli was called Rājā Māgadha. This was a term of praise, evaluating him as the great king of Magadha. His name was also preceded by Seniyo, being thereby Seniyo Bimbisāro, meaning Bimbisāra, the Grand Marshal.

It was said that the city of Rājagaha was walled by five mountains viz. Gijjhakūta, Vebhāra, Vepulla, Isigili and Kālakūta. As such, it was also called Giribbaja, a mountain-walled city. The former capital was said to be on a hill slope, but it was time and again damaged by fire. This was the cause of its being moved downward, — on the foothills, which were still within the five mountainous walls. It was towards the last days of the Buddha that King Ajātasattu had another city built outside the walled area, on the North. Rājagaha was a prosperous city, with quite a number of religious teachers establishing their denominations and being partronised to a certain extent by the king,

who, in case he did not have any connection with some of them, nevertheless granted them freedom to preach their doctrines in their own ways. During Bimbisāra's reign, the state of Kāśikagāma was presented to him by the Kosala King Pasendi on the occasion of his marriage to King Pasendi's younger sister.

### **Laying the foundation stone for Buddhism**

**That** the Buddha proceeded to Rājagaha first of all – after preaching to the fire-worshipping hermits– may be regarded as partly due to fulfilling his own promise earlier given to the king and partly to his intention to establish Buddhism in that city, which was a prosperous place. For it may be observed that the Buddha preferred to make known the Dhamma of his discovery to the monks first of all since most of them living a homeless life were well-intended and well-educated. In the case of lay people, he also aimed at those no less educated and being leaders of communities such as kings, chieftains, courtiers, including other well-informed Brahmins and people. Once these persons had obtained the Dhamma-Eye and become devout Buddhists, their retinue and subordinates would at least become interested and consequently pay more attention to studying the Dhamma and following their respected and revered leaders. This was a time-saver contributing to the rapid spreading of the Dhamma and the establishment of Buddhism in those regions. The Buddha himself being held in high esteem by the chiefs and sovereigns everywhere was practically safe from false accusations through suspicion. Besides, he had never been involved in any secular affairs, his efforts being spent absolutely for religious matters. Evidence of this can be seen later on.

Approaching the city of Rājagaha, the Blessed One did not proceed directly into it, but stopped to take lodging in a grove called Latthivana, literally the young palmyra orchard, possibly a place where palmyra-trees were grown. This was later known to King Bimbisāra, who learned that there arrived and dwelt in the Latthivana Grove at that time the Recluse Gotama, who went forth for the homeless life from the Sākyan people. Words were also spread around that that

Recluse, being the Blessed One, was the All-Enlightened Buddha, who preached the Dhamma beautiful in the beginning, beautiful in the middle and also beautiful in the end. He declared the chaste life pure and perfect in both the implication and connotation. It was therefore a blessing to see such an Arahant.

Now King Bimbisāra, together with his retinue totalling 12 *Nahuta*<sup>\*</sup> of the Brahmins and wealthy persons who were inhabitants of Magadha state, approached the Buddha where he was residing. The king himself, having paid homage to the Buddha, seated himself at a proper place on one side. However, the 12 *Nahuta*<sup>\*</sup> of Magadha people still displayed dissimilar attitude and demeanour. Some there were who prostrated before the Blessed One, while others uttered words of appreciation, and still others joined their hands in token of respect. Then there were a number who made known their names and families, whereas another group who just sat still. It was mentioned that most of the people still cherished a lingering doubt as to whether the Blessed One lived a chaste life in Uruvela's denomination or vice versa.

### **Banishing the people's doubt**

**Seeing** such a manner betraying their doubt, the Buddha, in order to clear away their uncertainty, asked Uruvela Kassapa for what purpose he had given up his former sacrificial rites. To which Uruvela replied that such rites praised enjoyment of the sense-pleasures e.g. sight, sound, smell, taste, including women. Having realised how they were all blemishes, he said, he no longer took any delight in them.

The Buddha then questioned him further, asking what, in that case, he turned his attention to now. Whereupon Uruvela replied, saying.

"The Dhamma of Peace, without Defilement, have I realised, O Lord. It is without bondage, being not subject to change. It is not to be suggested by anyone i.e. to be self-realised. It is through realization of this Dhamma, O Lord, that I have given up my practice of sacrificial rites."



Having so proclaimed his belief, Uruvela prostrated himself at the Blessed One's feet, declaring in the presence of the assembled people that the Blessed One was his Master whereas he himself was a disciple.

It was through this declaration on the part of Uruvela Kassapa that the minds of the Magadha people were rid of the uncertainty and became ready for instruction. The Buddha then delivered to them, as before, the five themes of progressive importance followed by the Four Noble Truths. It was recorded that of the 12 *Nahuta*\* of the audience, eleven of them obtained the Dhamma-Eye, whereas the remaining one *Nahuta*\* had their faith established in the Triple Gem.

At that time King Bimbisāra made it known to the Buddha that the five wishes he had long cherished were now fulfilled. They were:

1. May he be crowned king of the Magadha state.
2. May an Arahant come to his land.
3. May he be seated by the side of the Arahant.
4. May the Arahant deliver Dhamma to him, and
5. May he realise the Dhamma of that Arahant.

The King praised the Buddha's sermon and invited him, together with the Bhikkhu disciples, to have their meal in his royal palace on the next day. The Buddha accepted his invitation by keeping silent, — which implied acceptance by him and his disciples. However, there might be some who did not understand this and inquired further to have him let them know verbally.

### **Acceptance of the offering of Bamboo Grove.**

On the following day the Blessed One and his Bhikkhu disciples proceeded to have their meal within king Bimbisāra's palace. By this time a thought came to the king's mind about a suitable dwelling place for the Buddha and his disciples. He knew that for a place to serve the purpose it should

1. not be too close to nor too far from a village.
2. be accessible by roads for visitors.

3. not be crowded with people in the daytime and be quiet enough, not disturbed by the noise and people coming and going.
4. be appropriate as a place of seclusion for recluses to accelerate their efforts.
5. be proper to be a dwelling place for the Buddha.

With this aim in mind, the king thought of his own Veluvana or Bamboo Grove, some distance north of the city and realised how it well served all his purposes. As a token of his offering, the king poured the water from his golden urn (signifying the gift of an immovable thing), making known to the Buddha his intention to offer his Bamboo Grove as a dwelling place to the Buddha and his Bhikkhu disciples and requested the Buddha to accept it for the purpose. The Buddha then delivered a sermon to the king, encouraging and delighting him with the benefits of doing so. Referring to this, the Buddha allowed the Bhikkhus to accept an ārāma i.e. Grove (or monastery) offered them as a dwelling place.

According to the Scriptures, it was in this Bamboo Grove that the Buddha spent the second, the third and the fourth Rains Retreats. There happened a number of events within this period. They will be discussed later on.

Following will be described the traditions and culture of what have been mentioned earlier.

Presentation of a gift. What could be handed over would, as a matter of course, be given in that manner. But in case it was an immovable thing or something too big to be done by that way, there was the tradition of pouring water from a vessel in the presence of the receiver. The offering of a grove or a dwelling place, which was immovable, was therefore done by this method. That was why king Bimbisāra, while offering his Bamboo Grove to the Buddha, poured water from the golden urn. So did prince Vessantara, the Buddha-to-be, in his giving of the elephant to the Brahmins who asked for it. In what is called the 'sharing of the fruits of merit', – which cannot be

handed over, either,— the pouring of water from a vessel is also applied. However, this could be inherited from a Brahmanical tradition to be referred to later. It should be noted that the water must be poured out until there was nothing left in the vessel. This was the mark of the absolute willingness to give, not the half-hearted one.

### **Praise for the Buddha's Virtues**

**In** our morning chanting there was a passage beginning with “Taṃ kho pana bhagavataṃ evaṃ Kalyāṇo Kittisaddo abbhuggato, These are the words in praise of the Blessed One's beautiful virtue spread among the people: the Blessed One is an Arahant, the All-Enlightened One etc.” This signifies the fact that such words of praise were previously heard and generally accepted by the multitude of the people at that time. They were not formally composed by any scholar. The terms in the passages were also those previously used such as Bhagavā (the Blessed One), Arahant (the Arahant) and Sammāsambuddho (the All-Enlightened One). Thus, whenever there was anybody being widely venerated and accepted as a Satthā or religious Master, he was accorded such words of praise and acclaimed as a new Satthā. There was also the traditional belief that it would be a blessing to go and see such a holy person. It was because of this tradition, therefore, that whenever there was a rumour of an Arahant coming, people would be anxious at least to have the blessing of such a sight. When sometimes the king was known to have also done so, more people would be anxious and excited and a far greater crowd would be thronging to the place. However, where a genuine faith was concerned, it was through attainment of the Dhamma-Eye that a person, after having listened to the Buddha's sermon, would be securely blessed with an unshakable faith in the Triple Gem.

The Veluvana or Bamboo Grove, according to some legends, was divided into two parts, one being called Kalandakanivāpa, the place where squirrels were fed. It was this part that was offered by king Bimbisāra to the Buddha and his disciples. There was another part called Moranivāpa, where pheasants were fed, which was said to

have been offered to the mendicants or Paribbājaka, another type of monks at that time. This appeared to indicate the fact that the king was the patron also of other faiths, which, although he did not worship them, were not prosecuted by any means.

### **Foremost Disciples**

**Having** received the Bamboo Grove as an ārāma or Bhikkhus' dwelling place, the Buddha was said to have stayed there during the second, third and fourth Rains Retreat periods. It was during this time that he had found his two foremost disciples viz. Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Moggallāna. Their life-stories ran as follows:

**SĀRĪPUTTA.** There were near the city of Rājagaha two Brahmins' villages whose chiefs had for a long time been close friends. Each of them had a son, one being called Upatissa, bearing the name of that village, whereas the other being called Kolita for the same reason. Both boys were successfully brought up in accordance with the traditional system and as close friends were always going places, taking delight in youth interests and enjoyment together. Of their favourite places, one was a hill-top where there was an annual entertainment show. In the prime of youth they were like other boys, being sometimes gladdened and at other times saddened by the passing events and occasionally showering rewards to their favourite actors and actresses.

The turning point of their lives came one day when, with the maturity of their store of merit, they were moved to Saṁvega i.e. disillusioned weariness even while watching their favourite entertainment show. Whilst other people were laughing and cheering, they were somehow mysteriously withdrawn and oblivious to the scene of merriment. Their minds were overcome by the truth that before long—within a hundred years, that is—those people would disappear and be 'lost', going to where there could not be any description of it. They also noticed each other's reactions and, understanding their similar realization, agreed to 'go forth' i.e. to live a homeless life of a monk, of the mendicant type in the denomination of a religious teacher called

Sañjaya. They completed Sañjaya's course and realised that it could not satisfy their wishes but, not knowing where else to go, agreed between themselves that whoever had come across the Dhamma of Deathlessness was to tell the other of his discovery.

One day Upatissa came across Ven. Assaji, one of the Five Ascetics—the first group of the Buddha's disciples, while on his almsround in the city of Rājagaha. At first sight he was impressed by the Elder's demeanour but, knowing that it was not the time for questioning, followed him until he had finished his meal on the way. Seeing now it would be appropriate, the youth asked the Elder to whom he devoted his chaste life, who was his Master and whose Dhamma (i.e. teachings) he took delight in.

In reply the Elder said that he devoted his homeless life to the Blessed One, who went forth from the Sakyan clan. It was that Blessed One who was his Master. The Blessed One's Dhamma he took delight in.

Upatissa asked the Elder to recount the Dhamma for him. Ven. Assaji then said he was still a newcomer in the Buddha's Dispensation, being therefore not in a position to teach the Dhamma in detail. But Upatissa insisted, saying that there was no use in a verbose teaching. An epitome of it would suffice, so he said.

So said Venerable Assaji, epitomising for the youth the Buddha's teaching in what was compiled in verse by the ancient compilers as follows:

“Ye Dhammā hetuppabhavā	Tesaṃ hetuṃ tathāgato
Tesañca yo nirodho ca	Evaṃ vādī mahāsamaṇo”

*Whatever Dhamma is of the nature of being born  
The Tathāgata (i.e. the Buddha) has explained  
The causes of its birth and of its extinction.  
Such is the teaching of the Great Recluse.*

With this brief teaching, the youth Upatissa was able to obtain the Dhamma-Eye, realising that whatever is by nature to be born is

also, by its very nature, to die.

He then reverently took leave of the Elder and hurried to see his friend Kolita to tell him of the good news they had promised each other. He recited the above verse to Kolita, who likewise obtained the Dhamma-Eye. They went to see their teacher Sañjaya, related to him their experience and invited him to go to see the Buddha together. But Sañjaya, attached to the pride that he was already a well-known teacher, refused the request, saying that for him to be another teacher's disciple would be like putting a full-grown crocodile into a small earthen water-jar. It could not tolerate such a position. The Commentary of the Dhammapada stated further that Sañjaya asked Upatissa and Kolita whether there were more wise people in the world than foolish ones or vice versa. When they answered that it was vice versa, he said that the wise people would then go to the Buddha, whereas the foolish ones, who outnumbered the wise, would come to see him, and he was satisfied with that.

The youths then took leave of their teacher and departed, together with their own retinue who was said to total 250, to see the Buddha and asked for ordination, which they were all granted in the 'Ehi Bhikkhu' manner. It was recorded that their retinue, having been ordained, exerted their utmost efforts and soon attained Arahatsip.

MOGGALLĀNA. As for the youth Kolita, who was known by the Bhikkhu name of Moggallāna, after his mother's name Moggallī, it was recorded that seven days after his ordination, he was exerting his efforts in the village of Kalvānamuttagāma, in the city of Magadha. The Buddha was at that time dwelling in a grove called Bhesakalāvana, where the deer were fed, near the city of Suṇsumāragira, capital of the state of Bhagga. He was by that time overcome by a feeling of drowsiness. The Buddha then proceeded to encourage him to counter the feeling by various means which could be summed up as follows.

1. To be ever more mindful of the perception or determination that produces drowsiness.
2. Ponder the Dhamma that he had heard and studied.
3. Recite that Dhamma in details.

4. Pick the ears with the fingers and stroke the body with the hands.
5. Stand up, wash the eyes with water, look around in all directions and gaze at the stars.
6. Be mindful of the perception of light, dwelling on the thought of daytime day and night, unfolding the mind, ridding it of its covering, developing the mind bathed with light.
7. Take a walking meditation i.e. to walk back and forth, coupled with restraint of faculties, not being aware of anything outside.
8. (As the last resort) Lie down in what was called "the Lion's Posture" i.e. on the right side, with one foot overlapping the other, being mindful and fixing the time to get up.

The above-mentioned means were prescribed as alternatives, to be used one after another when the fore-going ones failed to banish drowsiness. However, in case all the alternatives did not work, it was advisable then for an aspirant to obey the body's desire and let it have a rest in the manner described above.

Following the ways and means to combat drowsiness, the Buddha gave Venerable Moggallāna three other instructions viz.

**1. On banishing pride.** Let him not "raise his trunk" (i.e. not put on airs nor cherish a feeling of self-esteem) while entering a layman's home; otherwise, in case there is an affair in the household that needs those people's prior attention and that consequently makes them forget to greet the Bhikkhu, that Bhikkhu would be embarrassed and distracted. He would abandon self-restraint and become estranged from meditation.

**2. On control of speech.** Do not speak that which is conducive to quarrel or fault-finding, for much talk and argument will follow. Then comes distraction to be followed by lack of self-restraint and the mind being estranged from meditation.

**3. On association.** The Buddha did not recommend association; nor did he condemn it at all times. Whatever place is quiet and undisturbed by the noise of people coming and going, being suitable

for a Samana (recluse) wishing for solitude, being also suitable as a place of retirement for those who prefer a secluded life, that association with such a place did the Buddha recommend.

Having been given such instruction, Ven. Moggallāna asked the Buddha for a summary practice whereby a Bhikkhu could be regarded as being inclined towards the extinction of desire and destined to the transcendental success, the transcendental security from bonds, the transcendental chastity and finality superior to all human and celestial beings.

In reply the Blessed One said to the effect that a Bhikkhu in this Dispensation, having heard that all kinds of Dhamma are not worthy of attachment, perceives all Dhamma with wisdom, knowing how not to be attached to them. Thereafter, whenever he experiences a feeling that is pleasant, unpleasant or neutral, he contemplates it as being impermanent. This he did with the Insight leading to Weariness, to Extinction, to divorcing himself from those feelings. He would then be detached from all things in the world, being thereby not agitated and able to eradicate all Defilements, knowing that his is the last life, perfected is his chaste life and finished is whatever there is to be done, there being nothing more to be done for the sake of Enlightenment.

By following the Buddha's instruction, Ven. Moggallāna attained to the Arahatsip on that same day.

### **Ven. SĀRĪPUTTA**

**As** for Ven. Sārīputta, who was called after the name of his mother Sārī, it was half a month after ordination that he followed the Buddha to Mount Gijjhakūṭa (Vulture Peak), in the city or Rājagaha. The Buddha was on that day dwelling within a cave called Sukarakhātā when a mendicant by the name of Dīghanakha Aggivesana approached him and stood at a proper place. Ven. Sārīputta was then attending upon the Buddha fanning him. The mendicant then expressed his view, saying that all things were disagreeable to him and that he did not take delight in them.



In reply the Buddha said, "Then, Aggivessana, such a view (of yours) is sure to be disagreeable to you and you must not take delight in it, either."

After this he went on to tell the mendicant of three groups of views viz. firstly, all things are agreeable to them; secondly, all things are not agreeable to them; and thirdly, some things are agreeable, whereas others are not.

The first view, so said the Buddha, tends towards lust for those things, whereas the second towards hatred or ill will, and the third is subject to both at different times. Such being the case, they all produce defilements, since an attachment to one is naturally to be opposed to the rest. What follows is quarrel and violence in words and actions. A wise man realising this fact abandons that view and does not adhere to the others. By this way can the three views be given up.

After this the Blessed One went on to give the mendicant another instruction to the effect that the body is the assemblage of the four principal elements viz. earth, water, air, fire. It is born of father and mother, grows through the feeding of rice and dessert and always needs perfume and soap to cover its offensive smell. It also requires cleaning and rubbing (to get rid of the filth accumulating on the skin). It is destined to dissolve and decompose. He should therefore consider it to be impermanent, to be suffering difficult to endure, regarding it as a disease, a boil and an arrow through its being afflicted with troubles and decline. He should contemplate it as being devoid of self.

Continuing his instruction, the Buddha described to the mendicant the three kinds of Vedanā (sensations or feelings) viz. pleasant, painful and neutral, explaining how when any one of the three arises, the other two are automatically excluded. These three, however, are changeable, being conditioned, arising through causes. They are of the nature to decline, fade away and to be extinguished. A Noble Disciple realising this truth becomes weary, with his mind divorced from lust and freed from attachment. What follows in its train is like what was previously mentioned in the Anattalakkhaṇasutta.

During this time Venerable Sārīputta, fan in hand attending upon the Buddha, was also listening to the instruction given to the mendicant. Contemplating it, he was convinced of how the Buddha advocated giving up all the Dhamma by means of the Supreme Wisdom. As a result his mind was delivered from all kinds of subtle defilements, having given up Attachment.

At the end of the sermon the mendicant obtained the Eye of Dhamma. It was recorded that the mendicant was Venerable Sārīputta's nephew. It was through his wish to pay a visit to Ven. Sārīputta that he approached the Buddha and then took the opportunity to express his own viewpoint, referring implicitly that he was not satisfied with the Buddha's teaching. Possibly the Buddha knew that and wisely retorted, thereby implicitly leading him to the more useful themes for his sake.

### **Ven. Moggallāna**

**Venerable** Moggallāna was praised by the Buddha as being foremost in his achievement of psychic powers, whereas Venerable Sārīputta in his Wisdom power, the former being regarded also as the 'left-hand' disciple of the Buddha whereas the latter as his 'right-hand'. It is because of this fact that when a Buddha image is constructed, there are also two disciples, each on one side of the image, sometimes standing, and at other times sitting. Both, however, are identical in size and feature and, to determine which of them is Venerable Sārīputta and which Moggallāna, the rule is to regard the Buddha image as the criterion. Thus the disciple on the right of the image is Venerable Sārīputta and on its left is Moggallāna. For one who faces the Buddha image, however, the disciple on his left is Venerable Sārīputta, whereas the other on his right is Moggallāna. This tradition also applies to an ordination procedure, wherein the applicant on the Preceptor's right is to be a senior and the other on his left a junior. But to the applicants themselves, the one on the left (while seated facing the Preceptor) is to be senior, whilst the other on the right the junior.

## Explanations

**Following** are explanations on what concerned both foremost disciples. This is to begin with Venerable Assaji's saying in reply to the mendicant Upatissa. This has been regarded as the essence of the Four Noble Truths, as evidenced in its being inscribed on the stone slab in the times of King Asoka.

The verse begins with *YE DHAMMĀ*..., implying the truth that whatever Dhammas are born of causes, the Tathāgata (i.e. the Buddha) described their causes, together with their extinction. Such is what the Great Recluse says. Superficially, the verse does not seem to be very inspiring, particularly to one who has not grasped the meaning of the Four Noble Truths to a certain extent. Only with such an understanding can a realization be attained.

For one who has grasped the meaning of those truths, it will be made clear that the Truth of Suffering and that of the Cause are the cause and effect, or, to put them correspondingly, the effect and the cause as far as the aspect of the arising of Suffering is concerned. Then there come the Truths of the Extinction and of the Path. Both are the effect and the cause where the aspect of the extinction of Suffering is considered. Such is the Great Recluse's teaching.

To apply this verse to the general principles of Buddhism, as one who has already studied them, it can be said that Buddhism teaches the all-inclusive law that whatever bad effects there occur come from equally bad causes, which can be called evil i.e. dishonest or unwholesome Karmas. The good effects, on the contrary, arise from the corresponding good cause, which can be called merit i.e. honest or wholesome actions. The first part of Venerable Assaji's verse – whatever Dhamma arises from cause – refers to the effects, both good and evil, whereas the second part – the Tathāgata tells of its cause – points to merit, honesty and wholesome qualities as the causes of the good effects, then to the evil, dishonesty and unwholesome qualities as those

of the evil ones. As for the third part—the Tathāgata tells of its extinction—may be regarded as the two-sided conclusion, urging people to get rid of the evil causes so they can steer clear of evil effects on the one hand and also to develop wholesome causes so as to be endowed with wholesome effects on the other.

However, for a religious teaching to be perfect, there must be a point of finality for aspirants to look forward to, otherwise to do good would be a process without end. This, then, implies the fact that that teaching is not complete. All things have their end or finality, be they a person's life, graded study or any activity. Such is what can be expected. Should a religious teaching urge people to do good without end, it would mean that the teaching is not yet complete.

### **The Grand Finali**

**There** is in Buddhism the point of finality – the 'Grand Finali', so to speak, of doing good. That people have been struggling to do good is due to the fact that they have not yet arrived at that point. They are still making efforts for more, for there is 'more' waiting ahead. If and when their 'good' is complete and perfect, it is then 'enough' there being no 'more' to be done since the 'Grand Finali' has been achieved and attained. It is a 'fait accompli' in the sense of being ultimately accomplished.

Now, when and where can this point be reached and this goal attained? Buddhism makes it clear that it is only when the āsavakilesa, literally the outpouring Defilements, have been eradicated can the aspirants be blessed with the 'Grand Finali'. Thenceforward there is no seed, or cause, of evil left. As such there is no more to be done to wash off the evil stains. Here the Buddha aptly re-interpreted one of the Brahmanist concept, calling such a person one who 'has floated away both merit and evil.' It is therefore at this point that is the finality, the absolute, or the climax, of what is good, there being no other good superior to this. It is the extinction of the Outpourings

(Āsava), with the consequent extinction of good and evil. The teachings of Buddhism point to this condition as the end of the Sermon, the end to whatever there is to be done.

### **Foremost in Wisdom**

**Venerable** Sāriputta was known to be foremost in the range and scope of Wisdom but was recorded to have attained the point of finality later than his retinue i.e. fifteen days after his ordination, whereas it took Venerable Moggallāna seven days to do so. Their retinue, however, had attained to Arahathood earlier than that. The reason for this, according to the Scriptures, was that his level and range of Wisdom was far superior to other Bhikkhus'. As such there followed as a result more doubts, which required more research and investigation, particularly on the advanced level. However, that he was able to grasp and realise the meaning of Venerable Assaji's synoptic instruction immediately, despite the fact that he had not studied the Buddha's instruction before, testified to his superior Wisdom.

This is made more obvious when we comparatively consider the cases of other people who had not studied Buddhism before or even who have already studied it more or less. How high, or deep, therefore, was his level of Wisdom !

### **Various strata of Desire**

**Another** fact worthy of consideration is **why**, in his instructions to the two foremost disciples, the Blessed One should have stressed the practice of contemplation of Vedanā i.e. sensations or feelings. It was said that those with a crude form, or level, of Tanhā or Desire are prone to being attached to body or matter. Thus they enjoy decorating their bodies, houses, utensils and other equipment. They can tolerate a degree of inconvenience but just cannot bear to have their bodies and other things look mundane, unattractive. Sometimes, or oftentimes, they are willing to suffer in exchange for beauty. Such is the characteristic of those attached to body and matter.

The higher, more refined level of Desire manifests in the attachment to Vedanā, the sensation or feeling of happiness itself.

Here there is little attention of physical or material beauty. It is content with whatever is conducive to happiness. Whatever food, clothing or dwelling place caters to this desire, regardless of its outward appearance, is its goal.

Now, Vedanā is of three kinds. As earlier mentioned, there are also the kinds that give unpleasantness and neutrality. If desire is established on the one, then aversion will spontaneously be fixed on the rest. In such cases, where there must occur a degree of profitable unpleasantness, such as in an earnest attempt to work or to study, the aversion will become a block to progress and success. It keeps the people where they are, confining them always in a passive and stagnant condition.

The two foremost disciples were known to be offspring of wealthy families and to be, as a matter of course, pampered by whatever their wealth could provide for them. Upon being ordained, their way of life was suddenly changed, with more feeling of unpleasantness as a result. This was true particularly in the times of the Buddha, when Bhikkhus were known to observe the four *Nissaya* (i.e. going for almsfood, wearing rag-robles, staying under a tree-shade and taking fermented urine as medicine) more strictly than at present. Such a life produced far more feeling of unpleasantness, in both quantity and intensity. There was no guarantee of obtaining food, clothing, dwelling place or medicine that would be comfortable or satisfactory to the desire. Such being the case, an attachment to the feeling of pleasantness would certainly defeat the purpose of all those ordained. This despite the fact that many of them would have an apparently sufficient amount of intellectual knowledge and acceptance of the teaching. It could be because of this fact that the Buddha, in his instruction to both of them, stressed the importance of non-attachment to whatever kinds of Vedanā occur. There is to be at any moment only one of them, excluding the remaining two. All of them are subject to change and dissolution and as such they are not worth any attachment. If even the Vedanā of pleasantness is detached from, there is naturally no care or worry to trouble the mind with. Without

care, worry or a lingering desire, there occurs the realization of all Dhammas (phenomena) as a result. This is a good food for thought i.e. serious thought. It points to the fact that one of the obstacles to success in work, study or doing good is this attachment to pleasantness. If this can be given up, with the courage to face whatever sufferings come one's way, there will obviously be a feeling of resignation, and relief. *No subject is too difficult; no undertaking too hard; no place too remote or dangerous.*

There is a saying worthy of consideration. This is "Sabbe dhammā nālaṃ abhinivesāya: all dhammas are not to be attached to." Its essential meaning is somewhat equivalent to a passage in our morning chanting "Sabbe dhammā anattā : all dhammas are non-self." These passages, it should be noted, refer to the ultimate truth, which the Buddha usually preached to those whom he wished to lead to the penetration of that level of truth. To ordinary people not ready for this level the Buddha would not mention it.

Generally speaking, the "all dhammas" can be divided into two kinds viz. the good or meritorious and the evil. First of all, there is the teaching of avoiding evil. Then comes the practice of doing good, i.e. holding on to doing good after having avoided or given up evil. On this level the practice of doing good must be held on to i.e. be attached to. It cannot be let go since there is sure to be a more and higher level of good to be done. The highest goal is not yet reached and the aspirants have to struggle on.

Now, there comes a time, or a level, where the highest point is reached. This means there is nothing more to be done since the "Everest", so to speak, has been conquered. But this is also where attachment is to be abandoned once for all. With attachment still lingering, desire is still present; and with desire lingering, *Kilesa* or Defilement is *ipso facto* always there, and as such the highest peak, the unruffled and unconditioned, is some distance away. This may in a sense be likened to the students who, having graduated, yet refuse to leave the university to fend for themselves. It is only for this highest peak of attainment that the Buddha recommended the giving up, or rather the surpassing, of even what is in the realm of good. In an ordinary i.e. elementary

and intermediate levels, he did not yet point out this 'Grand Finali'. What he advised was always the abandonment of evils to be supplemented by the desire for, or the attachment to, doing good. Hence the importance of applying the Dhamma instruction to suit the degree of maturity of a listener. Wrongly applied, the instruction will produce the undesirable result such as misunderstanding and confusion.

### **Cause of adverse criticism**

**There** is one fact that should be noted here. With the conversion to Buddhism on the part of the two foremost disciples, there followed a large number of youths from well-known and wealthy families of the city. This, however, resulted in an adverse criticism by the Magadha people, many of whom accused Lord Buddha of cutting short the family lines of householders, of depriving the families of their sons or offspring and also of making widows of many a wife. Seeing Bhikkhus during their morning alms-round, they bitterly complained, saying that here came these monks who had snatched quite a number of disciples from Sañjaya, and asking satirically whose other sons and husbands they were scheming to lure away. These bitter criticisms were later told to the Buddha, who assured them that such a comment would last seven days at the utmost. He then advised the Bhikkhus to tell those critics that the Tathāgata taught what is the Truth, which is beneficial to beings. It is advisable, therefore, he added, that those who understood this fact should not bear a grudge or ill will against the truth i.e. the Dhamma.

Referring to this incident, it should be observed that many of those converted to Buddhism had already been ordained as monks in another religious denomination. Both foremost disciples, together with their retinue, were long ago included in this category. They had not lived a homeless life just when they came to adopt Buddhism. It could be, therefore, that those bitter complaints were raised by some religious teachers who had lost a number of their disciples to the Buddha. Their insulting voices were those out of jealousy rather than out of a genuine pity for the families who had been deprived of their sons and husbands.



## THE GRAND FINALI

**Desires** are of various levels,  
Being the crude, middle, subtle.  
All are the snares to trap worldlings  
In all of their undertakings.

**The** crude one is based on matter;  
Body, money as its anchor.  
All things pleasant to five sense-doors  
Are what they want more and even more.

**The** middle kind is satisfied  
With happiness that is acquired  
Through mind being peaceful, tranquil.  
It thinks the highest goal's fulfilled.

**It** shuns making strenuous effort;  
Abhors attempt to move forward,  
Wallows in self-complacency,  
Thinking it's final victory.

**What'ver** pleases the eyes, ears, nose,  
Tongue, touch they regard as foremost.  
Other than these they do not care;  
Of all else never are they aware.

**The** subtle is far developed;  
Such mind does not prefer to stop,  
It can't be naively content,  
But looks forward to attainment

**Of** that Dhamma beyond mundane, —  
That which never will wax or wane,  
Being the crown of all that's good  
Transcending all the magnitudes

**Of** astronomical brightness,  
 Being secure, stable, changeless,  
 Where mundane concepts are absent.  
 That's what's known as Enlightenment.

**Let** Buddhists sublimate their desires,  
 With their minds gradually purified  
 Until they reach the atmosphere  
 Where gods and men respect, revere.

**This** is the highest benefit  
 Off'ring the viewpoint ultimate.  
 It seems so far, yet is so nigh  
 If we should have the will to try.

**Where** there's a will, there is a way  
 But we must first of all display  
 Our faith, courage, resolution  
 To breathe the air of that Dimension.

**In** doing good there is the end,  
 Aspirants attain this point when  
 They reach the full-final victory  
 There comes to them the Grand Finali.

**Supremely** pure and calm are they,  
 Where Peace unruffled holds sway,  
 Absolute is their Perfection;  
 'Tis where aspirants are Enlightened.

## NOTES

\*NAHUTA. This term can be rendered 'ten thousand' or 'an uncountable number'. However, with the number '12' coming before, it should then refer to the former, definite implication, thus meaning '12 ten-thousand' i.e. 120,000. Considering the population of the city of Rājagaha at *that time*, the former should at least be more reasonable or close to the actual fact than the latter implication. Besides, unlike the Bushmen in Australia or some tribes in Africa who, so it is said, can count only to five,— beyond that they categorically

count as '*many*', the ancient Indians during the times of the Buddha were able to count up to Koti and Asaṅkhaya, referring at least to ten or hundred of millions. After all, it was unlikely that the city of Rājagaha at that time, when the population boom was still unknown, should support the population of millions or billions.

## VENERABLE MAHĀ KASSAPA

At a time when the Buddha was dwelling in the Bamboo Grove, there was another prominent disciple that should be mentioned here. He was named Venerable Mahā Kassapa. He was, in a brief biography, son of a Brahmin named Kapila of the Kassapa family in a Brahmin village named Mahātīttha, in the state of Magadha. His Brahmin's name was Pippali Mānava, the youth Pippali. The family he was born to was a wealthy one. At a mature age, he was married to a girl by the name of Bhaddakāpilānī, daughter of a Brahmin of Kosiya family in the town of Sāgala, the state of Magadha.

He was later wearied with a householder's life and had a strong desire to live a homeless, chaste life. Realising how as a layman he would not be able to perfect, "like a well-polished conch-shell," the chaste life he aimed at while living such a worldly life, he shaved his hair and beard and, having donned the Kāsāya<sup>1</sup> robes, left his home, devoting his renunciation to whatever All-Enlightened One there was at the time. This meant he did not yet know who was the All-Enlightened One he dedicated his renunciation to, but, believing there should be one, he determined to give himself up to that Blessed One, whoever and wherever he was.

This part of the account of his life pointed to the fact that the term Bhagavā, Arahaṃ and Sammāsambuddha had already been used, being applied to whoever was highly revered as a 'super' or 'supra-mundane' human. Pippali also held to that belief, being sure that there was to be an Arahant somewhere but not knowing yet who he was. However, he was determined enough to devote his homeless life to that person. Some other disciples of the Buddha were also recorded to have taken to their homeless life in the same manner.

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1. reddish yellow robes of a monk dyed with astringent juice.

While on his pilgrimage in search of the 'Arahant', he came across the Buddha somewhere between the city of Rājagaha and the town of Nālandā while the Buddha was seated under the shade of a banyan tree named Bahuputta Nigrodha, literally the banyan with many offspring. It could be that the tree was a full-grown one with so many aerial roots all around. Upon seeing the Blessed One there, he suddenly i.e. possibly through intuition came to realise that the person was none other than the Buddha himself. He immediately prostrated at the Blessed One's feet, declaring that the Buddha was his Master and he was the Buddha's disciple.

What did he notice that made him so sure that he did come across the Buddha? This was not mentioned in the Pali Canon. Only in the Commentary was this recorded, describing the miraculous psychic powers as the cause of Kassapa's assurance. This was different from other disciples who had devoted their renunciation to the Buddha. Venerable Pukkusāti, for instance, accepted the homeless life in the same manner. He met the Buddha in the home of a potter. Yet he did not know this even while he was spending the night with the Buddha therein. It was not until he had listened to the sermon that he came to realise who the monk delivering him the sermon was. In the case of Venerable Mahā Kasspa, there was no mention whatever of any sermon. Once he saw the Buddha, he realised this was the person he had devoted his renunciation to and suddenly declared himself the Blessed One's disciple. Thus there should be something as a telltale sign for him, who, being endowed already with such a depth of wisdom, was able to detect, intuitively, who the personage should be. A parallel of wisdom may be seen in the case of Venerable Sāriputta, who was able to grasp the depth of Dhamma just after he had listened to Venerable Assaji's brief instruction only once.

Following are three items of instruction said to have been given by the Buddha to the homeless Pippali.

Firstly, to make up his mind to be highly respectful and obedient towards all Bhikkhus, be they Elders, newcomers or of middle status.

Secondly, to make up his mind to hearken and be attentive towards all the Dhammas that are conducive to wholesomeness.

Thirdly, not to abandon Mindfulness to be directed towards the body that is conducive to the blissful condition. This implied taking delight in Mindfulness of the body.

It was believed that Ven. Mahā Kassapa was ordained by the Ehi ordination i.e. informally by the Buddha himself. However, nothing was mentioned of this in the account of his life.

Eight days after his ordination, he was able to attain the all-round wisdom, which implied the Arahathood, with his mind delivered from all kinds and levels of Defilements. It was recorded that his wife also devoted her renunciation to the Buddha and was later ordained as a Bhikkhunī.

There were four other Elders also named Kassapa, three being the matted-haired hermits viz. Uruvela Kassapa, Nadī Kassapa and Gayā Kassapa, whereas the other one being Kumāra Kassapa. Thus there were five of them, all being named after their families'. In his case, he had the prefix Mahā added to his name, to distinguish him from the rest. He was later an important disciple in the spread of Buddha Dhamma until after the Buddha's passing away.

### **The Three Foremost Disciples' Instructions**

Following are some instructions of the three foremost disciples earlier mentioned.

1. VENERABLE SĀRĪPUTTA. He was highly praised by the Buddha for the magnitude of his wisdom by which he was able to preach the Four Noble Truths in as elaborate details as did the Buddha. On some occasions when the Buddha was approached by Bhikkhus who would like to take leave of him to distant lands, he told them to see Venerable Sārīputta also. An instance of this was once, while the Buddha was dwelling in the town of Devadaha, a large number of Bhikkhus who wished to go to a distant region went to

take leave of him. They were told to take leave of Venerable Sāriputta as well. At the Elder's place they were asked what they would answer if while dwelling there they were approached by some intelligent persons who questioned them about what their teacher's instruction was. What should they answer such persons, he asked them, so that their answer would be in accordance with the Buddha's teaching, not contradicting it. The Bhikkhus requested him to tell them. Whereupon he advised them to tell those persons that their teacher taught them to abandon delight and lust. Asked further in what things they should abandon delight and lust, he went on, they should answer it is the abandonment of lust and delight in Form, Sensation, Perception, Mental Conditioner and Consciousness. Questioned again what was the danger, and what the benefit, of doing so, they should answer that, with such a lust and delight still present, there is sure to be such sufferings as sorrow and grief when any of those five naturally suffer a change or decline. Once lust and delight is abandoned, there will be no sorrow or grief when any of them suffers its natural change or decline. That was why their teacher, having seen such danger and benefit, had taught them so.

**On another occasion** there was a Bhikkhu named Yamaka, who held to the belief that an Arahant is lost after death. Many Bhikkhus had tried to dissuade him from believing so, but to no avail. So they went to see Venerable Sāriputta and asked him to help Yamaka abandon that wrong concept. So said Venerable Sāriputta to Yamaka Bhikkhu, asking him the following questions one by one thus: "What do you see is an Arahant? In what is there an Arahant? Do you see that form, sensation, perception, mental conditioner and consciousness are an Arahant? Or do you see that there is an Arahant in those Five Aggregates?" To such questions Yamaka replied in the negative.

Then Venerable Sāriputta asked him again, "Such being the case, is it advisable to confirm that an Arahant after death is altogether lost?" To this Yamaka said, "Previously I did not have this knowledge". At this Venerable Sāriputta asked him further, saying, "Now if you are asked what happens to an Arahant after death, what will you answer?"

Yamaka answered, saying, "I shall say that the form, sensation, perception, mental conditioner and consciousness, which are changeable, have been extinguished". This, therefore, is another point worth remembering.

Giving Yamaka further instruction, Venerable Sārīputta said, "Supposing there is a wealthy man who is well guarded by his retinue. Then comes a man who wished to kill him, but was not able to do so by direct means. So he offered himself as the wealthy man's servant. He served his master so well that finally he was fully trusted by the wealthy man. Not long after that he got an opportunity to fulfill his wish by murdering his master. Even when the wealthy man was about to die, he still did not know who was his murderer. This was an analogy for those who are attached to the Five Aggregates, so said Venerable Sārīputta, who regard those Aggregates as their own self. Whenever the Aggregates suffer a change or decline, such an attachment makes them suffer as well. Without attachment there is sure to be no suffering even though those Aggregates may suffer a decline or an extinction.

There was still another occasion pointing to Venerable Sārīputta's tact and wit in applying his instruction to suit the circumstances. This was one morning while he was dwelling within the Bamboo Grove. He was returning from his almsround in the city of Rājagaha and was at the moment having his meal under the eaves of a house. Just then there was a Paribbājikā or woman mendicant named Sūcimukhī, literally having a mouth just like a needle, possibly referring to her being sharp-tongued or satirical in habit. She approached the Elder and started piercing him with her 'needle-mouth', saying, "This recluse eats with head bowing low". To which the Elder denied, saying he did not do so. "Then you must eat with your head turned up." Once again the Elder answered negatively. "Yes, you must eat heading towards the principle directions." Again the Elder denied doing like that. "Now you must eat heading towards the minor directions." She was, as before, given the negative reply. "Now", said the mendicant Sūcimukhī,



“with your denying whatever I have said, could you tell me how you eat?”

At this the Elder said to her, “Whichever recluses follow the (occult) practices of predicting the good or evil omens within the places are said to eat with their heads bowing low; whichever of them practise the (occult) practices of astrology are said to eat with their heads turned up; whichever of them offer their services to householders, serving the householders in a variety of ways, are like eating with heads facing the principle directions, whereas others who give predictions by looking at the organs of the body are those who eat with their faces turning towards the minor directions.”

In conclusion, Venerable Sāriputta confirmed that he had never done any of those things, his meal being obtained through decent, rightful means. That was why he could not be included in any of the groups of recluses above-mentioned. This shows how tactful the Elder was in refuting the accusations flung at him. His long and detailed instructions were compiled by ancient teachers in such Suttas as Saṅgītisutta and Dasuttarasutta, the latter being the guidelines for classifying and standardising the teachings for the General Councils called Saṅgāyanā.

VENERABLE MOGGALLĀNA, on the other hand, was praised for his ability to inspire faith from the families of the householders who had as yet no faith and never to do any harm financially to the families. He was compared to the bee, who tasted only the nectar of the flower without doing harm whatever to that flower’s petals, colour and smell. He was possibly knowledgeable in the construction activities since, whenever there was a construction work for the Ārāma or monastery at that time, he was often charged with the responsibility for looking after it. An instance may be seen in the case of the construction of Pubbārāma in the city of Sāvatthī by the female lay disciple Visākhā when he was given the responsibility to oversee the project. His teachings were compiled in the Anumānaustta, dealing with how to know and judge oneself impartially. In the sutta he instructed the

Bhikkhus to the effect that a Bhikkhu might say he would allow other Bhikkhus to warn or admonish him when he was doing something wrong. But, if he later proved himself to be stubborn, not listening to reason, the other Bhikkhus would leave him alone. The causes making a Bhikkhu stubborn were many, so he said, of which, for instance, one was anger, be it the impulsive, momentary kind or irritation, peevishness, and to make known through words the feeling of anger. Now, if a Bhikkhu who would like to be admonished by other Bhikkhus is an obedient one, they will be glad to do so. The causes of being obedient were then described as being opposite to those of being disobedient and stubborn.

After that he instructed them to compare themselves with others with regard to the fact that just as they shun other Bhikkhus with evil desire, so these Bhikkhus will likewise shun them if they cherish such desires. This was a self-reminding in order to survey themselves whether or not they had something undesirable to others. Should they answer themselves in the positive, then it was imperative they should abandon those desires. These, he told them, were what they should remind themselves day and night in the same way as young people often look into a looking-glass to see where on their face and body there was any blemish which should be got rid of. Just so should a Bhikkhu often check himself with wisdom to rid himself of whatever blemish in his practice there was. This Sutta he delivered to Bhikkhus in the deer park called Bhesakalavana, in the state of Bhagga.

**With regard to Venerable Mahākassapa**, the Buddha used to praise him as foremost in his instruction for the purpose of eliminating Defilements. He was always delighted in advising them to be satisfied with little and to follow the austere practices of Dhūtaṅga. More significant was the fact that the Blessed One also praised the Elder as being endowed with virtues parallel to himself, implying his practices of being satisfied with little, content with the four requisites and consequently equipped with the immunity by which to safeguard himself while going to the families of householders. For such purpose the

Buddha instructed the Bhikkhus to behave themselves like the moon. They must estrange themselves, physically and mentally, from householders' families, This so that those lay disciples would regard them always as newcomers and so that they would not have a personal, intimate relationship with lay families. All these virtues, so said the Buddha, could be found in their entirety in Venerable Mahākassapa. To give them an analogy, the Buddha lifted one of his hands and swung it in the air, telling the Bhikkhus that just as there was no trace left in the air by the hand, which was not attached to it, so Bhikkhus who went into lay disciples' houses should not be attached to them. They should determine as follows: "May those who wish to have wealth or virtue have their wishes fulfilled." and, "May they cherish the same attitude of mind when others are blessed with gains and wealth as when they themselves are." All these qualities of detachment could be expected of Venerable Mahākassapa, and that was why, so said the Buddha, he was relied upon not to be overwhelmed by attachment while going to lay disciples' homes.

His sermon was also praised by the Buddha as being based on an exemplary purified intention. With regard to this, the Buddha explained how a sermon could be based on an unpurified motive, saying that if a Bhikkhu delivered a sermon with the ulterior motive that the listeners would be impressed in himself and then displayed their impression in him, such a sermon was not purified. If, on the contrary, a Bhikkhu delivered a sermon with the purpose of convincing the listeners, making them realise the truths, and, through such realization, able to practise the Buddha Dhamma for their own benefit, such a Bhikkhu did so with a compassionate mind, taking pity on them, aiming at *their* benefit, not stealthily looking forward to his own. Such a sermon was said to be purified. And such was to be expected of Kassapa's sermon.

Mahākassapa was foremost in the regular observance of a number of austerity practices (Dhūtaṅga) viz. dwelling in the jungle, going for almsround (Piṇḍapāta), wearing rag-robles and having not more than three of such robes. He preferred a life of seclusion, not

taking delight in association. The Buddha once said to him, “You are old, O Kassapa. It would be advisable for you to come and stay within a monastery and receive almsfood offered by the householders.” In reply the Venerable said that such practices of his were based on two reasons. Firstly, it was his own preference due to its being his peaceful abode. Secondly, it would thereby be exemplary to Bhikkhus in later times, showing them how there was in the time of the Buddha a Bhikkhu who always took delight in doing so. To the Venerable’s reason the Buddha gave his appreciation.

## VENERABLE MAHĀKASSAPA

**Foremost** through his strict observance  
Of Austerity called Dhūtaṅga,  
Proving power of endurance  
Was Venerable Mahākassapa.

**Despite** the strength which was weakened  
Due to the age, growing fragile,  
His mental strength did not slacken;  
He still answered the call of the wild.

**His** abode of peace was Seclusion;  
To him it was an oasis:  
Embraced by jungles and mountains,  
Enwrapped by the warmth of Jhāna bliss.

**But** when called by the Sāsana,\* [ \*Buddha’s  
Doctrine  
He left his Seclusion Abode  
To help preserve the precious Dhamma,  
Caring not of any overload.

**Such** was how he’d answered the call  
Of duty in addition to  
That of the wild he’d placed above all.  
Now it’s Dhamma he most valued.

## VENERABLE SĀRĪPUTTA

**So** vast and deep was his Wisdom  
 Penetrating Buddha Dhamma.  
 Field Marshal of Buddhist kingdom  
 Was Ven'able Sārīputta.

**Second** only to the Blessed One,  
 He was 'general' of the Army  
 To help all people, harming none,  
 Expanding Buddhist territory.

**This** is the army merciless,  
 Killing all Mental Defilements,  
 Aiming at final self-conquest,  
 Yielding highest bliss permanent.

**Wherever** this army invades  
 It sows the seeds of Wisdom around  
 To Ignorance eliminate  
 Putting an end to charnel-grounds

**Of** one who has come to realise  
 How births cause deaths and *vice versa*.  
 All these are sufferings in disguise  
 Within the Saṁsāra's theatre.

## VENERABLE MOGGALLĀNA

**When** drastic measures were required  
 Then came Elder Moggallāna  
 To manage things that went awry,  
 Second only to Lord Buddha.

**Foremost** was he in applying  
 Psychic powers when things went amiss.  
 Where circumstance was challenging,  
 There he was at Buddha's service.

**His** powers used for Sāsana,  
 Being not for self-protection  
 When came the time for Nibbāna  
 He departed with resignation.

**He** was a source of inspiration  
 And faith and courage for many.  
 His was the strength of a Titan  
 When dealing with atrocity.

**His** manner of passing away  
 We still recollect with regret.  
 – Karmic effects have final say –  
 He had paid his outstanding debt.

**For** him, a disciple divine,  
 At all times blessed with Detachment,  
 There was no impact on his mind,  
 With Vipāka entirely absent.

## PASĀDA, BRILLIANCY OF MIND,

**Such** are three champion disciples  
 Each was foremost in his vict'ry.  
 They were just like three generals  
 In Lord Buddha's Dhamma army

**Of** distinguished Brethren and Sisters  
 Who had come from all walks of life  
 To be mentioned here and after  
 From our biological archives.

**These** to serve as encouragement  
 For all our friends in this Dhamma  
 What'ver sufferings they underwent  
 May be transformed into *Pasāda*\*

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\* Brilliancy of mind as a result of renewed Faith, This is to combat the feeling of downheartedness and despair in time of disappointments and failures due to adverse circumstances.

## THE SECOND, THIRD AND FOURTH RAINS RETREATS:

### At the Veluvana Grove, the City of Rājagaha

#### The Fourfold Wonder Meeting

**At a time** when the Buddha was dwelling in the Bamboo Grove, near the city of Rājagaha, there was a Great Meeting comprising the Fourfold Wonder called in Pali Cāturaṅgasannipāta. In the commentary of the Dīghanakhasutta i.e. the Papañcasūdanī (3/197) there was the following description:

1. The Meeting took place on the Uposatha (Fullmoon) day of the Māgha lunar month, which in Thai Calendar falls on the fullmoon day of the third lunar month. In the leap year, it falls on the fourth month.
2. The 1,250 Bhikkhus assembled therein came there on their own accord i.e. without prior appointment.
3. They were all the Arahants equipped with the Six Abhiññā (Psychic Powers).
4. They were all the EHI-Bhikkhu category, being ordained directly by the Buddha himself.

However, according to His Royal Highness the late Supreme Patriarch Prince Vajirañānavarorasa, the four elements he described in his LIFE OF THE BUDDHĀ Book Two were as follows:

1. The assembled Bhikkhus were all Arahants.
2. They were all the EHI-Bhikkhu category, being ordained by the Buddha himself.
3. They came there without prior appointment.
4. It was the day when the Buddha gave the instruction called Ovādapātimokkha.

It was also said that this Great Assembly took place also on the day when Ven. Sāriputta attained Enlightenment, becoming an Arahant while he was listening to the sermon given by the Blessed One to a mendicant named Dīghanakha. Attending upon the Buddha fanning him, the Elder contemplated the sermon until at the end of that sermon he was able to attain the Arahantship, with his mind delivered from all Āsavas or potential Defilements. It was then in the afternoon, when the Buddha went down from the Mount of Gijjhakūṭa (Vulture Peak) and proceeded to the Bamboo Grove, where he later addressed the Bhikkhus, giving them what was called the Ovādapāṭi-mokkha. Thus it was mentioned that Venerable Sāriputta attained the Arahantship on the fullmoon Māgha day, the day when the Blessed One delivered the Ovādapāṭimokkha instruction.

It was also mentioned in the Scriptures that the Buddha spent the first Rains Retreat period in the Isipatana Deer park, in the town of Benares. After the Retreat he proceeded to enlighten the fire-worshipping hermits. This took him two months, during which he had made use of various aspects of psychic powers to convince Uruvela hermit of his delusion. His success came on the fullmoon day of the Pus̥sa lunar month, equivalent to the Thai first lunar month. He later delivered the Ādittapariyāyasutta to the three fire-worshipping hermit brothers before coming back to the city of Rājagaha. There the two foremost disciples came to him. It was on the fullmoon day of the Māgha month that there was the Fourfold Wonder of the Māgha assemble as mentioned above.

However, such was a discrepancy with what was mentioned in the Pali Canon,<sup>1</sup> where it was recorded that during the eight winter days of Māgha month (equivalent to the third lunar month of Thailand) and the Phagguna month (equivalent to the fourth lunar month) the Buddha had been attempting to convince Uruvela Kassapa at the district of Uruvela. This meant that on the fullmoon day of the Māgha

<sup>1</sup> Vi. Mahā. 4/58/49



month the Buddha was still dwelling at the district of Uruvela. Should the Pali Canon's record be correct, its Commentary counterpart would then be wrong, and the Great Assembly should have been put off until after the second Rains Retreat period. Despite this, all other sources of references confirm that there was the Great Assembly with the Fourfold Wonder on the fullmoon day of the Māgha month, when the Buddha delivered the essence of his teachings called the Ovāda-pātimokkha to the assembled Bhikkhus.

### **Ovādapātimokkha : The Essence of Buddhism**

This instruction of the Buddha epitomises the whole body of his teachings into three and a half verses. By the ancient compilers it was described as follows:

Khantīparamaṃ tapo tītikkhā	: Patience is the foremost of austerity.
Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ vadanti	: The Buddhas regard Nibbāna as
Buddhā	supreme.
Na hi pabbajito parūpaghātī	: Monks who still kill or harm others
Samāṇo hoti paramā vihetthayanto	cannot be called Recluses.

This is the first verse, some points of which should be clarified as follows:

**1. The term BUDDHĀ** here was used in plural number, thus implying not only the Buddha, the Blessed One. In fact in some other places there were mentioned 3 kinds of Buddha as follows:

**a) The All-Enlightened One,** implying the Buddha himself, one who, having been enlightened himself, undertook to enlighten others until Buddhism as a movement was established.

**b) A Private Buddha.** This means one who was enlightened through his own effort like the All-Enlightened Buddha above but who was unable to enlighten others or to establish a new teaching as a religious movement.

**c) The Anubuddha.** This means those who were enlightened

through the teaching of an All-Enlightened Buddha, being thereby the latter's Arahant disciples.

### **Khanti : Patience, Forbearance, Fortitude**

**Referring** to the above verse, it can be said that the Buddhas, in whatever category they are, have the same viewpoint regarding the virtue of Khanti or, in simple term, Patience.

Now, Khanti or Patience is of two kinds viz. Adhivāsana Khanti and Tītikkhā Khanti.

The Term Adhivāsana means to restrain, with the etymological meaning of desisting or resisting. The term can be used to refer to what is generally practised by ordinary people. In time of suffering, for instance, from the pain during illness, or while being exposed to the elements or being troubled by hunger and thirst, a person without this kind of Khanti will helplessly moan and groan, or complain and grumble or else become impulsive, reacting violently either through actions or words or both. These have often led to quarrels and physical assaults, as are often seen and heard of in various places. If, on the other hand, a person is equipped with a degree of Adhivāsana Khanti, he will be thereby equipped with the resistance power not to give in to the impulsive desire on those occasions. Of course, there are still the physical and mental sufferings. What Khanti can do is to restrain and resist, not allowing it an opening to manifest on the physical or verbal plane. It is because of this suppression power that Adhivāsana Khanti is also called *Tapa*, literally what burns the Defilements, making them powerless at least for the time being. It is, however, the Khanti on the preliminary stage.

Even in the Buddhist sense, Nibbāna has a variety of implications. Instances are "Tanhāya vippahānena nibbānaṃ iti vuccati : it is Nibbāna through the eradication of Desire, Rāgadosamohakkhayā Nibbānaṃ : it is Nibbāna through the elimination of Lust, Hatred and Delusion." In short, it can be said that Nibbāna is the Dhamma that is

the extinction of Lust, Hatred and Delusion and also of Desire or in fact of all Defilements. Thus it is through the earnest and persistent practice until all Defilements are eliminated that Nibbana will appear, or manifest, to the aspirant. As long as Defilements are not eradicated, so long will the description and the talks of Nibbāna be only scriptural or intellectual. However, it is to be noted that there is no part of Desire involved in the attainment or realization of Nibbāna. This means there is to be ***neither a Desire for or no Desire for*** it, since that would be expression of like and dislike, both being manifestations of Desire or Defilements and thus obstacles to attainment of Nibbāna. The key to this is to progress or develop to the point of 'where there is no Desire, be it a negative or a positive one, involved', which is the point of approaching Nibbāna. This, however, is as far as the capacity for understanding at present is concerned.

In some places of the Pali Canon, Nibbāna was divided into two kinds viz.

1. Sa-upādisesa Nibbāna, and
2. Anupādisesa Nibbāna.

The term 'Upādi' is said to be synonymous with the Five Aggregates viz. Form (i.e. body), Sensation, Perception, Mental Conditioner and Consciousness. Thus the former kind i.e. Sa-upādisesa refers to the extinction of Defilements of an Arahant who is still alive. He has eradicated all Defilements but is still living like other people. When that Arahant passes away, his Five Aggregates are dissolved and his passing away is called Nibbāna of the second kind.

In another sense, the term 'Upādi' is said to refer to Defilements such as Attachment. According to this meaning, a Stream-Winner, a Once-Returner and a Non-Returner have not finished his task of eradicating *all* Defilements, there being some others of them to be uprooted although what they have got rid of have been absolutely done away with. Thus theirs are called Sa-upādisesa Nibbāna i.e. the Nibbāna with remnants of Defilements still to be eradicated. The Arahant, who has all Defilements eradicated, is said to have realised

the Anupādisesa Nibbāna.

There are also a group of terms, all implying Nibbāna viz. Amata (Immortality), Virāga (Dispassionateness), Mokkha (Deliverance), Asaṅkhata (Unconditioned) and Visaṅkhāra (Beyond the conditioned).

### **Target for all people**

**AMATA** means Immortality. This is desirable by all people, of all nations and at all times. It has been the searching point of all peoples from the ancient times to the present. It may be summed up that it can refer to a person or an individual, a condition or a Dhamma that is immortal.

**(a) The belief based on a person** may be seen in the case of the teaching confirming an immortal Being in a celestial realm. One instance of this is Brahmanism, a belief more ancient than Buddhism. It preaches the existence of Lord Brahma, the immortal Being, in heaven of the Brahma plane. This implies a separate realm or domain wherein dwells that immortal Being. A disciple is entitled to enter such a realm or condition through following its prescribed series of practices. Even after the Buddha's times there have been a number of other religious faiths preaching the similar concept of a personal immortal Being.

**(b) As a Bhāva.** With regard to the belief that immortality is a Bhāva i.e. condition or state, the Upanishads may be cited as one instance. It teaches the doctrine of Paramātmān or the Great Ātman, the All-Time Present. All sentient beings are divided from that Paramātmān and become each an Ātman. When an individual has performed good deeds to a prescribed degree, he or she will become a Mahātmān or great Ātman or Great Attā, which is the title bestowed upon some persons who have fulfilled those conditions. At the end of the life-span of that Mahātmān, the person will merge into the Paramātmān, becoming one with it at all times.

**(c) As Dhamma.** Buddhism, however, regards the Amata as Dhamma. i.e. impersonal. This is due to the fact that Buddhism denies that there can be any Divine Being who is able to have an immortal

life. Such a being, whoever he is, starts with birth and as such is destined to old age and death and, for this reason, to suffer extinction. Even Lord Brahma, who is said to enjoy an incalculably long life-span, is not an exception to this rule. Parallels to this may be seen in the physical, or to be more precise, astronomical concept, which confirms that even the sun, the moon and other heavenly bodies, no matter how very long life-span they have—in terms of millions upon millions of years—are finally to disintegrate. That they appear to be eternal or deathless is because their life-span is, compared with that of a human being, incalculably long.

**As for the entity** called Paramātmā or Paramattā mentioned in the Upanishads, Buddhism still holds that, as long as there is still the sense of Attā, so long will there be Attachment or Upādāna, which gives rise to Bhava, the condition of BE-ness. This is followed in its train by birth, to be followed as a corollary by death. This Buddhist concept points to the truth, or shall we call it an axiom, that in order to avoid death there must be no birth. With birth extinguished, old age and death are likewise extinguished. With the extinction of birth as a Deva or divine being, however highly evolved, or as a human being, or as anything else, there is to be *no more word or supposition to describe it, since it is inconceivable by a finite mind or knowledge to be based on, or derived from, those words or concepts.*

This may be seen as the supposition of a thing such as a house. There is to be first of all a house to be so called before it can be so called, in any language. Without a house, no supposition or descriptive word of it can exist. In the same manner, when there is no birth as anything or anybody whatever, there can be no supposition or descriptive term for it. In Buddhism, this is called the extinction of supposition or descriptive word. As such, it is not a person that is immortal; nor it is a Be-ness. It is the DHAMMA, whatever exists by itself, that is immortal. This cannot be pointed to any person nor any image of BE-ness. Such is how the DHAMMA and immortality are meant to imply in accordance with the Buddhist teaching.

That it is called Virāga, literally the absence or eradication of Lust or Attachment or Delight, points to the condition of the extinction of Defilements. That Rāga or Lust is mentioned solely is because it is the major, most dynamic Defilement for peoples or sentient beings. That is why absence of Lust was used as synonym of Nibbāna.

That it was sometimes called Mokkha or Mokkhadhamma (i.e. the Dhamma of Deliverance) is due to the fact that it delivers the aspirants from old age, illness and death. This used to be the target of achievement for the Bodhisatta or the Buddha-to-be. At first he looked forward to the extinction of the effect, which refers to sufferings. Later, when he was enlightened, he had come to know the causes i.e. Desires or Defilements. Hence another translation of Mokkha, which means Deliverance from Defilements. However, for practical purposes it has often been translated "Deliverance from Defilements and Sufferings." It is this point that the Buddha called Nibbāna—the extinction of Defilements as piercing weapons.

**Another synonym** is Asaṅkhata Dhamma, literally the Unconditioned or Visākhāra, the extinction of Saṅkhāras, both referring to the same thing. The term Asaṅkhata is opposite to Saṅkhata, which means being conditioned. Likewise the term Visākhāra is opposite to Saṅkhāra, which means the same thing as Saṅkhata. Thus all the things in the world which are seen, heard, smelled, tasted, touched, including this conscious body of ours called the Five Aggregates or Nāma-rūpa, are Saṅkhata, being conditioned. They are effects of some causes, which in turn are effects of some previous causes before themselves. These can be traced back to infinity, but they all can be said to have been produced by some causes. Instances on the external aspect can be cited in such natural phenomena as rainfall or sunshine. These are effects born of their causes, which are again effects of some other causes before them. They are what is in Buddhism called Saṅkhāra or Saṅkhata, all of which are characterised by three manifestations viz. Uppādo paññāyati: the appearance of birth; Vayo

paññāyati: the appearance of decline; and *Ṭhitassa aññatthattaṃ* : while still existing there is the manifestation of change. In short, we can say that they start with birth and stop, or end, with death. Between two poles there can be seen various aspects or manifestations of change.

**In the inner realm**, whatever good or evil a person has done are likewise Saṅkhāra since they must be conditioned by something. An individual must have done some evil so he can be called evil, whereas another one is to do some good before he can be called good, both, therefore, conditioning the person, making him or her different in a variety of ways. Without doing evil, there can be no evil for that person, and without doing good no good can be expected of an individual. Thus both good and evil, which condition a person, are also regarded as Saṅkhāra, the conditioner. Their inner effects are called Vipāka, again a Saṅkhāra, being produced by their respective causes. Now, when a person experiences the effects of what has been done, the pleasant effects will produce a delightful reactions, whereas the painful ones are sure to produce a sorrowful or tormenting reaction. Such reactions are born of Kilesa or Defilements, which, being produced by the said reactions. are again Saṅkhata or the conditioned. With the Defilements present, there are sure to be some Cetanā or Will, the driving force by which a person is, as its name implies, “forced and driven” to do some other kind of Karma in response thereto. Those Karma, being effects of Defilements, condition the Vipāka of one kind or the other. This means Vipāka here is the conditioned. But then it moves forward to condition another Karma and is therefore the conditioner once again, keeping the Karmic cycle turning endlessly, carrying or conveying with them the doer motivated by Defilement, Karma and Vipāka and so forth *ad infinitum*. Hence the pali term *Vatta*, meaning the cycle or wheel, which turns endlessly, both outside and inside, the latter driven by the latent power of the threefold agents viz. Kilesa (Defilements), Karma (Defilement-conditioned action) and Vipāka (Defilement-conditioned effects). They govern the lives of worldlings at present, binding term to this all-time wheeling, being now the

conditioned and then the conditioners. Trapped within this wheeling, there is no difference between the present life or the future ones. In all cases and at all times does the 'wheel' turn and 'drive' the worldlings' minds through endless births and deaths. This as long as it is not yet stopped or cut short by the development to the point of perfection of the Noble Eightfold Path. In other words, it is the persistent doing of good until all Defilements are done away with once and for all. Without the agent or the prime mover of Defilements the wheel *stops* turning, since there is no longer anything that 'moves' or 'drives' the person to doing any Karma. This leads as a matter of course to the extinction of Vipāka. Thereafter the cycle stops, with the 'wheel' turning no more. It is at this point that the Buddha called Nibbāna—the extinction of Defilements as piercing weapons.

**As earlier mentioned, Attainment of Nibbāna does not depend on Desire**, whether in the positive or negative sense, both being blockades to attainment or realization. An aspirant is required to do whatever can be done, to the best of his or her efforts. Of course, this is also included in the category of Saṅkhata or Saṅkhāra i.e. the conditioned or the conditioning forces. But they are on the wholesome or positive aspect. When they are developed to the fullest degree, Nibbāna is sure to appear of its own accord, there being at that moment no Desire, be it on the positive or the negative aspect. Now the Buddhas are the Knowers, those who have attained to that Supreme Dhamma and that is why they said, "Of all Dhammas Nibbāna is supreme." Without anybody having realised it in such a manner, there would be no one to confirm or declare the above phrase. Such is the second saying of the Blessed One.

### **Samāṇa (Recluses)**

**Next** comes the third part i.e. Na hi pabbajito parūpaghātī samāṇo hoti param vihetthayanto : never can a monk or an anchorite be called a recluse who hurts others or resort to violence. However, there can be another version of translation, which runs as follows : one who hurts others or who resorts to violence cannot be called a



monk nor a recluse. This is double negative. The Burmese Canon inserts 'na', meaning "not" in both parts of the saying. Thus it becomes, "Na hi pabbajito parūpaghātī Na samano hoti paraṃ vihethayanto : This is contrast to the Thai counterpart, in which there is only one *na* (i.e. not) at the beginning. But the overall meaning is the same.

One who hurts others or resorts to violence through the power of Greed, Hatred or Delusion or, in other words, of Desires, cannot be called 'Pabbajita', literally one who has gone forth (from home to the homeless life) and thus is known to have renounced all evils. Neither can he be called a Samāṇa, literally one whose mind is tranquilised. A 'Pabbajita', therefore, should be either one who has gone forth from Defilements and evils or one who is trying to do so. So is a 'Samāṇa' who has Defilements and evils tranquilised or who is attempting to do so. In case Defilements have not been under control, there is always the possibility of harmful thoughts towards others. If these thoughts are allowed to develop without restraint, they will give birth to the act of hurting others through words and deeds. In case they are not so strong, there will be only the thoughts burning the mind, which are in fact hurting the thinkers themselves. It is imperative, therefore, that to be a Pabbajita in the true sense of the term, one must be able to restrain oneself in accordance with the first part of the Buddha's instruction, followed by realization of Nibbāna in the second part. In short, it may be said that whereas the first and the second part are impersonal, the third one refers to the person who is endowed with such virtues. But it was offered in the negative form, arguing that a person without such virtues is in the position to hurt and harm others, at least through thoughts. As such he cannot be called a 'Pabbajita', one who has gone forth; nor can he be regarded as a 'Samāṇa', a recluse or one who has his Defilements tranquilised or under control.

**As far as Buddhism is concerned**, there are four kinds or rather grades of Samāṇa. These grades refer to the levels or degrees of realization, not to any outward status such as being a layman or a Bhikkhu, nor being a male or a female. The first grade of Samāṇa is the Sotāpanna or the Stream-Winner, the second is the Sakadāgāmi

or the Once-Returner, the third is the Anāgāmi or the Non-Returner, and the fourth or the highest one is the Arahant. In the strict sense, it is these four grades of Samāṇa that are included in the meaning of the term “Saṅgho.”

The Blessed One having declared the four practices mentioned above went on to summarise the practices in Buddhism into another verse, saying. “Sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṃ—Not to do evil”, “Kusala-sūpasampadā—to accumulate good”, and “Sacittapariyodapanaṃ—to purify the mind,” “Etaṃ Buddhānasāsanaṃ—all are the teachings of the Buddhas.” Such is how the various steps and kinds of practice can be summarised.

**It is worth noting that** the Buddha did not elaborate what is evil and what is good. This was because he was addressing the Arahant disciples, who, of course, were sure to know well enough. Even how the mind can be purified was also left unexplained, since those Arahant disciples had understood firsthand *how* to do so. At the mere mentioning of them they were in a position to grasp at their meaning in its entirety.

Later on, the Buddha treated in some more details what was evil and what was wholesome, so that **other people** might be able to know and abandon or develop it accordingly. The Five Evils, for instance, were exemplified as what was to be abandoned viz. killing, stealing, committing adultery, telling lies and taking intoxicants. Furthermore, he gave another elaboration of evils called ten Akusalakammāpatha (the ten evil ways) divided into three channels i.e. verbal, physical and mental. Then there are the roots of evil called Akusalamūla and their effects, which manifest in the form of troubles and sufferings. All these the Buddha told his disciples not to do, saying that it is possible for his disciples to restrain themselves from doing them.

On the other hand i.e. on the wholesome aspect, the Buddha also described them in equal details viz. the Kusalakammāpatha (wholesome ways), of which there are ten. As a counter-balance, there are again three Roots of Merit or Kusalamūla together with their effects.

In the booklet entitled Navakovāda, there are mentioned several groups of Dhamma from the Group of Two onwards which are to be cultivated. Instances are the Four Brahmavihāra or Sublime Abodes of Mind viz. Loving-kindness, Compassion, Sympathy and Equanimity. All these have been graded from the lowest to the highest one. They can be put to practice, with their effects to be fully expected.

Now, whether a person chooses to do evil or to do good is up to his own mind. It is for this reason that there comes the third part i.e. to purify one's own mind.

The term 'citta' was earlier described. It implies something formless, colourless, shapeless, being neither name nor form. It "dwells", so to speak, within the cave i.e. the body. It is the commander, being the origin of the thoughts, the will, which is the driving force of Karma, being thereby either defiled or brilliant, attached or delivered. It is characterised by its being able to "know" i.e. the basis or foundation of all knowledge. Its real nature has been described in the Canon as being "brilliant or shining". By some scholars it is translated 'the original mind' which connotes the fact that the later mind is not brilliant. However, there is in the pali passage nothing to mean 'original', possibly implying that such is the real, all-time characteristic of the mind. A parallel may be seen in the case of gold or diamond, both being naturally brilliant and sparkling at all times. That it seems to lose its brilliancy or sparkle is because of the later unwelcome visitors i.e. Defilements.

### **Three Strata of Defilements**

**What** is worth noting in the mentioned pali passage is the terms used therein i.e. Upakilesa and Āgantuka, the first being the Defilements and the second the visitor. Generally, we find the term Kilesa, whereas here the term "Upakilesa" was used. The prefix 'Upa' implies the act of "entering"; hence the suggestion that those Defilements have come in from outside, being the (unwelcomed) visitors which attach themselves to the mind like visitors overstaying the host's welcome. From this it can be concluded that Defilements are one

thing, whereas the mind is another, the former being not the real nature of the latter.

However, it is possible for the mind to be delivered or detached from Defilements and, having been so delivered, its nature i.e. the brilliancy or the sparkle will manifest in full. This is like gold mixed with other base minerals. Through the method of heating and others to drive away those base materials, the resplendent nature of gold will appear. Also it may be seen like diamond smeared with earth and mud. Its sparkle, although being there at all times, cannot be seen. It is not until after being washed of those stains and undergoing a skulful cut by a jeweler that its myriad facets will be seen in full radiance. Such is the aura emanation of the mind.

**Now, how do the Defilements, the unwelcomed guests of the mind, enter to defile it?** This has been mentioned in a number of Suttas to the effect that they insert themselves in through the channel of 'Ārammaṇa', meaning what is thought by the mind, dwelled upon by the mind. There are six 'doors' through which Defilements enter viz. Rūpārammaṇa i.e. the sight coming in through the eyes, Saddārammaṇa i.e. the sound coming in through the ears, Gandhārammaṇa i.e. the smell coming in through the nose, Jivhārammaṇa i.e. the taste coming in through the tongue, Photṭhabbārammaṇa i.e. the touch coming through the (skin of the) body and Dhammārammaṇa i.e. these sight, sound, smell, taste and touch in the past that enter the door of the mind i.e. the thought. These 'ārammaṇas' are sometimes the cause of Lust or Greed, at other times of Hatred and still at other times of Delusion. Each kind having entered the mind produces the Defilements in accordance with its characteristic, clothing the mind with its respective influence. Next, a person being affected by the Defilement of Lust is aware that he or she has a lustful desire. So is the case of each of other Defilements viz. Hatred and Delusion. This level or stratum of Defilements is called Pariyutṭhāna, the mind-clouder, manifesting itself particularly on the mind. When later on they continue to disturb the mind that is submissive to them, they become the Akusalamūla or Roots of Evil, driving the person to committing a Karma

through words, deeds or thoughts. A Defilement at this stage is called *Vītikkaṃa*, which breaks loose through any of the three kinds above. They have now escaped its mental confinement, beyond the limit of what is wholesome and righteous to desist. As long as they are kept within the boundary of mind, they will hurt the mind with their burning power endlessly, being thereby called Mental Hindrances, those that hinder the mind from attaining higher faculties.

### **Dormant or Potential Defilements**

**But** all these Defilements, however strong, will sooner or later subside, be they Lust, Hatred or Delusion. This is due, of course, to the law of change, of the *Saṅkhatadhamma*. That they subside may be because of the practical attempt to have them calmed down. But this is, as the term implies, merely a calming down, not an extinction. The sediment, so to speak, has settled in the deep recess, or the sub-conscious part, of the mind. When Lust, for instance, subsides, its sediment still lies dormant, with its potential power, at the bottom,—as it were, of the mind. This is called *Rāgānusaya*, the dormant or potential Lust (ready to spring to action). So is it with Hatred, which is called *Paṭighānusaya*, and also with Delusion, which is called *Avijjānusaya*, the dormant or potential power of Ignorance.

These are evidenced in the fact that although people are often influenced, or overpowered, by Lust or Greed, Hatred or Anger, and Delusion or Ignorance, yet there are always the times when those Defilements subside and settle and thus seemingly disappear for the time being. Yet the more often those Defilements occur and then subside, the more powerful is their potential strength. This may be compared to the dust lying at the bottom of a container or a jar. The water on the surface may look clear and limpid as long as it is not yet stirred. But once it is disturbed by outside forces, all the dust will instantly rise to the surface, clouding the water thereby. The mind is like that. While not being disturbed, it appears calm and pure. At the presence of tempting or provoking influences, the dormant Defilements betray their presence, eclipsing the transparency of the mind at once.

### The Third Step : Mind-purification

**As** against the purification of the mind, following is the explanation of how the mind is defiled first of all. The first term to deal with is 'Upakilesa'. As earlier mentioned, the prefix 'upa' is added to stress the meaning that those Defilements are the unwelcomed visitors to the mind; they are not the mind's intrinsic nature. In other words, they come *in* from outside. However, generally speaking, the term 'Kilesa' is enough where no stress is required. Also described was how Defilements come in various strata or levels, and the door-way through which Defilements work is the 'ārammana'. Such is how Kilesa is stirred to action on the mind, then overflow through the words and deeds and after that subsides for a while, when it is called Anusaya, lying dormant.

On the other hand, to treat the matter from the original point, it is advisable to start from the most subtle depth to the crude manifestation. As earlier described, the most subtle form of Kilesa is called Anusaya : what lies dormant (with great potential power), which is divided into 3 categories viz. Rāgānusaya : the Anusaya of Lust (including Greed i.e. a form of Attachment), Patighānusaya, the Anusaya of Irritation, being the unpleasant aspect, and Avijjānusaya : the Anusaya of Ignorance or Delusion. All these are dormant, subtle and submerged.

When these Anusayas are stirred, the Anusaya of Lust takes the crude form of Lust, which may be translated sense-delight; the Anusaya of Irritation betrays itself as Anger or Hatred called Dosa, which implies what is still within the mind, not yet spilling out to hurt others ; the Avijjānusaya emerges in the form of Moha, the wrong attitude of mind regarding what is good as evil and vice versa. All these, at this stage, are clouding the mind from within, with the person being aware of them at this time.

Left unchecked, Rāga grows stronger until it becomes Abhijjhā, a strong form of Greed or Desire to have, which may be rendered Covetousness. When Dosa becomes stronger in the same way, it becomes Byāpāda, the desire to take revenge or to retaliate. If Moha

is allowed to escalate, then it becomes Micchāditthi i.e. Wrong Views, to regard what is good as evil and vice versa. In its strongest form, it deludes a person into concluding that there is neither merit nor evil; whatever is done is merely a Kiriya i.e. merely an action, with no moral effect whatever. Or it hypnotises a person into believing that things or events occur at random or by chance, there being no real cause producing them. They occur, once again, by chance. Another extreme wrong view is the viewpoint that there is nothing of what is traditionally supposed to be so and so i.e. there is neither a father nor a mother. This connotes the assumption that parents are in no position to deserve respect from children. They happen to be born before their children, who will later on give birth to more children in the same manner. Nor is there a good person or an evil one. Hence the non-existence of good and evil effects of what has been done. These are total or absolute negation, being extreme wrong views.

Abhijjhā (Covetousness), Byapāda (Hatred) and Micchāditthi (Extreme Wrong Views) are what is called Vītikkamakilesa, the layer of crude Defilements that cause the spillover through words and deeds. This kind of Kilesa is itself the evil aspect of the mental Karma clouding the mind, producing as a result evil Karma through words and deeds. Hence the Buddha's saying, "All the Dhammas have *Mana* (mind) as their Leader, their supreme command, being born of mind. With the mind being clouded, whether a person speaks or acts, suffering will always follow him like the wheels of a cart following the foot-prints of the bulls pulling the cart. With the mind being brilliant, whether a person speaks or acts, happiness will always follow him like the shadow following him." Such are the three strata of Kilesa or Defilements, ranging from the crude to the subtle form i.e. Vītikkama (spillover), Pariyatthāna (clouding) and Anusaya (dormant),

**There is also another pali term for the most subtle form.** it is called Āsava, literally whatever flows and is fermented. It can do so because it always lies dormant, with great potential power. Elsewhere, the term "Āsava" refers to intoxicating liquid, which, of course, is fermented. There are three kinds of Āsava viz. Kāmāsava : the Āsava

of Lust or Sensual Delight, equivalent to Rāgānusaya mentioned above. Second is Bhavāsava : the Āsava of Be-ness. This level, as a matter of fact, is somewhat different from the second Aunsaya i.e. one of Patigha (Irritation), but there may be an overlapping area to a certain extent. The term 'Bhava' means 'Be-ness', whereas 'Patigha' means 'impact' or rather 'friction.' Now, since there is potentially a Be-ness, implying the attachment to 'I' or 'self,' it follows that there is to be, at some time or another, an 'impact' or a 'friction' on that 'Be-ness'. Without the sense of Be-ness there is *raison d'être* nothing to produce a friction (*possibly like 'there is no sound of one hand clapping'*). Hence two aspects of Bhava, the first implies the existence of Be-ness, whereas the second connotes the possibility of friction as a result thereof.

Third comes Avijjā, literally Ignorance or Not-knowing. It is regarded also an Anusaya or the dormant Defilement. Both are equivalent in meaning so there is no question of equating them.

### **Purification process against Defilements**

**Various** kinds and strata of Defilements having been discussed, it is advisable now to know how to counter their influences i.e. to purify the mind of those Defilements. As with the three strata of Defilements, there are correspondingly three steps of purification viz.

**The crude form** called Vītikkama can be countered by the first instruction : not to do evil. In other words, it is comparable to Sīla, observance of Precepts.

**The middle stratum** i.e. Pariyutthāna can be countered by the second phrase of the instruction : to fulfill virtuous conditions. This is equivalent to Samādhi or Cittasikkhā, development of Meditation. It is worth noting that in the second phrase of the Buddha's instruction, the original pali passage was 'Kusalassūmpasampadā, literally, ordination of Kusala or virtues'. On this basis, the first part may be looked upon as outer or physical ordination, whereas the second one is inner or mental ordination.



**The subtle form** of Defilements is to be washed off by means of the third part of the verse i.e. to purify the mind, which can be regarded as Paññāsikkhā, the course or step of practice dealing with Wisdom, or Insight, This means Wisdom must be cultivated and developed to the full, since it is through such Wisdom that the most subtle Defilements called Āsava or Anusaya can be eradicated. How to do so can be studied from various Suttas, which were the Buddha's own instructions, such as Anattalakkhanasutta or Ādittapariyāyasutta. In these Suttas or Discourses there were described the methods by which to develop and strengthen the power of Wisdom, contemplating the Aggregates, the so-called Elements and the sense-doors until there dawns upon the aspirant the Nibbidā or Disillusioned Weariness, which is the starting point on the way to realization as earlier mentioned. All these practices are the Buddhas' instructions.

Having said the above verse, the Blessed One went on to instruct the Bhikkhus with another one-and-a-half verses as follows:

Anūpavādo : not to speak ill of anybody;

Anūpaghāto : not to harm anybody;

Pātimokkhe ca saṅvaro : to observe the monastic discipline carefully;

Mattaññutā ca bhattachasmiṃ : to be moderate in food;

Pañtaṅca sayanāsanāni : To associate with places of seclusion;

Adhicitta ca āyogo : to take the practice of advanced Meditation;

Etam Buddhāna sāsanaṃ : all these are the Buddhas' teachings.

In the essence, this latter part of the Buddha's instruction is somewhat like the elaboration to a certain degree of the above verse. What is worth noting here is the fact that at that time *there was as yet no formal monastic discipline that could be called Paṭimokkha in the sense understood later on or today*. Thus the term 'pātimokkha' herein should be meant to imply the traditional rules of monastic dis-

cipline understood to be observed by the monks. Such is how this instruction of the Buddha was called *Ovādapātimokkha*, that is to say, the *Pātimokkha* (Monastic Discipline) *that is an instruction*, as opposed to one that was formally established, like a code of law, later on.

This instruction, it should be noted, the Buddha gave to his Bhikkhus who were all Arahants. The purpose, therefore, was *not* to pave the way for their attainment of any Path and Fruition, which they all had already attained. Rather, it was to help draw a guide-line or an overall view of his teachings for them. That was why, first of all, he epitomised the Buddhist course of practice under three main headings. Then he suggested three more general methods of practice followed by some more explanations thereof. It was recorded that on the Uposatha days i.e. the fullmoon days and the days before the new moon day, the Blessed One presided over the assembly of Bhikkhus and gave them this *Ovādapātimokkha*. This he had done every fortnight. Such was how he participated in the Uposatha together with the Bhikkhus. This was called *Pārisuddhi Uposatha*, the Uposatha on an Uposatha day, when all the Bhikkhus already assembled were all purified of all disciplinary offences.

However, it was also recorded in the Book of Discipline<sup>3</sup> that on one Uposatha day, when all the Bhikkhus were already assembled for the *Pātimokkha* and had been waiting for a while, the Buddha would not come to preside over the occasion. When it was the first watch of the night Venerable Ānanda went to inform the Buddha of the matter, but the Buddha refused to come. He was once again informed at the second watch and again at the third watch of the night, still the Buddha refused the invitation. But on the third time he told Venerable Ānanda that the congregation of Bhikkhus was not purified since there were two Bhikkhus who had committed a serious disciplinary offence. On learning of this, Venerable Moggallāna undertook to survey the assembly by means of his psychic, clairvoyant power and soon saw who were the culprits. He went straight to them and told them

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<sup>3</sup> Vi. culla.7/283/447-8 ; *Khu. U.* 25/150/116

to leave, but they refused. It was not until they were forcefully dragged away that they had to comply. But then it was dawn and the time for the Uposatha was over, so there was no Uposatha procedure for that day. Referring to this matter<sup>4</sup>, the Buddha ordered the Bhikkhus to recite the disciplinary articles themselves from then on, for he would not participate in the procedure again. This was called the Vinayapāṭi-mokkha, as opposed to the Ovādapāṭimokkha. It is the former Pāṭi-mokkha that the Code of Disciplinary Articles has been formally recited every fortnight to this day.

## THE FOURFOLD WONDER ASSEMBLY

**One** night on Māgha month fullmoon  
Amidst the Great Congregation,  
The Buddha granted them a boon  
Of his summarised instruction.

**'Twas** called Ovādapāṭimokkha  
Comprising three and one half verses  
To be the gist of his Sāsana  
That Buddhists should bear in mind first.

**This** Māgha Bhikkhu assembly  
Was endowed with Wonder Fourfold  
One thousand two hundred fifty  
Were all Arahants, young and old.

**All** were EHI category  
Ordained by Him the Blessed One.  
No prior appointment any  
Had they come : through order of none.

**To** this significant meeting  
Lord Buddha gave his final touch.  
He summarised his own teaching  
So they could learn from it as such.

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<sup>4</sup>Vi. Culla. 7/292/446

**Khanti**, Nibbāna, Non-Violence

Did the first Gāthā\* emphasize. [\*verse  
 In the second one were condensed  
 The gist of three items likewise:

**To** abstain from what'ver's evil;  
 To always do what's right and good;  
 Then to attempt what's more subtle –  
 To cleanse the mind of evil root.

**This** means Defilement potential,  
 Dormant within sub-conscious mind.  
 It is practice highest, noble,  
 Leaving all mundane things behind.

**Never** do harm by words and deeds;  
 Follow the norm of a recluse;  
 Be moderate to drink and eat;  
 A seclusion do always choose—

**All** such were more details given,  
 Elaborating three mainstays,  
 Which had already been mentioned,  
 Winding up with the advanced way

**Of** mind cleansing stressed once again  
 To bring home how all his teachings  
 Must supersede all things mundane  
 To the Extinction of Suff'ring.

**All** these are Lord Buddha's milestones  
 Put up for ev'ry wayfarer  
 For us they are *sine qua none*  
 As well as are our *de riqueur*.

**May** all the wayfarers Buddhist  
 Follow all these Buddha's signposts.  
 At each and ev'ry turn and twist  
 Let's be careful to the utmost.

***Never*** be lured into by-ways  
Side - stepping from the Buddha's Path.  
Do always on the main Path stay  
To Enlightenment at long last.

## rites for the deceased (*Dakkhīṇānupadāna*)

At a time when the Blessed One was dwelling in the Bamboo Grove, king Bimbisāra took the initiative to perform the rites for the deceased called *Dakkhīṇānupadāna* in Buddhism. He invited the Buddha and a number of Bhikkhus to have a meal within his royal palace and offered such requisites as robes. Then he dedicated the fruits of his merit to his deceased kinsmen. The Buddha appreciated the king's motive with the passages some of which have been used by Bhikkhus nowadays in connection with the same kind of rites. The appreciation verses beginning with the pali "Adāsi me akāsi me..." may be rendered as follows:

"Having recalled that such and such persons who used to be our relatives and friends had kindly given this to us or had kindly done this to us, such relatives and friends should perform the rites for the deceased. They should not weep or lament with grief, since to do so would do nothing good to the deceased, who will remain as they are.

The offerings that you have done, that have been well established in the Sangha, will go to benefit the deceased for a long time within the range of possibility (in each case).

A great merit you have done in performing your duties as their relatives, in worshipping the deceased through this fruitful kind of worship and in strengthening the Bhikkhus in doing so."

Such is the summarised account of the first *Dakkhīṇānupadāna* performed for the first time in Buddhism by king Bimbisāra.

The term '*dakkhīṇānupadāna*' consists of '*dakkhīṇā*' and '*anupadāna*', the latter implying the act of adding or increasing, whereas the former meaning, literally, the causes of progress. So the term was used to refer to a rite by which to dedicate the fruits of merit to the deceased.

There is also another name for this. It is called '*pubbapetabali*'.

'Pubba' means 'coming or going before', whereas 'peta' means the deceased and 'bali' implies giving or sacrifice. Together, they mean the act of sacrificing something for the sake of those who had gone (i.e. had died) before.

According to Brahmanism, the term '*pubbapeta*' means ancestors. This term, however, has a limited meaning. It refers only to three former generations viz. father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Those before these three generations are not included in the meaning of the term.

Such rites for the deceased were for a long time traditional. It resulted from the general belief that death is not the end of everything. In some cases it was even believed that the soul would be able to return to the former body. In most cases, however, it was believed that the deceased would take birth on another plane or dimension. Now, their relatives being concerned about their welfare in that dimension and fearing the deceased might be starved or suffer in some way or another, undertook to dedicate the fruits of merits done in this world to them. The manner of dedication, of course, followed the manner of the belief in each case and tradition. That was why such a merit-making was also called *Saddhā* in pali or *Śrāddhā* in sanskrit language, both meaning 'faith'. Hence the term *Śrāddhavratta*, the 'vratta' or practice conducted through faith or belief that to do so and so would result in sending the fruits of merit done to the deceased. In Brahmanism there was a kind of oblation, which was done through pouring water and dispensing charity.

What was used as an oblation may be, for instance, lumps of rice for the sake of the three former generations as earlier mentioned. It was called *Sapinda*, meaning ones who were related through lumps of rice. Those other than the three former generations were offered through pouring water, not through the lumps of rice. The 'water-pouring' was done by scooping up water by the cup of both hands and then letting it flow out therefrom, while the donors made a mental note dedicating the fruits of their merit to the deceased relatives.

This was to quench the thirst of those deceased persons in case they were thirsty. This method of using water as a means or channel of sending the fruits of merit done was also used for the sake of those three former generations.

As far as dispensing charity was concerned, a number of Brahmins were invited to a meal, after which they were offered robes or clothings. This was to prevent the deceased from going naked.

The lumps of rice as a form of oblation called Sapinda have been accepted and incorporated into the Thai tradition. Thus on some festival occasions called in Thai '*Trus or Sath*' day banana-leaves are made into the form of cones into which are put some rice. Then they are put on a kind of tray, with other edibles around that rice.

This pouring of dedication water should have been incorporated into Thai tradition. It can be seen in, as earlier mentioned, the pouring of water as token of giving things immovable. Such is how this tradition may have its origin in Brahmanism, the difference being that the water thus poured is not intended to be the drinking water for the deceased. Instead, it is the token of merits shared or dedicated. In Brahmanism, such pouring of water is called Samānodaka i.e. (for) those who have a share in the (symbolic) water.

**To come back** to the event in Buddhism. The question is : what did king Bimbisāra have in mind to be spurred to performing such rites? According to the Commentators,<sup>1</sup> at a time when the King offered the Bhikkhus a meal and the Bamboo Grove, quite a number of his deceased relatives who had been born '*Petas*' (hungry ghosts) through their evil deeds came crowding the royal palace, hoping for the dedication of the fruits of merit to be shared to them. But there was nobody who cared to think of doing so. Being thus disappointed, they made an eerie noise in the night. The king, hearing that frightening noise, came to think of it. With that thought in mind he performed the said rites for the deceased on the following day.

Logically, since there had been in Brahmanism such rites as Dakkhiṇānupadāna, Puḥ:bapetabali and Śrāddhavratta as earlier men-

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<sup>1</sup> Maṅgala 1/328/338



tioned, there ought to be something in Buddhism parallel to that. However, there is in Buddhism no oblation in the form of anything material such as the drinking water. *Only the intention or resolution to share the fruits of merit thereof is enough.* The dispensing of charity to Bhikkhus headed by the Buddha and the mental note dedicating the fruits of merit done are therefore sufficient for the purpose. Again, whereas the Brahmanical tradition limits the deceased recipients to only three generations upwards and other relatives as mentioned before, there is no such limitation in Buddhism. This can be seen in the verses of appreciation which have been already translated to the effect that devotees, recalling the beneficial deeds done to them by the deceased, whoever they are i.e. friends or relatives, are in the position to perform such rites. This can be seen to be all-inclusive, being unlike its counterpart in Brahmanism, which allows only the three generations upwards to partake of the rice; others can drink only the water. The Buddhist tradition in this respect is therefore comparatively unlimited.

However, there is also something worthy of note as far as this 'unlimitedness' of Buddhism is concerned. This is what may be called the possibility or feasibility principle to be applied to each case. This, therefore, connotes the fact that it may in some cases or situations be impossible especially as far as the receivers are concerned. But, *where the givers or donors are considered, there is no such conditional clause.* The merit-makers have thereby performed what is expected of dutiful relatives, showing how they are grateful and respectful towards the deceased, how they have fruitfully supported the Bhikkhus and have thereby performed a praiseworthy act of dispensing charity. For this reason, although there is something like a conditional clause at the receivers' end, *no such limit is there for the givers or donors, who are unconditionally entitled to enjoy those meritorious fruits.*

As for the 'Possibility Principle' (Ṭhāna), and its corollary 'Impossibility Principle' (Athāna), there is a Sutta or Discourse called Jānūsasonisutta<sup>2</sup> describing them as follows:

A Brahmin named Jānūsasoni once approached the Buddha,

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2 An Dasaka. 24/290/166.

asking whether, with respect to the Brahmanist rites of dispensing charity and *Srādhavratā*, the fruits thereof from the Brahmins who resolved to share them to the deceased relatives would yield the expected results.

***In reply the Buddha said that there are conditions or occasions on which such dedication is sometimes possible and at other times not.***

Regarding the latter category (i.e. not possible), this refers to two kinds of beings. Firstly, those who have done ten kinds of unwholesome or evil acts (*Akusala Kamma*) and have taken birth as hellish beings or animals. Secondly, those who have abstained from such evil acts and have been born to the world of celestial or human beings once again. These two kinds of beings live on the 'food' of their own planes and as such are not in the position to appreciate and enjoy the meritorious fruits dedicated.

The former category (i.e. possible) implies those who have done the *Akusala* (unwholesome acts) and are by that time born to the planes of *Pittivisaya* i.e. the hungry ghosts, who have deformed and grotesque bodies. These beings live on both the 'food' of their own planes and that dedicated by donors from the earth plane. It is only this kind of beings that can appreciate and enjoy such a share of merits.

Again, the Brahmins asked if, in case the relatives did not take birth in the planes of hungry ghosts, there should be anybody to appreciate those results.

The Buddha's reply was that, in such a case, other relatives would appreciate them. This is because it is impossible that there should *not* be in that plane any relative whatever (when traced back to the remote past) of the donors.

The Brahmin asked further, saying, "If those beings have taken birth in the realms where appreciation is impossible, is there any other condition to be of some help to them in those realms?"

The Buddha replied to the effect that they would benefit by whatever charity they themselves used to do on the earth plane. If, for instance, they are born animals such as elephants and horses, they will be fairly well fed, with sufficient supply of food and water to make them fairly happy in that condition. If, on the other hand, they are born human or celestial beings, they will be provided adequately with whatever they need to live on there. All these are their own Karmic results of charity.

On the side of the givers or donors, therefore, there can be no loss whatever.

**To recapitulate**, there are in Buddhism three conditions whereby the rites for the deceased can yield the expected results. They are

(a) The donors or givers are required to make a **mental** note dedicating the meritorious fruits thereof. There is no problem regarding whether or not the pouring of water is used as a supplementary factor. What counts is the intention or resolution made on the occasion.

(b) The deceased who have taken birth in the planes of hungry ghosts have known and appreciated the sharing or dedication of the fruits of merits,

(c) The act of charity is a worthy one, being dispensed towards the persons worthy of that charity. In Buddhism this refers firstly to the Bhikkhus, and secondly to other persons who are in need of such an act. A charity of this characteristic, with its fruits shared or dedicated, can fulfil the donors' wish.

There used to be<sup>3</sup> in (Thai) official circles a coined term *Dakkhiṇānūsaraṇa*, consisting of *Dakkhiṇā* and *Anūsaraṇa*, with the combined meaning of recollection of such rites—a rather awkward, inappropriate term. It was intended to mean rites for the deceased, with chanting verses, followed by what is called 'Sadappakorn', but no offering of meals for Bhikkhus, whereas *Dakkhiṇānupadāna* means

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<sup>3</sup> in B.E. 2504, but is now unused

the same process followed also by the offering of a meal to Bhikkhus.

It should be noted that, in the Brahmanical rites for the deceased, food and clothings are essential requisites and cannot be dispensed with. This is done through offering those things to the Brahmins. This is true also in Buddhism, wherein for the rites to be perfect food and clothes are to be included. The clothings, however, are not offered by hand to the Bhikkhus. They are placed on a long strip of cloth for Bhikkhus to take them off. In case of the deceased being an ordinary person, the rites are called Paṇsukūla, whereas when the deceased person is a member of the royal family<sup>4</sup> they are called Sadappakorn in the vernacular.

The term Paṇsukūla, literally refers to the used cloth, referring to the first of the four Nissaya (fundamental practices) in the instruction on the day of ordination given by the Upajjhāya or Preceptor to the newly ordained Bhikkhu.

The term 'Sadappakorn' is the vernacular for the Pali 'Sattapa-karaṇa', the seven Texts comprising the Abhidhamma. During the funeral rites, there is a tradition of reciting the Pali passages in those texts. Now, when the time comes for receiving the said Paṇsukūla cloth mentioned above, the cloth is specially called the Sadappakorn cloth in connection with the recitation of the seven Abhidhamma pali passages.

The process of 'drawing' (i.e. receiving) the cloth consists of a length of ceremonial thread or a long strip of cloth from the coffin or the urn to the area where the Bhikkhus are seated. The host or hostess places the clothes (or robes) on the thread or the strip. The Bhikkhus touch the cloths with their right hands and recite the pali passage used on the occasion:

Aniccā vata saṅkhārā  
 Uppajjitvā nirujjhanti

uppādavayadhammino  
 tesaṃ vūpasamo Sukho

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from the rank of 'Momchao' upwards

Impermanent are the Saṅkhāras, being naturally subject to birth and decline. Having taken birth, they are destined to extinction. Blessed is it to have them tranquilised.

In the case of Bhikkhus of the Dhammayuti group, another verse is added as follows:

Sabbe sattā maranti ca  
Tathevāhaṇi marissāmi

Marīṇsu ca marissare  
natthi me ettha saṅsayo

All beings are destined to die. They used to die some time before. They are destined to die some time later. I am also destined to go like that. There is in this matter no doubt on my part.

In case the cloth (or robe) is placed on or under the coffin and a Bhikkhu recites the said passages at i.e. closest to the coffin while taking the robe from the thread or strip placed for the purpose, it is Mahāpaṇsukūla, the Great Pansukūla cloth. There is a record in the Canon related to the Life of the Buddha<sup>5</sup> saying to the effect that the Buddha himself, while attempting to convert the fire-worshipping hermit Uruvela Kassapa at the Uruvela district, also did the Mahā Pansukūla, the difference being that he did not do so formally or ceremoniously like this. Without more ado he went straight to the corpse on a charnel-ground, pulled out the piece of cloth wrapping it, then washed, dyed and cut it to form a robe for himself. There is in some places in Thailand something parallel to this. A corpse is hidden somewhere in a forest or under a leafy bush, with a Cīvara or robe placed on its hands (in worshipping gesture). The corpse is tied seated on one end of a long plank, balanced on a centre support. A Bhikkhu is then invited to go there (usually alone and sometimes at night-time). To get the robe, he is required to tread on the other end of the plank which, like a see-saw, makes the opposite end seem to jump up suddenly towards him, with the seated corpse in the bending-down position, looking like offering him the robe on its hands. Now the Bhikkhu takes the robe from the corpse, who acts like the donor at the moment. In some cases, however, the Bhikkhu is not informed of

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5 Vi. Mahā. 4/53/41

this beforehand and thus it takes one with nerves of steel to be able to do so with calm and poise.

The method of washing the Paṇsukūla cloth was probably intended for Bhikkhus who refuse householders' robes but are content to secure the robes for themselves in that manner. Possibly they wish to preserve the old tradition of taking the abandoned cloths from the rotten corpses, then washing and dyeing them, cutting them into the form of a robe the way the Buddha had done, as was recorded in his life-story (in the Pali Canon).

### **Receiving of Sheltering Places Permitted**

**During** the three Rains Retreat periods while the Buddha was dwelling in the Bamboo Grove, there were some occurrences worth mentioning as follows :

The first one was the Buddha's permission for the Bhikkhus to receive the Senāsana i.e. sheltering places.

The term Senāsana consists of Sena, meaning bed place, and Āsana, sitting place. Combined, it is used to refer to a sheltering place wherein one can sit and lie down.

It was known that, first of all, the Buddha permitted the Bhikkhus to receive the offering of a Grove (comparable to a park) named the Veluvana or Bamboo Grove. This being a royal park, there ought to be some kind of dwelling place within it, but it was a pity there was no mentioning of it whatever. But we know that at least there must be a great number of trees therein. This is like what we call a park today. The term ārāma (grove) literally meaning a place of delight, referred to where there are shady trees all over the area. Although they were fruit-trees, yet they gave a delightful shade. Such was the original meaning of ārāma or grove. Now that the Buddha had given permission for Bhikkhus to receive the offering of such a place, the term later came to have taken on the meaning of a monastery. *It was because of this fact that the later Elders in the Sangha have inherited and maintained the tradition that trees are to be the essential part of a monastery.*

The tradition has been kept alive within the monastery of Bovorn Nives by the late Supreme Patriarchs Prince Vajirañāṇavarorasa and Prince Vajirañāṇavaṇsa. Whenever there was a tree within the area falling down, another one must be brought and planted in its place. This was to live up to the tradition that a monastery cannot be without trees, which are a source of inward joy and delight. By H.R.H. Prince Vajirañāṇavarorasa it was surmised that the ārama or monastery in those times such as the Bamboo Grove still belonged to the king and that there must be some persons taking care of it who were the king's men. The Bhikkhus were granted royal permission just to dwell in there as residents, not as owners.

During those earlier times, there was still no mention of senāsana i.e. quarters as (permanent) dwelling places called Kuṭi and Vihāra. Such being the case, there was recorded in the *Seṇāsana Khandhaka*<sup>6</sup> in the Book of Discipline, the following story.

One morning a wealthy householder in the city of Rājagaha happened to see a number of Bhikkhus coming out of their retreats in various places, some from a forest, others from the hills, gorges, caves, cemeteries, shady bushes, open places and haystacks. They all walked in a self-restrained manner. Seeing this, he was delightedly impressed and asked the Bhikkhus whether they would be permitted to receive sheltering places made specifically for them. They told him they would have to inform the Buddha first and later came to ask him about the matter. The Buddha allowed them to receive the *Senāsana* i.e. the places wherein they could sit and rest, of which there were five kinds mentioned in the Canon as (1) Vihāra : dwelling places such as huts or cottages; (2) *Adḍhayoga* : a lean-to; (3) *Pāsada* : a multi-storied house; (4) *Hammiya* : a dwelling place with flat roof; (5) *Guhā* : a cave (which may be natural or man-made such as one built with bricks).

The Bhikkhus then came back to tell the wealthy man of the Buddha's permission. Whereupon the man had sixty Vihāras built within

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6 *Vi. Culla*. 7/85/198-203

one day. This was thought to be something like small huts, each accommodating one Bhikkhu only. That was why they were all built within one day; otherwise they would not have been finished within so short a time.

The wealthy man then came to see the Buddha and invited him together with the Bhikkhus to have their meal at his house on the following day, when the man, having offered the prepared food for him and the attendant Bhikkhus, asked the Buddha what he should do with regard to those sixty huts. In reply the Buddha told him to make them accessible to the Bhikkhus who came there from the four directions. The wealthy man having done so, the Buddha appreciated his offering with the passages later composed in verses beginning with *Sītaṇi unhaṇi patihanti*, all meaning as follows :

“Such Vihāras sheltering (the Bhikkhus) from the heat and cold and protecting (them) from ferocious beasts, reptiles, mosquitoes and from the natural elements such as wind, rain and sun, to offer them (to the Bhikkhus) as places for retreat, for the wellbeing and the development of meditation and insight, is praised by the Buddhas as being supreme.

Such being the case, a wise man, seeing these benefits, has made the Vihāras a delightful place and invited a Bhikkhu with a wide experience to dwell in them.

He should provide such a Bhikkhu with rice, water, robes and a dwelling place, with a faith convincing him that the Bhikkhu is honest and sincere.

Having been so provided, the Bhikkhus with a wide and practical experience will instruct those people the Dhamma that is conducive to the end of Suffering. It is the Dhamma that those men, having realised, will be able to do away with all Outpourings (i.e. āsava), thus attaining Nibbāna within this life-time.”



Such was how the Blessed One appreciated the offering of Vihāras by a wealthy man in the city of Rājagaha before he went back to his dwelling place.

### **The Tradition of Appreciation**

It was customary at that time that one Bhikkhu should say the appreciation passages. This was after the Bhikkhus had finished their meal. The chief Bhikkhu said the passages in the form of a brief sermon understandable to everybody. Sometimes other Bhikkhus might also be present, whereas at other times they were sent back first, with only one Bhikkhu remaining who was to give the appreciation instruction which was singled out from the body of the Buddha's teaching. This was coupled with the information and blessing concerning the meritorious acts having been performed by the lay disciple who was the host on that occasion.

### **To accept the Preceptor as one's guide and leader**

Another occurrence worthy of note was the Buddha's transference of authority to perform the activities of the Order to the Sangha i.e. to members of the Order as a whole. Such an activity was, first of all, the ordination procedure, in which a newly ordained Bhikkhu was required to formally accept his Upajjhāya or Preceptor as his teacher and leader. In doing so the Buddha referred to the newly ordained Bhikkhus who improperly robed themselves, went on their almsround in the indecent manner and were ill-behaved in a variety of ways. It was in the Canon not mentioned in what manner or type they had been ordained, but it was obvious that the ordination procedure called *Ñatticatuddhakamma* was not yet established. Hence it can be concluded that those Bhikkhus were either ordained by the Ehi instruction of the Buddha himself or by three Refuges (*Tisaranagamana*). Referring to the above-mentioned occurrences, the Buddha ordered the Bhikkhus to formally accept the Preceptors as their teacher and leader. The Pali term for the Preceptor is *Upajjhāya*, literally one who looks intently, meaning one who oversees the behaviour of his charges. At first the process of submitting oneself to the Preceptor's overseeing should

probably be like the system used today of providing a newly ordained Bhikkhu with a 'companion' Bhikkhu. This 'companion' is one well informed in the disciplinary rules. Thus it was the duty of an Upajjhāya, as one with the greater background of experience and information, to supervise the Bhikkhus under his care, telling them what is permissible and what is not.

### **An exemplary aged Bhikkhu**

It was recorded that there was some time later an aged Brahmin named Rādha, who came to the Bhikkhus asking for ordination. But he was turned down time and again and soon pined away with grief. He was seen by the Buddha, who asked him about the cause and was told why he was grieving so. The Buddha then called the Bhikkhus to a meeting and asked them if there was anybody able to recall an act of kindness towards them by the aged Brahmin. The Bhikkhu who did so was Venerable Sāriputta, who said he was given a ladle of food by the Brahmin while he was one day on his almsround in the city of Rājagaha. At this the Buddha told him to arrange for the Brahmin's ordination. Venerable Sāriputta asked the Buddha how he should give ordination to the Brahmin. In reply to this, the Buddha revoked the method of Tisaraṇagamāṇa ordination, by which an applicant could be ordained by only his Upajjhāya, and established a system, or procedure, of ordination in which a number of other Bhikkhus were required to take part and give their approval. According to this method, a motion was to be submitted once to the assembly of Bhikkhus. This was to be followed by another three times of declaration or making the motion known to the assembly for approval. This method was therefore known as Ñatticatutthakamma Upasampadā, ordination by means of the four-stepped procedure and was used first of all in the ordination of Rādha by Ven. Sāriputta. It has been used until now.

### **Various Types of Sangha**

The term Saṅgha, literally meaning 'group', herein (i.e. in the Disciplinary sense) implies a group or chapter of Bhikkhus who collectively perform an activity. The minimum number of Bhikkhus to be so called

is four. The Saṅgha in this sense can be classified as follows :

a) *Catuvagga* (chapter of four). This is the minimum requirement for the Kāraṇasaṅgha (Bhikkhus jointly performing an activity) who can perform many Saṅgha activities, except when there is mentioned a greater quorum than this.

b) *Pañcavagga* (chapter of five). The Saṅgha of this quorum is entitled to perform the activity called *Pavāraṇā* on the last day of the three-month Rains Retreat period and another one i.e. ordination procedure in an area outside the 'Central Region' (of India). A quorum of Sangha smaller than this is not entitled to do so.

c) *Dasavagga* (chapter of ten). The Sangha of this quorum is empowered to give ordination in the "Central Region" (of India). A smaller quorum cannot do so.

d) *Viśativagga* (chapter of twenty). This quorum is required to absolve a Bhikkhu who has committed a serious disciplinary offence called *Saṅghādisesa* and has undergone a series of repentance and confession procedure during the prescribed period of self-exile. The purpose is for the guilty Bhikkhu to have the Bhikkhu community's approval and forgiveness and to be welcomed into the community once again. As usual, this is the minimum requirement forbidding a smaller quorum.

The Buddha having transferred the authority of performing the activities to the Sangha community as a whole, there arose the necessity to establish a number of other rules and regulations for the smooth and systematic function in all cases. Fulfilment of such requirements is called *Sampatti*, whereas a deficiency of them somewhere is called *Vipatti*. The former makes such an activity accepted and valid, whereas the latter nullifies its value. Those requirements are as follows :

a) *Vatthu* (person or subject-matter). This refers to the person or subject-matter that requires the Sangha performance such as the ordination procedure (subject-matter) for an applicant (person). The latter must meet the requirements for the ordination-seeker which have

been established by the Buddha. When those requirements are met, this is called *Vatthu Sampatti*; in case they are not so, this is called *Vatthu Vipatti*. The former is granted ordination, while the latter is denied it.

b) *Sīmā* (place). An activity must be performed within a proper place or boundary specified by the Buddha. This is *Sīma Sampatti* legalising that activity. An activity performed outside this area is not valid in the disciplinary sense.

c) *Parisa* (assembly). This requires the *Bhikkhus* who assemble to be the *Pakatatta* i.e. not those who have committed the capital disciplinary offence called *Pārājika*, the Defeaters, depriving them of *Bhikkhuhood*. They must not be the ones to be ex-communicated, either. Moreover, they must be seated within the *Hatthapāsa* of each other. This means the distance that can be reached out to each other by hand. Hence the literal meaning of 'the noose of the hand.' This is the maximum distance from each other allowed by the Buddha.

All these mean that the *Bhikkhus* being not the 'defeated' nor the 'excommunicated' assemble within the legitimate boundary. During the process of the activity the assembled *Bhikkhus* do not get up and go out; nor will any outsider *Bhikkhu* enter the area or boundary. If, in any case, any *Bhikkhu* has the right to come in, he must be seated within the so-called *Hatthapāsa* of other *Bhikkhus* close to him. When all these requirements are met, the *Parisasampatti* is attained; if not, it is called the *Parisavipatti*, nullifying the activity performed.

d) *Kammavācā* (wording). This means the ways by which the purpose of the motion and the declaration are expressed. In the ordination procedure, for instance, the motion (*Ñatti*) is submitted once to the assembly. This is to be followed by the *Anusāvanā*, declaration or request for approval, to be recited three times. In both the *Ñatti* and the *Anusāvanā* there must be mentioned the name of the applicant, that of the Preceptor and other relevant details. All these must be recited correctly in order to attain the *Sampatti* of the *Kammavācā* or Wording. Any deficiency of such requirements is the *Vipatti* of the

Kammavācā. As before, the former case makes the activity valid and legal, whereas the latter renders it null and void.

**As regards the quorum** for ordination procedure, it was mentioned that the area within what was called the Central Region (Majjhima Janapada) requires a quorum of ten Bhikkhus at least, whereas in the outer or remote area (Paccanta Janapada) a smaller quorum of five was enough. Now the 'Central Region' at that time referred to the central part of India, which was described in the Scriptures as extending Northwards to such cities and being bordered by such states. An overall picture of this area revealed its shape to be like a Mudiṅga (i.e. a kind of drum bulging in the middle).

That area during those times being a developed one with a great number of Bhikkhus dwelling therein, the Buddha commanded a quorum of ten Bhikkhus for the ordination procedure. But in outer or more remote areas collectively called Paccanta where there were fewer Bhikkhus, a quorum of five should be sufficient. Now as far as the literal meaning is concerned, Thailand is obviously to be considered an outside or remote country. But, where the essential purpose is considered, the quorum for Thailand, where there are a great number of Bhikkhus, the quorum should be ten, not only five. For this reason the late Supreme Patriarch H.R.H. Prince Vajirañāṇavarorasa formally preferred the quorum of ten.

Moreover, in what was called the Central Region in India during those times it is now very difficult to find ten Bhikkhus to form the quorum prescribed. If, however, an ordination is to be done in India by this time, it is still advisable to follow the disciplinary requirement for a quorum of ten.

It is noteworthy that the Sīmā of the monastery of Bovorn Nives used to be altered and modified many times until at present it is shaped also like a Mudiṅga. Possibly King Monkut, who had known about this, would have done so intentionally. This so that the monastery should have the perimeter like that of the 'Central Region' at that time.

# NO LOSS IS THERE FOR ONE WHO GIVES

**One** thing there has been  
 From the times ancient  
 This can be regarded  
 To think of relatives

**Especially** those  
 Parents and cousins –  
 Whether they should be  
 Thus those here should do

**To** make them over there  
 At least relieve them  
 So they perform rites,  
 Fruits of merit with

as common factor  
 for peoples everywhere.  
 as human nature  
 with concern and care,

who are the deceased:  
 all the beloved ones,  
 in heaven or Hades.  
 what'ver can be done

healthy and happy,  
 of torment and suff'ring.  
 hoping these should carry  
 effects relenting.

**Recommended** is such practice  
 In Buddhism by Lord Buddha,  
 Who also advised all Buddhists  
 To make merit through the Sangha,

**Then** dedicate the fruits thereof  
 To beings in that dimension  
 So these can reach them with one waft  
 Of mind-to-mind interaction.

**Of** course, some cases there may be  
 Where such fruits cannot reach targets,  
 A difference of extreme degree  
 Blocking both sides from having met.

**The** recipients may be too high  
 Or they might have sunken too low.  
 Those fruits, therefore, cannot come nigh.  
 Such beings those fruits must forgo.

**But** for givers, there is no loss;  
 What'ver merit they have thus sown

Through Sangha or a worthy cause  
Always are treasures of their own.

**Just** like a candle of merit  
Gives off its light in all directions.  
Who've can see and benefit  
Is surely not the candle's question.

**Let** merit-makers take courage.  
Be not distressed if no one knows.  
There is no such thing as wastage  
In what've they have tried to sow.

**A** bountiful harvest is theirs  
In proportion to what they've sown.  
They may not yet be now aware,  
Yet all there is is all their own.

**No** more, no less, than they deserve.  
What's theirs can't be stolen or lost.  
From their goal they should not swerve  
But hold on to it at all costs.

## TO THE CITY OF KAPILAVATTHU

It was some time during these three Rains Retreat periods that the Buddha proceeded to the city of Kapilavatthu, in the state of Sakka. In the Pali scriptural texts, it was mentioned that the state of Sakka was part of (i.e. was annexed to) the state of Kosola. This can be known from an occurrence in the latter part of the Buddha's life-time, when at one time King Pasenadi approached the Buddha and said that the Blessed One was eighty years old ; so was he. Furthermore, the Buddha was a Kosala person; so was he.<sup>1</sup> However, it could be that the state of Sakka was a free, sovereign state at one time or another.

But, according to the Commentary,<sup>2</sup> which was a later source of reference, Sakka was a free country ruled over by King Suddhodana, the Buddha's father, with the city of Kapilavatthu as capital. It was also recorded that, after the Buddha's renunciation, the king always tried to learn about his son's progress. He was informed respectively of the Bodhisatta's Enlightenment, the spread of the doctrine and the happenings in various places, also in Bamboo Grove, in the city of Rājagaha, where the Buddha was staying. For several times he tried to send messengers to the Buddha, inviting him back to Kapilavatthu. But those men, having listened to the Buddha's teaching, were all ordained, with none of them going back to the King. Finally, he sent a courtier by the name of Kāludāyī, meaning the black Udāyī, possibly because of his dark complexion, as messenger to invite the Buddha to his hometown. As before, Kāludāyī, having seen the Buddha and listened to his sermon, asked for ordination. But he did not neglect his commitment and thus acted as the king's proxy, inviting the Buddha to return to Kapilavatthu. The Buddha accepted the invitation and proceeded to his hometown by foot, together with a number of Bhikkhus.

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1 *Dhammacetiya-sutta*, Ma. Ma. 13/515/569

2 *Samanta*. 3/71-73



There was no mention in the Pali Canon as to *when* i.e. in what month of what year the Buddha started the journey to his hometown. But, according to the Commentarial source, we learn that in the first Rains Retreat period the Buddha stayed at the deer park of Isipatana. After that i.e. on the first day of the waning moon, in the eleventh lunar month, he proceeded on his mission to help the fire-worshipping hermits. For three months i.e. until the middle of the second month he had stayed in the district of Uruvela. Thereafter he proceeded to the city of Rājagaha and received the offering of Bamboo Grove on the last day of the second month. At the Bamboo Grove he had stayed until the middle of the fourth month. It was on the following day that he started his journey to Kapilavatthu, which was described as being sixty Yojana away. Travelling—as was mentioned therein — one Yojana a day, it took him two months to reach his destination in the middle of the sixth month i.e. on the Vesākha fullmoon day.

It was not exactly known how far was the distance of one Yojana, but it may be calculated, roughly, through comparison of measurement systems. It was in the Scriptures mentioned that the distance from Buddhagayā, where the Buddha was enlightened, to the deer park of Isipatana, was 18 Yojana. The same distance by train is now known as somewhat less than 120 miles. So both systems may be roughly equivalent here. Now, the distance from Rājagaha to Kapilavatthu was said to be 60 Yojana. That means to cover one Yojana a day would be a leisure walk, not a hurried or a forced one.

Upon arrival<sup>3</sup>, the Buddha's relatives headed by king Suddhodana arranged a welcome ceremony and had him stay in a grove belonging to a Sakyan prince named Nigrodha. Hence the name Nigrodhārāma. At first, the Buddha's older relatives refused to pay respect to him, on the grounds that he was younger than they were. This revealed the strong feeling of pride, restraining them from paying respect to anyone who was younger in age. It was also recorded that, to counter their pride, the Buddha applied his psychic powers to create the

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3 *Khu. Jā.* 28/365/1045; *Jātaka* 10/315.

Pokkharavassa, the red rain, and related to them a Jātaka (one of his former births) while he was born prince Vessantara<sup>4</sup>. The story in brief runs as follows :

**King** Sañjaya of a Sīvīrattha country in days of yore had a son named Vessantara, who was born to his queen Phussatī. When the prince grew up, he was married to a princess named Maddi and later had a son named Jālī and a daughter named Kanhā. Prince Vessantara was strongly inclined towards dispensing charity, being always delighted in giving away whatever he was asked for by anybody. He once offended his own countrymen by giving to the people of Kālīṅga state a white elephant which his own people regarded as symbol of prosperity for their own country. They rallied to demand the king to send the prince into exile. To which the king, obeying the people's will, had to conform. As a result the prince was banished from his country, together with his wife and children. They went to live a hermit life in a remote jungle. But there still followed more tragedies to befall the pious prince. For a beggar Brahmin, having heard of the prince's record of charity, managed to seek him out in the jungle to ask for the young prince and princess as his servants. As before, prince Vessantara granted his request, allowing the Brahmin to take them away. His charitable act did not end here. For some time later there came another Brahmin to ask for his wife. Again, the prince granted his request, even knowing that he would thereafter be left all alone. However, the second Brahmin was none other than Sakka, Lord of the celestial realm, in disguise. So, having been granted the princess, he returned her to the prince, saying he would commit her to the prince's care for the time being. Obviously, this was to prevent her from being given away to another greedy, selfish person.

As for Jūjaka, --for that was the beggar Brahmin's name --, having been offered the young prince and princess, he took them to their grandfather i.e. king Sañjaya, who paid him a fine ransom in exchange for his grandson and granddaughter. Later king Sañjaya

proceeded, together with the ransomed prince and princess, to the jungle retreat of prince Vessantara and welcomed him, along with princess Maddi, back to this country. Such is the summary of the Jātaka story.

**This** story is in Thailand called by the vernacular name of Mahājāt (i.e. Mahājāti, the Great Birth). It has been very popular since the olden times. There are various versions compiled by poets in the form of graceful poetic prose to be read out by Bhikkhus as sermons from the Ayuthya period (three centuries ago) to the present day. This has become customary in the royal court when a senior member of the royal family was ordained for three months. He is usually asked to give a 'Mahājāt' sermon on any one of the episodes of the story. When king Rama V (i.e. king Chulalongkorn) was ordained a Sāmaṇera i.e. a novice, he also gave a sermon on one episode of the story, with H.R.H. prince Mahesuan Sivavilas arranging the offerings in obeisance to the sermon. Even now, there are still many monasteries arranging an annual ceremony of giving the Mahājāt sermons to raise funds for the construction projects within their compounds. Obviously, prince Vessantara has contributed considerably to countless construction projects of so many monasteries in Thailand.

To come back to the story of the Buddha in the city of Rājagaha. The older relatives, having witnessed such a miracle and heard the impressive Jātaka, abandoned their pride, with all paying respect to the Buddha the way they did a holy man. However, since there was no one at the moment thinking of inviting the Buddha to have a meal anywhere, the Buddha in the following morning went out, together with his Bhikkhus as usual, for their almsround in the streets of the city. This brought about a feeling of shameful surprise to king Sudhodana and his other relatives, who were informed of what was happening. Regarding this as being against the tradition for members of a royal family, the king hurried to the scene and complained to the Buddha, saying, he (i.e. the Buddha) was behaving disgracefully for the monarchical lineage, since there had never been any member of the royal family begging for almsfood like that. But the Buddha

replied that he was following the Buddhas' lineage, not the king's. This was because, having become a Buddha, he was bound to follow the former Buddhas' tradition. Then he uttered the verses beginning with *Uttitthe Nappamajjeyya*, meaning a person should not look down upon the leavings or the lump of rice he should 'get up' and receive. Do live the Dhamma honestly; and do not live it dishonestly. For one who lives the Dhamma (honestly) will rejoice both here and in the hereafter,

From the above verses, it may be concluded, from their connotative meaning, that one should not treat with contempt the almsfood put into the almsbowl and that to go for the almsfood is by no means a contemptible act. It is after all an honest way of obtaining food, being not an act of stealing. On these grounds, whatever means of earning a livelihood is honest and appropriate to one's social status is to be considered right and proper. Of course, it cannot be generalised that to go begging for food is always allowable and honourable. It is traditionally permissible only for monks who live a homeless life, not for lay people who have to earn their livelihood by other means. Thus the tradition and social status are also to be taken into account.

It was said that the king, having been so informed, offered to carry the almsbowl for the Buddha and invited him to have a meal in the royal palace.

### **Ordination of Nanda and Rāhula**

On the third day after that there was a nuptial ceremony followed by the celebrations of a new royal mansion for a prince named Nanda. He was the son of princess Pajāpati Gotamī, the Buddha's aunt, who also had a daughter by the name of Rūpanandā. On that day the Buddha was invited to have a meal in prince Nanda's mansion. After the meal he carried the Buddha's almsbowl and followed the Buddha outside. This was seen by his retinue, who hurried to inform the prince's bride, who also hurried out in time to urge her bridegroom to come back to her as soon as possible.

While following the Buddha out of his mansion, Nanda was feeling rather uneasy but tried to console himself, thinking that at such and such a place the Buddha would take the almsbowl back from him so that he could return to his bride. When, however, the Buddha showed no sign of doing so, Nanda had no choice but to follow him until both reached the Nigrodha grove, where the Buddha, looking back, asked him flatly if he would seek ordination. Afraid to contradict the Buddha, Nanda stammered out the answer in the positive. Whereupon the Buddha had him ordained then and there.

On the seventh day, so it was said, the Buddha was once again invited to have a meal within the royal palace. This time princess Yasodharā or Bimbā, mother of prince Rāhula, the Buddha's own son before his renunciation, had the young prince, aged seven at the time, come out to see his father, possibly asking to inherit the throne. The Buddha took the boy-prince to the Nigrodha grove and had Venerable Sāriputta ordain him there as a Sāmanera i.e. a novice. The method used in this case was the Tisaranagamana (the Three Refuges), the former ordination procedure for Bhikkhus which had been abandoned, to be replaced by another one called Nātticatutthakamma. Thus Rāhula was the first Sāmanera ordained by the method which has been in use until now. It was said that the Buddha knew how the material, mundane wealth is impermanent and exposed to dangers and loss, whereas the Noble Wealth (Ariyadhana) is permanent and indestructible. For this reason, when Rāhula asked for the former kind of wealth, he gave his son the latter.

This may be compared to the present tradition of parents having their sons ordained. That they manage to do so is equivalent to giving their sons the Noble Wealth, which is the Wealth Supreme. Having done so, parents are blessed with delight in that they have done their best to their sons. With regard to the sons' duties towards their parents, there are mentioned two categories viz. the secular and the religious ones. To be dutiful such as to take care of parents, who had taken care of them while they were young, belongs to the first i.e.

secular category. To establish them in such virtues as Faith and Precepts (Saddhā and Sīla) is regarded as being of the second i.e. religious kind, which is the superior way of expressing gratitude towards parents. This is in fact nothing but to provide them with the Noble Wealth. Now, their ordination is the best way to do so since it acquaints them with religious activities and provides them the opportunity to observe Precepts, listen to sermons and undertake other, higher practices. This, therefore, is mutual help and development, one leading the other to accumulation of Noble Wealth to benefit both sides.

Now king Suddhodana having been informed of Rāhula's ordination was overwhelmed with grief. He hastened to see the Buddha to express his feeling of sadness, saying how he had been grief-stricken for the first time by the Buddha's renunciation. This feeling was repeated when prince Nanda departed on the wedding day. But he used to console himself that after all there was still Rāhula as his anchor of hope. When his young grandson left him this time, so profound and poignant was his sorrow. He therefore would like to ask the Buddha for a blessing. When the Buddha said he had stopped giving a blessing to anyone, the king said it was not a demand nor a command, and as such the Buddha was free to decide for himself whether he would grant the following request or not. Asked what was the blessing he would like to have, the king replied that henceforward whenever the Sangha wished to ordain anyone, let them seek permission first of all from that person's parents. He had learned from his own experience how great was the grief suffered by himself because of these losses, so he did not want other parents to suffer the same fate as he did. To this request the Buddha agreed, and so it has been the tradition to this day that an applicant to ordination must be given permission by his parents before he can be ordained.

## Mahādhammapālā

It was also mentioned in the Commentary that on the following day king Suddhodana told the Buddha that, while the Buddha was exerting his efforts to achieve Enlightenment, he was one night informed by a Devatā (a being of an invisible, higher astral plane) that the Buddha had passed away, but he refused to believe that. Hearing this, the Buddha related to the king a Jātaka story named Mahādhammapālā Jātaka<sup>5</sup>, which can be summarised as follows :

There was in the state of Kāśī a village called Dhammapāla, after the name of its headman, who had a son with also the same name. His was a virtuous family by tradition, with the result that other people in the village willingly followed his example, thus abstaining from such vices as killing, stealing and telling lies. The headman sent his son for an advanced study in the denomination of a master at Taksilā, the then famous institution for higher education. The young Dhammapāla proved to be a brilliant student, to the satisfaction of his Ācāriya (teacher). Some time later the Ācāriya's son died of an illness. This brought about sorrow and lamentation on the part of his relatives and other students of the Ācāriya. The young Dhammapāla, however, did not grieve but could not help doubting why the boy should die young. He asked the people there and was told that death could come at any time to anybody, there being no fixed time for its arrival. Dhammapāla protested, saying that the people in his village lived to a ripe old age before dying. The Ācāriya, not believing his student's claim, authorised Dhammapāla to look after the institution in his place while he himself travelled to Dhammapāla village, bringing a goat's bones with him. Reaching the village, he went straight to Dhammapāla's father and, showing the goat's bones, told him that his son had died. But Dhammapāla the father would not believe this, arguing that no one of his village ever died young. Surprised, the Ācāriya asked what was the reason for his strong conviction, and in what manner his villagers lived

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<sup>5</sup> Jātaka. 10/186

their life so they could be confident of living to such an age. In reply the village headman said that it was because the tradition of living a virtuous life. He then elaborated the manners of *how* such a life could be lived. This impressed the Ācāriya, who came back to inform his students of the Dhammapāla way of life and managed to follow the Dhammapāla villagers' example from that time onwards.

It should be noted that the Buddha did not spend the Rains Retreat period in Kapilavatthu. Having had Nanda and Rāhula ordained, he took them back to Rājagaha and spent the Rains Retreat there. Such was the description of his first visit to Kapilavatthu.

### **An unanswerable question : When**

It is to be regretted that very few data can be obtained from the Pāli Canon sources to enable the scholars to know chronologically *when* i.e. in what day or month of what year the Buddha proceeded to such and such places, and from where. Whatever was mentioned at all was merely the phrase, "on one occasion" or "at one time" followed by the place where the Buddha stayed or proceeded. This Canon in Pāli was known to have been written down in Sri Lanka during the fifth Synod or General Buddhist Council about five hundred years after the Buddha's passing away. It was in the later texts called Atthakathā or the Commentaries that more details were given. The term Atthakathā means an explanation (of the Pāli Canon). The compilers of these texts were called Atthakathācāriya. These Commentaries were compiled more than one thousand years after the Buddha's passing away. It was in these later texts that the time involved was told in more details. For instance, the time when the Buddha proceeded to Kapilavatthu was recorded to have taken place before the second Rains Retreat period. However, it was mentioned therein also that king Suddhodana had sent ten messengers, one at a time, to invite the Buddha back to his hometown. When after due time none of them had returned, he sent the next one for the same mission. Not until this had repeatedly occurred nine times did he send Kāludāyī, the tenth in succession, to inform



the Buddha of his invitation. And it was in this tenth time that his wish was fulfilled.

Should the above data be accepted as true, it would be impossible for the Buddha to go to Kapilavatthu *before* the second Rains Retreat period. It would take quite some time for the king's messenger to reach Rājagaha, where the Buddha was staying, and then some time more for the king himself to wait patiently before he could decide each messenger would not return to him. Both cities being fairly far from each other, there appeared to be a discrepancy where the time factor was considered. For all this it can be concluded that the Buddha did proceed to Kapilavatthu some time in the early years after his Enlightenment. Furthermore, it was recorded that the Buddha took Venerable Nanda and Sāmaṇera Rāhula to Rājagaha, where he spent the second Rains Retreat in the Bamboo grove. But from the Pāli Canon source, after the Buddha had had Rāhula ordained as Sāmaṇera, he went over from Kapilavatthu to the city of Sāvattī. This is a curious discrepancy. It might be that ordination of Rāhula took place during the Buddha's *second* visit to Kapilavatthu, which he did in the fifteenth Rains Retreat, when he stayed for the period in the Nigrodha grove.<sup>6</sup>

### **Rāhulovādasutta**

**Again**, there can be found in some Sutta that the Buddha instructed Sāmaṇera Rāhula at the Bamboo grove. Regarding this assumption, the Commentators<sup>7</sup> said that Rāhula was seven years old when he was ordained a Sāmaṇera. During his stay in the Bamboo grove in Rājagaha, he was regularly instructed by the Buddha, whose instructions in this case were later compiled collectively in a Sutta called Rāhulovāda, meaning instructions given to Rāhula. He was at one time staying in a multi-storied building named Ambalatthikā, at one end of the Bamboo grove. Here the Buddha gave him an instruction centred on two points as follows:

Firstly, you (i.e. Sāmaṇera Rāhula) must not speak what is not true, not even for fun.

<sup>6</sup> Mano. Pū. 2/39

<sup>7</sup> Pa. Sū. 3/119

Secondly, you must at all times be mindful in having your words, deeds and thoughts purified.

From the details in this Sutta, upon the Buddha's arrival, the Sāmanera laid out the seat-cloth and washed the Buddha's feet with the prepared water. The Buddha having taken his seat told Rāhula to look how little was the amount of water for washing his feet that was left in the container. Then he analogically drew a lesson for the Sāmanera, saying to the effect that, just as there is but little water left therein, so there is little of Bhikkhuhood remaining of whoever is shameless in deliberately telling a lie.

Then he told Rāhula to pour out all the water left in the container and said further that there is the Bhikkhuhood in a Bhikkhu deliberately telling a lie no more than there is water left in that container. His Bhikkhuhood has been abandoned.

The Buddha further told the Sāmanera to put the water-container upside down and then turned it over once again. Now, he said, the Bhikkhuhood of one who deliberately tells a lie is empty like the emptiness of that water-container.

Thereafter he gave the Sāmanera another analogy, saying that a king's well-trained war elephant, having been commissioned, was ready for a battle. It would make use of its two fore feet, two hind feet, head, ears, trunk and tail. However, as long as it still preserved its trunk, not risking nor making use of it in the battle, so long would it not be regarded as having given up its life for the king. Thus, not until it had used its trunk in performing the duty in a battle could it be said to have fulfilled the performances required of it, with nothing left undone. In like manner, never can a monk be said to do no evil who is shameless enough to deliberately tell a lie. It is only when he has abstained from doing so that he can be said to do no wrong.

Having elaborated his teaching so far, the Buddha wound up his instruction, telling Rāhula not to tell what was not true, not even for fun.

**Next**, the Buddha gave him the second instruction how to be mindful of deeds, words and thoughts, drawing a lesson from a thing of everyday use. He asked the Sāmaṇera what a looking glass was for. Rāhula replied, saying that it was for checking i.e. surveying if there was any flaw or blemish on one's features. Referring to this analogy, the Buddha said that it was advisable for him (i.e. the Sāmaṇera) to check or survey himself carefully before saying, doing or thinking anything. This was to contemplate the pros and cons, the benefits and drawbacks, to result therefrom. In case such an act, word and thought should result in hurting oneself or others or both oneself and others, being evil, producing disadvantages and sufferings, then let him abstain from such an act, word and thought. If after having impartially contemplated, he came to know that there was no harm done, it being wholesome, with happiness as a result, then he should do, speak or think in such a manner .

Again, while doing, speaking or thinking, he must be aware, or mindful, of it, in order to know whether it was an evil to be abandoned or it was wholesome and therefore he should continue to do so.

Furthermore, having done, said and thought, he should once again do a careful check and survey to know whether it was good or evil. In case it was evil, —which has been done already, —he must let it be known to the Buddha or to other Bhikkhus who are wise and thoughtful. This so that he could be more careful, not to do so again in the future. If, on the other hand, it was wholesome, then he should rejoice and be blessed with delight and ecstasy. This so that he might be more attentive to what was wholesome day and night.

To conclude, the Buddha said that all the recluses in the past had always purified their words, deeds and thoughts in this manner. So do those at present and so will those in the future.

Such were the two points of the Buddha's instruction to the young Rāhula : never to say what was not true, not even for fun, and to be mindful of words, deeds and thoughts, always checking and contemplating whether any of them was evil or wholesome.

This Sutta was called Ambalatthikā Rāhulovādasutta, after the name of the multi-storied building where the young Rāhula was staying. It was also called Cularāhulovādasutta<sup>8</sup>, the small instruction given to Rāhula. This was to distinguish it from another Sutta referring to another theme given to him when he grew older.

### **Kumārapañhā (Questions for children)**

**According** to the commentary, at a time when Rāhula was still a small boy, the Buddha used to instruct him through a series of questions called Kumārapañhā (Questions for children) or Sāmanera-pañhā (Questions for Sāmanera). It was mentioned that these questions were put to a Sāmanera named Sopāka by the Buddha. But according to the Commentary, these questions of which there were ten the Buddha also asked Rāhula. They were as follows :

QU : What is One ? — ANS : Sentient beings are nurtured by food.

QU : What is Two ? — ANS : Nāma-Rūpa (Name-and-Form)

QU : What is Three ? — ANS : Three kinds of Vedanā (Sensations).

QU : What is Four ? — ANS : The Four Noble Truths.

QU : What is Five ? — ANS : The five Aggregates as the seat of Attachment.

QU : What is Six ? — ANS : The six sense-doors.

QU : What is Seven ? — ANS : The seven constituents of Enlightenment (Bojjhanga)

QU : What is Eight ? — ANS : The Noble Eightfold Path.

QU : What is Nine ? — ANS : The nine Sattāvāsa (planes of existence of sentient beings)

QU : What is Ten ? — ANS : Those blessed with the ten Characteristics i.e. the Arahants.

Most of the above-mentioned themes have already been well known, except perhaps the nine Sattāvāsa, which refer to the various

<sup>8</sup> Ma—Ma 13/123/125.

<sup>9</sup> Khu. Khu. 25/2/4

planes of existence of sentient beings at all levels or degrees of maturity. That an Arahant is blessed with the Ten Characteristics means that he (or she) is blessed first of all with the eight elements of the Noble Eightfold Path, plus Sammāñāna (Right Insight) and Sammāvimutti (Right Deliverance). Such a person is in one sense called Asekha, having nothing left for study (and practice) for further improvement, and is blessed with the Ten Characteristics mentioned above.

Possibly these questions were intended to serve as a means by which to memorise the Dhamma themes. They might be recited parrot-like at first, without analytical understanding. But later, with more training and instruction, a more profound understanding would be obtained.

## SEEING FROM 'OUTER SPACE'

*Three* levels of benefits there are  
From the mundane to the highest,  
Which, as mentioned by the Buddhā,\*  
Was regarded as one priceless.

*Seeing* the possibility  
Of that priceless, supra-mundane  
Anywhere in anybody,  
The Buddha would always take pains

*To* lead that person to the Path  
Despite an overwhelming grief.  
He feared no worldly aftermath,  
Knowing there would soon be relief

*For* that person and all concerned,  
Who would later come to realise  
That 'twas the Path of No Return,  
That it was worth all sacrifice.

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\* pronounced 'BUD-DAR' to rhyme with 'are' above.

**Based** on this lofty criterion  
Was ordination of Nanda.  
He used the method Draconian  
Like that of his son Rāhula.

**Both** brought about sorrow so great  
To both father and relatives.  
But he saw it would culminate  
In benefits outweighing grief.

**That's** why he dared to do like that,  
Seeing from 'outer space', as 'twere,  
For what he gave them there's no match.  
It is Noble, highest Treasure.

**These** compensate what'ver drawbacks  
There were in such method so harsh.  
Based on compassion were those acts,  
Which far outweighed worldly aftermath.

**Such** is the nature of a wise man,  
Who always weighs the pros and cons  
And always does what'ver he can  
For the sake of both here and beyond.

## The Social, Mundane Level of Dhamma

**During** these Retreat periods, the Blessed one instructed a wealthy man's son by the name of Siṅgālaka. This was purely an instruction on secular level, showing how the Buddha relaxed the theme of his teaching in this case. It can be seen that formerly the Buddha usually preached the Dhamma of the supra-mundane level. Those accepting the Dhamma included Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇeras, together with male and female by disciples, the latter category being first instructed with the Five Themes of Progressive Importance (Anupubbīkathā) before being led to realising the Four Noble Truths. It was said that for those lay disciples to be instructed in this manner, they must be seen (clairvoyantly) to be mature enough to win the Dhamma-Eye, becoming Stream-Winners thereby. The Paths of a Stream-Winner and a Once-Returner are known to be open also to lay disciples, whereas that of a Non-Returner, although not totally closed to lay disciples, often spurred them to a homeless life. Instances there were, in fact, of Non-Returners who were still lay people, on the grounds that they were duty-bound to look after their parents and as such were not in a position to abandon the worldly life. However, a lay disciple who attained the Arahatship was spiritually bound to live a homeless life within that day. Apparently, this has been accepted as traditional in Buddhism ever since. Thus the Buddha's teaching so far, even in the case of lay disciples, had always been intended to lead them to realization of the Four Noble Truths i.e. the supra-mundane level. Only in the case of the youth Siṅgālaka did he relax it to become a purely social, mundane theme.

### Singālakasutta<sup>1</sup>

**According** to this Sutta, a wealthy man's son by the name of Siṅgālaka, having got up early one morning, went out of the city of Rā-

jagaha, He dressed himself with wet clothes, with his hair also wet, while paying homage to the six directions viz. the East, South, West, North, the lower direction and the upper direction. Seeing this during his almsround in the city, the Buddha questioned him what, and why, he was doing so. In reply he said that he had been told to do so by his own father before he died. At this the Buddha said that there was in the Ariya Vinaya (Noble Discipline) no such way of paying homage to the directions. Asked by the youth what was the manner suggested by the Noble Discipline, the Buddha gave him an instruction, while standing with the almsbowl in his hand, that may be summarised as follows :

### **Conquest of the here and the hereafter**

**An** Ariyasāvaka (Noble Disciple) practises for the conquest of this world and the next who has rid himself of the fourteen evils and has the doors of all the dangers from the six directions closed. This implies the fact that to rid himself of those evils and have those doors closed were the causes leading to such conquest, which produces in turn happiness and prosperity in both worlds.

The term 'Ariyasāvaka' has two meanings, the first one being, literally, a disciples who listens i.e. a disciple of the Noble Ones, whereas the second a more advanced implication, referring to a disciple who *is* a Noble One i.e. from a Sotāpanna (Stream-Winner) onwards. The first is the general sense and may be applied to in this case, which should mean "a Noble One's disciple" A parallel to this may be seen in the term Ariyavinaya i.e. in, or according to, the Noble One's Discipline. Whoever follows the Noble One's Discipline is entitled thereby to be called a Noble One's disciple.

### **The Fourteen Evils**

**The** Fourteen Evils mentioned above can be classified into three groups as follows :

a) **Four unwholesome acts** (Kammakilesa), one that defiles the doers viz. killing, stealing, committing adultery and telling a lie.



b) **Four prejudices** (Agati) viz. Chandāgati : prejudice through love ; Dosāgati : prejudice through hate ; Bhayāgati : prejudice through fear ; and Mohāgati : prejudice through delusion or ignorance.

c) **Six great causes of ruin** (Apāyamukha) viz. taking intoxicants, night-roving, attending show and fairs too often, gambling, making friends with evil persons and laziness in work.

He further elaborated the evils of each of those causes of ruin into six items as follows :

- a) **Evils of taking intoxicants** viz. It is a waste of money ; and often leads to quarrels and violence ; being also harmful to health ; being a source of disgrace ; causing impudence ; and being harmful to the nerves.
- b) **Evils of night-roving** or going to places in an inappropriate time viz. to unconsciously neglect oneself ; one's wife and children ; one's property ; to be treated with contempt ; to be falsely accused ; and to be beset with troubles and problems.
- c) **Evils of attending shows and fairs** (or frequenting places of entertainment) too often viz. to lack self-restraint (i.e. immunity power) whenever there is dancing ; or singing ; or instrumental music ; or solo singing with accompanying music ; or folklore song accompanied with the clapping of hands of the chorus ; or songs accompanied with the beating of drum.
- d) **Evils of gambling** viz. the winner inflicts hatred upon the loser ; the loser broods over the lost money ; it is a wasteful dwindling of money ; the gambler cannot be trusted ; his friends (and relatives) treat him with scorn ; lack of spouse due to financial untrustworthiness.
- e) **Evils of making friends with evil persons** viz. to be addicted to gambling ; to women ; to drinking ; to form a habit of obtaining money by fraudulent means ; to be a cheat ; and to be a ruffian, one given to violent and criminal acts.

- f) **Evils of laziness in work** viz. to have a tendency for making an excuse that it is too cold for work ; that it is too hot for work ; that it is too late for work ; that it is too early for work ; that one is too hungry to work ; and that one is too thirsty to work.

Thus these are fourteen in all, being divided into four unwholesome acts, four prejudices and six causes of ruin. The four unwholesome acts are parallel to the first four evils to be abstained through the first four Precepts, not including taking intoxicants, which is the fifth, since it is already classified as one of the six great causes of ruin.

### **True and false friends**

**Next** he touched upon two kinds of friends viz. the false ones and the true ones.

The false friends (Mittapatirūpa) can be classified into four groups viz. the swindlers, the flatterers, the fawners and the leaders to destruction.

**Characteristics of the swindlers** : a) they always think of gaining advantage over their friends; b) their motto is 'giving is fishing'; c) they give a helping hand only when they are in trouble; d) they make friends with others only for their own benefit.

**Characteristics of the flatterers** : a) to coax with what is already past i.e. what can never be done or given; b) to cajole with what is future i.e. what can never be expected for sure; c) to give help when help is not needed; and d) to make excuses when asked for help.

**Characteristics of the fawners** : a) never to object or protest whether in committing an evil or; b) in doing a meritorious deed; c) to praise in their friends' presence; and d) to speak ill in their friends' absence.

***Characteristics of the leaders to destruction*** : a) to instigate and lead to drinking; b) to night-roving; c) to indulging in games; and d) to gambling.

**True friends** can be likewise classified into four groups viz. those who help, those who never forsake their friends, those who tell what is profitable; and d) those who have compassion.

***Characteristics of those who help*** : a) to look after their friends who are absorbed in worldly pleasures ; b) to look after the property of their friends who are absorbed in worldly pleasures ; c) never to leave their friends in time of danger; and d) to give financial help in time of need more than is asked for.

***Characteristics of those who never forsake their friends*** : a) to disclose their own secrets to their friends; b) not to betray their friends' secrets ; c) not to desert their friends in time of need and d) to be able to give up their own lives if occasion arises.

***Characteristics of those who tell what is profitable*** : a) to restrain their friends from evil; b) to establish them in virtues; c) to tell them what they have not yet heard or known ; and d) to give them advice on how to tread the path to heaven.

***Characteristics of those who have compassion*** : a) to remain friends even in time of misery ; b) to remain friends in time of happiness ; c) to protest against those who speak ill of their friends ; d) to appreciate those who praise their friends.

**These practices** are regarded as elementary or foundation of other themes of higher levels, being very often found and spoken of. Possibly because of this fact they are most often taken for granted, being equally often neglected or regarded as not worth an attention. Such is the cause of unnecessary troubles time and again. Should they be given more recollection and attention in connection with each and every aspect of secular life, the fourteen unwholesome acts would be more often avoided and care would be taken in the association of people involved in daily life.

### **The Six Directions Personified**

**Having** instructed the youth Sīṅgāḷaka with preliminary practices, both those to be avoided and others to be cultivated, the Buddha went on to teach him the following personified directions in the Noble Discipline. They were :

The direction in front refers to parents ;

The direction on the right i.e. teachers.

The direction behind i.e. wife and offspring;

The direction on the left i.e. friends ;

The direction below i.e. servants and subordinates.

The direction upwards or overhead i.e. monks and recluses.

Following are the reciprocal duties in connection with those directions.

***Duties of parents towards offspring*** viz. a) to keep the offspring from evil ; b) to establish them in good conduct ; c) to teach them arts and sciences ; d) to provide them with suitable spouses ; e) to give what is due to them when it is time to bequeath them the property.

***Reciprocal duties of offspring towards their parents*** viz. a) to support the parents in return for their kindness; b) to help them when help is needed ; c) to uphold the honour of the family ; d) to behave in such a way as to deserve their inheritance ; e) To perform religious rites for them after their death.

***Duties of teachers towards pupils*** viz. Not to neglect in advising the pupils what they ought to do ; b) to undertake to teach them what they ought to know c) to tell them what there is to be studied and understood ; d) to praise them to their friends ; e) to give them protection wherever they go.

***Reciprocal duties of pupils towards teachers*** viz. To show respect by getting up to greet them ; b) to wait upon them ; c) to obey them; d) to attend to their wants e) to pay attention to whatever they teach.

**What is worth noting** is the phrase “to give them protection wherever they go”. This was possibly due to the fact that an Ācāriya (teacher) was usually respected wherever he went. That was why he was called Disāpāmokkha. This kind of respect, or honour, would be accorded the disciple also wherever he was known to be that teacher’s disciple. Whatever help was possible would then be willingly given to the disciple both by other disciples of the same teacher and by other people who paid respects to that teacher. On the other hand, a disciple well informed in what was taught by the teacher would apply that teaching or practice to the benefit of others wherever he went, thus endearing himself to the people everywhere. This should be another meaning of how a teacher could give protection to the disciples wherever they went.

**The direction behind i.e. duties of a wife towards her husband :** a) To manage the household affairs to the best of her ability; b) to be hospitable to his relatives and friends; c) to be faithful to him ; d) to look after his property ; e) to pay attention to her duties and obligations.

**Reciprocal duties of a husband towards his wife** viz. a) to pay due respect to her b) not to treat her with contempt ; c) to be faithful to her ; d) to allow her to manage the household affairs for him ; e) to delight her with ornaments.

**The direction to the left i.e. friends should be treated by a person as follows :** a) to give them presents as a means of cementing the bonds of friendship ; b) to speak kindly to them ; c) to help them when help is needed ; d) to have an evenness of behaviour i.e. not to be impulsive towards them ; e) to be reliable in words.

**Reciprocal duties of friends towards a person :** a) to protect and advise a friend who is overwhelmed by sensual pleasures ; b) to protect the properties of a friend who is overwhelmed by sensual pleasures ; c) to stand by in time of danger ; d) not to leave the friend in time of need ; e) to respect the friends’ relatives.

***Duties of a servant towards a master*** : a) to get up and start work before the master ; b) to stop work after the master ; c) to take only what is given ; d) to try to improve the work ; e) to praise the master to others.

***Reciprocal duties of a master towards servants*** : a) to give them work suitable to their strength and skill; b) to give them food and other requisites; c) to nurse them in time of sickness; d) to grant them some extra delicacies; e) to grant them an occasional leave.

***Duties of a lay disciple towards Bhikkhus*** : a) to help and treat Bhikkhus with kind acts ; b) and words ; c) and thoughts ; d) to have the door open to them ; e) to provide them with food and requisities suitable to them.

***Reciprocal duties of a Bhikkhu towards lay disciples*** : a) to protect them from evil; b) to establish them in good conduct; c) to help them with a kind heart; d) to tell them what they have not yet heard or known; e) to clarify what they have not yet understood; f) to point out to them the path leading to heaven.

**These six directions** represent the all-encompassing web of human society. Wherever a person stands, he is to be inevitably surrounded by those 'directions', be they the compass directions or the personified ones. Thus a person who has fulfilled his duties towards such 'directions' can be said to have avoided the dangers therefrom. He has by that means done whatever is required of him in the 'web' he has found himself in. But whether he will enjoy the reciprocal duties from other 'directions' or not is quite another matter. In many instances, it is found to be the cases of "like begets like", with more or less reciprocal, similar outcome in return. What matters in this case, therefore, is whether or not one has dutifully fulfilled those requirements where one 'stands.'

It was described that a person has 'conquered' both the here and the hereafter who has abstained from the fourteen unwholesome acts and fulfilled the duties towards the six 'directions.' This implies

the fact that he has the path of his prosperity cleared of obstacles, being thereby able to secure a sure foundation financially and spiritually. With these 'directions' being all friendly and compassionate towards him, he is safe from all dangers coming therefrom.

**The reciprocal duties of a husband towards his wife** may be commonplace today as far as the present circumstances are concerned. But when the situation in those times are considered, such a teaching of the Buddha was purely a revolutionary idea to the society that regarded women as a Bhaṇḍa or one of the men's belongings. It was obvious how in this Sutta the social status of women was elevated on a par with men.

### **Sanctuary for squirrels**

**According** to the Commentary of this Sutta, there was the history of the Bamboo Grove told to the effect that it had been in existence since the olden times. There was at that time a king who, while in this Grove, happened to lie asleep in it. His retinue, however, also happened to stay away from him at the moment. There was then a king cobra slithering towards the king. At its approach, there was a small squirrel crying out loudly and thus awakening the king in time, with the result that the snake suddenly left the king unharmed. The thankful king, seeing how he was saved by the squirrel, revealed his gratitude by ordering his people not to harm the squirrels there and also had them well fed all the time. That was why the Grove was called Kalandakanivāpa, a Grove where squirrels were given royal pardon and security.

On one occasion while the Buddha was staying at the Bamboo Grove, a wealthy man who was resident of the city of Sāvattthī, in the state of Kosala, by the name of Anāthapiṇḍika, happened to travel to Rājagaha on a business trip, and took residence at a wealthy man's house in Rājagaha. This Anāthapiṇḍika was husband of the Rājagaha wealthy man's sister. It should be noted here that the term Bhaginī, parallel to 'sister', may refer either to a 'younger sister' or an 'elder

one.' To make it clear, therefore, the prefix 'jettha' meaning elder, or 'kanittha' meaning younger, must be added. In case the term was used without a prefix, the meaning implied was often, though not always, 'younger sister.' However, it could sometimes be still ambiguous, implying none in particular. As such, this wealthy man by the name of Anāthapīṇḍika was either the younger or older brother-in-law of the wealthy man in the city of Rājagaha.

During Anāthapīṇḍika's visit, the wealthy man of Rājagaha was busy preparing a meal for the following day for the Buddha and the Bhikkhus he had already invited. This made him too busy to attend to Anāthapīṇḍika the way he used to do on former occasions. This raised a doubt on Anāthapīṇḍika, who wondered what his friend was preoccupied with that made him unusually busy and left him almost alone. It was not until his friend had finished the preparations work that he had time to converse with Anāthapīṇḍika, who asked him whether he was preparing for a marriage ceremony or for a king's reception or even a very important Yañña i.e. sacrificial rites. In reply the wealthy man of Rājagaha said that he did not prepare either a marriage ceremony or a king's reception, but that he was going to do a great Yañña in a different category and manner. This implied, so he said, the fact that he had invited the Buddha and the Bhikkhus to a meal on the following day. At the word BUDDHA, Anāthapīṇḍika was suddenly overwhelmed with delight. Several times did Anāthapīṇḍika ask the same question and every time was he given the same reply. When he expressed his wish to see the Buddha at that moment, his friend said that it was not yet time and suggested he go with him on the following day. That night Anāthapīṇḍika lay on the sleepless pillow and got up early in the morning. Through his earnest desire he got up and went out of the city-gate called Sītavana, heading towards the Bamboo Grove, where the Buddha was staying. The Buddha had by that time waken up and was engaged in walking meditation when Anāthapīṇḍika approached him and addressed him, asking if he was well. His manner of address was one commonly used, literally meaning if he was sleeping well, with the conotation mentioned above. The Bud-



dha answered, saying that a Brahmin who had done away with his Defilements was sure to stay well at all times. Then he preached to Anāthapiṇḍika the Five Themes of Progressive Importance. Having finished those themes, the Buddha, seeing that Anāthapiṇḍika's mind was now worthy, being supple, without Mental Hindrances, like a piece of cloth washed off its stains, being thereby clean and receptive of the dye, instructed him further with the Four Noble Truths. This ended up with Anāthapiṇḍika obtaining the Dhamma-Eye, realising how whatever is of the nature to be born is also of the nature to decline and die. This indicated realization of the Noble Truth of Suffering, the Truth that all things in the worlds are subject to birth and death. This realization is the first Path and Fruition in Buddhism.

Having achieved the Dhamma-Eye, Anāthapiṇḍika expressed his faith in Buddhism, taking refuge in the Buddha, together with the Dhamma and the Sangha. He declared himself a male lay disciple or Upāsaka and invited the Buddha and the Bhikkhus to a meal at his house on the following day. The Buddha accepted his invitation by keeping silent.

Anāthapiṇḍika then returned home and told what had happened to his friend, who volunteered to arrange all things for him. But he declined the offer. When this was later known to the village chief until to the king, both also offered to do so for him. Yet he did not give his consent, on the grounds that he had all things prepared and ready and when it was time he made it known to the Buddha, who proceeded with a number of Bhikkhus to the home of the wealthy man of Rājagaha. After their meal he invited them to go over and stay in the town of Sāvattthī, in the state of Kosala. To Anāthapiṇḍika's invitation, the Blessed One made it known implicitly that it was customary for the Buddhas to take delight in the abandoned home, which meant a place of solitude. Understanding the implicit meaning of the Buddha, Anāthapiṇḍika said that he knew it. Thereafter the Buddha and the Bhikkhus went back to their place.

Now Ānāthapīṇḍika, having finished his business in Rājagaha, left the city for Sāvattī, capital of the state of Kosala. He also prepared everything for the Buddha's journey to his city. These included the construction of groves and dwelling places, the preparation of food on the way at regular intervals from Rājagaha to Sāvattī. Reaching his city, he looked for a suitable place as a Grove for the Buddha and his Bhikkhus. He finally came across a grove belonging to a prince by the name of Jeta which answered all the characteristics he looked for. He went to see prince Jeta and asked for its purchase. But the prince refused his request, saying he would agree only on the condition that the money (i.e. the coins) must be spread out all over the area Anāthapīṇḍika wanted to purchase. Anāthapīṇḍika consented, but the prince again refused to sell. When this case was brought to court for trial, the judge decided in favour of Anāthapīṇḍika, who willingly complied with the terms of the seller, filling the area he wanted to purchase with the coins spread all over. It was until almost the last moment, when there was a small space remaining near the door-way, that the prince, possibly impressed by the Anāthapīṇḍika's unprecedented magnanimity, said he would except that bit of place from the terms agreed upon and thus would be willing to make some merit thereby. To this Anāthapīṇḍika agreed.

With the terms for the purchase fulfilled, Anāthapīṇḍika had Bhikkhus' quarters built, together with special open areas, arches, multi-purpose halls, fire-booths (aggisāla) for water-boiling and cooking, store-rooms for food\*, latrines, meditation-tracks (for walking meditations), in addition to places for sitting meditation, both open and covered (for use in time of rain), wells, well-booths, fire-sheds (jantāgara). The latter, however, cannot be found in Thailand but can still be seen, so it is said, in India today. It is something like what is presently called a sauna or Turkish bath. Within this jantāgara is a room with hot damp air where one can clean one's pores through perspiration. It is,

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\* the pali term for this is kappiyakuti from kappiya meaning appropriate, and kuti meaning place. It thus implies the fact that it is appropriate that food should be kept or stored in this place.

in other words, like a kind of bathing, the difference being that one applies one's sweat, rather than water, to clean the body. Apart from these, Anāthapiṇḍika also had lotus-ponds and pavillions built within the Grove compound. Prince Jeta, however, had the entrance arch built as token of his bit of charity.

It is worth noting that the term 'Anāthapiṇḍika' means one who has lumps of rice always ready for the needy. This was not the original name of this wealthy, magnanimous man whose name was Sudatta, through whose unparalleled benevolence the appellation was given to him.

The term 'jeta' of the former owner of the Grove meant victory. It was explained in the Commentary that the king his father had achieved a victory in a war when he was born. Hence his name which reflected the good occasion. His grove or '*vana*' was therefore called Jetavana. There is a monastery in Thailand called Jetuvana or Jetu-phon in the vernacular, with the vowel 'u' added. Despite the name, it was, as earlier mentioned, the result of the unparalleled magnanimity of Anāthapiṇḍika. In the Commentary period, it was estimated to cost 180 million for only the cost of land. The cost of building Bhikkhus' quarters and other structures was another 180 million, plus another 180 million set aside for celebrations and other activities. The total expenses for this was therefore fifty-four hundred million.

But even this astronomical figure was not all he had sacrificed for Buddhism as far as the dispensing of charity was concerned. More will be mentioned at a time when the Blessed One arrived and stayed in the city of Sāvattthī in the state of Kosala.

## THE GENTLE SLOPE OF DHAMMA

**Buddha** Dhamma is for people  
 In each and every walk of life.  
 To all it is beneficial  
 Who want amidst the 'storms' to survive

**The** ravages of waves and winds,  
 The tests of temptations and threats,  
 The challenges on strength within  
 To face the on-coming re-death.

**Thus** Lord Buddha did not neglect  
 The fate of those in sphere mundane,  
 Knowing how “practice makes perfect”,  
 Graciously he often took pains

**To** teach them what’s fundamental,  
 Establishing them securely, –  
 To the utmost of their potentials, –  
 In what they can for themselves ‘see.’

**That’s** how he taught Singāla youth  
 The six personified directions, –  
 The fundamental, social truth  
 So his life be strictly moral,

**This** shows the Lord’s resourcefulness,  
 Adapting his Dhamma to suit  
 Each person, none being useless,  
 Male or female, aged or youth,

**His** Dhamma not sheer precipice :  
 Rather, it is a gentle slope.  
 At intervals there’s an oasis  
 For the aspirants’ renewed hope.

**An** uphill task this may well be,  
 Yet, on reaching each ledge and ridge,  
 An aspirant weak and weary  
 Is rewarded with fresh courage

**And** bliss urging him not to cower,  
Inspiring him to struggle on,  
Assuring him the darkest hour  
Is only that before the dawn.

**Buddhist** aspirants ! Come forward.  
The summit's awaiting us. "*It's there.*"  
Courageously exert your effort  
Manfully—with no cost to spare.

## SOME DISCIPLES ORDAINED WITHIN THIS PERIOD

**During** this period there were some disciples whose accounts of life should be recorded here.

(a) **VENERABLE PUNṆA MANTĀNĪPUTTA.** He was son of a Brahmin woman named Mantānī. Hence his name Mantānīputta. He was born to a wealthy Brahmin family, in a Brahmin village called Doṇavatthu, near the city of Kapilavatthu. He was nephew of Venerable Aññakoṇḍañña, who, while on his mission to disseminate the Buddha's Message, went one day to this village, where he, having impressed his nephew Punṇa, left the village, leaving his nephew there. Having been impressed in the Dhamma, the youth Punṇa exerted his efforts until he achieved the Arahatsip there. He later had ordained about five hundred youths in the village.

According to the Commentary, he was recorded to have taught the ten topics of conversation he had thought out as follows :

1. Appicchakathā : topic leading to being satisfied with little.
2. Santutthikathā : topic leading to contentment.
3. Pavivekakathā : topic leading to seclusion.
4. Asaṅsaggakathā : topic leading to not association (with the crowd).
5. Viriyārambhakathā : topic leading to exertion.
6. Sīlakathā : topic leading to observance of Precepts.
7. Samādhikatha : topic leading to developing meditation.
8. Paññākathā : topic leading to cultivating Wisdom.
9. Vimuttikathā : topic leading to Deliverance.
10. Vimuttiñānadassanakathā : topic leading to Insight into Deliverance.

He later approached the Buddha and had a Dhamma discussion with Venerable Sāriputta on the theme of the Seven Steps of Visuddhi

(Purity). He was also praised by the Buddha as being foremost (*Etadagga*) in preaching the Dhamma.

The term *Etadagga* consists of *eta*, meaning 'thus', and *agga* meaning excellent or foremost. When combined they refer to the fact that such and such a disciple was foremost in such and such a manner. The term was used by the Buddha in praise of his disciple who was regarded as being excellent or foremost in his or her own way.

### **Ordination of six princes and a barber**

On his way back from Kapilavatthu the first time, — as earlier described, the Buddha proceeded respectively on his way until he arrived at Anupiya Ambavana or the Mango Grove of Anupiya, in the state of Malla, which, according to some sources, was not far off from Kapilavatthu. At that time there were six Sākya princes viz. Bhaddiyarājā, Anuruddha, Ānanda, Bhagu, Kimbila and Devadatta, together with a barber by the name of Upālī, all following the Buddha and asking for ordination at the Anupiya Ambavana.

There was here a brief account in the Saṅghabheda Khandhaka mentioning the names of two young Sākya princes viz. Mahānāma the elder brother and Anuruddha the younger one, the latter being the apple of his mother's eye, being, somewhat like the Buddha, provided with three residences, one for each season, in addition to all kinds of entertainments. Mahānāma, however, being the elder brother, had to shoulder the responsibility of hard work. It happened one day that the two brothers came to consult each other that there had been from all other lines of Sākya clan members who went forth for the homeless life, following the Buddha's foot-prints. Yet there were none of their line who decided to do so. It was advisable, therefore, that either one of them should do the same thing as other Sākya princes. Anuruddha said that it would be impossible for him to be ordained, so let Mahānāma do it for him. The elder brother agreed, —but on the condition that Anuruddha would have to accept the responsibility he had shouldered for so long. These included agriculture,

which meant the various rice-growing methods. Then Mahānāma taught his younger brother in details how to sow the seeds, plough, harvest and others. At this Anuruddha asked Mahānāma when this kind of work should come to an end. In reply Mahānāma said that there could be no end to be expected, since their fathers, grandfathers and all their generations before that had done like this and had passed away one by one, there being no end in sight. Hearing this Anuruddha made up his mind, saying that he would like Mahānāma to go on working endlessly, while he himself would accept the homeless life of a monk.

He later made known his decision to his mother, who, of course, would not give her consent, since he was so much loved by her. For three times had he asked for her consent. Then she set a condition, saying he must first go to ask Bhaddiyarājā, who was a king by that time, to go forth with him. If Bhaddiyarājā agreed to do so, then she would also agree to his request.

At this Anuruddha went to see Bhaddiyarājā and told him that his 'going forth' now depended on Bhaddiyarājā. Hearing this Bhaddiyarājā said to Anuruddha, "No matter whether your 'going forth' depends on me or not, we --- er --- you can do so as you like." This was a favourable opportunity for Anuruddha, who did not hesitate to seize it, taking for granted that it was Bhaddiyarājā's consent. Then he flatly concluded, saying, "Good, we shall 'go forth' together."

But Bhaddiyarājā protested, saying that he was not in a position to do so at that time. He asked Anuruddha to request him to do other things, which he would readily give consent. As for the 'going forth', he advised Anuruddha to go along first. But Anuruddha quoted his mother's condition that he could not 'go forth' without Bhaddiyarājā accompanying him. Now that Bhaddiyarājā uttered the word "we" in his reply, which should mean "we shall go forth together", Bhaddiyarājā should not go back on his own words.

Admitting the slip of his tongue, Bhaddiyarājā then had no alternative but to do what he had said, although inadvertently. However,



he put off the time to seven years, but Anuruddha would not agree to that. The postponement was steadily reduced to seven days, which Anuruddha found tolerable and so gave his consent.

Bhaddiyarājā then arranged to have his throne succeeded by his son and other brothers of his. During the period of seven days, he also managed to invite four other young princes to 'go forth' together with him. Those four were : Ānanda, son of Amitodanasākya, Bhaggu and Kimbila (there being no mention whose sons these two were), along with Devadatta, son of Suppabuddha Sākya, who was younger brother of princess Bimbā or Yasodharā, Rāhula's mother. These six Sākya princes left the town of Kapilavatthu, with a group of retinue to see them off to the border of their state, while they themselves entered the state of Malla. There they put off all their ornaments, wrapped them in a piece of cloth and handed them over to Upāli, telling him to go back and sell those things and keep the money for himself. Upāli the barber, having received the ornaments and walked back a little distance, came to think that, should he go back to the Sākya land, the other members of the Sākya family might kill him since they would think he had murdered all those Sākya princes. Next moment, a thought came to him that, since all those princes were able to give up all those precious things, why should not he, an ordinary barber, be able to do the same thing. At this thought he hanged all those ornaments on a tree and went back, making known his intention to follow the example of the Sākya princes. Thus the six Sākya princes and one barber, totalling seven in all, set forth on their way to the Mango Grove of Anupiya, where the Buddha was then staying, and asked for ordination.

**It should be noted here** that the six princes asked the barber Upāli to be ordained first since he would be their elder brother in the Buddha's Discipline and they would have to pay respect to their own former barber. Their purpose was to eliminate their own ego as princes of a royal family. The Buddha agreed to do so, having the

barber ordained first, with the six princes ordained later and thus being 'younger' in the Buddhist Discipline.

As far as Bhaddiyarājā's biography was concerned, it was mentioned that he was son of princess Kāligodhā, and was rājā (king) of the Sākyans. No other details were known. In the Pali Canon, only he was called a Rājā (king). Even Suddhodana (the Buddha's father) was called Suddhodana Sakka. It was only in the Commentary period that he was called Suddhodana Rājā. Thus nothing more can be known of this personage. However, after ordination, he achieved the Arahantship within the forthcoming Rains Retreat period and was often heard to exclaim, "How happy it is, O how happy!" The Bhikkhus having heard this related the incident to the Buddha and voiced their opinion that perhaps Bhaddiya was recollecting the happiness of his lay life as a king while uttering that phrase. The Buddha sent for him and asked what was the kind of happiness he referred to in his exclamation. In his reply he told the Buddha that formerly while he was Rājā he was always troubled by the nagging thought of his country's security and dangers, both from outside and inside. This despite the fact that he had done his best in every possible way to assure security both to his palace and to the outward areas, from the borders of the land inwards. Now that he had been ordained and achieved its results he was no longer plagued by such troubles despite the fact that he was to live alone in the seclusion of the wilds. There was, he said, no fear of danger coming from anywhere. That was why he often exclaimed like that. The Buddha confirmed his words and later praised him as being foremost among his disciples as far as the high or noble family was concerned.

### **Venerable Anuruddha**

**As** for Venerable Anuruddha, he retired to exert his efforts in the Grove called Pācīnavaṇṣadāyavana in the state of Ceti. Before going there, he had studied the Kammatthāna (Meditation and Insight practice) from the Field Marshal of the Dhamma army i.e. Venerable Sāriputta. He had thought out what was called seven 'Mahāpurisa

Vitakka' or Recollections of a Great Man as follows :

- (1) This Dhamma (Doctrine) appeals to those who are satisfied with little, not to those who are ambitious.
- (2) This Dhamma appeals to those who are content, not those who are given to desires.
- (3) This Dhamma appeals to those who are bent on seclusion, not to those who prefer association.
- (4) This Dhamma appeals to those who prefer exertion, not to those who are lazy.
- (5) This Dhamma appeals to those who have their Mindfulness established, not to those who are absent-minded.
- (6) This Dhamma appeals to those who have their Meditation established, not to those who have their Meditation wavering.
- (7) This Dhamma appeals to those who are equipped with Wisdom, not to those who are without Wisdom.

At that moment, the Buddha was staying in the deer park of Bhesakalavana, near the town of Suṇsumāragāra, the state of Bhagga. Knowing Venerable Anuruddha's thoughts, he proceeded to see him and gave him another characteristic of his Dhamma as follows :

- (8) This Dhamma appeals to those who take delight in not delaying nor loitering, not to those who prefer to delay or loiter.

**Furthermore,** the Buddha described the benefits to be obtained from those eight recollections as follows :

With such recollections always borne in mind,

- (1) Whatever rag robes a Bhikkhu is wearing will appear like the excellent robes offered by a wealthy householder.
- (2) Whatever alms-food he has obtained will be like delicate food offered by a wealthy householder ;
- (3) Whatever tree-shade he stays under will appear like a grand edifice of a wealthy householder ;

- (4) Whatever fermented urine he takes as a medicine will be just like the five delicacies of a wealthy householder viz. ghee, butter, oil, honey and sugar.

A Bhikkhu keeping in mind those recollections will be bent on contentment. Being content, he will be able to take delight in whatever he has. Being so delighted, he was not perturbed by whatever he has.

It was also recorded in the Canon that the Buddha, after his visit to Venerable Anuruddha, also related those eight Recollections of a Great Man to the Bhikkhus, giving them the following brief explanation.

To be satisfied with little means not to boast about one's own existing virtues. This even though a Bhikkhu is fully endowed with all the eight Dhamma mentioned above. Such a Bhikkhu, therefore, is not bent on displaying or making known to others such virtues of his.

To be content means to take delight in whatever can be obtained.

To be bent on seclusion means not to prolong a conversation whenever there is a visitor coming to see him. He usually talks briefly, implicitly signalling the visitor not to prolong the conversation.

To be bent on exertion means to exert his efforts in the four manners, as described in the four manners of Padhāna (i.e. Exertion).

To be established in Mindfulness means not to be absent-minded, but to be able to remember what was spoken or done even a long time ago.

To be established in Meditation means to have an unshakable level of Meditation, implying the Jhāna attainment.

To be endowed with Wisdom means to develop and train himself to penetrate the Truth that whatever is of the nature to take birth is also of the nature to be extinguished.

To take delight in not delaying nor loitering means to take

delight in the attainment of the Path and the Fruition as soon as possible, not to be tempted by whatever Defilements should insert to delay that attainment.

Such were the advices the Buddha gave to Venerable Anuruddha while the Venerable was staying in deer park of the Pācīnavansa. He exerted his utmost efforts and was able to attain the Arahship within that Rains Retreat period. He was praised by the Buddha as being foremost in the Dibbacakkhu or Clairvoyance power.

As for Venerable Ānanda, he obtained the Dhamma-Eye, being a Stream-Winner through listening to the sermon of Venerable Punṇa Mantānīputta. Later, i.e. twenty years after the Buddha's Enlightenment, he became his attendant Bhikkhu until the Buddha's passing away. This will be related later on.

Venerable Bhaggu and Kimbila were recorded as having also attained Arahship through their exertion, but such was only what can be known of them.

**The barber Upāli**, however, had a distinguished career. He studied the theme of Meditation from the Buddha himself and expressed his wish to leave for a secluded life. But he was dissuaded by the Buddha, who told him he would achieve only the result beneficial to him alone by doing so. Should he continue to stay with him (i.e. with the Buddha), he would be able to achieve the double result viz. the Vipassanādhura i.e. Insight, and also Ganhadhura i.e. scriptural learning. Obeying the Buddha's instruction, he was able to attain the Arahship within that Rains Retreat period and was endowed also with the in-depth knowledge of the Vinaya or Monastic Discipline. He was later praised by the Buddha as being foremost in the Disciplinary knowledge. In Pali term he was called the Vinayadhara.

However, there was one who broke ranks. He was Devadatta, who was said to have achieved the psychic powers attainable to worldlings. He was later on tempted to break away from the rest of the group because of the tempting achievement. This had spurred him to stirring

up a lot of troubles in the Order of Sangha. He even caused a schism in the Order and bruised the person of the Buddha. These will be discussed later.

## TO WHOM THE DHAMMA APPEALS

**To** those satisfied with little  
Doth the Buddha's Dhamma appeal.  
To others with greed untrammelled  
The Dhamma doth no results yield.

**Those** who know how to be content  
Will by this Dhamma be inspired.  
Others with this virtue absent  
Will burn with insatiable desire.

**The** Dhamma praises seclusion ;  
Some are by this deeply impressed.  
Those who prefer association  
Will find it painfully distressed.

**Exertion** is the driving force  
That spurs on many aspirants.  
Those who are 'fraid to bear the cost  
Remain where they are for aeons.

**Mindfulness** is virtue keynote  
For aspirants sincere, earnest.  
Who've neglected this anti-dote  
Is sure to block his own progress.

**Secure** meditation provides  
The car of mind's accelerator.  
An aspirant often backslides  
Whose meditation still wavers.

**Wisdom** is aspirant's headlight  
For his own trav'ling car of mind.  
Without wisdom he will lose sight  
Of truth and stray and lag behind.

**To** those who shun loiter or delay  
This Dhamma surely doth appeal.  
Determined and dauntless are they, –  
Those aspirants : the men of steel.

**Such** are seven recollections  
By the Arahant Anuruddha  
Concerning Buddha's Dispensation  
Supplemented by the eighth Dhamma.

**Thus** adds the Lord to make complete  
The characters of Buddhism.  
Of these we Buddhists should take heed  
To tell Dhamma from hedonism.

## THE OUTSTANDING PHYSICIAN; A MOLEHILL MOUNTAIN

It was during this period of Rains Retreat that there occurred several significant events. Quite a number of disciples came to the Buddha and later became prominent ones. Also approaching the Buddha were several male and female lay disciples who later played a significant role in assisting him spread the Message. Of those people, the life-story of a physician, both for the king of Rājagaha and for the Buddha, will be told as follows :

This royal physician was called Jīvaka Komārabhacca, whose name has been well known and highly respected in the circle of traditional medical practitioners of Thailand. According to the Pāli Cīvara Khandhaka, the city of Vesālī, capital of the state of Vajjī in the time of the Buddha, was famous as being highly prosperous, with teeming population, abundant supplies of food and other things. Apart from the well-ordered houses of the people, the city was beautifully decorated with grandiose castles, royal mansions, tranquil ponds and luxuriant parks. On top of these, there was a courtesan by the name of Ambapālī, who was regarded as the glory of the city. It was said that she fixed the rate of welcoming her 'client' at fifty Kahāpana for a night.

On one occasion, there were a group of wealthy men from Rājagaha, capital of Magadha, who went to Vesālī for some business. Having witnessed how flourishing was the city of Vesālī, they went back to their hometown and related to King Bimbisāra what joy and delight they had found there. In addition they suggested the king appoint a beautiful maiden to be, like Ambapālī, the courtesan who would glorify the city. With the king's consent, they managed to find a girl by the name of Sālavatī to serve as counterpart to Ambapālī of Vesālī. The rate of spending a night with her was fixed at one hundred Kahāpana. There were within her dwelling places various kinds of music and other entertainments.



It is worth noting here that the appointment of a courtesan to glorify a city was a tradition for some states in India at that time. A very beautiful maiden was to be selected for the purpose, making her the common 'property' of whoever could afford to pay the fixed rate for one night. Thus she was regarded as a glorification for the city much the same way as did the delightful parks and ponds. Hence the appellation *Nagarasobhīni*, the maiden who beautified or glorified the city. In some states, if there happened to be a maiden so beautiful that she was approached by many suitors, all wishing to ask for her hand, she would then be appointed the '*Nagarasobhīni*', to prevent her from being the 'property' of anybody in particular.

After some time *Śālavatī* happened to become pregnant and, knowing how a pregnant woman would be shunned by men, she pretended to be ill and refused to welcome anybody coming to her. She later delivered a baby boy, whom she ordered her slave girl to take out and leave on a refuse-heap. This was customary also for the courtesans. If she delivered a baby girl, it would be raised to become a courtesan like its mother. But if it was a boy, she would get rid of it the way *Sālavatī* did her baby boy.

### **The Twist of Fate**

**But** 'fate' had something significant in store for *Sālavatī*'s thrown-away son. For one of the royal sons of king *Bimbisāra* named *Abhaya*, while on his way to see the king one morning, saw a number of crows shrieking and swarming over the place where the baby boy was left on the refuse-heap. He ordered one of his men to go and see what happened. Upon being told that there was an abandoned child, he asked whether the boy was still alive or not. The men replied that it was alive. This was the reason why the boy was called *Jīvaka*, meaning "alive". The prince then had it taken to his palace and provided it with the best kind of nurses and food to raise it as his adopted son. This was why the boy was called *Komārabhacca*, meaning 'to be brought up by the royal prince.' The boy was later called *Jīvaka Komārabhacca*.

Later, when the boy Jīvaka grew up, he asked prince Abhaya about his biological parents. The prince told him, honestly, that he did not know them, but that all the time he had brought Jīvaka up like his own son. Hearing this, the boy pondering over his own status in the royal palace concluded that without any knowledge by which to earn his own living it would be impossible for him to stay on in the royal court. He decided to make a name of his own through the knowledge of medicine, on the grounds that it was beneficial also to other people, being based on the spirit of compassion and loving-kindness. He made known his decision to prince Abhaya and took leave of him to go to Takkasīlā, the seat of advanced learning at the time.

He was a brilliant boy, able to acquire much knowledge of medicine within a short time through his retentive memory. It was mentioned in the Commentary that Sakka, king of the gods, also gave an invisible help by inspiring the boy's teacher to teach him more effectively and elaborately. This to the extent that he was enabled to cure a patient through his first prescription.

He had studied medicine for seven years and came to think that there appeared to be no end of the study. "Could it be that there is no end of it at all,?" he thought. Having asked his teacher about this, he was told to go into the forest with a shovel, surveying the area with the perimeter of one 'yojana' (i.e. 16 square kilometers) for a herb that had **no** medicinal power at all. Finding that, he was to dig it up with the shovel and brought it back to him. Jīvaka did as he was told to do, but to his dismay he found that he could not find any herb without any medicinal power whatever. All the flora he came across in the jungle were known to have some kind of medicinal value and because of that no such thing could be found. He came back to his teacher to report his disappointment. Whereupon the teacher gave him a pleasant surprise by telling him that he had then completed his education and was therefore able to earn his living by that means from then on. He arranged for Jīvaka a small amount of provision to support him while on his journey and told him to go back home.

With such provision Jīvaka set forth on his way back to Rājagaha, passing a number of cities and towns until he reached the town of Sāketa, where his small amount of provision ran out. Now he was to make use of his knowledge of medicine and for that purpose he had to volunteer to cure somebody's illness.

### **Miraculous Cures**

It happened at that time that the wife of a millionaire in the town of Sāketa had been suffering from a headache for seven years. There had been several famous physicians offering to cure her with all possible means, but to no avail, despite a lot of money wasted thereby. When Jīvaka offered to cure her, she at first declined the offer, seeing that he was only a young man and thinking that it would be a waste of money just as in the former cases. But Jīvaka promised that he would not ask for any money before his cure worked. If and when it did, then she was free to give whatever amount she thought proper. To this proposition she agreed. Having diagnosed the condition of illness, he had a handful of ghee brought and mixed with some other kind of his own medicinal herbs. By doing so he had made them into a sniffing powder for her. This proved to be an effective cure. She soon completely recovered from the ailment that had tortured her for so long. For this miraculously effective cure Jivaka was rewarded 1,600 Kahāpaṇa collected from herself and her relatives. This in addition to a number of slaves and women. All these were taken to Rājagaha, where he offered them to prince Abhaya, in return for the prince's kindness in having brought him up, thus saving his life from the refuse heap. But the prince returned all of them and had a dwelling place specially constructed for him in the royal palace.

Some time later king Bimbisāra was ill with haemorrhoids. His bleeding stirred the minor wives to make a laughing stock of him, saying he had menstruation and would deliver a child soon. Having been told of this gossip, the king was ashamed and told prince Abhaya to find a physician for him. Jīvaka was then ordered to do so. He was able to cure the disease with only one application of his medicine.

Pleased with his seemingly miraculous power, the king had his concubines fully decorated, then ordered them to take off those things and gave them all to Jīvaka. But he returned them to the king, saying he was satisfied only with the king's remembering of his act. In return, therefore, king Bimbisāra appointed him as a royal physician, both for himself, members of the royal household and also for the Buddha and the Bhikkhus.

In another instance, there was a very wealthy man in Rājagaha who had been afflicted with a severe headache for seven years. Many physicians had tried to cure him of the disease, but to no avail. They all gave up the efforts, some predicting that he would die within five days or seven days. Possibly knowing of Jīvaka's ability, the governor of Rājagaha approached King Bimbisāra, asking for Jīvaka to cure the wealthy man of the severe headache. Jīvaka, having seen the symptoms, asked what the wealthy man would give him should he be able to cure the headache. In reply the wealthy man said he would give whatever wealth he had and would also be glad to become Jīvaka's slave. He asked whether or not the man would be willing to lie on his back for seven months, then on his left and right side, each for the same period. The man answered in the positive. So Jīvaka had him bound to the bed so he could not move, then had a cleft on his skull opened and took out two tiny living things therefrom. It was said that those who saw the bigger one predicted that the wealthy man would die in five days, whereas others seeing the smaller one said that he would die in seven days. However, Jīvaka closed the opening and had the cleft cemented as before.

After lying on one of his sides for one week, the wealthy man admitted defeat, saying he could not lie in that posture any longer. Jīvaka allowed him to lie on the other side for another week, and then on his back for one week. These went on for three weeks in all. Then he told the man the process had come to an end, revealing the fact that if he had not told the man to lie for seven months in one

posture, the man would not have been able to do so even for one week. Now that the disease had been completely cured, so he said, the wealthy man was allowed to get up. The wealthy man finding Jīvaka's words to be true, was willing to honour his promise by giving up all his wealth, while he would be Jīvaka's slave. But Jīvaka would not accept those things. He merely asked for a hundred thousand Kahāpaṇa for himself and another hundred thousand for the King.

Then came another case challenging Jīvaka's miraculous healing power. A son of a millionaire in Rājagaha was suffering from a disease called Antaganta i.e. a knot in the intestines due to the twisting of the bowels. This was the result of the severe strain during his physical exercises. This made his urinating and motion very difficult, with severe pain as a result. He approached the king and asked for Jīvaka to cure his son. Through his diagnosis, Jīvaka knew what it was. He partitioned off a section of a room with curtains and had the wife of the rich man's son standing in front of him within the partitioned area. Then he cut open the boy's abdomen, took out the part of the intestines where there existed the knot and, having joined the intestines, applied his medicine to cement them into one piece as before. He put back the intestines into their place and sewed the skin of the abdomen, applying his ointment to make the wound heal. His performance this time won him 16,000 Kahāpaṇa.

Meanwhile, king Candapajjota of Ujjeni was ill with Pandupalāsa i.e. jaundice and sent an envoy to king Bimbisāra, asking for Jīvaka's help. He travelled to Ujjeni and, having observed the symptoms of the disease, asked the king whether he would take the medicine made from condensed ghee. The king answered definitely that he could not and commanded Jīvaka to try another cure, saying he loathed ghee most of all.

But Jīvaka, knowing how such a disease could not be cured without ghee, managed to boil ghee mixed with other herbs, making the solution smell and taste like an astringent juice, something like being made from wood core. However, he was heedful enough to pre-

pare for his sudden escape in case the king came to discover that. To this end he told the king that on some occasions he had to fetch the tree-roots and some medicinal herbs suddenly to prepare for the cure. As such he asked to be granted permission to go out of the city whenever he wanted to, by whatever vehicle could be obtained for the purpose and also through whichever city-gate would be appropriate for the moment. This should include the two-way trip, both from the city and back into it. To his request the king agreed.

Having prepared the mixture and offered it to the king Jīvaka hurried to the place where the king's elephants were kept and rode a female elephant named Bhaddavatī out of the city as fast as he could. Now the king having drunk the mixture, soon belched and at the moment knew how Jīvaka's preparation contained what he loathed most of all. He was very angry and ordered Jīvaka to be arrested immediately. He was told how the physician had escaped on the elephant Bhaddavatī. So he commanded one of his courtiers Kākadāsa, the fleet-footed, who could travel faster than the elephant, to follow Jīvaka and had him taken back to the city. However, knowing how the physician was crafty in a variety of ways, he forbade Kākadāsa to eat or drink anything offered by Jīvaka. The fleet-footed Kākadāsa soon overtook Jīvaka, who was having his meal within the town of Kosambī, on his way to Rājagaha. He told Jīvaka the king commanded him to go back. Now Jivaka, still having has meal, said he would do so after he had finished his meal. Then he invited Kākadāsa to join him in his meal. But Kākadāsa, remembering the king's warning, refused to eat. Seeing that, Jīvaka took out some 'āmalaka'\* fruits and ate one of them, thereby asking Kākadāsa to eat another, which he had stealthily inserted a drug with strong purgative effect hidden in one of his nails. Kākadāsa, seeing Jīvaka also ate the fruit himself, was confident that another fruit should not be poisoned, so he ate it (to quench his thirst). After that he drank some water, whereupon the drug took effect suddenly. He was frightened and asked Jīvaka if he would die there. Jīvaka answered that the effect did not have the killing

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\*its formal name is emblic myrobalan, a white, small fruit with astringent taste used for quenching thirst.

power. It only weakened him for some moments. Then he said that he knew how the king was a cruel man and would have him killed in spite of his cure. So he would not go back with Kākadāsa. He then returned the elephant Bhaddavatī to Kākadāsa and told the fleet-footed courtier to go back with the elephant, whereas he himself would go on his journey to his hometown.

By now king Caṇḍapajjota had recovered from his disease and being grateful for Jīvaka's performance had two pieces of Siveyyaka cloths sent as royal gifts to him. This was a kind of cloth specially made from the town of Sībī and being therefore of very high quality. Jīvaka, having received them, thought that such a superior quality cloth should be appropriate either for king Bimbisāra or the Buddha.

Now the Buddha himself was at that time also unwell, suffering from constipation, and wishing to take some laxative. Venerable Ānanda then reported this to Jīvaka, who prepared a mixture for the Buddha and give it to Venerable Ānanda. After taking Jīvaka's preparation, the Blessed One was well again.

### **A devout physician**

**Apart** from his unexcelled knowledge of medicine in those times, Jīvaka was also devoted to Buddhism. He had a grove built particularly for the Buddha in Rājagaha. This was called Jīvakambavana (Jivaka's Mango grove). The story will be told later on.

Having cured the Buddha with his preparation, he offered the two pieces of superior cloths called Siveyyaka mentioned above to the Buddha. However, before offering them, he asked the Blessed One for a blessing. Whereupon the Buddha said that he had stopped

giving a blessing to anyone. Jīvaka asked the Buddha to feel free in deciding his request, – which meant that should he find it advisable, then he might grant it. His request was that the Buddha grant the Bhikkhus to receive the robes given by householders. And this request of his the Buddha granted.

It can be learned from this request by Jīvaka that before this time Bhikkhus had been using only Paṇsukūla robes i.e. robes collected from refuse heaps, implying that they wore rag-robes or robes that had been abandoned as worthless. Never had they received any robe offered by a householder. It was therefore after Jīvaka had asked for this blessing from the Buddha that Bhikkhus were allowed to receive robes given them by lay disciples. However, in granting this blessing, the Buddha made it a voluntary practice, by which a Bhikkhu was free to decide for himself whether or not he would continue collecting rag-robes or would receive those given by lay disciples. In addition, the Buddha praised the virtue of contentment i.e. to be satisfied with whatever could be obtained by rightful means.

Having granted the blessing, the Blessed One acknowledged the receipt of the cloths offered by Jīvaka, encouraging and delighting him in the practice of Dhamma, also enlightening him, so it was said in the Commentary, into the Path and Fruition of a Stream-Winner. Thereafter, seeing how the Jeta Grove was a long way off, Jīvaka thought of offering his Mango Grove, which was not so far away, to the Buddha and the Bhikkhus. In this Mango Grove of Jīvaka the Buddha used to stay occasionally.

### **Meat eating : a molehill mountain**

**At** one time, while the Buddha was staying in the Mango Grove, he was told by Jīvaka about the rumour that even when the Reculse Gotama (i.e. the Buddha) knew how the people killed the



animals to prepare food for him, yet he was eating that kind of meat, which was called Udisamaṇsa, not caring if he should become a tacit supporter of slaughtering by that means. Because of this Jīvaka would like to know whether they spoke the truth or they had falsely accused the Buddha.

To Jīvaka's question the Buddha replied, saying that the people had falsely accused him since they had not spoken the truth. He explained that there were three kinds of meat that Bhikkhus should not eat viz. one that they had seen, one that they had heard of and one they had grounds for suspicion of. This implied the fact that if Bhikkhus had seen , or heard or suspected that such meat was prepared especially for them, then they were forbidden to eat it. If, on the contrary, they had not seen, nor heard nor suspected , then such a meat was not forbidden to them.

### **How to eat vs. What to eat**

**Furthermore**, the Buddha gave him a more detailed explanation, citing an instance of a bhikkhu in this Dispensation who, wherever he stayed, be it in a village or a town, radiated his loving-kindness, compassion, sympathy and equanimity to all the six directions (i.e. north, east, south, west, upwards and downwards). Such Sublime Abodes of the Mind of his was complete, untrammelled, without any thought of doing harm to or hurting anyone. His Sublime Abodes of Mind covering all places and in all respects. Now a householder or a householder's son approached him and invited him to a meal at his house in the following day. If he thought it appropriate, he would accept the invitation. Having entered the house, he was offered the alms-food. Never had he any wish at that time to have the lay disciple give him delicate or delicious food. He partook of his meal while contemplating its drawbacks and with the Wisdom by which to detach himself therefrom. Never did he eat the food overwhelmed by any Desire. Such being the case", so asked the Buddha, "should that Bhikkhu be regarded as deliberately doing harm to himself or to others or to both sides ?"

Answered Jivaka : “With such Divine Abodes of Mind, together with the wisdom contemplating the almsfood in such a manner, the Bhikkhu certainly has no intention whatever to do harm or hurt anybody.”

“Now,” said the Buddha, “can the Bhikkhu be regarded as having eaten the food without any evil involved ? ”

Jīvaka answered in the positive, admitting that there should be no evil involved in such a Bhikkhu’s eating the food with such a practice and an attitude of mind. He added that he had heard Lord Brahma was a *Mettāvihārī* being – one who radiated Loving-kindness; a *Karuṇāvihārī* being – one who radiated Compassion; *Muditāvihārī* – one who radiated Sympathy; and *Upekkhāvihārī* – one who radiated Equanimity. Now he had seen the Buddha as material witness of such sublime practice in all respects.

Now the Buddha went on to tell Jīvaka that, whoever still cherished hatred, the desire to do harm to others due to his own lust, hatred and delusion, no such lust, hatred and delusion existed in the Blessed One, who had once for all abandoned them. Regarding the *Udisamaṇsa*— the meat from the animal killed particularly for the Buddha or the Bhikkhus, the person who did so was sure to reach the five evil conditions as follows :

The first evil occurs when an order is given to the effect that an animal from such and such place be brought.

The second one implies the miseries suffered by the animal when it is tied or dragged by the neck.

The third one is when the order is given that the animal be killed.

The fourth evil takes place when the animal is being killed.

The fifth one comes to him when such meat is offered to the Buddha or the Bhikkhus. He is said to have offered what is not appropriate.

The Blessed One having said so, Jīvaka praised his explanation and agreed that whatever food the Bhikkhus partook of by that means was genuinely appropriate and freed of unwholesome effects. He then declared himself an Upāsaka i.e. a male lay disciple, taking refuge in the Triple Gem throughout his life.

This Sutta was called Jīvakasutta, on the grounds that it was Jīvaka who asked the Buddha questions, particularly the one that raised the people's doubt why the Buddha, having prohibited killing by the Buddhists, still allowed the Bhikkhus to eat meat. The Buddha's answer was **conditional**, implying the fact that he did not allow nor prohibit in all respects. What was prohibited was the Udisamaṇsa, the meat of the animal killed especially for Bhikkhus. This was based on the three conditions as mentioned above. However, there are also ten kinds of meat that Bhikkhus are absolutely forbidden to eat. These are ; for instance, human meat, meat of bears, elephants and raw meat. It should also be noted that even while eating the meat that was allowed, a Bhikkhu must be equipped with the right attitude of mind i.e. the mind endowed with the Divine Abodes of Mind. There must not be a desire to have such and such a food (to satisfy the palate). On the other hand, for those who prefer to eat meat, if sometimes they found no favourite meat , they would be somewhat irritated. This should be also a kind of evil desire despite the fact that there might be in the food some meat they did not discover then.

The right attitude of mind should be that there is to be no desire (positive or negative i.e. like or dislike) interfering. Whatever is obtained is to be eaten with contentment, without any desire for or against any particular meat, (except what was already prohibited). With such an attitude of mind established, a Bhikkhu is said to partake of the food that is 'kappiya' i.e. appropriate to him, that is 'anavajja' i.e. without any evil involved.

Furthermore, Bhikkhus live a life depending on others. It would give people inconvenience if they should refuse food mixed with meat the way lay disciples usually do. For that would give them the trouble

of preparing the food specially for Bhikkhus. To save lay disciples this unnecessary trouble, the Buddha laid down the rule that , as long as it was not included in the forbidden categories, such a meat was to be regarded as being allowed. Whatever food is offered, be it meat or vegetables, let the Bhikkhus eat it with mindfulness based on the earlier mentioned attitude. This therefore, should be in accordance with what is suitable and appropriate as far as a Bhikkhu's life is concerned.

## THE OUTSTANDING, PIOUS PHYSICIAN

**Never** is there a physician  
More outstanding and more pious,  
Both in the past and at present,  
Than Jīvaka the virtuous.

**Abandoned** on a refuse-heap  
By his own courtesan mother,  
He took a sudden quantum leap  
Being by a kind prince nurtured.

**So** complete his medical learning  
That in the forest he couldn't see  
What couldn't be used to cure suffering  
From any plant or any tree.

**His** services rendered to all  
Based on humanitarian grounds,  
Both young and old, and great and small,  
In villages, cities and towns.

**He** used to cure Buddha and kings,  
And millionaires, princes, paupers,  
And was one time given nothing  
Except an execution order.

**One** blessing he asked from Buddha,  
Which in fact not for his own sake.  
Bhikkhus wore robes Paṇsukūla  
Which from refuse-heaps did they take.

**Odd** bits did they collect from there  
To make up just one Cīvara,\* [ \*monk's robe  
This ordeal they should be spared.  
So he requested Lord Buddha

**That** he granted them to receive  
The robe offered by a donor.  
The Buddha, then, to his relief,  
Gave him the positive answer.

## MEAT EATING : A MOLEHILL MOUNTAIN

**Some** teachers found a bone to pick  
With Lord Buddha and his Bhikkhus.  
This was the meat-eating conflict  
A bone-of-contention issue.

**They** made a mountain of molehill,  
So said Buddha to Jīvaka,  
Nothing that bad was there until  
A person ate it with Lobha\* [ \*greed for taste

**Those** fault-finders are extremists,  
Accepting not the middle way.  
They take delight being sadists,  
Thus their own jealousy betray.

**They** were malicious fault-finders,  
Creating faults that were not there,  
Blind to the virtues of others,  
Extolling their own everywhere.

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\*greed for taste

**The** extremists emphasize WHAT,  
 But Lord Buddha laid stress on HOW.  
 The mind's attitude they cared not,  
 Just bent on kicking up a row.

**Prohibition** and allowance  
 By Buddha are *conditional*  
 Meat-eaters not always villains;  
 Nor are meat-abstainers angels.

**Here** there is *nothing absolute*;  
 Other factors come into play;  
 Each has a part to contribute  
 In this Lord Buddha's middle way.

**It's** mindfulness Buddha advised,  
 Also wisdom as ultimate  
 So that Buddhists may then realise  
 How they must not pamper the palate.

**Meat** or no meat : – this is but WHAT.  
 The stress is on matter, not mind.  
 It's pity many have forgot,  
 Leaving the 'HOW to eat' behind.

**In** Buddhism vegetarian  
 Is voluntary, not compulsion;  
 It's by no means the criterion  
 Nor passport to being enlightened.

**For** more details see the Discourse  
 The Buddha gave the physician,  
 So that Buddhists may not get lost,  
 Muddled by that '**molehill mountain.**'

## A JIG-SAW PUZZLE

**Now** king Pajjota of Ujjenī, whom Jīvaka cured of the disease and who later sent him the twin cloth of Siveyyaka, besides loathing ghee, was also of a violent nature. Hence his epithet Candapajjota, the violent or terrible Pajjota. He was addicted to drinking liquor, but was also impressed in Buddhism. Having learnt that the Buddha was born to the world, he thought of inviting the Buddha to his city. After consultation with his courtiers, it was agreed upon that a courtier of his named Kāñcana should be sent to invite the Buddha. The family name of this courtier was Kaccāyana, so he was called Kāñcana Kaccāyana.

However, before departure, Kaccāyana asked for the king's permission to be ordained. Whereupon the king gave his consent. So he set forth with other seven friends towards Rājagaha, where they were ordained by the Buddha and later exerted their efforts until they all attained the Arahatship.

This courtier Kaccāyana was recorded to be son of a Brahmin who was a courtier in Ujjenī. His complexion was so beautiful that it was described by the term 'Suvannavanno', meaning 'with the colour like gold.' This expression, it should be noted, was also used to describe the Buddha's complexion. That was why his first name was Kāñcana, meaning 'gold.' But often he was called by his family name, which was 'Kaccāyana'. After the passing away of his father, he was appointed by the king to occupy his father's position. Having been ordained, he was called Mahākaccāyana Thera.

After the attainment of Arahatship, he invited the Buddha to Ujjenī. But the Buddha said that he should go there himself, since he was able to impress both the king and the people of Ujjenī. Complying with the Buddha's advice, he went to Ujjenī together with seven other Bhikkhus. On their way, they came to a district named Nārī, where there lived a girl who had long beautiful hair. She was daughter of a person who used to be a wealthy man, but the family

was in a miserable condition when she was born. Now, there was at the same time a wealthy man's daughter who was deprived of hair. The former girl was approached by the latter, who promised to pay a very high price for the wealth of hair. But the offer was declined.

It was on the day when the girl with long beautiful hair saw Venerable Kaccāyana and seven other Bhikkhus reach the district and walking along the street with their empty alms-bowls that, being impressed, she decided to sell her hair and obtain the money for charity purpose. She invited the Bhikkhus into her house and going into her room, cut her long hair and ordered her servant to go and sell the hair to the wealthy man's daughter, who used to offer her very high price. She also added that whatever amount the servant got for the hair was to be spent for the almsfood for the eight Bhikkhus. The servant did as she was told but the wealthy man's daughter knowing now it was her day treated the hair with contempt, saying that it was worthless, being like a dead woman's hair, and as such did not deserve such a high price as had been offered. She gave the servant only eight Kahāpaṇa, with which the servant bought food for the eight Bhikkhus, with only the food worth one Kahāpaṇa for each Bhikkhu.

Venerable Kaccāyana and his seven attendant Bhikkhus, having had their meal within the poor girls' house, departed for Ujjenī and took lodging within the royal Grove. They were recognised by the garden-keeper, who went to report to king Pajjota. The king then went out to see them and asked where the Buddha was staying. He replied that he was told by the Buddha to come instead. When the king asked him about the travelling and whatever happened on the way, he related to the king about their experiences on the way, including the poor girl's magnanimous sacrifice of her long beautiful hair. The king was very pleased and had his men welcome her to his palace and accepted her as another queen. Later she bore him a son, who was named Gopāla Kumāra after the child's maternal grandfather. The new queen was also named Gopālamātādevī. She later had a Vihāra built for Venerable Kaccāyana within the Royal Grove.



Venerable Kaccāyana was experienced in explaining in details what was summarily referred to. Some time later, when he approached the Buddha at the Jeta Grove in Sāvattihī, he had elaborated several of the Buddha's brief sayings. His elaborations have been collected in such Suttas as Madhupinḍikasutta. Referring to this ability of his, the Buddha praised him as foremost in this respect. He had served the cause of Buddhism very well in Ujjeni, with the result that there were so many people in the town "going forth" for the homeless life.

It is noticeable that the people in Thailand have come to think of him in the form of a plumb, big-bellied Bhikkhu, instead of one of a good-looking Elder,—which he was. There was no mention in the pali scriptures and the Commentary why he should be portrayed like that. But a folklore has it that because of his own handsomeness he had been mistaken so many times to be the Buddha. This made him feel uneasy and, to avoid being mis-remembered again, he made a resolution to transform himself into a fat, ugly-looking Bhikkhu the way he has been represented until now. In Burma and Mons there exists also the same kind of fat Bhikkhu called Upaguta. In China there is the fat image representing the future Sṛī Āraya Buddha, the age of Plenty and Abundance. Possibly the Thai people had adopted this concept and materialised it in the form of such a fat, big-bellied Bhikkhu.

### **The Jig-saw Puzzle**

There is a difficult problem in an attempt to put in chronological order the Buddha's activities, stating definitely when such and such an event did take place. There was scarcely any mention of the date in the Pali Scriptures; there may be more, but still less than enough, in the Commentary. The arrangement, therefore, is often beset with this difficulty. The chronological order arranged herein is therefore attempted partly through direct reference in the Scriptures and partly through inference regarding such matters. What took place in the city of Rājagaha, for instance, can be concluded as occurring in the early days on the grounds that there was mentioned the ordination through the EHI BHIKKHU manner. This method, as is generally known, did take place in the Buddha's early days of his spreading the Message. Also through

some other concomitant circumstances it was also included in the second, third and fourth periods of Retreat (Vassā).

### **Uggasena**

There was another story mentioned in a book, citing the Commentary of the Dhammapada concluding that it occurred in the fourth Rains Retreat. From that Commentary the story centred on a wealthy man's son by the name of Uggasena ran as follows :

There were at one time a troupe of dancers and acrobats arriving to perform in the city of Rājagaha. Their performances involved gymnastics on a high trapeze mounted on long bamboo poles. The performers climbed up to dance, sing and display their acrobatic feats on top of the high bamboo poles. Uggasena was one of the spectators who admired their performances. However, he was specially fascinated by a daughter of a dancer that after the play he went back home and lay still on bed, pining for the young girl and refusing all food. To his parents he told how he loved her to distraction and that, without her he would gladly die. In compliance to the son's wish, his parents sent a go-between to ask for the girl's hand in marriage. But the girl's father refused the offer, saying that should the boy really love his daughter, he had to accompany his troupe and follow her. To this demand the boy readily complied, and soon his wish was fulfilled. When later their son was born, the mother taught the boy to say that he was son of a coolie or one working like a buffalo. This implied the fact that the rich man's son was without any skill in the arts of her troupe i.e. in any acrobatic feat. Having learnt of such insulting words, the rich man's son came to think what was the reason for his wife's remarks. He then knew that it was his own fault that he had so far not studied and practised such an art and skill. This gave him the courage and resolution to practise the acrobatic art until he was able to rival anybody in the troupe. At one time he accompanied the troupe to perform in the city of Rājagaha and had the opportunity to listen to the Buddha's sermon centred on the following verse,

“Do let go the beginning, the end, and the middle.

One who has reached the end of Bhava (Becoming or BE-ness), having been delivered in all places, will no longer experience birth and old age.”

Being impressed, he asked for ordination. Whereupon the Buddha admitted him with EHI BHIKKHU manner.

## A JIG-SAW PUZZLE

**It's** difficult putting events  
In chronological order  
The years and points of time absent,  
Nothing is known : before or after.

**Nothing** was told in the Pali  
Only “At one time” was mentioned  
So we can't know with certainty,  
Without the year and month given.

**So** difficult it is to know  
Which was before and after which.  
This task I try to undergo  
Often with nothing established.

**We** know enough ‘how’, ‘what’, ‘why’, ‘where.’  
But as regards ‘**exactly when**’  
So with others we may compare,  
We are left in a trackless den.

**Commentaries** tell us some more  
But it's scanty and rare and rough.  
What these sources offer, therefore,  
Is too little and far from enough.

**This** is solving a jig-saw puzzle,  
Gleaning data from here and there.  
If it should be a losing battle  
May those scholars from everywhere

**Accept** my humble apology  
And help correct errors thereby  
So readers know the reality  
That I so far cannot descry.

**My** work, therefore, far from perfect.  
It's replete with E.&O.E.  
This I know and will not object  
To those errors kindly shown to me.

## THE FIFTH RAINS RETREAT : WOMEN ORDINATION

**Having** stayed in the city of Rājagaha for an appropriate time, the Buddha proceeded to the city of Vesālī, where he took lodging at the Kūṭāgārasālā in the Mahāvana Grove. Vesālī was capital of the state of Vajjī, one of the independent states of that time. It was a flourishing and beautiful city. From the Scriptures we learn of the history of the dynasty ruling over Vajjī as follows :

In former times the queen of king Kāśī of the city of Benares gave birth to a blob of red flesh. Being ashamed, she had it put into a vessel and sealed, with an inscription to the effect that it was born to the queen of the Benares king. Then she had it floated away until it reached the river Ganges, where it floated further on to a district where there lived a hermit who lived depending on a family of cowherds. The hermit seeing the vessel floating by took it up and opened it. He found the blob of flesh which was not yet rotten. Thinking there must be some living thing inside, he kept it for some time. Later the blob broke into two parts and still later they became two infants, one of them being a boy while the other a girl. Their bodies, however, were transparent, since whatever they ate could be seen from outside. That was why they were called 'licchavī', meaning without the 'chavī', that is to say, the skin. In another sense, however, the term can be translated 'līnacchavī', meaning the wrinkled skin, which soon became corrupt, becoming 'licchavī.'

The hermit managed to bring up the two infants, but the task became a burden to him, taking him more time than before in looking after them. This made him go into the village of cowherds for alms late in the morning. The cowherds learning about his reason for coming late offered to take care of the children themselves. The hermit agreed but told them to take good care of the children and to have

them married together when they grew up, also to build a town for them. The cowherds did what they were told to do. By doing so a dynasty called 'licchavi' was created. Later a number of offspring were born to them. Their families were thus expanded through inter-marriage, by which more and greater families were formed until the town had to be expanded time and again. That was why the city was called 'vesālī', meaning the city that was expanded. Their state was called 'vajjī', meaning the territory to be excepted. Possibly this connoted the fact that it was militarily strong and should be excepted or by-passed by a king who wished to expand his territory. However, there was another implication mentioned in the Scriptures. This was that while the first monarchs of the 'licchavi' dynasty were still young, they used to bully other children who were offspring of the cowherds. The bullied children reported this to their parents, saying they were harassed by the children who had no parents. Being displeased, those parents told their children not to associate with them, that is to say, to except them from the circle of their friends. But this name, insofar as it referred to the territory, should be meant to imply the one to be excepted on the grounds that it was militarily strong.

### **King Suddhodana's Last Days**

**While** staying in the Kūṭāgārasālā i.e. the spired dwelling place, within the Mahāvana Grove, the Buddha learned about his father's illness. It was mentioned in the Scriptures that the king always missed his sons and grandson, all of whom had left him for the homeless life. In time of illness, he would like to see his son i.e. the Buddha, Bhikkhu Nanda and his nephew Venerable Ānanda. In response to his father's wish, the Buddha proceeded to the city of Kapilavatthu, where he approached the king and delivered to him a series of sermons for several days, enlightening his royal father into the Path and Fruition of an Arahant. The king, however, due to his illness bade the Buddha farewell and passed away before he could be ordained a Bhikkhu.

## Women Ordination

**The Blessed One** having cremated the remains of his father, his aunt-queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, knowing her responsibility had come to an end after the king had passed away, approached the Buddha at the Nigrodha Grove in Kapilavatthu and requested him to grant ordination also to women, thus allowing them to live a homeless life in the Buddha's Dispensation. But the Buddha refused her request, forbidding women to be ordained. For three times did she beseech the Buddha and for three times did the Buddha persist in his refusal. Grief-stricken, Pajāpati Gotamī wept bitterly and returned to her place.

The Blessed One having stayed in the Nigrodha Grove in the city of Kapilavatthu for an appropriate time proceeded to the Kūtāgārasālā in the Mahāvana Grove, near the city of Vesālī. During this time queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, together with a number of Sākya princesses, had their hair cut, and donned the Kāsāya robes (robes of a recluse or monk). They all took pains to walk to Vesālī and arrived there with their feet bruised, all of them weakened and in a miserable condition through the ordeal. Reaching their destination, they stood weeping at the gate of the Buddha's dwelling place.

Venerable Ānanda seeing them there asked them what was the cause of their doing so. Having learnt about their wish, he told them to stop and rest there while he approached the Buddha and reported what had happened, asking him to grant ordination to women. Thrice did Venerable Ānanda request him for permission and thrice did the Buddha refuse his request. Venerable Ānanda then asked him whether a woman, having been ordained in this Dispensation, should be able to attain the Fruition of a Stream-Enterer, a Once-Returner, a Non-Returner and an Arahant. To which the Buddha answered in the positive. At this Venerable Ānanda said that since queen Gotamī, who was his own aunt, had offered so much act of kindness in place of his own deceased mother, being the one who had painstakingly brought him up ever since he was an infant, she should not be denied her sincere and earnest wish to be ordained in the Buddha's Dispensation.

So said the Buddha, "If Mahāpajāti Gotamī should be willing to accept the eight 'heavy conditions', she would be granted the ordination. Those 'Heavy Conditions (Garudhamma)' are :

1. A Bhikkhunī, even if she has been ordained for a hundred years, is to pay homage to, to get up and greet and to do whatever proper measures are required as token of respect for a Bhikkhu who is newly ordained, even on that day.

2. A Bhikkhunī must not stay for a period of Rains Retreat in a monastery where there is no Bhikkhu dwelling.

3. A Bhikkhunī must 'expect' two things from the Bhikkhu Saṅgha every fortnight. Those two are : to learn about the day for the Uposatha (recitation of the Code of Disciplinary Rules) and to listen to the Bhikkhu's instruction.

4. After a period of Rains Retreat a Bhikkhunī is required to follow the Pavāraṇā procedure (one asking for forgiveness) in both the Bhikkhu and the Bhikkhunī denominations.

5. A Bhikkhunī, having committed a serious offence, is to follow the 'mānatta' (expiatory) procedure for a fortnight from both the Bhikkhu and the Bhikkhunī denominations.

6. A girl having perfectly observed the six Precepts for two years is entitled to be called a Sikkhamānā. She is thereafter entitled to be granted ordination in the Saṅgha of both denominations (i.e. the Bhikkhu Saṅgha and the Bhikkhunī Saṅgha).

7. On no account can a Bhikkhunī condemn or blame a Bhikkhu.

8. Bhikkhus can teach and forbid Bhikkhunīs, but not vice versa.

Should Mahāpajāpati Gotamī be willing to accept these 'Heavy Conditions', said the Buddha, she and her retinue would be granted ordination.

Venerable Ānanda relayed the eight Garudhamma to Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, who said she was as delighted to accept them as a youth



would a garland of flowers as ornament. This acceptance was therefore symbolic of her ordination as Bhikkhunī. Whereupon Venerable Ānanda returned to tell the Buddha of his aunt's unconditional and delightful acceptance.

So said the Buddha to the effect that should women not be admitted into this Dispensation, the Dhamma would exist for a thousand years. Now that women were so admitted, the chaste life would not exist for so long. It would exist only for five hundred years. This was just like a family with many female members but few male counterparts. It would be easily destroyed. Or just like a wheat field that used to yield a bountiful harvest. When it is attacked by swarms of aphids, it will before long cease to produce anything worthwhile. Or just like a kind of disease that attacks a sugar-cane field, making the plants red and wither away. However, the eight Garudhamma so laid down for Bhikkhunīs under the condition that they would not violate them for the rest of their lives would be something like a dam constructed around the area of a big well, preventing thereby too much outflow of the water from inside and too much inflow of the water from outside.

### **Gradual Decline of Buddhism**

It should be noted that the passages from the Bhikkhunīkhandhaka in the Pali Canon was the only source that predicted the age of the chaste life as one thousand years should women not be admitted ordination, whereas, should they be admitted, the mentioned age would be reduced to only five hundred years. This is the source of reference from the Pali Canon. But in the time of the Commentaries, there was the explanation that there would still be the Arahants with four kinds of Fluency (Paṭisambhidā) during the first thousand years. In the second thousand years there would exist the Arahants of the Sukkhavipassaka category. This means the Arahants with the minimum, compulsory attainment of having the Defilements abandoned, but with no other distinguished, attractive capa-

cities. Then in the third thousand years only the Anāgāmi̇ i.e. the Non-Returner could be found, whereas in the following period i.e. the fourth thousand years there would exist only the Saka-dāgāmi (Once-Returner). In the last i.e. fifth thousand years there would remain only the Sotāpanna i.e. the Stream-Enterer. Thus the Dhamma, herein implying the Path, Fruition and Nibbāna, would exist (i.e. would be attainable for the people) for five thousand years. The Pariyatti Dhamma i.e. the intellectual study of Buddhism would also remain throughout the same period. But the symbols such as the monks' robes would still exist for a long time after that.

In another place there were mentioned five conditions leading to the disappearance of the Doctrine (Saddhamma Antaradhāna) as follows :

- (1) The disappearance of the Path, the Fruition and Nibbāna (Adhigama Antaradhāna).
- (2) The disappearance of practice (Paṭipatti Antaradhāna).

The first kind implies the fact that, whenever there is nobody attaining the Arahatsip until there is nobody attaining the Fruition of a Stream-Enterer, that would mark the disappearance of the Adhigama, which is another name for the Path, the Fruition and Nibbāna.

The second kind implies the absence, first of all, of the intention or the will to practise for the sake of Jhāna, Insight, the Path and the Fruition. This means the aspirants have no intention or will power to practise for such a lofty state of mind. With the decline of this aspect of practice, there remains only the practice of the Disciplinary rules. Of those rules, the smaller, less significant ones are the first to be neglected. This negligence increases steadily until only the four capital rules called the Pārājika or the Defeaters remain. As time goes on, even the four Pārājika will not remain. Such is how the practical aspect of the Disciplinary rules ceases to be.

(3) The disappearance of study (Pariyatti Antaradhāna). As long as there is still the study, with its memorisation, so long this aspect can exist. But there will come a time when even this aspect is also neglected. Then comes the Pariyatti Antaradhāna.

(4) Liṅga Antaradhāna. This mean the disappearance of the status symbol such as the robes. Next will come the time when even the status symbol of a Bhikkhu to mark him from the lay disciples cannot be seen, either. This is the disappearance of this aspect.

(5) Dhātu Antaradhāna. This refers to the disappearance of the Buddha's Relics. It was mentioned that a time will come in the distant future when there will not be even the Buddha's Relics left in the world.

Such is the description of the Disappearance of Buddhism compiled in the form of texts in Sri Lanka. From the Pali Canon, there was what was earlier mentioned, in which it was explained that the chaste life or the Saddhamma would exist for a thousand years. This implied the fact that there would be the Arahants well versed in the four kinds of Fluency (Patisambhidā) during that period. Now that the Buddha had laid down the eight Garudhamma for the Bhikkhunī, the prophecy of five hundred years was nullified.

Having laid down the eight Garudhamma for the Bhikkhunī as formal acceptance of Mahāpajāpati into the Bhikkhunī Order of Saṅgha, the Buddha ordered the Bhikkhus to have the accompanying Sākya princesses ordained. In this manner they were all regarded as Bhikkhunīs, and were also answerable to the eight Garudhamma like their leader Pajāpati Gotamī. It was mentioned that some time later Mahāpajāpati Gotamī asked the Buddha, through Venerable Ānanda, for a clause of leniency to the effect that a Bhikkhu and a Bhikkhunī be allowed to pay respect to each other on the basis of their ordination period. But the Buddha refused to grant her such a leniency.

### **Eight Criteria**

**On** another occasion Mahāpajāpati Gotamī approached the Buddha and asked him to deliver to her a summary instruction which she, having listened to, would retire to seclusion for the sake of an earnest practice. In response to her request the Buddha laid down the eight rules or criteria by which to judge the authenticity of his Message. They are :

Whatever teaching is conducive to

- 1— the increase of sensual delight ;
- 2— the submergence in suffering ;
- 3— the accumulation of Defilements ;
- 4— the growing of Desire ;
- 5— the absence of contentment with whatever there is ;
- 6— the tendency towards playful gathering ;
- 7— laziness ; and
- 8— being fussy,

let it be known that it is not the Dhamma, nor the Discipline ; nor the Buddha's teaching.

On the contrary, whatever teaching is conducive to

- 1— the abandonment of sensual delight ;
- 2— the deliverance from suffering ;
- 3— the reduction of Defilements ;
- 4— the lessening of Desire ;
- 5— the promotion of contentment ;
- 6— the tendency towards seclusion ;
- 7— the tendency towards exertion ; and

8— a life of simplicity,

let it be known that it is the Dhamma, the Discipline and the Buddha's teaching.

The theme explained to Mahāpajāpati Gotamī was treated, in the book entitled NAVAKOVĀDA (Instructions for newly ordained Bhikkhus) as the criteria on which to judge the authenticity of the Buddha's teaching.

During the fifth Period of Rains Retreat the Buddha stayed in the Kūṭāgārasālā within the Mahāvana Grove near the city of Sāvattihī, in the state of Vajjī. The term 'Mahāvana' means the Great Forest. Within this area there was constructed a multi-storied building called Pāsāda with a spired roof. The term 'Kūṭāgārasālā' is composed of 'kūṭa', meaning spire ; 'Āgāra' meaning building and 'Sālā' meaning structure. The place was meant to be the dwelling place for the Buddha and the Bhikkhus. Thus whenever the term 'Kūṭāgārasālā' was mentioned, it was understood to refer to the Grove in general. According to the Scriptures, the structure was built lengthwise from north to south, with its front part facing the east. It was while staying here that the Buddha went to the city of Kapilavatthu as earlier mentioned. According to the ancient compilers, he was said to go there by air. Possibly it could be meant to refer to the fact that he went there in a hurry, since King Suddhodana was at the time seriously ill. After the passing away of king Suddhodana, Mahānāma Sākya, elder brother of Venerable Anuruddha, succeeded to the throne.

### **Princess Yasodharā**

In the book entitled PAṬHAMASAMBODHI compiled by the late Supreme Patriarch Paramānujita Jinorasa and also in the Commentary, princess Yasodharā Bimbā, referring to the 'going forth' of the Buddha and her son Rahula, and also to the passing away of King Suddhodana, wished also to 'go forth' for a homeless life in the Bhikkhunī Order. She then went to Sāvattihī, where she knew the Buddha used to stay. But it was not yet the time when the Buddha

came to spend the Rains Retreat there. Should this be really so, it could be that he was just passing the city on his way to the Jeta Grove before the Retreat period. After that he proceeded to Vesālī to stay in the Mahāvana Grove.

## EIGHT CRITERIA

### **The** Norm and the Law

The abandonment  
So that aspirants  
Of sensual indulgence,

**Deliverance** from  
Of the Lord's Doctrine  
In the cocoon of  
Which tortures the mind

### **Defilement** reduction

The Lord didn't praise  
This is criterion  
To which we Buddhists

**To** lessen Desire,  
Is what aspirants  
For such is the gist  
Which earnest Buddhists

### **Contentment** as key-note

Preventing unscrupulous —  
Its promotion helps  
This the Buddha praised

### **A** Dhamma aspirant

In secluded place,  
He prefers an abode  
This, too, is hallmark

is characterised by  
of sensual delight  
stay away from the mire  
which blocks their Insight.

suffering is the goal  
as against submergence  
suffering untold,  
through its recurrence.

is Buddhist process :  
its accumulation.  
of Buddhist progress,  
should always hearken.

the cause of suffering,  
are duty-bound to do.  
of Buddha's teaching,  
should look forward to.

of Buddhist practice,  
pulous greediness.  
strengthen the basis.  
as a self-conquest.

doth always rejoice  
not playful gathering.  
not disturbed by noise.  
of Buddha's teaching.

**Never** should Buddhists be  
Exertion and patience  
This is to assure  
But spurred on by these,

**Simplicity** is watchword  
As manner of practice  
They shouldn't be fussy  
Their progress will then be

**So** this instruction  
On which we can judge  
Of the Dhamma which  
To his ordained aunt

**It** was also addressed  
Both contemporary  
Providing essence  
Something like signposts

overwhelmed by laziness.  
must be their foothold.  
that they don't regress  
sending them to their goal.

for all aspirants  
to worship Buddha with.  
nor extravagant.  
firmly established.

is the criteria  
the authenticity  
the Buddha made clear  
Mahāpajāpati.

to other disciples,  
and posterity,  
and fundamentals,  
so that all can agree.

## **TOLERANCE : THE BUDDHA'S MAGNANIMITY; RECOLLECTION OF PAST LIVES**

**While** the Buddha was staying in the Mahāvana Grove, — be it during the period mentioned here or any other one, there were five hundred young Licchavī princes coming out for a hunting trip, together with a number of dogs trained for hunting purpose, in the Mahāvana Grove. Coming across the Buddha, they were moved to forget their initial purpose and, laying down their arms and leading the dogs to another place, seated themselves before the Buddha, joining hands in token of respect and in a poised manner. At that time another Licchavī prince by the name of Mahānāma happened to pass by that way. Seeing the other Licchavī princes in such an unusual calm bearing in the presence of the Buddha, he surprisedly exclaimed, saying, “So shall Vajjī exist ! So shall Vajjī exist !” This indicated his prophetic exclamation to the effect that the land of Vajjī shall flourish in the future. Hearing his exclamation, the Buddha asked him what was its meaning. He replied that these young Licchavī princes were aggressive and sadistic by nature. They used to snatch away cakes and fruits such as sugarcane, jujubes and other things that were meant to be presents to such and such families. At times they liked to harass women and displayed their barbaric nature in a variety of ways. But now they were seen to seat themselves in a self-controlled manner, joining hands in obeisance to the Buddha. This he had never dreamt of before. It was because of this transformation that he was inspired to exclaim prophetically that the state of Vajjī shall prosper in future.

**In** furtherance of Mahānāma Vajjī's reply, the Buddha went on to give him another instruction on the theme of the causes of prosperity as follows :

There are five practices to be followed by whoever looks forward to the fulfillment of his responsibility, be he a consecrated king,



a state governor, an heir to his father, a king's chief courtier, a leader of a group or a family. Those five Dhamma or practices to be followed are

(1) To do whatever is to be done in an appropriate manner towards his parents by means of the resources righteously acquired. The parents so revered will give him their blessings, praying for his happiness and longevity.

(2) To do whatever is to be done in an appropriate manner towards his wife, offspring, servants, workmen and other persons involved (in his work). This by means of the resources righteously acquired. Those persons so well treated will likewise return his kindness, praying for his longevity.

(3) To do whatever there is to be done in an appropriate manner towards the owners of the farms close by, who work in the neighbourhood, and towards the survey officials. Those persons, having been well treated, will in the same manner return his kindness and generosity.

(4) To do whatever there is to be done in an appropriate manner towards the invisible, celestial beings who are in the position to accept the oblations. This by means of the resources righteously acquired. Those invisible, celestial beings, having been offered oblations, will in the same manner return his kindness and generosity by praying for his longevity.

(5) To do whatever there is to be done in an appropriate manner towards the recluses and Brahmins. This by means of the resources righteously acquired. Those recluses and Brahmins, having been respectfully treated, will likewise pray for his longevity.

Any person governing his retinue in such and such a place who is equipped with these five practices can look forward to the progress and prosperity of his charges, and not the decline thereof.

*In terms of language*, it should be noted that in the original Pali passages, the verb phrase meaning 'to revere, respect and worship' was used categorically throughout the five kinds of practices towards different people. The meaning intended was therefore to treat each group properly in accordance with their social status, not to treat them with contempt or in an improper manner. The first group referred to parents, whereas the second to other members of the family and other persons involved in one's work. This means to treat them, especially the servants or slaves and workmen humanely. The third kind included all who have something to do with one's work and responsibility. The instance given referred to an agricultural society. That was why the owners of the nearby fields and the survey officials were cited. In another kind of society, the term may be extended to include other officials concerned that a person comes into contact with, and also other people both in the neighbourhood and in the related business. The fourth kind i.e. the Devatā or the gods or celestial beings who used to be offered oblations. This should refer to the traditional practices of spirit communication handed down from one generation to another. This shows the principle of tolerance on the part of Buddhism, which does not recommend the violent and aggressive practice or an outright protest against the family traditions. The fifth kind is obvious enough in meaning, which referred to recluses or Brahmins of a religious faith professed by that person.

### **Dialogue with a mendicant**

**While** the Buddha was staying in the Kūṭāgārasālā, within the Mahāvana Grove, near the city of Vesālī, there was a 'Paribbājaka' or mendicant dressed in white robes dwelling in a monastery of Paribbājaka called Ekaṇḍarika. Possibly the name was derived from a small mango-tree with small mango fruits.

One day the Buddha, having robed himself and carried the almsbowl, went into Vesālī for almsfood. Thinking that it was still early in the morning, he dropped in the monastery called Ekaṇḍarika in order to pay an informal visit to a mendicant named Vacchagotta

whom he used to know.

He was warmly welcomed by Vacchagotta. The Buddha having seated himself, Vacchagatta asked him a question to the effect that he used to learn from various people that the Samāṇa Gotama (i.e. the Buddha) was the All-Knower (i.e. Sabbaññū), being the See-All who declared the full and perfect knowledge. Such being the case, whether the Buddha was walking, standing or sleeping, he was uninterruptedly endowed with the Ñāṇadassana or the Seeing Eye, making him able to see all things at all times. Such was what the people referred to the Buddha. He i.e. the mendicant would like to know whether that rumour was true or not true, whether it would be a reference to the Buddha's ability in the right or the wrong way.

In reply the Buddha said that what the mendicant had heard about him was not true. The people did not say what he (i.e. the Buddha) said. It was therefore a reference to him in the wrong way.

At this the mendicant asked futher what should be the right reference to the Buddha that should make it agree with what the Buddha had said, thus not being the reference to him in the wrong way.

### **The Buddha's Triple Knowledge**

**The** Buddha answered, saying that it would be correct to refer to him as being endowed with the Triple Knowledge. This would therefore not be a reference to him in the wrong way. Thereafter he explained to the mendicant the meaning of the Triple Knowledge, saying that the first was called Pubbeni-vāsānussatiñāṇa i.e. the Knowledge by which to recollect whatever had happened in the previous lives ; the second was Cutūpapātāñāṇa, the Knowledge by which to see the deaths and the (re)births of sentient beings ; and the third was Āsavakkhyanāṇa, the Knowledge by which to eradicate the Āsava i.e. potential, dormant Defilements. He concluded his reply, saying that to refer to him in the right manner would be to say that he was endowed with the mentioned Triple Knowledge.

*Next*, the mendicant asked him another question, saying whether there should be some lay disciples who, not having abandoned the Saṅgajana or Spiritual Fetters binding him to the household, would after the dissolution of their bodies be able to achieve the end of Sufferings. To which the Buddha answered in the negative.

The mendicant asked again if such lay disciples would after the dissolution of their bodies enter a celestial realm. To which the Buddha answered in the positive, adding that there were not only one hundred, nor two, three, four, five hundred, but more than that.

When the mendicant asked once again whether the mendicants would after the dissolution of their bodies be able to attain the extinction of Suffering, the Buddha replied in the negative. Asked another question whether there were mendicants who entered a celestial realm after the dissolution of their bodies, the Buddha answered that, as far as he could recall, there had never been any mendicant able to do so, the exception being the only group who were Kiriāvādī i.e. those who accepted the truth of the survival of results of Karma. Vacchagotta then expressed his viewpoint that such being the case, the Tittiya doctrine (i.e. one of the heretics) would be 'empty' i.e. producing no good results. Here the Buddha said that it was indeed so.

### **Tolerance**

**There** were several things worthy of note in this dialogue. First of all, the Buddha also dropped in to have an informal discussion on religious matters with the monks of other religious faiths in their places. This showed a spirit of tolerance, not regarding them as enemies, but treating them as ones who could be approached and could have an exchange of views on some occasions. There were several other informal talks like this mentioned in the Canon.

Regarding the theme of conversation, the mendicant referred

to what he had learnt from other people concerning the abilities of the Buddha. Those people attributed the all-time Knowing-eye to the Buddha, saying that he was able to know all things at all times, no matter whether he was walking, sleeping or waking. The Buddha replied that it was not true and referred to the Triple Knowledge, which can be explained as follows :

### **The First Knowledge**

**Firstly**, the term (Pubbe nivā sa nussati ñāna) is composed of Ñāna, meaning Knowledge or Insight ; Anussati, meaning to recall ; Nivāsa, meaning dwelling place ; and Pubbe, meaning previous or in the former times. Taken together, the term means 'the Insight whereby to recall the dwelling places in former times.'

Now, what is the meaning of 'nivāsa' i.e. dwelling places ? It means the Five Khandha or Aggregates of Existence viz. Rūpa (Form or body), Vedanā (Sensation), Saññā (Perception), Saṅkhāra (Mental Conditioner) and Viññāna (Consciousness). Taken together, they refer to this living, conscious body, which is the seat or the home for dwelling.

Now comes a question who it is that 'dwells'. In some places this was mentioned as 'satto' meaning 'one who is bound or tied up'. All sentient beings are called 'satto', which means literally those who are still bound. As such they do not yet 'know', being thereby not yet emancipated. To be more precise, this refers to what is regarded as 'self' or 'attā'. In pronoun form, this is referred to as 'I, he, she, you, they'. It is this 'satto' or 'attā' that 'dwells' within such a dwelling place.

What, then, is the exact location of the 'self' ? This is a challenging question. It may be answered that what is collectively this conscious body is to be called 'self'.

To go further to what exactly is the 'self', it would be difficult to answer. It cannot be equated with any one of thirty-two parts of the

body (hair, nails ; teeth etc) ; nor with any of the four so-called elements (earth, water, air, fire). Should, for instance, the self be pointed to at the hair, then we would have lost it after our hair is shaved. Hence the impossibility of equating the 'self' with any of the thirty-two parts of the body.

Now, after this concious, living body dissolves, with its breaths lost, there is a question whether the 'self' would be lost with the breaths or not. There are two answers representing two viewpoints, one believing that the 'self' is spontaneously lost, there being nothing surviving it, whereas the other holding that there is a part that is not lost. It is this part, so confirms the latter group, that does not die and that takes another life in another dimension.

To explain the belief of the second group. When the conscious body becomes unconscious through the disappearance of the breaths, there is still left another part that is not extinguished or that does not die. According to Buddhism, this surviving part may be (temporarily) called the self that 'goes out' to find another nivāsa i.e. dwelling place. In another sense, such a dwelling place is nothing but a new set of the Five Aggregates of Existence or another conscious, living body after the dissolution of the old body, now unconscious or dead.

This first Insight or Ñāna is the Knowledge by which to recall the former 'houses' i.e. the Aggregates that used to house the so-called 'self' in former times. The power or the strength of this Insight enabled the Buddha to trace back to a remote past, recalling uncountable lives or dwelling places.

With regard to a contemporary man, it will be seen that this ability is far less developed. Even within the limit of this life-time, we are not able to recall many of our events in younger days or those childhood events, most of them being completely forgotten. We cannot know when i.e. at what time and on what day we were born. It was known to us just by means of other people telling us. Only a highly impressive event can remain in our memory store, the rest being

completely lost (*from the surface, conscious mind*). This means the strength of our Sati i.e. recollection power is still undeveloped.

However, modern psychology has given us an additional and interesting fact. It states that a self-hypnotism, when it is developed deep (or we can say high) enough, until it reached the level of sub-consciousness, can strengthen the power of recollection to a considerable degree and enable the person to behave as if he, or she, were still at that younger age such as to be able to read and write much as the person should be at that age. Also the person's reaction would be his or her reaction in those younger days. These were later developed backwards to what may be called the pre-natal existence (i.e. to the time before he was born to this world through his present parents) This, therefore, is nothing but the first step towards recollection of former life. However, what had happened to the person before his or her birth is still difficult to ascertain with absolute confidence. Only the reactions and knowledge in the person's younger days, which are now completely forgotten by the surface mind, can be fairly ascertained and prove very interesting.

All these researches and experiments have revealed the fact that modern psychology has accepted the truth of what has been forgotten but stored in the deep, unconscious level of the mind. With that level of mind developed or reached, what has been stored and preserved therein will emerge and make its presence felt. This is parallel to the method prescribed in Buddhism which is called the development of Samādhi or Meditation. It is different from hypnotism that the subjects being hypnotised have lost their power of self-possession or Mindfulness, whereas in the system of Meditation of Buddhism the meditators have complete self-control and self-assertion. The more developed is Buddhist Meditation, the stronger is the power of self-control and self-assertion. In case it is steadily developed to the level called Jhāna, the aspirant will be able to awaken the undreamed-of, miraculous power of the mind. The Buddha was said to have raised the level of his surface mind to such a lofty condition that he was

able to direct it towards the power of Insight whereby to realise the ultimate truth. In the course of this system he first of all achieved the power of Insight by which he was able to recollect his former lives. This was called, as earlier mentioned, Pubbenivāsānussatiñāṇa. It was the Insight enabling him to recollect the Five Aggregates that used to be his 'dwelling places'. It is often called briefly, recollection of past lives, although in the actual Pali term there was no explicit mentioning of the term 'jāti' meaning birth. Only the term 'nivāsa' meaning 'home in which to live' was used instead. But the meaning implied is the same. For the term 'jāti' means birth, and to find a home to dwell in is to take birth. Both terms, therefore, have the same implication. While dwelling in a home each time, the 'home' is to be regarded as one life-time.

## TOLERANCE : MAGNANIMITY

**Never** did Lord Buddha regard  
Other teachers as his enemy.  
Knowing they were playing their parts  
In much the same way as was he.

**He** was the champion of tolerance  
With magnanimity of mind.  
For him there was no more Hindrance ;—  
Nothing to be “an axe to grind.”

**A** world of relativity  
Must take “all sorts” to make it such.  
Instances of dichotomy  
Must be accepted just as much.

**Variety** is the spice of life :  
Seasons, beliefs, practice, habits.  
Each has his own way to survive  
In such manner as he thinks fit.



**But** all can meet, exchanging views,  
 With no attempt to 'change' the other.  
 Freedom of speech to ask and argue  
 Each must accept as 'de rigueur.'

**This** is the key to 'live and let live',  
 Wherein will reign unity and peace,  
 Or, better still, to 'live and *help* live' :  
 – The highest goal man can ever reach.

## RECOLLECTION OF PAST LIVES

**The** best way to refer  
 Is to lay stress on  
 It is fountainhead  
 The mainstay of

**First** is to recall  
 Where one used to 'dwell'  
 This means Name-and-Form  
 In all the countless

**To** recall such 'homes'  
 To find birth-places  
 As being human,  
 Now merry and mirthful,

**This** is the 'snakes-  
 Exposed to dangers,  
 This alternate triumph  
 The Buddha had seen

to the Lord Buddha  
 His Triple Knowledge.  
 for the flow of Dhamma,  
 His Sublime Message.

'homes' of former lives  
 ere arriving here  
 or Aggregates Five  
 various realms or spheres.

is to be able  
 wherein all were born  
 hellish or celestial,  
 now fallen and forlorn.

and-ladders' progress  
 unstable, insecure.  
 and despair endless  
 through his Insight pure.

**Perfectly** immune  
Was Lord Buddha through  
The Supra-mundane  
He achieved on that

**This** is one of three  
To the Buddha, as  
It is these guidelines  
*They are intrinsic,*

to this condition  
this Sublime Insight.  
beyond hell and heaven  
Enlightenment night.

ways by which to refer  
by himself advised,  
we should remember.  
*direct and precise.*

## THE SECOND AND THE THIRD INSIGHTS : SELF AND LOVE

**The second Insight**, Cutūpapātānāṇa, is the Insight or Knowledge by which to see the 'cuti' or moving out and the 'Uppatti' or the entrance, of sentient beings. It should be noted that here the words 'Jāti' meaning birth and 'Marāṇa' meaning death were not used. Instead, there were used the 'moving out' to mean death, and the entrance or moving in to mean birth.

Who, or what, is it that moves out and moves in? In the Canon the term 'Satto' was used, referring to the conventional truth that there is anyone or anything that does the moving out and in, as it were. In other places, there were mentioned the terms 'attā' meaning self or 'puggala' meaning person. However, the term 'puggala' has a more limited sense than 'satto', since it is used to refer only to man most of the times. In the cases of animals or celestial beings and Brahma beings, 'puggala' was not used. Thus 'satto' is all-inclusive, referring to celestial beings, Brahma beings, men, animals and also hellish beings, demons and hungry ghosts. As long as they are bound or attached to anything, they are to be regarded as 'satto'. In a more limited or precise meaning, we can say that it is the feeling of 'self' that is the cause of being bound up or of attachment. Thus all sentient beings, be they of any lower or higher degree, have each a 'self' embedded in their feeling or knowledge. In the following explanation, therefore, the 'self' will be referred to with the meaning so far discussed.

The 'self', the feeling of 'I', is the entity that moves out and enters. To move out means to go out of the 'nivāsa' or 'home' that 'I' used to dwell in, which has become the old home, which in fact refers to the previous Five Aggregates. To enter or to go into (i.e. Uppatti) means to go into a new dwelling place or home i.e. the new

set of Five Aggregates. Thus the term 'move out' means death, whereas the term 'enter' or 'go into' means birth. In this Insight these two terms were used instead of birth and death, which were usually used in other places where the general meaning referring to the conscious, living body, the seat of the Five Aggregates, was meant. Under such context the term 'birth' is to come first, followed by old age and death.

Now, there is something that survives the death of the body. That 'something', when the body dies, moves *out* of it and then *into* another body. The act of moving out is called 'Cutī', whereas that of entering or moving in is called 'Uppatti'. That is why in this Insight of the Buddha the terms birth and death or death and birth, referring to the general meaning concerning the conscious, living body, were not used. Herein the higher or overall meaning concerning 'Satto' or sentient beings in general was implied, since the entity, compared with the body, did not suffer such a death. It is able to move out of the old, worn-out or dying body, thereby entering another one. In this regard the term 'Cutī' referring to the act of moving out was used before 'Uppatti' i.e. the act of moving in. Referring to the celestial beings, there is a phrase to the effect that they move out of the heavenly realm. But the term 'Cutī' was not limited to celestial beings. It can also be used in other cases where 'Satto' or sentient beings are concerned.

Such acts of moving out or leaving and moving in or entering can sometimes be expressed in terms of a new birth or 'Bhava' i.e. plane of being or dimension of life. But whatever term was used, the underlying meaning was the so-called Nivāsa i.e. a new dwelling home or place.

So the Buddha achieved the first Insight (Nāṇa), the ability to recall an uncountable number of 'homes' he used to dwell in. The Pali passages appear to refer only to his own 'homes'. But from other places in the Canon it is obvious the term implies recollection of the 'homes' of other sentient beings as well. Also in the second Insight it was made clear the meaning included the moving out and the going in of sentient beings. Here they can be related to each other

by the fact that, having recollected the 'homes' both of his own and other beings, together with other relevant details, the Buddha was better able to see, through attainment of the second Insight, that that all sentient beings, or rather their 'selves', are destined to move out from one life to another life is dictated by the nature of their own Karma. If they have accumulated unwholesome Karma, then they are to enter another 'home' i.e. take birth in a new dimension, which is imperfect in many ways, being thereby troubled by miseries of various kinds and degrees. If, on the other hand, they have a good store of wholesome or meritorious Karma, they will head for a better 'home', taking birth in a better, higher dimension blessed with comforts and happiness.

It was stated that the Buddha achieved the Triple Knowledge or Insight on the night of his Enlightenment. In the first watch of that night he achieved the First Knowledge, seeing **how** sentient beings as well as he himself moved out of and into home after home during the odyssey of their former lives, whereas in the second watch he achieved the Second Knowledge, seeing **why** they should be so destined to different 'homes.' This means he realised the truth of Karma before his actual Enlightenment, since this occurred before his attainment of the Third Knowledge in the last watch of the night.

How the first and the second kinds of Insight are inter-related may be seen in the fact that, having recollected the events of innumerable lives in the past together with their relevant details, he was thereby able to see **what** Karma they had done in each of those lives and also **how** by their nature they had experienced such effects in the life and lives that followed. With such a degree of far-sightedness spanning innumerable life-times he was able to see and know much farther, both in space and time, than worldlings lacking such a power. It was through this extra, supra-mundane ability that he was able to arrive at a definite conclusion that it is beings' own Karma that determines the fruits to occur to themselves. In other words, they are the heirs or the reapers of the harvest they have themselves sown.

**The third Insight** is called *Āsavakkhayañāṇa*, the Insight by which to eradicate all *Āsava* i.e. dormant, potential Defilements lying hidden in the deepest recess of the mind. It was explained that this is the Knowledge whereby Suffering, its cause, its extinction and the path leading to its extinction is fully realised. In another sense, it was said to be the Knowledge whereby all the *Āsavas* are known, together with their causes, their extinction and the Path leading to their extinction. Such are the explanations of the term *Āsavakkhayañāṇa*, the third Insight.

How the three kinds of Insight or *Ñāṇa* are three respective steps, one leading to the other, may be seen as follows :

First of all, having looked back through aeons of life-times, he had come to know how by the nature of Karma accumulated, the so-called moving out and the moving in each time are determined. This resulted in his seeing both the natural suffering i.e. birth, old age and death inherent in the *sankhāra* i.e. the conscious body, and the accompanying, concomitant mental sufferings such as sorrow, grief and lamentation. As such he came to a definite conclusion that the so-called 'nivāsa' (i.e. home) in which the self dwells is itself the suffering since all those sufferings converge on the 'home' (attached to as 'self'). At the time of birth, it is generally understood that this 'house' is born. In time of old age and death, this 'house' is once again the sufferer of such unpleasant experiences. Other mental sufferings likewise affect this same 'house'. No matter how many thousands or hundreds of thousands of lives have passed, the attitude of beings towards the 'houses' is always the same. This may be seen as something like looking back to the past events of this life-time. What was done yesterday was mostly the same as the day before yesterday, which again was mostly the same as the day before that.

We might have done some good Karma to be born this time amidst beneficial circumstances. We may be endowed with comforts and happiness for some time, yet such a situation cannot remain unchanged for ever. At one time or another it is due to change and

decline. Even the birth as a celestial being or a Brahma being, whose life-span is believed to be astronomically long, there is to be, after that long lapse of time, a 'cuti' or 'moving out' i.e. death, only to be born and thus to create another 'house' once again. Whatever birth there is, therefore, is to be inevitably followed by old age and death. During each life-span more fresh Karmas are to be done, repeatedly, endlessly. Good Karmic effects as results of good Karma done often cause 'pamāda' i.e. heedlessness or over-confidence. Being over-confident tempts one to do evil and as a result to decline and end up with a disaster. Having suffered so much, one comes to one's senses and manages to counter-act the baneful effects by doing as much good as possible and as a result climbs up the ladder to be in the purified, lofty atmosphere once again, thus being exposed to the same old danger from temptations of various kinds and degrees.

**The vicious circle** so vividly seen by the Buddha as he proceeded further backwards in his recollection of remote past lives strengthened his understanding how birth is suffering, how more and endless births are consequently more and endless suffering. Thereafter, he came to realise the truth that such an endless process is the result of Tanhā, which may be rendered Desire or Craving. This, therefore, denotes the fact that the cause of those sufferings is nothing but Desire.

Now comes the Third Truth that, since Desire is the cause of suffering, the extinction of Desire is *raison d'être* the extinction of suffering. Finally there arises the Knowledge that there is to be a process or system of practice that should lead to the extinction of suffering, — which is the Noble Eightfold Path, to be summarised under three steps of practice viz. Sīla (Precepts), Samādhi (Meditation) and Paññā (Wisdom). All these combine to form a significant theme leading to the full-final realization of the Truths of Suffering, its Cause, its Extinction and the System of practice leading to that extinction.

In another sense the term Āsava or dormant, potential Defilements was used in place of suffering. There are in one sense three

kinds of Āsava viz. Kāmāsava i.e. sensual delight ; Bhavāsava i.e. Attachment to Name-and-Form ; and Avijjāsava i.e. Ignorance or Delusion. The direct realization of Āsava is the Insight by which to see that this 'self' is produced by the Āsava. This is because the 'self' that is generally understood is nothing but the brainchild or the offspring – so to speak, of those three kinds of Āsava.

Thus the 'self' that we are attached to cannot be pointed out *where* it specifically exists. In the Anattalakkhanasutta, the form (body), considered in depth, is not self. Nor is each and all of these i.e. Sensation, Perception, Mental Conditioner, and Consciousness. Now, within this conscious, living body there is nothing else, except the Five Aggregates mentioned above, as the conglomeration of Name-and-Form. Such is how the 'self' is but the 'shadow' of Attachment. The stronger this Attachment, the correspondingly more tenacious is the 'self'.

In our childhood, or infancy – to be more precise, there was no conscious knowledge of, and thus no conscious attachment to, the 'self.' As we grow up, we are given such names by our parents. After education, we go to work and are appointed such ranks and titles and own quite a number of belongings. All this time we attach ourselves to those names, ranks, titles and belongings. These are the result of Attachment. Should there be something making us forget all such accretions, we would then lose our attachment to them. It is through our memory that the Attachment continues, with the 'self' being sometimes bigger and at other times smaller, depending on the strength of that Attachment. All these, under close and impartial scrutiny, have no essence of their own since they are but the 'shadow' or what radiates from Upādāna or Attachment. Their size, or rather strength, is up to the size i.e. the strength of Attachment, which determines how much, or how little, the 'self' should be. Traced further backwards, it can be said to radiate from Avijjā, Ignorance, or Delusion or Not-knowing. It is this Avijjā that, not knowing the truth of non-existence, grasps all those things and creates them out of nothing. In other words, it grasps at the shadow, thinking that the shadow is the substance. This because of, as its name implies, Ignorance.



Another factor, or agency, in this process is the Bhava or BE-ness, by which we are 'hypnotised' into thinking that we are this and that. This is also a factor creating the notion of 'I' or 'self.' Without this Bhava, therefore, such a notion cannot exist.

### **Self-love**

**Apart** from this, there is the Kāma i.e. Lust or, in a generally accepted term, love. This is self-love inherent in everybody. It is, to be more precise, the love towards what is attached to. Wherever 'self' or 'our self' exists, there also exists lust or love in the sense herein implied.

It is through this 'Love' that there occurs the fear of death, of pain, of suffering or damage, since death is arbitrarily or instinctively understood to be the end of 'self'. We equate 'self' with this 'Nivāsa' i.e. home. When this home i.e. body collapses, we instinctively feel our 'self' will also collapse. Hence our petrified fear of it. This is common to ordinary worldlings, who just cannot help clinging lovingly to whatever they conclude is their 'self.' The Buddha, in confirmation of this fact, said, "Never is there any love greater than self-love." In other places, he also said to the effect that, with all facts considered, there can be seen nothing to be loved more than the love of self.

An in-depth study will reveal the truth that under the love of wife, property and other things lies the love of self, since it is intrinsically for the pleasure and happiness of one's own self that one is moved to do so. Whenever any person or thing runs counter to one's wish or desire, that love will be transformed into anger and sometimes jealousy and the consequent desire to take revenge in various forms. Sometimes it occurs in the form of bringing the case to court or, in the case of intense love between two persons, such a love may end up in a wanton murder. These betray the truth that one's love of other things and persons is intrinsically based on the pleasure and happiness to be obtained from that thing or that person for oneself.

## TWO MORE INSIGHTS; SELF AND LOVE

**Second** comes the Insight  
Could see the 'moving  
The 'homes' by beings  
By which **where** they'll go

**To** get what they deserve,  
No less and no more :  
What exists but is  
Must wait in the queue

**Closely** related  
Whereas the first one  
The second sees **why**,  
Beings suffer and enjoy,

**That** he could see **why**  
Merit and evil  
These made them 'move out  
Suffering and happiness,

**Surveyed** farther backwards  
This endless cycle  
Is to sentient beings  
Yielding more misery

**The** culmination  
Is the weeding out  
The hydra-headed Desire,  
And spurs all worldings

**This** resulted in  
Of the Lakkhana Three<sup>1</sup>  
The shadow of 'self'  
Died a final death

whereby the Buddha  
out of and into'  
through their own Karma,  
to what' ver is their due.

at the given moment,  
it's justly determined.  
at the time absent  
till its turn comes in.

are the two Insights.  
sees **how**, **where**, and **when**  
with divine spotlight,  
as they do so then.

was because he knew **what**  
they had done before.  
and in' and begot  
as impartial law.

into remote past,  
of re-deaths and re-births  
the very strong holdfast,  
than merry and mirth.

of his achievement  
of all Āsava :  
which is always latent  
to more and more Karma.

his realization  
and the Noble Truths Four  
known as Delusion  
to be born no more

1 Lakkhana There i.e. the Three Common Characteristics of the conditioned or Saṅkhāra viz. Changeability, Flux or Fluidity and Non-substantiality (Aniccā, Dukkha and Anattā)

**If** 'love' there's to be  
 Being supra-mundane,  
 Based on four kinds of  
 With a 'give-and-no-take'

it's beyond Karma,  
 it's genuine holiness  
 Brahmavihāra<sup>2</sup>,  
 It's totally '**self-less**'.

---

2 Brahmavihāra is the Divine Abodes of Mind, of which there are four viz. Loving-kindness (Mettā), Compassion (Karunā), Sympathy (Muditā) and Equanimity (Upekkhā).

## ‘SELF-LESS’ LOVE ; WHAT THE BUDDHA WAS BORN FOR

**There** is, however, a kind of love that is not for the sake of oneself. This is the love parents lavish in their offspring. It is based on *Mettā* (which, in one sense, may be translated Loving-kindness). It is characterised by the sincere wish for the offspring's happiness, no matter how such sacrifice of their own happiness they have to make. There is no limit to such a sacrifice, which can involve, if need be, the giving up of their own lives. This is the love that demands no return. The offspring's happiness is the parents' wish. Whenever the offspring suffer, the parents also suffer and cannot help struggling to eliminate their offspring's suffering. This is called *Karunā*, which may be rendered Compassion. Now, when the offspring get promoted or are successful in any way, parents will also be happy with them. This is *Muditā*, which may be translated Sympathetic joy. The fourth one i.e. *Upekkhā* or Equanimity, however, is most difficult to practise for most parents. This virtue implies the truth of justice, the absence of prejudice, or the feeling of neutrality when circumstances demand. Equipped also with this virtue, parents will not be led away by a prejudiced love. In case the offspring are going to do wrong or evil, parents must restrain them from doing so. When they had a quarrel with anyone, parents must find out the cause in order to know who is right and who is wrong. This is, in other words, to be fair and just, not carried away by a prejudiced love. Such is the implication of *Upekkhā*, call it Equanimity if you will. It is also a requirement for parents, — to prevent their being unjust and unfair. Absence of this virtue will certainly do harm in the long run to both themselves and their offspring.

This instance is given to show that there is another kind of love apart from the generally selfish, lustful love. It is called, as earlier mentioned, *Mettā* (by whatever name it may be rendered in English). It is always supported by forgiveness, there being no anger cherished,

no matter how much the wrong committed by their beloved ones is. This is entirely different in case love is based on lust, which, whenever such a desire is balked or thwarted, is sure to become anger, jealousy, rage and most probably the consequent atrocious crimes. All these are not the case with love supported by Mettā.

To come back to what is supposed to be 'self'. The love of self is saturated, as earlier described, with lust. Hence its being overwhelmed by Avijjā (Ignorance) and Bhava (BE-ness). In another sense, it is the Āsava (potential or dormant Defilement). From the scriptural references, we know how it is Tanhā (Desire or Craving), which gives birth to Āsava. Abandonment of Tanhā is therefore the corresponding abandonment of Avijjā. This can be done through following the Noble Eightfold Path.

Now, the Buddha had in all respects perfected the Noble Eightfold Path. As regards Sīla (Precepts), he had from the early being-ning observed them in all their entirety. Meditation or Samādhi, however, he started when he entered the right track. Thereafter he directed that Samādhi towards the heightening of Paññā i.e. Wisdom or Insight. This was his progressive advancement which culminated in his discovery that it is to regard anything as self that is Āsava or dormant, potential Defilement ; it is Tanhā that gives birth to the Āsava ; and it is the abandonment of Tanhā or Desire that is the abandonment or extinction of Āsava ; and, finally, it was the practices he had followed until there dawned upon him such Insight or realization that had brought about the abandonment or extinction of Āsava. All these became Vijjā or Knowledge, by which Avijjā or Ignorance is eradicated once for all. With it comes the corresponding eradication of Bhava (BE-ness or Becoming) and Kāma (lust).

Here the Sattabhāva (the condition of attachment to BE-ness) is extinguished, being replaced by the Buddha bhāva (the condition of a Buddha or an Enlightened One). As a result of this there is no more cycle of re-births and re-deaths, no more Karmic impact on the mind, — this through that extinction of Āsava. For the rest of

his (physical) life he remained in the old 'home' or Nivāsa. When that 'home' came to an end i.e. dissolved or died, he no longer experienced any Bhava (BE-ness or Becoming) nor any Jāti (birth). It is the condition – if one should be allowed to use that term for lack of another appropriate word, – that is beyond all supposition or conceivable notion. No longer can it be called Viññāna or Consciousness, Attā (self), Satto (sentient beings or Attachment) or Puggala (person). In other words, not even a name can be given to it; nor can a reference (through our limited mind) be made.

**This** understandingly gives birth to a wrong viewpoint to the effect that an Arahant after death is totally lost. To counteract this idea the Buddha and his disciples used to question the person holding this view what he identified the Arahant with : – whether the Arahant was the Five Aggregates which were his 'home.' The answer was in the negative. Then followed the question why the Arahant should be considered lost when the 'home' dissolved or died. This shows how there should be no such loss after an Arahant passes away. But then there followed a question : **where**, if it is not such a loss, does he go, or stay ? The answer is that there should be no thought of **where** i.e. of location. This is like a fire that is extinguished through the total absence of fuel. It is impossible, or rather inconceivable, to point out **where** that fire is or to say that that fire is altogether lost. This is an analogy by which to help understand the truth that such a matter on such a level is not understandable nor describable in terms of words, being thereby beyond the power of thoughts to conceive and beyond the power of words to describe.

Such is the explanation in accordance with what was mentioned in the Scriptures to the effect that the Buddha was blessed with the Triple Knowledge (Vijjā) or the Triple Insight (Ñāṇa). It is the correct and direct way to describe the virtues of the Buddha.

Such being the case, the term Nibbāna in Buddhism refers to what is by nature the ultimate or supra-mundane, being subtle, difficult for most people to understand or conceive of. Possibly because of

this there is in Mahāyāna Buddhism a Nibbāna in which the Buddha by the name of Ādi is still dwelling in a celestial realm called Sukhāvatī. He symbolises the self that does not grow old or die, being immortal thereon, together with quite a number of Bodhisattas or the Buddhas-to-be. Such a crystallization of Nibbāna and the Buddha in an immortal, eternal realm of heaven is, of course, understandable to the public. When the Dhamma arrived in a region where there was already a worship of personal ghosts and gods and a Supreme Being, it comfortably mingled with the indigenous beliefs, with no contradiction to arouse a feeling of irritation. This is evidenced in the Dhamma that has been established in Tibet, Japan and China. Even the Western peoples are earnest in their study of Mahāyāna, which appeals to them better than Theravāda, with the Anattā (no self) doctrine at the core. It appears they are at a loss when it comes to understanding this enigma, often confusing it with the Attā (self) doctrine.

### **Venerable Nanda and Sister Nandā**

**After** a discussion at some length on the 'heavy' themes of Anattā and Nibbāna, it is now advisable to present the life-stories of some disciples. They are Venerable Nanda and Sister Nandā, both being the son and daughter of king Suddhodana, the Buddha's royal father. They were born to queen Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī.

At the time when the Buddha visited the city of Kapilavatthu for the first time, — which was said to be some time before the second Rains Retreat period, he had prince Nanda, his younger half-brother ordained a Bhikkhu. Ironically, the event took place on the prince's wedding day with a girl known to be the most beautiful of the state. During the nuptial ceremony the Buddha proceeded in response to the invitation for almsfood in the royal palace. On his return he handed his almsbowl to prince Nanda, who having received it, followed the Buddha to the grove where he was dwelling. There the Buddha asked him, without more ado, if he wanted to be ordained. Due to his respect for the Buddha, Nanda replied, possibly hesitatingly, in the positive. He was then and there ordained. After that the Buddha

had his own son Rāhula ordained a Sāmaṇera before leaving the city of Kapilavatthu. According to the Pali Canon, the Buddha proceeded to the city of Sāvattī, but he was said in the Commentaries to proceed to Rājagaha first, then went on to Sāvattī later. Now, should he go to Rājagaha first, he would have to stay during the Rains Retreat period there i.e. at The Bamboo Grove (Veluvanaṛāma) and proceed to Sāvattī after that period. In case he proceeded to Sāvattī first, he would stay there only for a brief period before going further to stay for the Rains Retreat in Rājagaha. This was because he was said to spend the second Rains Retreat in the Bamboo Grove in Rājagaha. Thus it could be that he went to Sāvattī once – on his way back from Kapilavatthu, be it a break of journey or an arrival after the Retreat period. This was because he had made a promise to the millionaire Anāthapindika of Sāvattī that he would stay in the Jeta Grove built for him before that time.

Anāthapindika was the son of a wealthy man named Sumana in Sāvattī. He was formerly called Sudatta, but, since he always took delight in dispensing charity to the orphans, the needy and the poor people, he was later given the appellation Anāthapiṇḍika, meaning one who had lumps of rice for the needy and helpless. It was by this appellation that he was later generally known.

While the Buddha was staying in the Bamboo grove in Rājagaha, Anāthapindika had the opportunity to go there for his business affairs. He then approached the Buddha and, having listened to the sermon, was said to have achieved the Dhamma-Eye, becoming thereby a Noble Disciple of the Stream-Winner category. He made known his intention to build a monastery for the Buddha in Sāvattī and requested the Buddha to accept his invitation to proceed and stay there. To which the Buddha accepted by keeping silent, which meant consent or approval. The wealthy man, having returned to his hometown, had a monastery called Jeta built. The land was purchased from the owner called prince Jeta. The construction period was in some sources said to be nine months, whereas in other sources five months.



While the Buddha was staying in the Jeta Grove in response to Anāthapindika's request, he was accompanied by prince Nanda his half-brother, who was said to be troubled by homesickness after his ordination, pining for his bride whom he had left behind just on the day of wedding. He admitted to being ordained out of his respect for the Buddha, not through his own faith or pure willingness. As such he often thought of leaving the Order to become a lay disciple again. When this was known to the Buddha, he was sent for by the Buddha and was asked about the matter. He frankly admitted the fact. At this the Buddha transported Nanda, through his psychic powers, to the Tāvātīsa celestial realm, where he had the opportunity to see many celestial nymphs. Asked by the Buddha which should be more beautiful: his bride or the celestial nymphs, Nanda replied that the goddesses were incomparably more beautiful than his human bride. So the Buddha told him to go on living a chaste life so he would later be rewarded those goddesses. This the Buddha guaranteed Nanda and transported him back to the Earth plane.

Nanda Bhikkhu, having seen the celestial nymphs with his own eyes, was considerably relieved of his lingering desire for his human bride, his thoughts now being centred on the celestial maidens. He earnestly lived the chaste life, aiming at being rewarded those maidens. This was later known to the Bhikkhus, who made fun of him, saying he was the Buddha's servant whom the Buddha 'had bought' and who looked forward to those celestial maidens as ransom.

This practical joke was made known to Nanda Bhikkhu time and again. He was increasingly ashamed of it and as a result managed to estrange himself from such lustful thought. He was later determined to live the chaste life to the full and was later rewarded the Deliverance from all Defilements. On the following day he approached the Buddha, saying he no longer wanted the Buddha to be his security for obtaining any maiden. Hearing this, the Buddha uttered an exclamation, saying to the effect that

Sensual Delight (i.e. Kāma) is like the marsh and the thorn

Whoever has crossed over that marsh and has thrashed out those thorns will achieve the extinction of Delusion (Moha). Such a person is no longer ruffled, whether in time of happiness or that of suffering.

### One 'thorn' pulling out another

**Now**, sister Rūpanandā was Nanda Bhikkhu's younger sister. When the Buddha visited Kapilavatthu for the second time due to the demise of king Suddhodana and had the king's remains cremated, he left Kapilavatthu for Vesālī. It was during his stay there that queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī requested his permission for ordination as Bhikkhunī. After that he proceeded to Sāvattī, where he stayed at the Jeta Grove.

At that time princess Rūpanandā, having seen that her father had passed away, that her mother had become a Bhikkhunī and that her elder brother had also been ordained a Bhikkhu, decided to live a homeless life like many of her cousins. She asked for Bhikkhunī ordination and stayed in Sāvattī.

It was said that she was a very beautiful girl and as such was strongly proud and attached to her physical form. Even after ordination she would not go to listen to the Buddha's sermon for fear that the Buddha would speak ill of her form. However, she often learned about the Buddha's moving sermons and, in a desire to see him who she knew was her own elder half-brother, stealthily went one day with a group of Bhikkunīs to listen to his sermon. Here it was described in the Scriptures that, as soon as she entered the convocation hall, she saw a very beautiful young girl, aged about sixteen, who was standing by the side of the Buddha. The girl, while attending upon him, was fanning him on one side. Gazing breathlessly upon the figure, she compared its beauty with hers and found to her dismay that her beauty was far inferior to that girl's.

But, while she continued staring at the figure for some time, it somehow became older, looking as if it were twenty years old. At

this point its beauty was less blooming than it was a few moments ago. But the process of change, or decline, still went on. The figure transformed itself into a woman who had given birth to an offspring, then into a middle-aged woman, and again into an old, decrepit woman. Gazing on, she saw how the older the figure was, the more helpless it became until it was seen to wallow about in the pool of its own excrement and urine. It was not long after that when the figure died, becoming a bloating corpse right there. Now Bhikkhunī Rūpananadā, with her eyes and attention fixed upon the figure all the time, was moved to disillusionment in the beauty of the physical form. She then came to a realization of the truths of Aniccā (Changeability), Dukkha (Flux or Fluidity) and Anattā (Non-substantiality). The Buddha, seeing into her mind, instructed her with the following verses like a blacksmith forging iron when it is hot.

“Look at this body, O Nandā, which is the seat of unrest, being unclean, rotting, always flowing in and out, which fools strongly crave for. Do view all the elements as void, and not come back again to this world. With lust for Bhava (BE-ness) disgorged, you will be blessed with Peace at all times.”

And, as climax of his instruction, the Buddha wound it up with the following verse,

“Created as a ‘city of bones’ is this physical form. It is smeared with flesh and blood, being at the same time the seat of old age, death, vanity and contempt.”

By such an intensified, enlightening visual teaching, Bhikkhunī Rūpanandā’s mind, completely absorbed in the Truths, was delivered, once for all, from all Defilements.

Accounts concerning Nanda Bhikkhu and Rūpanandā Bhikkhunī show how the Buddha was resourceful, particularly as far as his psychic powers were concerned, in adapting his method of instruction to suit the tendency and maturity of each individual. An analogy may be seen in the case of (as a Thai saying goes) using another thorn to pull out a thorn (embedded in the skin). Thus, knowing how Bhikkhunī

Rūpanandā was strongly attached to her physical form, the Buddha created, through his psychic powers, another physical form that was more beautiful. This was to pull out the 'thorn' of Attachment to her own body with another 'thorn' he created, thereby directing her attention towards the new 'thorn' that was more attractive than the former one. However, he did not wait for the second 'thorn' to embed itself into her 'skin'. This was done through the transformation of the figure, telescoping the natural process of change, which should have taken place in a span of years or decades, into a matter of moments or minutes. It was by this means that the second 'thorn' was successfully pulled out as well as the first one.

The figure seen by Rūpanandā could be literally true, being created through the Buddha's psychic powers. Or it could be an analogy representing his verbal instruction that was so moving and impressive as if it were seen with the physical eyes. For, after all, the Buddha was said to be endowed with the three kinds of *Paṭihāriya* (miracles) viz.

- a) *Iddhipāṭihāriya* : Miracles of psychic feats.
- b) *Ādesanāpāṭihāriya* : Miracles of mind-reading.
- c) *Anusāsanipāṭihāriya* : Miracles of the Teaching.

The first and the second kinds are the means leading to an end, which is the third. Hence the superior significance of the third kind. But it must be supplemented by the former two in order to suit the circumstances of each individual listener. That the Buddha was able to establish the Kingdom of Dhamma in the world was due to his being endowed with all the three kinds of Miracles.

### **What the Buddha was born for**

**However,** there are some who still doubt the advisability of the Buddha's method of seemingly forcing prince Nanda away from his bride on the most significant day of their lives, thus leaving her a

widow. This judgment should be based impartially on every aspect of the pros and cons. It must be because the Buddha had clairvoyantly seen how Nanda was then blessed with the degree of maturity to enable him to become an Arahant. Now, the best time for him was to be one before he would be burdened by family ties. This meant there was no time to be wasted and waited, being the case of 'now or never', as it were. The Buddha, through his resolute determination, did not hesitate to force Nanda from his earthly happiness to a far more lofty bliss or success i.e. the Dhamma success. Such was an instance of his noble task as the Buddha, without which he would not have successfully established the Kingdom of Dhamma in the world. He was not in a position to be afraid of anything or anybody that would desist him from doing what was to be righteously done. What he had in mind is one thing : the Dhamma or Righteousness. It was this principle that he followed, unruffled and fearlessly, in all circumstances.

## WHAT THE BUDDHA WAS BORN FOR

**Of** all persons 'helped' by Buddha,  
None so unwilling as Nanda,  
Who was taken, to his dismay,  
From his bride on their wedding day.

**Out** of his respect for the Lord,  
And thus not of his own accord,  
Nanda, the Buddha's half-brother,  
Was placed in such a dilemma.

**Half-heartedly** he gave consent  
And regarded as punishment  
The Lord's embarrassing question  
If he wanted ordination.

**Thus** on that night his bride-to-be  
Was as alone and sad as he,  
Tossing, turning on sleepless pillows,  
They pined restlessly for their beaux.

**Herewith** a question may arise  
By some inclined to criticise :  
Why was the Lord so merciless  
To be callous of their sadness ?

**Grief-stricken** they must surely be  
Why didn't the Lord have the heart to see  
The maiden crushed by deep sorrow  
To suddenly become a widow ?

**Let's** think in terms of benefit  
Based on long-term, higher spirit  
So as to solve this enigma  
Given to us by Lord Buddha.

**Such** benefits are of three grades  
With respectively nobler weight :  
Earthly, hereafter still mundane,  
Their achievements may wax and wane.

**Nibbāna** is the third, highest :  
The aim of Buddha's Noble Quest,  
Outweighing both the lower ones,  
To excel it there being none.

**If** there's a possibility  
For highest grade in anybody,  
The Lord would then not hesitate  
To have such potential culminate

**In** that third benefit supreme,  
Callous and cruel as it might seem  
To others who were not mature  
And found it so hard to endure.

**So** they were free to criticise,  
But he could not do otherwise.  
Such benefit he couldn't ignore,  
For **that was what he was born for.**

**Please make use of the following**

# **INDEX**

**to facilitate your research**

**and**

**to obtain as much benefit as possible**

**from the information in the book**





## HOW TO USE THE INDEX

This INDEX has been worked out in details. The purpose is to help the readers find out as much information as possible about what they wish to refer to that has been mentioned in the book. In order to save space and redundant repetition, abbreviations and signs are used. Following is the key thereof :

The Primary Headword is printed in bold type arranged in alphabetical order beginning, for example, in page 1

**Abandonment,**

**Abhaya,**

**Abhidhamma etc.**

The Secondary Headword, subordinate to the Primary One, comes in bold italics such as (from page 1) under the Headword **Aggregate**

***Arahant***

***Body-and-mind***

***Clinging etc.***

(They are also arranged in alphabetical order)

Whenever the Primary Headword is referred to once again, it is replaced by an oblique stroke like this /  
for example, from page 1 :

**Abhaya, prince /**, king Bimbisāra's son

Please read : Prince Abhaya, king Bimbisāra's son...

But whenever the secondary headword is referred to once again, it is replaced by the first letter of that word. For example, from page 1

**Aggregates** (Khandha), ***Arahant***, / are not an A.

please read : Aggregates are not an Arahant.

Example 2 : under the headword Four Noble Truths (page 31)

**Four Noble Truths**

***Firsthand***, the / are to be realised F.

please read : The Four Noble Truths are to be realised firsthand

Numbers : the first number refers to page,  
the second to the paragraph of that page, and  
the third, in case there is any, refers to the line of that  
paragraph. This occurs when that paragraph is long ;  
the purpose is to save the time (and energy) of the  
researcher, who will not have to scan the whole para-  
graph to find out what is referred to.

for example, (from page 1) under the Primary Headword

**Abhaya**, prince / , king Bimbisāra's son, who rescued the boy Jivaka from  
the refuse-heap 184-3

this means that the information above can be referred to in page 184 paragraph 3

In case the second number is underlined, it is to be understood  
that the paragraph mentioned must be counted up (from the bottom of  
the page). This occurs when in the page where there are too many  
paragraphs, and it would be rather confusing to count the paragraphs  
down, as is usually done. The purpose is therefore to facilitate the  
research. For example, (from page 2) under the Primary Headword

**Air**, the Buddha going to Kapilavatthu to visit his father by air 212-2  
means that the information can be found in page 212 and  
within the 2nd paragraph, which is to be counted up (from  
the bottom of the page)

Sometimes there is the **capital letter L** after the number. This means the  
information can be found in the **Last** paragraph of that page. For example,  
in page 18 under the Primary Headword

**Dakkhiṇānupadāna** , rites for the deceased 125-L. (meaning the last  
paragraph of page 125)

At other times there is the **capital letter P** after the number of page. This  
refers to the number of Poem of that page. For example, from page 1 under  
the Primary Headword

**Accelerator** , meditation compared to the car of mind's / 181-P.6  
This means the information can be found in Poem No.6 in that page

The numbers separated by a comma refer to the same page. For  
example

**Amata** .....107- 1,2 a,b,c

means the details can be found in page 107 paragraphs 1 and 2 a,b,c

**The Arrow (→)** refers the readers to another Primary Headword such as

**Avijjā → Ignorance and Anusaya**

This means that the researcher is to turn to another two Primary Head words i.e. **Ignorance** and **Anusaya** for its detailed information.

**A series of dots** like this (....) invites the readers to read on within that paragraph or page.

Thus from page 10 under the primary headword

**Bhikkhuni**, eight Garudhamma for B. 207 ....  
means the readers are to read the whole page 207

**The Abbreviations q.v.** means reference to that term, which is the primary headword elsewhere in its alphabetical order

For example, page 14 under the primary headword **Celestial realms** there is the secondary headword **Tavatimsa**

**Celestial Realms . . . . .**

.....  
.....  
.....

**Tavatimsa q.v.**

This means the readers are to refer, for more information, to the primary headword Tavatimsa under the alphabet T



# A

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## SHORT BIOGRAPHY





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His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyāṇasamvara, the Supreme Patriarch was in his early days known as Charern, his family name being Gajavatra. The first son of three children, he was a native of Kanchanaburi, a province bordering Burma, 130 km. to the west of Bangkok. He was born on the third of October 1913 (B.E. 2456).

His father's name was Noi Gajavatra, his mother's, Kimnoi.

It is said that H.H. Somdet Phra Nyāṇasamvara became distinguished for his serenity of spirit and very high intelligence early on, showing signs of his future profession. Even as a child, his favourite play things were centered around the monkhood. Sometimes he dressed himself like a monk and imitated monk's activities: carrying an alms-bowl, reciting Pāli verses after alms-collecting, preaching a sermon and so on.

His secular education began when he was 8 years old. Admitted to an elementary school located in Wat Devasanghārām in the city of Kanchanaburi near his home, he completed Prathom 5 (5th grade), equivalent to Mathayom 2 of the present national education curriculum.

Upon completing his elementary education, he was ordained a Sāmaṇera (novice) at Wat Devasanghārām in Kanchanaburi at the age of fourteen, with Phra Kru Adulsamanakit, the abbot of Wat Devasanghārām, as his preceptor.

In the second year of his novitiate, he began his higher Buddhist education. At that time, Pāli language instructors were not available in the province of Kanchanaburi; therefore, with his preceptor's consent and help, he journeyed to Wat Saneha in Nakhon Pathom, a province 77 km. east of Kanchanaburi, to study Pāli. He spent two years there; then, to further his Pāli and Dhamma studies while still a Sāmaṇera, he moved to Wat Bovoranives, the most important center of the Gaṇa Dhammayuttika and the royal residence of the three past Supreme Patriarchs. There in 1941 (B.E. 2484) he completed his Pāli language study and passed the 9th grade, the highest level of Pāli examination as constituted by the Thai Sangha.

In 1933 (B.E. 2476), at the age of twenty, he returned home to Kanchanaburi and was ordained as a bhikkhu (monk) at his former monastery, Wat Devasanghārām, a temple of the Mahānikāya sect. He passed one rains retreat there; at the end of the rains retreat, in the same year, he returned to Wat Bovoranives and was reordained as a monk of the Dhammayuttika order. His reordination ceremony was presided over by Somdet Phra Sangharāja Chao Krom Luang Vajirañānavangsa, the thirteenth Supreme Patriarch and the fourth lord abbot of Wat Bovoranives.

His Holiness' exceptional ability moved him rapidly through the stages of ecclesiastical promotion.<sup>1</sup> First the title of Phra Sobhoṅganāphorn

<sup>1</sup> Thai ecclesiastic rank is called Phra Rājāgaṇa and is of six levels, viz (1) the "common" level, (2) the Raj level, (3) the Thep level, (4) the Dhamma level, (5) the level immediately next to the level of Somdet and (6) the level of Somdet. Each level of Rājāgaṇa usually has its own specific name. The highest office of the Thai sangha is that of Somdet Phra Sangharaja (H.H. the Supreme Patriarch.)

(Rājāgaṇa) was bestowed upon him at the age of thirty four in 1947 (B.E. 2490); he was later promoted to a higher rank of the same titular name in 1952 (B.E. 2495) at the age of thirty nine. His third hierarchical promotion still bearing the same titular name, took place in 1955 (B.E. 2498) when he was forty two years old. A year later, in 1956 (B.E. 2499), he received his fourth hierarchical promotion entitled Phra Dhammavarābhōṇ when he reached his forty third year. This auspicious event coincided with the royal ordination of H.M. King Rama IX, Bhumiphol Adulyadej, the present monarch of Thailand. At the age of forty eight, he was appointed to the position of Phra Sāsanasophon, next in rank only to the seven top ecclesiastical administration leaders who held the title of Somdet.

The special titular name of Somdet Phra Nyāṇasamvara, which was not given to any bhikkhu for one hundred and fifty years since the reign of King Rama II, was bestowed upon His Holiness in 1972 (B.E. 2515) when he was fifty nine years of age. In 1989 His Holiness was invested by Their Majesties the King and Queen as the Supreme Patriarch (Sangharāja) with the special titular name of H.H. Somdet Phra Nyāṇasamvara, Somdet Phra Sangharāja Sakalamahāsanghapariṇāyaka. In short, he rose rapidly through the ecclesiastical ranks.

In 1956 (B.E. 2499) the present monarch, H.M. King Bhumiphol Adulyadej, chose to be ordained as a bhikkhu for a period of fifteen days from October 22, 1956 to November 5, 1956, during which he resided in Wat Bovoranives. Krom Luang Vajirañāṇavangsa, the then Supreme Patriarch, acted as "Upajjhāya--Royal Preceptor" to His Majesty. His Holiness, then holding the title of Phra Sobhonganāphōṇ, was chosen to be an adviser and guardian to the Royal Bhikkhu. This special and important occurrence added precious memories to His Holiness' life history.

In 1978, a special assignment was entrusted to His Holiness when the Crown Prince chose to become a monk for fifteen days, residing in Wat Bovoranives, from November 6 to 20, 1978. His Holiness became the Crown Prince Bhikkhu's instructor and adviser in monastic codes of discipline and the Buddha's teachings.

Hierarchical and ecclesiastical responsibilities in various departments<sup>2</sup>, from the bottom to the highest positions and ranks, were also assigned to Somdet, and the burden increased in proportion to his hierarchical promotion.

His Holiness has had a remarkable record of ecclesiastical administration, which can be summed up as follows:

When the Buddhist Order was still under the Sangha Act the order of 1941, in which the Gana Sangha was moulded on the civil system under the National Constitution,<sup>3</sup> His Holiness was appointed acting Chief of the Administration Department, Dhammayuttika affairs only.

2 Under the 1941 Act, the central administration of the Gana Sangha was organized into 4 Departments, viz.

1. Administration Department                      3. Propagation Department

2. Education Department                            4. Public Works Department.

3 Established by the Sangha Act on Buddhist Brotherhood (Gana Sangha) of the Buddhist Era 2484 (1941).

In 1962, the 1941 Act was replaced by a new law entitled "Act on the Administration of the **Buddhist Order of Sangha**, Buddhist Era 2505 (1962)"; His Holiness became a member of Mahā Thera Samāgom (The Elders' Council) on the very day that the new act<sup>4</sup> became effective. He was also Chief Administrative Authority of the Bangkok-Samutprakan municipality dealing with Dhammayuttika affairs only.

In the field of ecclesiastical education, His Holiness was Chairman of the Ecclesiastical Education Board of the Thai Sangha and Chairman of Executive Committee of the Training Institute for Dhammadūta Bhikkhus Going Abroad. He was also Chairman of the Executive Board of Mahāmakūṭa Buddhist University, the first Buddhist University established in Thailand, under the Patronage of Dhammayuttika Administration.

After the passing away of Phra Brahmamunī (Suvacathera), the fifth abbot of Wat Bovoranives in 1961, His Holiness was appointed the sixth abbot of Wat Bovoranives, while holding the title of Phra Dhammavāraphorn. The renovation and decoration of the aged and decayed buildings and residential quarters in the monastery took place immediately after his appointment. The one hundred year-old Uposatha hall (Main Assembly Hall), originally made of brick and plaster, was restored by fitting beautiful white marble slabs over the outside columns and walls. The old doors and windows of the Uposatha hall were replaced with new and beautifully carved teak ones. Other buildings throughout the monastery were renovated and remodelled. The construction of new buildings to accommodate and support new activities was undertaken. The compounds of the monastery were furnished with a variety of shrubs and trees. At this time, the whole of Wat Bovoranives was renovated, reshaped, and beautified.

Concerning monks and novices in the monastery, His Holiness supports and encourages monastic education in every possible way. He continually selects instructors and tutors in Dhamma and Pāli studies for new bhikkhus and novices, and scholarships for higher studies, both at home and abroad are granted every year. Necessary facilities such as libraries, etc., have been provided by His Holiness for resident monks and novices.

Regarding education outside Wat Bovoranives, through His Holiness' initiation and guidance, more new schools and institutions are constructed to meet the needs and requirements of the Thai people.

The construction of Wat Nyāṇasaṃvarārām in Bang Lamung District near Pattaya, Chonburi province, is a most significant event. Its majestic beauty and beautiful buildings are known far and wide. The significance and importance of this monastery is demonstrated by their Majesties' royal patronage. Their Majesties the King and Queen graciously accepted it and placed it in the first grade<sup>5</sup> (top grade) of Royal Monasteries under royal

4 Under the 1962 Act, the Maha Thera Council was revived in a form similar to that established under the Buddhist Church Administration Act 1902.

5 All buddhist monasteries in Thailand are duly classified in order of importance. Out of more than 30,000 monasteries throughout the kingdom, over 150 monasteries are taken out and grouped together under another category of classification. This top group is given the name of Royal Monasteries, and is divided into three grades, from first to third grade.

patronage. Moreover, His Holiness is called upon by people from all walks of life to assist in establishing public places such as schools, colleges, hospitals and so on. The bhikkhus annex and new 24 storey-out-patient building in Chulalongkorn Hospital are the best examples of His Holiness' patronage and generosity given to the public.

His Holiness' support for education is rooted in his own inner love of learning, which he has had since his childhood. His unceasing and energetic striving for knowledge has resulted in outstanding success in his studies. His Holiness is not only well-versed in Sanskrit and Pāli, which are the classical Buddhist languages, but he has also studied Chinese, French, German and English. Although monastic responsibilities and administrative duties, caused him to put aside further study, His Holiness did not abandon his study of English. His fluency in English has led him to encourage extensive exchanges of religious dialogue and ideas in Wat Bovornives. He himself used to give lectures on Dhamma in English to foreigners.

Apart from his secular and religious proficiency, His Holiness is keenly interested in meditation and concentration practices. When he was a young monk he went to visit many forest-meditation centers up-country, staying there for two to three months a year to devote himself to spiritual practice. Later the burden of ecclesiastical administrative duties was so great that he was unable to find time to enter forest-meditation centers as before. His Holiness does not surrender to the situation. He creates his own forest-like seclusion in his own shelter in the city, because he is of the view that one should practice meditation and concentration wherever one dwells by creating forest-like seclusion in one's own mind.

It can therefore be said that His Holiness is endowed with three unique qualifications: administrative skill, academic ability, and proficiency in meditation and concentration. He balances all three harmoniously in his day-to-day life.

In accomplishing his administrative and academic duties, His Holiness closely follows the example of his royal predecessor at Wat Bovornives, the late somdet Phra Mahā Samāṇa Chao Krom Phraya Vajirañāṇavarorasa, who was a master of Buddhist studies and a reformer of ecclesiastical administration. He wisely emulates the meditation and concentration practice of his preceptor, the late Somdet Phra Sangharāja Chao Krom Luang Vajirañāṇavangsa.

Because they arise from his scholarly and meditative nature, His Holiness' teachings attract Buddhists from all walks of life, he can properly apply the Dhamma to the everyday world and its problems. His teachings or sermons are therefore very relevant and his audience is benefited by his explanations of theory and practice. His Holiness gives sermons in the Uposatha hall every fortnight, and lectures on meditation and concentration. Wat Bovornives, is therefore known as an important meditation center in the metropolis in Thailand.

Apart from the sermons and meditation lessons mentioned above, His

Holiness has written many books on Dhamma, explaining the Buddha's teachings and meditation practice, such as *Principles of Buddhism*, *Fortyfive Years of the Buddha*, *Soḷasa Pañhā (Sixteen Questions)*, *A Guide to Awareness*, etc. His books arouse interest among readers and are well-known.

In connection with the propagation and dissemination of Buddhism abroad, His Holiness was once the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Training Institute for Dhammadūta Bhikkhus Going Abroad. He himself has often been to foreign countries in Asia, Europe, America and Australia to observe religious practices and to meet people. Since His Holiness supports Dhammadūta bhikkhus in Indonesia and Australia, he has visited those countries several times.

During His Holiness' tenure as abbot, Wat Bovoranives has become a center of foreign relations and is well-known to foreigners who are interested in Buddhist studies. Many foreigners from both East and West come to Wat Bovoranives to study Buddhism. Some become ordained as bhikkhus or sāmaṇeras for a time. It is no exaggeration to say that His Holiness has reestablished Wat Bovoranives in its former magnificent and dynamic role of spreading the Dhamma, as in the time of King Mongkut, the first abbot, and of Somdet Phra Mahā Samaṇa Chao Krom Phraya Vajirañāṇavarorasa, the third Abbot.

Most recently, from 20 June to 2 July 1993, His Holiness visited China at the invitation of the government. During his thirteen-day tour he met the President of China, the President of the Buddhist Association of China, various officials, and Buddhist monks, nuns, and lay-followers. He visited Buddhist monasteries and important historical and cultural sites and exchange ideas with Chinese Buddhists, in Beijing, Xian, Kunming, and Xishuangbanna's. This historic visit—the first ever by a Supreme Patriarch of Thailand to China—should bring the two countries together through their common religious heritage.

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It cannot be denied that the Buddha's life-story, describing his activities selflessly performed for the sake of trainable beings, is sure to be of great benefit to the scholars who pursue their study with the purpose of applying them to their life. This certainly is conducive to both self-development and selfless service. The present entitled "Forty-five Years of the Buddha" is the result of such purpose.

1991Forty-Five Years



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