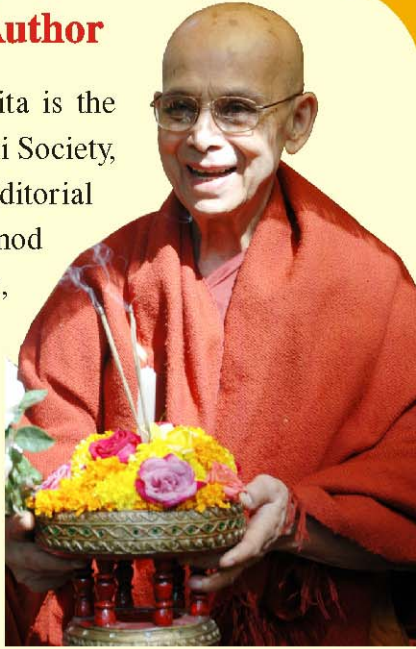


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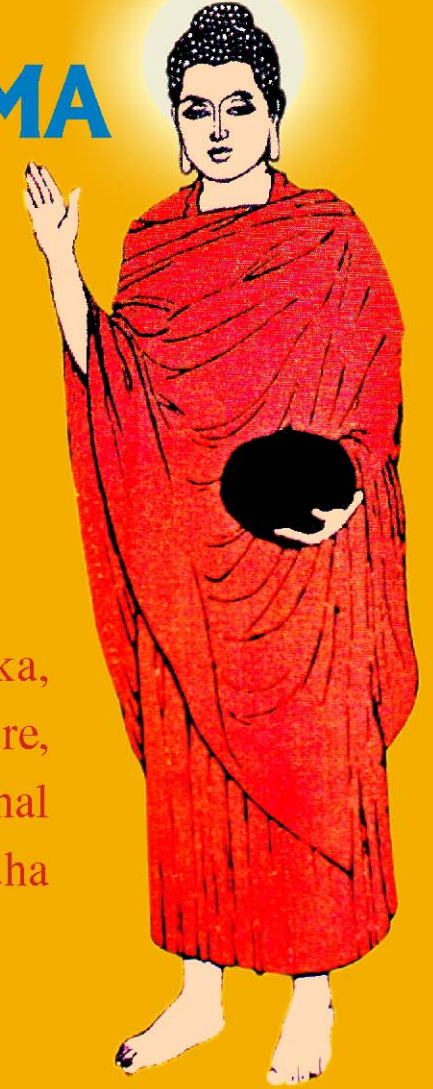
Venerable Acharya Buddharakkhita is the founder-president of Maha Bodhi Society, Bangalore. He was a member of the Editorial Board of the Sixth Buddhist Synod (Chaṭṭha Sangāyana) in Yangon, which brought out a complete edition of the Buddhist scriptures. Since then he has established many Buddhist centres in India and abroad and rendered yeomen spiritual and humanitarian services. He established Mahabodhi Monastic Institute in Bangalore, India, Buddhayoga Meditation Centre in USA and conducted many Dhamma and Pali courses, meditation courses and written numerous books and translation of Buddhist texts. They have been published all over the world, including some German, Portuguese, Korean and Chinese translations. He has been editing and publishing English monthly DHAMMA for last four decades.

Mahabodhi Academy of Pāli and Buddhist studies and Bhagavan Buddha University of Pāli and Theravāda Buddhism, Bangalore are the result of his effort and research to provide a systematic Buddhist education as widely as possible, the first of its kind in whole of India.



# THE BUDDHA AND HIS DHAMMA

VOL - I



According to the Tipiṭaka, the Sacred Pāli Scripture, which preserves the original teachings of the Buddha

THE BUDDHA AND HIS DHAMMA

By: Venerable Acharya Buddharakkhita



**BUDDHA VACHANA TRUST**

MAHA BODHI SOCIETY, GANDHINAGAR, BANGALORE - 560 009, INDIA.

Venerable Acharya Buddharakkhita

# **THE BUDDHA AND HIS DHAMMA**

**Vol. 1**

**According to the Tipiṭaka, the Sacred Pāli  
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teachings of the Buddha.**

**By  
Venerable Acharya Buddharakkhita**

**Buddha Vachana Trust  
Maha Bodhi Society, Gandhinagar, Bangalore-09**

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## INTRODUCTION

**The Buddha and his Dhamma** is a presentation of the life and teachings of the Buddha as found in the *Tipiṭaka* the sacred *Pāli* scripture, which has preserved the original teachings of the Supremely Enlightened One, the Buddha.

Every effort has been made to faithfully present the authentic teachings. Several discourses (*Suttas*) of the Buddha have been adduced. This is to compare and contrast the interpolations by sectarian scholars or others motivated by political, social or religious bias.

For forty five years, Lord Buddha taught his Dhamma in *Pāli*, the language of the common people, out of profound compassion. When a learned monk who hailed from a priestly family, requested the Buddha to allow him to render the Dhamma into Chandas, language of the Vedas, the Buddha forthwith refused to grant because it would then be confined to a very small group of upper class brahmin scholars and priests who could pass on only to brahmin students.

If the privileged scholars and elitists, had the knowledge of the Dhamma restricted only to a group who claim to be at the top of the social hierarchy, the whole purpose of benefiting every one regardless of caste and status, would have been lost.

The Buddha taught his Dhamma “For the benefit, well-fare and happiness of the many and out of compassion for the world-*Bahujana hitāya, sukhāya, lokānukampāya*”. Therefore he choose to deliver his discourses only in *Pāli*, not in chandas or Vedic Samskrit.

*Pāli* at that time was a highly cultivated ordinary man's language which was understood by all. It wasn't a rustic language as some Sanskritists try to make out. Culled out from various works of the *Tipiṭaka*, many of Buddha's discourses have been presented with faithful English rendering.

As to the question "What is the origin of the *Dhamma*? Is it a divine revelation given to seers, messiahs, or prophets, which the major religions of the world declare?" The answer is: "It is not a divine revelation, but the unique teaching of the Omniscient Buddha who was the supreme teacher both of human and divine beings. So the origin of the *Dhamma* is the *Bodhi* or Enlightenment won by the Buddha. Then what is the origin of the Buddha who is the source of the *Dhamma*?"

The Buddha is the Supremely Enlightened being who with his own spiritual might and wisdom successfully climbed the spiritual summit state and thus became the All-Knowing One (*Sabbāñṇu*), and the Self-Become One (*Sayambhu*), and the Discoverer (*Sammā sambuddho*) of the Four Noble Truths. Out of boundless compassion he has bestowed the *Dhamma* to both the divine and human beings. Thus the Buddha is a unique Discoverer and Teacher born of the highest state of spiritual attainment.

What then is the origin of a Buddha? Buddhas evolve from a state of the *Bodhisatta*, a would-be-enlightened one, who has been consecrated by a previous Buddha. There were many Buddhas in the past, there will be many in the future and in our present aeon Lord Gotama Buddha is the present Buddha. This is how a chain of Buddhas arise periodically through times immemorial and keep the Heritage of Enlightenment (*Dhamma*) alive.

In this book the story of *Bodhisatta Sumedha* who in the dim past, was consecrated as the *Bodhisatta* by the Buddha *Dipaṅkara*. *Sumedha* was spiritually mature enough to renounce his throne and opt for an ascetic life, having already perfected the ten *Pāramis*, exalted virtues, that go in the making of an Enlightened One. If *Sumedha* had heard the *Dhamma* from the Buddha *Dipaṅkara*, he would have attained the enlightenment of an *Arahat*, Buddha's Enlightened Disciple.

However, he was so profoundly moved by the spiritual glory and majesty of the Buddha that he chose to tread on the foot steps of the Buddha *Dipaṅkara*. He made known his intention to Lord *Dipaṅkara* who with his omniscient eyes saw through his past as well as the future. And the Exalted Buddha made the prophesy that he will become Buddha Gotama after an immensely long time extending to innumerable aeons. From that moment he became a *Bodhisatta* and embarked on the quest of fulfilling the ten *Pāramis* thrice over.

The *Jātaka* literature, part of the *Tipiṭaka*, provides five hundred fifty two stories of Buddha's past lives extending to an incalculable period of time. During this period he fulfilled the thirty *Pāramis*, and in his last birth as Prince Siddhattha, he renounced his crown and chose to become a monk. After years of painful struggle, *Bodhisatta* Siddhattha became the Buddha *Gotama*. Then he remained in *samādhi* for seven weeks, enjoying the bliss of Enlightenment. Thereafter he embarked on his mission of compassion, namely, preaching of the *Dhamma* "For the good and the happiness of the many".

This book provides an account of this journey of compassion by way of presenting several important early discourses of the Buddha.

A seeker of truth who is diligently pursuing his or her spiritual pursuit leading to realization of *Nibbāna*, the state of liberation from the bonds of recurring existence (*Samsāra*), would find this presentation of the Buddha's Dhamma sufficiently stimulating and instructive.

We wish success to all seekers of Truth!

May the light of the Buddha surround the lives of all beings, with wisdom and well being! May all beings be happy!

**Venerable Acharya Buddharakkhita**  
**Fullmoon day of Āsaḷha. July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2001**  
 Celebrated as Dhamma Cakka, (Setting in Motion the  
 wheel of Dhamma) Day  
 at Maha Bodhi Society, Bangalore



**"Sabba dānaṃ Dhamma dānaṃ jināti"**  
**"Among all gifts the gift of Dhamma excels !**

**- The Buddha**

This book is published in fond memories of  
 our grand parents

**Late Sri S. Krishnan and**  
**Late Smt. Kannagamal Krishnan**

and as mark of respects to our beloved parents  
**Mrs. Booshnam Krishnamurthy**

Sri Krishnan was an ardent follower and has been associated with Buddhist Associations across India since 1922. His association with Venerable Acharya Buddharakkhita dates back to 1956 and has been instrumental in spreading Buddhism and helping Buddhist Temples.

This book is to create an awareness and educate people to follow in the Buddhist principles in our daily life for the good of mankind.

We also would like to thank

**Venerable Acharya Buddharakkhita**  
 for all his blessings on the Krishnan Family.  
 May the merits of this dāna be shared by all beings!  
**Mr. Mahendran and Mrs. Dr. Premila Mahendran**  
**and Family**

## ***Bodhisata Sumedha Paṇḍita***

The story of *Bodhisatta Sumedha Paṇḍita* appears in the *Jātaka* literature, a part of the Sacred Buddhist *Pāli* Scripture, known as ‘The *Tipiṭaka*’. The *Jātaka* contains five hundred fifty two stories of Buddha’s past lives as *Bodhisatta*, (would-be-Buddha). The introductory part of the *Jātaka*, known as *Nidāna*, provides the story of Sumedha’s life. The *Nidāna* is divided into three parts. These are: *Dure Nidāna*, *Avidure Nidāna* and *Santike Nidāna*.

***Dure Nidāna*** consists of the story of *Sumedha Paṇḍita*’s early life, how he met the Buddha *Dipaṅkara* and aspired to become a Buddha himself. It also describes the ten perfections, *Pāramis*, necessary for the attainment of enlightenment. Further, *Dure Nidāna* includes five hundred and fifty two *Jātakas*, stories of Buddha’s past lives as *Bodhisatta*, perfecting thirty *Pāramis*, that is, the ten *Pāramis* three times over.

***Avidure Nidāna*** provides the story of Prince *Siddhattha Gotama*, who later became the Buddha *Gotama*. It begins with how the divine king of *Tusita*, *Seta Ketu* by name, decided to be born in the human plane as Prince *Siddhattha*, son of King *Suddhodana* of the *Sakyan* Kingdom. Then the life story of *Siddhattha Gotama* until he became the Buddha *Gotama* is presented in the *Avidūre Nidāna*.

***Santike Nidāna*** consists of the history of the Buddha’s life and teachings. It provides the account of forty-five years of Buddha’s Spiritual Mission as the Bearer of Truth, the *Tathāgata* Buddha.

The Life and mission of *Sumedha Paṇḍita* goes back to the dim past of four *asaṅkheyyas* and hundred thousand aeons (*kappas*). He hailed from a very ancient and wealthy brahmin landlord family that owned and ruled over a small principality. Living in the city of *Amarāvati*, he received the best of education till his sixteenth year. he was very intelligent and his teachers and fellow students held him in high esteem. At the age of sixteen, when he was still pursuing his educational carrier, his parents suddenly died.

This sad event made him very thoughtful as to the meaning and purpose of life. Returning home he became the head of his family and the principality. His Treasurer came with the detailed account of the wealth he inherited. He informed Sumedha, saying: “Now you are the owner of this immense wealth left by seven generations of your forebears, both from the father’s and mother’s sides. You own fourteen treasuries filled with gold, silver and jewelry, on top of all the immovable properties of your family. The Treasurer submitted the inventory of his assets and took him to the fourteen treasuries to check for himself.

The only son and now owner of the immense wealth, he began to think deeply about the real values of wealth, which he could carry with him when he too dies. He reasoned that his mother and father and forebears, for seven generations, kept accumulating such vast riches, and when they died, left them behind without carrying any of the wealth with them.

For several days he remained immersed in deep philosophical thought, searching for the solution of life’s riddles. He saw through the impermanent nature of everything in the world, including all forms of life and external objects. And he asked himself whether there is a way by which he could carry

everything when he too died. He sought to progress towards emancipation from the ills of the world.

Emerging from contemplation, he called his Treasurer and said: “Though my parents and forebears could not carry all this wealth when they died, I am going to carry them when my turn to die comes. They only accumulated. I am going to share and earn spiritual merit by giving away everything to those who need them most. Wealth and property remain here when we go, but the spiritual merit (*Puñña*) accruing from *dāna*, goes with us when we die. By giving up everything, I am going to gain everything.”

Therefore please make a public proclamation by the beating of drums that whoever needs anything to make life happy, may come and give his reason for seeking whatever he wants. Only the needy will receive, not a person who wants to add to his existing belonging. Accordingly, a public announcement was made throughout his principality lasting for many days. People from all over the principality and beyond flocked to his mansion to receive whatever they needed by providing appropriate reason.

*Sumedha* appointed a team of his loyal officials to distribute prudently all he possessed. It took a long time to give away the immense wealth from all the fourteen treasuries. For the exemplary generosity and wisdom he demonstrated through his meritorious deeds, *Sumedha* now became known as *Sumedha Paṇḍita*, *Sumedha-the-Wise*.

When questioned by people in high places in *Amarāvati* as to why he gave up everything, he answered: “I see everywhere that life is filled with all kinds of suffering. From the time one is born till one dies, one faces suffering in one form or another. And invariably the cause for such is wanting and

accumulating things in order to enjoy life, which is basically impermanent. I also see that if there is the evil of greed etc., there is also goodness that frees the mind from such evil.”

“Thus, it is perfectly reasonable to think that in this world, marked by pairs of opposites, - when there is heat there is also cold, when there is bad, there is also good, and when there is suffering, there must be extinction of suffering also.”

When all his treasures were given away, he asked his councilors to choose a righteous head of the principality, who brings happiness and harmony among people. When such a person was selected by his councillors and the people in general, he handed his authority over to the new Head of the principality. After giving up his high position and all his possessions, he donned the recluse’s robe and went to a remote area of Himalaya known as the *Dhammika* Mountain, for meditation and spiritual development.

Having renounced the worldly life, he headed for *Dhammika* Mountain in the Himalaya to practice meditation and seriously pursue spiritual life. Because of this extraordinary and meritorious deed of *Sumedha*, the divine ruler *Sakka*’s yellow precious-stone seat of state became hot. As he looked for the cause with his divine eye, he became aware of this great spiritual deed and understood that a Great Being has appeared to benefit the world. Thinking, I must help him, so he had his celestial master-builder, the god *Vissakamma*, summoned.

He told him “*Sumedha Paṇḍita* has performed a great sacrifice through his act of renunciation. Now an ascetic, he is heading for *Dhammika* Mountain in the Himalaya to lead the holy life. So you must go there and build a comfortable hermitage with all facilities including an ambulatory for walking



meditation.” Forthwith *Vissakamma* went to *Dhammika* mountain, chose a good spot, built a hermitage, and an approach road leading to it.

After reaching *Dhammika* Mountain, *Sumedha* saw the hermitage with all facilities in a serene spot. He decided to go and pursue the practice of meditation in that quite surrounding free from disturbance. He undertook a few ascetic practices to energetically pursue a spiritual life. He vowed not to lie down, and practice meditation only in three postures, sitting, standing, and walking. Soon his vigorous effort enabled him to attain the supramental meditative absorptions and the resultant supernormal powers. He successfully developed the eight *jhānas* and the five *Abhiññas*.

Having successfully accomplished this task in a relatively short period, he reflected deeply on the scenic beauty of his surrounding and the comforts of the hermitage. Then he asked himself: I gave up my household possessions, seeing the danger of such a comfortable and luxurious life; the hermitage and its surrounding are so pleasant and beautiful; once I grow fond of this place, I may become attached to this new possession, which will hinder my spiritual progress and invite suffering born of attachment. So he decided to leave the *Dhammika* hermitage, and went out searching for a cave or a tree under which he may live a life of a free hermit.

In the thickly forested side of the mountain, he found suitable trees and caves. Staying in a new site each day, he lived on the fallen fruits and berries of the forest. Occasionally, he went for alms-round to a village or town located in the foothill area of the Himalaya. He did this by employing his supernormal power of flying through space.

While flying back from the alms-round, one day he saw from above a huge crowd of people working on a road leading to the city. Landing unnoticed, he asked some people, “What is going on here? What is the crowd doing on the road to the city? Are you preparing for a festival or something else?” An important looking man said: “Lord *Dipaṅkara* Buddha has appeared in the world. We are working on the road to welcome him and his disciples to our city.”

As soon as *Sumedha* heard the word Buddha, he was profoundly moved. His hair stood erect in great awe and devotion. He asked again and again “Did you say that the Buddha has appeared in the world, and that he is coming here? Electrified by the same answer, he asked could I also join you to serve the Buddha?

They thought: “*Sumedha* has great supernormal powers; he can help us to complete the road fast.” They said: “There is a big pit, which needs to be filled. You can complete the job.”

*Sumedha* thought: “I could finish the entire route instantly by my supernormal abilities. But, who am I to display such powers in the presence of the Supremely Enlightened Buddha? His powers are infinite and it will be foolish for me to exercise my powers. So let me serve the Buddha with physical labour as the others are doing”.

As *Sumedha* energetically worked, the Buddha *Dipaṅkara*, together with a large following of his *Arahat* disciples and others, suddenly arrived and stood before him. *Sumedha* had not completed his task. Seeing the majesty and glory of the Buddha with the six-rayed hallow around him, he was awe-struck. With deep reverence, he covered up the pit by lying over it with his body as a bridge, for the Buddha and his disciples to cross over it. Spreading his matted hair to act as a foot-rag for the

Buddha, he earnestly wished: “May the Lord and his disciples walk over this body-bridge and sanctify my spiritual life”.

Continuing, he thought: “The Buddha with his infinite compassion liberates countless beings from worldly bondage. I am seeking my liberation. Why not I commit myself to follow the foot-steps of the Buddha?” Accordingly, he made a mental aspiration seeking the Buddha to consecrate his life, so that he too can attain Supreme Enlightenment and help numberless beings to be free from *Samsāric* existence.

The Buddha became aware of his thought aspiring to be a *Sammā Sambuddha* in the future. “But did he have the required spiritual precondition to be able to attain such a goal?” thought the Lord. Having penetrated into his past and future with his Omniscient eye, the Buddha saw that he had the prerequisite conditions and concluded: “He can become an *Arahat* forthwith, since he had already fulfilled the ten perfections (*Pārami*), necessary to attain the enlightenment of an *Arahat* disciple (*Sāvaka Bodhi*). By further perfecting these *Pāramis*, three times over, for a period of four *asāṅkheyyas* and a hundred thousand aeons (*kappas*), he will become a Buddha, Gotama by name”.

Accordingly, the Buddha *Dīpaṅkara* made a prophetic declaration, foretelling how *Sumedha* is destined to become the Supremely Enlightened Buddha Gotama, after four *asāṅkheyyas* and a hundred thousand aeons. Having consecrated *Sumedha* on the path to Supreme Enlightenment, by this prophesy, the Buddha asked him to arise from that prostrate position.

The princess of the realm and other members of the royal family were waiting in the crowd to welcome the Buddha into the capital city. She was carrying eight lotus flowers. As soon as she heard the Buddha’s declaration consecrating *Sumedha*

into the path of the *Bodhisatta*, she gave *Sumedha* five lotuses and kept the remaining three for her to worship the Buddha.

*Sumedha* worshipped the Buddha with these five lotus flowers and the princess with hers. While worshipping, she made an aspiration: “May I be able to perfect my *Pāramis* together with *Sumedha*. When he becomes prince *Siddhattha*, may I be his wife. And when he becomes the Buddha *Gotama*, may I become his *Arahat* disciple”. Buddha *Dīpaṅkara* became aware of this aspiration and blessed her to achieve her goal.

Now the great crowd of human and divine beings hearing the prophecy, burst into a loud cheer of exultation. Filled with reverence for *Sumedha*, many in that gathering earnestly made this aspiration: “If I do not attain *Nibbāna*, in the interval, may I gain deliverance under the Buddha *Gotama*”. Just as, a person, having failed to cross over a river to the opposite bank from its upper reaches, later crosses over from the lower reaches, even so, those who aspired to attain *Nibbāna* under the Buddha *Gotama* hoped to do. The place where this great event occurred became strewn with flowers offered by the devotees. The Buddha together with his retinue then proceeded to the capital city.

After the Buddha, his *Arahat* disciples and the throng of devotees left the place, *Sumedha* went to a spot heaped up with diverse flowers. Sitting down in a meditative posture he began contemplating on the essential conditions for the evolution of a Buddha. He asked himself: “What are the exalted virtues and spiritual perfections that should be fulfilled to achieve Supreme Enlightenment?” Sunk in profound contemplation, he became aware of the many extraordinary events, which were occurring in various planes of existence. Experiencing this phenomenon by his supernormal power of Divine Eye, he became ever more convinced that he was going to become a Supremely Enlightened

Buddha as predicted by Lord *Dīpaṅkara* while consecrating him as a *Bodhisatta*.

Deeply reflecting about the perfections essential for attaining his goal, he became aware of ten such perfections with vivid examples. He told himself: “*Sumedha Paṇḍita* now that you are destined to become a Supremely Enlightened Buddha, you must clearly understand the nature of these perfections”. He then recalled how the previous *Bodhisattas* conducted themselves to achieve their objectives.

He told himself: “Like the past would-be-Buddhas, you must begin by fulfilling the perfection of Giving (*Dāna Pārami*). Just as, an upside down water pot pours out water, totally, neither holding nor taking back even a single drop, so too, you must you give away your material possessions to any one who seeks. Not only these, but you must also give away your limbs, even your life itself, in order to fulfil the perfection of giving. Only when this task is accomplished, as all previous *Bodhisattas* did, that you can reach your goal.

Continuing to contemplate he became aware of the *Pārami* he must next fulfill. This is the Perfection of Virtue, moral purity (*Sīla Pārami*). He reminded himself: “Just as, the *cāmari* cattle (Yak) protects its tail even at the cost of its life, so must you protect your moral precepts and principles of virtue.

Then he thought, “You must also fulfill the perfection of Renunciation (*Nekkhamma Pārami*). Just as, a prisoner longs to be free and not attached to the prison, even so, must you seek emancipation from *saṃsāra*. You must not have any attachment, even for the blissful divine states.

Reflecting further, he became aware of the perfection of Wisdom (*Paññā Pārami*). He reminded himself: “Just as, a monk on his alms-round collects alms from every house, without making

any distinction, even so, must you gather knowledge and wisdom from every source, regardless of the status of the person you learn from.

In the same vein he thought: “You must also fulfill the perfection of Self-effort (*Viriya Pārami*). Just as, a lion stays forceful and vigorous under all circumstances, even so, must you remain energetic and unrelenting. In all future states of existence you must keep rightly exerting and fulfill the perfection of Self-effort.

Further you must also fulfill the perfection of Enduring Patience (*Khanti Pārami*). “Just as, when people throw both pure and impure things, upon the earth, it bears both alike without being perturbed; even so, must you endures, remain unmoved, like the earth. Whether you are praised or blamed, respected or disrespected, you should bear both alike and fulfill the perfection of Enduring Patience”.

Continuing, he said, “You must also fulfill the perfection of Truthfulness (*Sacca Pārami*). Just as, the brilliant planet Venus never deviates from its path and remains steadfast in all seasons, even so, must you, never deviate from the path of truthfulness. Even if a lightning were to strike your head, you should never resort to falsehood to protect your self-interest, but firmly hold on to fulfilling the perfection of Truthfulness.

Further, he reminded himself: “You must also fulfill the perfection of Resoluteness (*Adhiṭṭhāna Pārami*). Just as, the mountain, despite the fierce winds blowing from all directions, remains immovable, is never shaken, even so, must you fulfill the perfection of Resoluteness. Once you determine that a cause or course of action is right, remain resolute, hold on to it, and never be shaken. In this way must you fulfill the perfection of Resoluteness.”

Then he said: “You must also fulfill the perfection of Universal Love (*Mettā Pārami*). Just as, water-cools down all, whether a sinner or a saint, so, must you promote the well-being of all. Again water turns the land fertile and prosperous. So too must you benefit all, by loving kindness. By seeking other’s happiness, must you fulfill the perfection of Universal Love”.

Further he reminded himself: “With all these perfections you must also fulfill the perfection of Equanimity (*Upekkhā Pārami*). Just as, the mother earth remains indifferent to whatever is thrown on it, whether unclean or clean, soiled refuse or valuable offerings, even so, must you be ever equanimous. Maintain mental balance under all circumstances, whether painful or pleasurable. In these ways you must fulfill the ten perfections.

In order to successfully pursue the path of a Bodhisatta, and to perfect the exalted virtues that lead to Buddhahood, there is no other way but to fulfill these ten perfections, three times over. I shall therefore, pursue the path of the Bodhisatta, by fulfilling these *Pāramis* for four *asaṅkheyyas* and hundred thousands kappas. Then with iron will and resolution he flew to his cave in the Himalaya.

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## Enlightenment Day

### I. The Bodhisatta’s Dream

The night before the Enlightenment day, the Bodhisatta dreamt five dreams between mid-night and dawn. First, he dreamt that he was laying on the surface of the earth as his bed, with Himalaya as pillow, placing his left hand on the eastern sea, his right hand on the western sea, both his legs on the southern ocean. This dream presaged that he will realize supreme Enlightenment and become an All-Knowing Buddha, thus be the spiritual teacher of both human and divine beings.

Second, he dreamt that from his navel a *Tiriya* grass emerged, and growing ever taller, rose higher and higher through the sky into the space and stood there with several stems of long leafs in all directions. This dream presaged that he will discover, formulate and preach the Noble Eightfold Path, also called the Middle Path, to gods and humans.

Third, he dreamt that hordes of black-headed ants with white bodies crawled up his legs from toe to kneecap. This dream presaged that a large following of people with black-haired heads wearing white clothes, that is, lay devotees, will take refuge in him.

Fourth, he dreamt that four kinds of birds (blue, golden, red and gray), came flying from four directions and threw themselves down prostrate at his feet and then turn completely white. This dream presaged that people from all the four castes (*Khattiya, brahmana, vessa, sudda*), would enter the monastic order (*saṅgha*) established by him and become *Arahats*.

Lastly, he dreamt that he was walking to and fro on the top of a mountain of faeces without getting soiled. This dream presaged that he will receive large quantities of the four requisites (robes, alms-food, monasteries and medicaments), to be used by him and his disciples without attachment, that is, without clinging to them.

The *Bodhisatta* understood the meaning underlying these dreams. First, he told himself: “Well, here I don’t have any members of my family, friends, or followers, with whom I can share these dreams and hear their interpretations. So, now I will interpret myself, and told himself the meaning underlying these dreams, as mentioned above.

## II. *Sujāta’s thick (Ghana) Pāyāsa*

Having thus been assured that he will attain *Sammāsambodhi* at daybreak, he washed and rested contemplating. Then he went out on alms-round (*piṇḍapāta*), and seeing the *Nigrodha* (Banyan) tree in the *Senāni* village, sat under it.

At that time *Sujātā*, the daughter of the chief of *Senāni*, was busy cooking a special milk-rice preparation called *Ghana Khira pāyāsa*, to make ritual offering to the residing deity of the *Nigrodha* tree. Twenty years ago, she had prayed to this guardian deity of this huge holy Banyan tree, that she will make a ceremonial offering of special *Ghana pāyāsa* if she was blessed with a good husband from a wealthy family of her caste and a son as the first-born.

She was given in marriage to a wealthy *Bārānasi* family and had a son, *Yasa* by name, as her first-born. Once her desire was fulfilled, she visited this tree every year on *Vesākha Puṇṇami* day and made a ceremonial offering as a religious ritual, from the last twenty years. On this *puṇṇami* day too, she had prepared the special *Ghana pāyāsa*.

Several months ago she had selected one thousand cows and fed them with *Valmee* (Licorice) sweet creeper for a week to get high-yielding quality milk. She then fed five hundred cows for one week with this sweet milk and She then collected the milk of these five hundred cows, to feed two hundred fifty cows with this milk for one week. In this way, she went on milking and feeding half the number of cows in each turn. In other words, she fed one hundred twenty five cows for a week with the milk of two hundred fifty cows, sixty three cows with the milk of one hundred twenty cows, twenty two cows with the milk of sixty three cows, sixteen cows with the milk of thirty two cows, eight cows with the milk of sixteen cows. In this way, in each turn feeding the cows for one week, and produced very thick and sweet milk from the last eight cows. With this milk drawn from eight cows, she prepared a special *Ghana pāyāsa*.

When the preparation was over around mid-morning, she sent her maid to clean up and decorate the *Nigrodha* tree, so that she could make the ceremonial offering with religious fervour. The maid saw the *Bodhisatta* seated meditating under the tree, and thought that the deity of the tree, having taken human form, is sitting under the tree to receive *Sujātā’s* special offering. Awe-struck she ran back and reported to *Sujātā* that the tree-god himself is waiting to receive her offering.

Excited, *Sujātā* rushed with the golden bowl containing the special *pāyāsa*, taking the *Bodhisatta* to be the deity in human form to receive the *pāyāsa*. She now offered it to the *Bodhisatta*, saying: “Venerable One, please accept it together with the bowl. My wish has been fulfilled. So I now make this offering. I seek your blessing, and wish earnestly that having granted my earnest wish, may all your wishes also be fulfilled.” She then devoutly made the offering of the rich *pāyāsa* together

with the golden bowl having no concern for the golden bowl costing a hundred thousand gold coins, as if it was a plantain leaf, then she went her away.

This year's offering acquired a special significance as the Bodhisatta received the *pāyāsa* in a golden bowl. When the *pāyāsa* was offered to him, he found that his bowl had disappeared. His bowl was received from *Ghaṭikāra* Brahma god on the day he left home and became a monk. Loss of *Ghaṭikāra's* bowl thus had a special significance.

*Sujātā's* son *Yasa*, now a married man, lived with her enjoying the luxury of a wealthy family. Few months later *Yasa* met the Buddha, became a monk and an *Arahat*. His parents too became *Ariyas*.

### III. *Nerañjarā* River

Having received the *pāyāsa* in the golden bowl, he went to the bank of river *Nerañjarā*. He found a suitable place on the bank, kept his robes and bowl of *pāyāsa* on that. Then he went down and bathed in the river, came up, dried himself and sat down to eat his alms food. He made forty-nine morsels out of the *Ghana pāyāsa* and ate them all.

After eating his meal, he decided to test whether he will gain Enlightenment on this day. So he exercised his mind and made an-act-of-will, saying: "If I am to attain Enlightenment this day, then let this bowl cut across the current, and on reaching the middle of the river, go against the current. He then flung the golden bowl into the river. Cutting across the current of the river, which was then in spate, it stood still in midstream, then in a great speed swam across directly against the current for a distance and sank to the bottom of the river, then to the palace of the *Nāga* King *Kāla Nāgarāja*, located beneath the river.

Having tested and being assured of his Enlightenment on this full moon day, he entered the beautiful *Sāla* grove, then in bloom, on the bank of *Nerañjarā*. He sat down under an ancient *Sāla* tree and began to practice meditation. He had already developed the eight *samāpattis* and five *abhiññās* after he had become a monk. But during the six years of very severe mortification of the body, his *jhāna* and *abhiññā* attainments had not been exercised. In other words, these supernormal attainments had rusted a bit.

When the *Bodhisatta* gave up the bodily torture and took to the path of moderation, he lived by collecting alms-food, practised meditation once again, for a fortnight before the full moon day. Now on this day at the *Sāla* grove, he exercised all the *samāpattis* and *abhiññās* fully and prepared himself to ascend the summit of Supreme Enlightenment.

### IV. Battle with *Māra*

Practising *ānāpānasati* meditation, the *Bodhisatta* developed the *jhānas* and *abhiññās*. Around early evening he emerged from the meditation and walked down to the river, had a wash, then headed towards the *Bodhi* Tree along the path now decorated by celestials. Devas and other celestials accompanied him with offerings of celestial flowers and perfumes. On the way *Sotthiya*, a grass cutter, coming from the opposite direction, offered him eight bundles of grass after seeing his bright features.

The *Bodhisatta* received the bundles of grass, went ahead and climbed up the high ground of the *Bodhi* Tree. He then stood on the southern side of the *Bodhi* Tree facing north. The southern ground sank and the northern ground rose up. Just as, a cartwheel, when stepped on tilts, causing the opposite side to rise, even so, the southern ground sank causing the northern ground to rise. Seeing this the *Bodhisatta* understood

that this is not the right place to strive for the Enlightenment. So, keeping the *Bodhi* Tree to his right he went clock-wise to the west and then to the north with the same tilting effect. Then going east, he found the earth to be stable and firm and concluded “This is the right spot.”

Then laying the grass bundles for a seat to meditate and strive, he now sat down with the *Bodhi* Tree at his back. Then facing east, he sat cross-legged and resolved with an iron-will saying: “Let my skin, my sinews, my bones, shrivel, let my flesh and blood dry up, I will not leave this meditative posture until Enlightenment is attained.” This firm determination came to be known as the Fourfold Energetic Striving (*Caturaṅga Viriyā*), and his posture as the Invincible Posture (*Aparājita Pallāṅka*). And the seat he sat on came to be known as the Unvanquished Throne (*Avijahita Āsana*) because of the hundreds of missiles (lit. thunderbolts) that were hurled at him and his seat simultaneously.

Now *Māra*, who enforced total control over all beings in the sentient world, became aware of this determination. He had been closely following the *Bodhisatta* for six years during his fierce self-mortification. But he failed to enforce his will on him because of the purity of the *Bodhisatta*'s mind. *Māra* thought to himself “*Siddhattha* is now seated under the *Bodhi* Tree seeking Supreme Enlightenment and transcend worldly existence, thus escape from my domain of the three worlds of humans, devas and brahmas. If I allow him to attain his goal, not only will he escape, but carry countless others with him to transcend worldly existence. I will not allow him to attain his goal.”

*Māra* is a powerful god and belongs to the highest divine realm (*devaloka*) known as *Paranimmita Vasavatti*. He is not the ruler of that realm, but an inhabitant who has become an

outlaw deity. Just as a human rebel leader, having raised a big fighting gang, organises an insurgency against his own country, going about looting, plundering and committing all kinds of crime, even so, the god *Māra* leads an insurgency on his divine realm. As a mighty outlaw deity he and his evil forces are greatly feared, thus allowing him to hold sway over the threefold world.

*Māra* had thought: “If I allow him to do what he wants to do, that is escape from my hold, then not only will he escape but also carry countless others to do so. So, I will not allow him to escape from my domain.”

Accordingly, *Māra* assembled his evil forces from celestial realms and ordered them to surround the *Bodhisatta* from three directions, behind, right flank and left flank. He did not dare to attack the *Bodhisatta* from the front, knowing how mighty he was as an embodiment of virtue and wisdom. He commanded, saying: “Transform yourselves into various frightening forms, and each one of you, holding a different weapon, charge at him, overwhelm and destroy him. Mind you, he is a powerful human being”. Then he himself assumed a very fearful and hideous form, with thousand arms, each holding a different weapon. Now riding on *Girimekhala*, his celestial elephant mount, he charged on the *Bodhisatta*, raising dreadful noises and abuses of intimidation, as though the hell itself was let loose.

Seeing the vast hoards of *Māra* advancing from three directions to destroy the *Bodhisatta*, the various gods and celestials, who had assembled near the *Bodhisatta* in great numbers to pay homage to him, now fled helter skelter. The *Bodhisatta* observed *Māra*'s hordes advancing with deadly weapons towards him. He told himself, “I sit here alone. *Māra* and his overwhelming number of troops are advancing from the three directions to dislodge me from this seat and foil my efforts at reaching the goal of Supreme Enlightenment. I have none

to protect me now, neither my parents and relatives nor my friends and retinue. Indeed! My only companions and protectors at this critical moment are thirty Perfections (*Pāramis*). These fully perfected Perfections are going to be my invincible weapons to defeat *Māra* and his evil forces.”

Having made up his mind to fight with an incomparably superior weapon, he plunged into recalling the countless meritorious deeds he had performed to fulfil the ten Perfections, three times over. As he remained undeterred by reflecting on the Perfections, the tumultuous noise and fury became ineffective. This demoralized the fiends of *Māra*. So, *Māra* now decided to employ his most ferocious weapons of annihilation. Accordingly, he discharged nine deadly elemental forces of nature to make the *Bodhisatta* to flee.

1. First he let loose a violent inward-rotating cyclone known as *Vātamaṇḍala*. Fierce storms began to blow from all directions, which had the force to blast away whole rock-tops, and hill-tops, uproot huge trees, even a jungle, and pulverize the human habitations around. However, on coming near the *Bodhisatta* the cyclone became powerless, its force spent, and could not even ruffle the edge of the *Bodhisatta*'s robe, because of the power of his Perfections.
2. Frustrated by the failure of this wind force, *Māra* thought: “I will drown him with powerful torrents of water”. In a moment he let dark rain clouds fall in torrential rains known as the ‘Mighty Pour Down’ (*Mahā Vassam*). The sheer force of the torrents of water inundated the forest, then overflowed to the foothill areas around. However, on reaching the *Bodhisatta*, these strong currents of the flood could not even wet a single thread of his robe by the power of his Perfections.

3. Seeing the failure of this elemental flood-weapon, *Māra* thought: “I will turn him into dust by pounding him with rocks”. So he caused the ‘Rain of Stones’ (*Pāsāna Vassam*). Huge stones from rocky hills rolled down sending fumes of rock-dust. However, on reaching the *Bodhisatta*, these were transformed into balls of celestial flower garlands (*Dibba mālāguḷa*) by the power of his Perfections.
4. Then *Māra* thought: “I will make mincemeat of him and destroy him”. So he let fall the ‘Rain of Weapons’ (*Pahāra Vassam*). All kinds of deadly weapons rained down, such as single-edged, double-edged swords, spears, knives etc., emitting fumes, as they fell down from all directions through the sky, only to turn into sweet jasmine flowers scattered around him by the power of his Perfections.
5. Now angry but undeterred by these failures, *Māra* vowed: “I will burn him to cinders”, and rained down red-hot embers smoking and blazing (*Aṅgārā Vassam*). But as soon as these fell, they got transformed into beautiful and fragrant flowers, by the power of *Bodhisatta*'s fulfilment of Perfections.
6. Enraged, *Māra* then rained down hot ashes (*Kukkula Vassam*). These ashes were extremely hot and powdery which would set fire on any object. But on reaching the *Bodhisatta*, they were transformed into celestial sandal wood powder by the power of his Perfections.
7. More upset, *Māra* then rained down hot fine, powdery sand (*Bālukā Vassam*), capable of roasting anything on which it fell. But as they fell from the sky near the *Bodhisatta*, they turned into celestial incense powder by the power of his Perfections.
8. Frustrated than ever *Māra* then caused hot mud with fumes and flames to fall like rain (*Kalala Vassam*). But on reaching



the *Bodhisatta* these were turned into celestial perfume paste by the power of his Perfections.

9. Now, virtually out of mind, *Māra* created a massive darkness, pitch black and blinding. The *Bodhisatta* let out a network of rays from each pore of his body's hair. So that by the time this blinding fearsome darkness reached the *Bodhisatta*, it disappeared in the same way as the darkness of night is dispelled by the sunlight.

Having miserably failed to dislodge the *Bodhisatta* by these nine deadly weapons, he ordered his troops to attack in a massive way. Then, sitting on his mount *Girimekhala* and holding his most powerful weapon called the Wheel Weapon, a total annihilator, he demanded: "*Siddhattha*, remove yourself immediately from that seat. It does not belong to you; it belongs to me." Then he threatened, saying: "If you do not vacate it, I will employ this Wheel Weapon. It will annihilate you."

Now a dialogue ensued between the *Bodhisatta* and *Māra*. Said the *Bodhisatta*: "*Māra*, you have neither fulfilled the Ten *Pāramis*, nor the Ten *Upapāramis*, nor the Ten *Paramattha Pāramis*; you have also not performed any unique meritorious deed, such as, the Five Great sacrifices, neither have you conducted yourself with such deeds of merit as to benefit the world of sentient beings. Further, you have not conducted yourself for the growth of your wisdom. But all these have been accomplished and fully perfected by me. Therefore, this seat called the Invincible Throne, rightly belongs to me, not to you."

On hearing this *Māra* was so overcome with rage that he discharged his deadliest annihilating wheel weapon. However, by the power of the *Bodhisatta's* wise reflection on his fulfilling the thirty perfections, this disastrous missile transformed itself into a flower garland and stood suspended in the sky before

the *Bodhisatta*. Now furious then ever, he ordered his troops to hurl down huge rocks and boulders, the size of hilltops, to pulverize the *Bodhisatta*. But these too turned into bunches of celestial flowers before the *Bodhisatta* who remained totally composed recalling how he had fulfilled all the perfections, life after life, from the dim past.

Jumping down from his mount, facing the *Bodhisatta*, *Māra* now impudently raised a dispute. He demanded that *Siddhattha* produce witnesses to prove his claim. The Would-be-Buddha now calmly asked: "*Māra*, who are your witnesses to prove your claim that this Invincible Seat of Enlightenment belongs to you by virtue of your past great deeds of merit." Pointing towards his vast array of troops, *Māra* said: "These are my witnesses." As soon as the fiends heard *Māra's* contention, they shouted in one voice: "I am his witness, I am his witness!"

*Māra* now challenged the *Bodhisatta* saying: "Show me your witness?" In the ensuing dialogue, the *Bodhisatta* serenely said: "Well, you have produced sentient beings as your witness. I do not have any such sentient witness. But I will now call upon this insentient earth to be my witness as proof of the innumerable and great meritorious deeds I have performed in the past. Then, saying: "Let the earth be my witness", he extended his middle finger to touch the earth. Lo and behold! The great earth began to role very fast with the uproar of a thousand thunders, throughout the entire universe, impacting on realm after realm of existence.

This awesome event caused such fright among *Māra's* forces that they quickly bolted helter skelter. *Māra's* mount *Girimekhala* with his huge form, fell on his knees on the ground in sheer panic, then hastily arose to flee, following the entire horde of *Māra's* fiends. Now, overcome by great fear, without looking at this or that side, *Māra* too fled in utter despair.

As *Māra* fled in panic, the celestials, *devas* and *brahmas*, returned from their hiding places, and in one tumultuous voice declared: “The *Bodhisatta* Siddhattha has won, *Māra*, the Evil One, is defeated!” To celebrate this great victory over *Māra*, they appeared before the *Bodhisatta* and devoutly paid homage with celestial flowers. They sang in unison his praise and acclaimed his victory.

Having vanquished *Māra* before sunset in the western horizon, he now plunged into ecstatic meditative absorption. In the first watch of the night, between six and ten p.m., he developed the four *jhānas* one after another. Emerging from the fourth, he then exercised the supernormal powers as a prelude to ascending on the summit of Supreme Enlightenment.

## V. Realisation of Supreme Enlightenment

1. The *Bodhisatta* developed to the fullest extent, the three *Vijjās*, Supernormal Direct Knowledge and Power. He exercised the first supernormal power of recalling his past lives (*Pubbenivāsānussati*). Then the divine vision, that is, the divine power of seeing a chosen object somewhere afar (*Dibba Cakkhu*). In order to realize *Nibbāna*, by penetrating the Four Noble Truths together with the destruction of the insidious mental cankers (*āsava*), he now applied his mind to the task of exercising the third *vijjā* leading to the state of perfection, known as *Arahatship*.

The first *vijjā*, *Pubbenivāsānussati*, enables one to recall past existences, that is, all events and experiences of past lives. This *vijjā* consists of two distinct attainments, namely, supernormal direct knowledge and supernormal power (*ñāṇa* and *abhiññā*). Through his Direct Knowledge he recalled and saw through all the activities, events and experiences of former lives, going back right to hermit Sumedha’s time, when he had been

consecrated a *Bodhisatta* by the Buddha *Dipaṅkara*. Recalling in backward order, he reviewed innumerable lives through four incalculable and hundred thousand aeons, world cycles. Now he extended the same direct knowledge to many previous existences prior to hermit *Sumedha*’s lifetime. Then he recollected in forward order all the existences forming the distinctive process of *Bodhisatta*’s spiritual evolution right up to that of *Setaketu deva*, the divine ruler of *Tusita*, who chose his last birth as prince Siddhattha *Gotama*.

The two components of this first *vijjā*, namely, Direct Knowledge and Power arise simultaneously, working in tandem, as it were. This knowledge enabled the *Bodhisatta* to clearly see and know every detail of all existences backward and forward, while his power enabled him to recall the details. The *Bodhisatta* attained this direct knowledge and supernormal power in the first watch of the night, between six and ten p.m. This attainment assured him of the realisation of Supreme Enlightenment.

In the second watch of the night, between ten p.m. and two a.m., he developed the second *vijjā*, *Dibba cakkhu*, Divine Vision or direct knowledge and (divine) power of seeing through other’s evolutionary processes, life after life, and the underlying causes thereof.

The two components of this direct knowledge and supernormal power are: 1. *Cutūpapāta abhiññā*, the power and knowledge of seeing the deaths and rebirths of other sentient beings. 2. *Yathā Kammūpaga abhiññā*, the power and knowledge of seeing through the underlying causes, which are meritorious or demeritorious volitional activities (*kamma*).

By developing the divine vision during the middle of the night, the *Bodhisatta* clearly saw through how beings die and are reborn i.e., he saw beings on the verge of death, followed

by rebirth into another state of existence. He saw through by means of *Cutūpapāta abhiññā* the details of their lineage etc., that is, how and why beings are lowborn or highborn, beautiful or ugly, rich or poor, etc. Then by means of *yathā Kammūpaga abhiññā* he saw through the underlying causes i.e., the good or bad deeds leading them to such a destiny.

With profound insight he saw through the *kammic* background of the destinies of beings both in states of misery (*Duggati*) and in states of happiness (*Sugati*). In *Duggati* are born those in the hells, or in the worlds of animals, ghosts, or demoniac beings. And in *Sugati* are born those in human, divine and brahma realms. Ability to penetrate with divine vision into the past *kammic* background, or the origin of the destinies of beings also enabled the *Bodhisatta* to foresee the future destinies of sentient beings (*Anāgataṃsa ñāṇa*), based on the accumulated *kammic* formations of good and bad deeds of past and present existences.

By penetrating these two *vijjās*, *Pubbenivāsānussati* and *Dibba cakkhu*, the *Bodhisatta's* mind was now fully empowered to acquire the final and crucial transcendental *vijjā* called *Āsavakkhaya ñāṇa*, destruction of mental cankers, and therewith all defilements, bonds and accumulated *kammās* and their potential results known as “Substratum of rebirth” (*Upadhi*). He developed this third *vijjā* in the third watch of the night, between two a.m. and six a.m.

**Āsavakkhaya ñāṇa:** He began practising insight meditation (*Vipassanā bhāvanā*), based on the law of dependent origination (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*), in forward and backward orders, between two and six a.m. Since his mind was now fully prepared, he quickly developed all the stages of intuitive insight (*vipassanā ñāṇa*), together with the various *jhānas*, step by step, from first

to fourth *jhāna*, as bases for the attainment of the four stages of *lokuttara ñāṇa*, Supramundane direct knowledge and power.

This is how the four stages of *lokuttara ñāṇa* together with the four levels of super sensory ecstatic absorptions, *jhānas*, were developed. Between two and three a.m. he attained the first stage of Supramundane path and fruition insights of *Sotāpatti magga* and *phala ñāṇa*, with first *jhāna* as the base. Between three and four a.m. he attained the second stage of Supramundane path and fruition insights of *Sakadāgāmi magga* and *phala ñāṇa*, with the second *jhāna* as the base. Between four and five a.m. he attained the third stage of Supramundane path and fruition insights of *Anāgāmi magga* and *phala ñāṇa*, with third *jhāna* as the base. Between five and six a.m. he attained the fourth and final stage of Supramundane path and fruition insights of *Arahatta magga* and *phala ñāṇa*, with the fourth *jhāna* as the base.

The *Arahatta magga* and *phala ñāṇa* is also known as *Āsavakkhaya ñāṇa*. Thus, he realised this final stage of spiritual perfection in the last watch of the night and became the *Arahat*, the Perfect One, the Holy Progenitor of all subsequent Perfect Ones. Immediately after becoming the *Arahat*, his Supramundane insight –wisdom pinnacled to the summit of all spiritual attainments, known as *Sabbāññutā ñāṇa*, the state of Omniscience. As the Omniscient One he became the *Sammāsambuddha*, the Supremely Enlightened Buddha, the discoverer of the heritage of Enlightenment.

Since he attained to this summit state of spirituality by perfecting thirty *pāramis*, that is, ten *pāramis* three times over, through an incalculable period of time, independently, by himself alone, without being taught by another, he became the *Swayambhu*, the Self-Become, or incomparable Teacher of gods and men, the Enlightener of beings seeking freedom from

*saṃsāra*; as such, the Lord and Saviour (*Bhagavā*), of the three spheres of existence.

By daybreak, at the juxtaposition of *Vesākha* full moon sinking in the western horizon and the glorious red orb of the sun rising in the eastern sky, at this sacred moment (*subha muhutta*), he completed his momentous, peerless achievement. This caused the entire universe of ten thousand world systems (*dasa saḥassi loka dhātu*) to resound with innumerable and indescribable miracles. With the manifestation of these great omens (*mahā maṅgala*) the Buddha breathed forth two verses of exultation and triumph, found in the *Dhammapada*:

**“*Anekajāti saṃsāraṃ,  
Sandhāvisaṃ anibbisam,  
Gahakāraṃ gavesanto  
Dukkhā jāti punappunam.  
Gahakāraṃ diṭṭhosi,  
Puna gehaṃ na kāhasi,  
Sabbā te phāsukā bhaggā,  
Gahakūtaṃ visaṅkhitam,  
Visaṅkhāra gataṃ cittaṃ,  
Taṇhānaṃ khayamajjhagā.*”**

“Through many a birth in *saṃsāra*,  
Have I wandered, seeking in vain,  
The builder of this house (of life).  
Repeated birth is indeed suffering!”  
“O house builder, you are now seen!  
You will not build this house again,  
For your rafters are broken,  
And your ridgepole shattered.  
My mind has reached the Unconditioned.  
I have attained the destruction of craving.”

*Dhammapada- 153-154.*

## ***Satta Sattāha:***

### **Seven Weeks in Sublime Ecstasy**

Plunged in supramental states of meditative absorption (*samāpatti*), the Buddha spent seven weeks in seven different places in the vicinity of the *Mahābodhi* Tree. During these forty-nine days, after becoming the Supremely Enlightened One (*Sammā Sambuddha*), he did not eat, drink, rinse his mouth, bathe, nor answer the call of nature. Also he did not lie down to rest or to sleep. But the Buddha remained in sitting, standing and walking meditative postures, enjoying the bliss of emancipation through the Supramundane states of Path and Fruition Insights, based on ecstatic meditative absorption (*Jhāna*).

The forty-nine morsels of *Sujāta*'s *Pāyāsa* offering that he had partaken in the forenoon of *Vesākha* full-moon day, had provided him with all the nourishments his body needed. So he continued to be steeped in the attainments of *jhāna* and supernormal states of direct knowledge and power (*Abhiññā*). With his omniscient mind, immersed in *Nibbānic* bliss, he reviewed the infinite expanse and fathomless depths of *Dhamma*, thus bringing to maturation all his unique transcendental attainments.

Immediately after the enlightenment, sitting cross-legged on the ‘Seat of victory’, the All-Knowing Buddha breathed forth two inspired utterances (mentally, called *manasā udāna*) thus:

“Through many a birth in *saṃsāra*,  
Have I wandered, seeking in vain,  
The builder of this house (of life).

Repeated birth indeed is suffering!”  
 “O house builder, you are now seen!  
 You will not build this house again,  
 For your rafters are broken,  
 And your ridgepole shattered.  
 My mind has reached the Unconditioned.  
 I have attained the destruction of craving.”

*Dhammapada-* 153-154.

### I. *Bodhi Pallanka Sattāha:*

#### A Week in meditative absorption under the Mahābodhi Tree

Following the attainment of Omniscience, the Buddha breathed forth (mentally) the *udāna* of two aforesaid ecstatic verses. Seated on the Invincible Throne (Seat of victory) for a whole week, plunged in the state of fourth *Jhāna*, he remained savouring the bliss of *Nibbāna*, born of the victory over *Māra* and his evil forces.

The Buddha now spent the daytime immersed in the *Samatha* (Tranquillity) *Samādhi*. In the nighttime he practised the *Vipassanā* (insight) meditation. During all the three watches of the night (*tiyāma*), from the first to sixth night, he contemplated, with penetrative insight (*Vipassanā ñāna*), on Dependent Origination both, in forward and backward orders. With each night his comprehension of the depth and subtlety of this all-embracing law, increasingly became more and more clear and sharp.

On the seventh night the procedure changed, as stated in the *Udāna Pāli*, a canonical text of the Sacred *Tipiṭaka*. On this last night of the first week, he spent the entire first watch (6 to 10 p.m.) contemplating on the *Paṭicca Samuppāda* just in the forward order. Then in the middle watch (10 p.m. to 2 a.m.), he contemplated in the backward order. In the last watch (2 to 6 a.m.) he contemplated on both forward and backward

orders. This procedural change indicates that his penetration of the Law had reached the height of its clarity and profundity.

With increasingly distinct knowledge of the Law of Dependent origination, the Buddha’s heart overflowed with rapture, in the same way as oil overflows when the lamp is filled up to its brim. So the Perfect One breathed forth *Udāna*, an inspired utterance, at the end of each watch. There are two kinds of such ecstatic utterances, *manasā* (mental) and *vacasā* (verbal) *udānas*. His first *udāna*, following victory over *Māra*, was uttered mentally. At the end of each watch on the seventh day, he uttered *udāna* verbally. Both the mental and verbal *udānas* were later passed on to the Venerable *Ānanda*, Treasurer of the *Dhamma*, to be a part of the text of the *Udāna Pāli*.

Having attained to the summit state of spiritual Perfection, he won Supreme Enlightenment (*Sammāsambodhi*) and became the Discoverer of the Four Noble Truths, ‘hitherto unknown’ in Buddha’s own words, to any divine and human being. This was the culmination of a quest that began when, as *Sumedha*, he received the confirmation at the feet of the Buddha *Dipaṅkara* and was consecrated as *Bodhisatta* simultaneously. Together with *Sammāsambodhi*, he became the Omniscient One (*Sabbaññu*), the Self-Enlightened One (*Swayambhu*), the All-Compassionate One (*Mahā Kāruniko*), the Saviour of the world (*Lokanātho*), and the Supreme Teacher of gods and men (*Satthādevamanussānaṃ*).

### II. *Animisa Sattāha:*

#### Weeklong gaze at the Mahābodhi Tree

During the entire second week the Buddha stood between his seat, the Invincible Throne, and the *Mahābodhi*, gazing at the Tree of Enlightenment, under which he won Supreme

Enlightenment. It is said that some of the divinities in the huge gathering of *Devas* and *Brahma* gods, who watched him seated for the whole of first week, began to question among themselves whether he has indeed become the Buddha.

Being aware of what the divinities thought and in order to dispel their doubts, he rose up to the sky and performed his first miracle, known as the “Twin Miracle” (*Yamaka Pāṭihariyam*), simultaneously emitting fire and water from two sides, left-right, upper-lower, front-back sides of his body. Then he descended on the ground between his seat and the *Mahābodhi*, and stood like a golden post, gazing at the Sacred Tree without ever winking.

He did this to sanctify the *Mahābodhi* tree under which he attained Omniscience, and to spiritually vitalize it, for the benefit of the future followers and devotees who would flock to the place to pay homage out of faith and gratitude. Through the last two thousand and six hundred years the *Mahābodhi* Tree has been the holiest Buddhist shrine to countless Buddhists throughout the world, generation after generation.

### III. *Caṅkamana Sattāha*:

#### Weeklong walking meditation

The Buddha spent the third week walking up and down on an ambulatory, known as ‘Jewel walk’ created by devas. It ran from east to west between his Invincible Throne and the spot on which he stood gazing at the *Mahābodhi* without winking. As he assumed the walking meditation posture, he continued to be absorbed in the supramundane Fruition absorption (*Phala Samāpatti*).

It is to be noted that in three weeks, he assumed three different postures. In the first, he remained sitting, in the second, he

remained standing and in the third, he walked to and fro for the entire week practising *vipassanā*, penetrative Insight meditation.

### IV. *Ratanaghara Sattāha*:

#### Weeklong contemplation in the Jewel Pavilion

After the weeklong walking meditation, the Buddha went to a place on the northwest side of the *Mahābodhi* Tree. He sat there cross-legged sunk in profound contemplation on ways to formulate and present the Four Noble Truths he had discovered. This was to facilitate clear understanding of the followers who also seek enlightenment. He formulated the Noble Eightfold Path, consisting of *Sīla* (Virtue), *Samādhi* (Meditative Concentration) and *Paññā* (Wisdom), as the three steps of spiritual purification and development leading to *Nibbāna*.

Accordingly, the entire Teaching (*Dhamma*) is presented as the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*) consisting of 1. *Vinaya*: representing *Sīla* – for purification and development of morality. 2. *Sutta*: representing *Samādhi* – for purification and development of mind through meditative concentration. 3. *Abhidhamma*: representing purification and development of wisdom through the earnest practice of insight meditation (*Vipassanā*). These three steps are again integrated to the threefold framework of the Teaching, namely,

- 1) Learning or Knowledge of the *Dhamma* (*Pariyatti*).
- 2) Practising or experiencing the *Dhamma* (*Paṭṭatti*).
- 3) Realizing or actualising the Four Noble Truths, the heart of *Dhamma* (*Paṭivedha*).

As he sat in profound contemplation of the *Abhidhamma*, particularly its last part called *Paṭṭhāna*, his body emanated

brilliant rays of six colours, which soon formed into a radiant six-coloured pavilion. This hallowed spot is called *Ratana Ghara*, the Jewel Pavillion, within which the Lord of Wisdom (the Buddha) sat exercising his Unobstructed (*Anāvarana*) Omniscient wisdom for the entire fourth week. This unique act is compared to the swimming, with abandon, of a great whale in the vastness of the open, deep ocean. The whale cannot do this in swallow or restricted water. Even so, the Buddha exercised his profound wisdom in the limitless expanse of the Omniscient vision of *Dhamma*. While doing so, his All-Knowing wisdom, emitted waves of multicoloured intermingling rays of such intensity that they formed the Jewel Pavillion. A golden aura surrounded the Buddha's person, as an outcome of this unique attainment, during his entire mission of forty-five years, which earned him the epithet '*Aṅgīraso*', Emanator of multicoloured Rays.

## V. *Ajapāla Sattāha*:

### **Weeklong contemplation under *Ajapāla* Banyan Tree**

Rising from the Jewel Pavilion, the Buddha went to the *Ajapāla* (Goatherd's Shelter) Banyan Tree and spent the fifth week under it. Sitting cross-legged he contemplated further on the *Dhamma* he had discovered and continued to enjoy the *Nibbānic* bliss through the Supramundane Fruition-absorption (*Phala samāpatti*).

As the name suggests, this was a sprawling ancient tree under which the local goatherds and their charges rested at noon. Others too visited the place to enjoy its peaceful ambience. Under it the Buddha sat deeply engrossed in meditation and reflection of the *Dhamma*.

Now a person nicknamed *Huhuṅkāra* (conceited) brahmin arrived. Presuming the superiority of his caste, he stood before

the Buddha, resting the chin on his walking stick and bending forward. Then he flung a question saying: "Venerable *Gotama*, what makes a person a *brahmana*, a holy man?" Penetrating into his mind as the Buddha became aware of the brahmin's incapacity to discern the Four Noble Truths, he answered in a verse saying:

"A true *brahmana* is a holy man known as *Arahat* who has rid himself of all evil (*bāhita pāpāti brahmana*), who is free from haughtiness having realized *Nibbāna*." The sheer truth of the answer, humbled the brahmin and he departed in haste.

*Māra* has been following the Buddha for six years seeking even the minutest fault. But having so far failed to find one, again approached the Buddha to sow a seed of doubt and discontent in his mind. He said: "Oh Ascetic, you are brooding over all the good things you are missing in this forest – royal possessions, pleasures etc., or over the mistakes you have committed, but dare not face your people. Why not make friends and enjoy life?" The Buddha replied: "I have destroyed all evils and am free from any desire, worry or attachment; hence I remain immersed in ecstatic absorption, contrary to what you are trying to make out with your deceitful intent."

Resentfully, *Māra* then said: "Many ascetics and monks, in spite of renouncing household life, are attached to good things like gold, silver, property or monastic requisites, such as, robes, dwellings etc., saying, 'This is mine'. If you have similar attachments, you will never escape from my domain of the threefold spheres of existence!"

The Buddha replied: "Unlike others, I have no such attachments. I have destroyed all mental defilements, including self-illusion, which says, 'This is mine' etc. Therefore you will never see my path over your domains."

Then in a conciliatory tone *Māra* threw his last ploy at the Buddha, saying: “O Revered *Gotama*, if you know the path to *Nibbāna*, go alone. Why must you teach it to others and convert them?”

The Buddha replied: “Well, *Māra*, however much you try to hinder me, I will continue to teach the noble path leading to the other shore of *Nibbāna* and guide beings to that state of immortality and ultimate peace.”

Thereafter entirely out of his wits, *Māra* conceded defeat, saying: “Oh, Enlightened Buddha of the *Gotama* clan! We give up, although we feel sad, and despondent. Even after trying much to deter you, Lord, we have failed in all our attempts”, and utterly dejected, he disappeared. Then squatting on the road north of the *Mahābodhi* tree he mused in a spirit of self-examination. He scratched sixteen lines on the road, each representing his stock of achievements as against those of the Buddha. He mumbled: “The Buddha had fulfilled the ten Perfections (*Pārami*), three times over, which I have not. Having fulfilled the thirty perfections, he has acquired absolute knowledge and power, concerning six unique attainments, not attained even by *Arahats*, Liberated Ones. I have none of these, namely, 1) Total knowledge of other’s spiritual and moral faculties which indicate the inborn spiritual maturity and moral capacity controlling one’s judgments, intentions, thoughts, feelings, moods etc. (*Indriya Paropariyatti ñāṇa*). 2) Total knowledge of other’s inclinations and dormant unwholesome dispositions (*Āsayānusaya ñāṇa*). 3) Total knowledge over the attainments of boundless compassion (*Mahākarunā samāpatti ñāṇa*). 4) Total knowledge over the performance of Twin Miracle (*Yamaka Pāṭihāriya ñāṇa*). 5) Total knowledge of the Unobstructed Vision (*Anāvarana ñāṇa*). 6) Total knowledge of Omniscience (*Sabbaññutā ñāṇa*). I do not have all these unique achievements. On account of

not having these special supernormal knowledge and powers and transcendental insights, I can never be the Buddha’s equal. He, indeed, is superior.”

Just then *Māra*’s three daughters, *Taṇhā* (craving), *Arati* (aversion) and *Rāga* (passion), thought: “We have not seen our father for some time. Where is he now?” And looked for him with divine vision and found him squatting on the roadside, brooding and scratching lines on the ground. Instantly they appeared before him and said: “Father, why do you look so dejected and disturbed?” *Māra* replied: “Well daughters, this Ascetic *Gotama* has for ever escaped from my domain of the three spheres of the humans, *devas* (divinities) and *brahmas* (Radiant gods). Not contented with this feat, he threatens to convert and carry innumerable others with him. I have been following him all these years seeking some fault to keep him under my sway. But I have failed to find even the minutest fault. I have battled with him; alas, to no avail. Hence I am so disturbed and dejected.”

Said the daughters: “Father please do not worry. We are females, and we know all about female wiles. We will entice this mortal ascetic with our superb divine charms and powers. Rest assured, we will soon bring him to your presence.” *Māra* replied: “Nobody in the three spheres of existence can entice this ascetic *Gotama*. He is well established in the Imperturbable Security of *Nibbāna*. He indeed is beyond our reach.” “Do not worry, we will lure him into our snares of passion and so on”, said the daughters.

These three female deities then appeared before the Buddha and enticingly said to him: “Venerable Recluse, please allow us to attend on you; sitting at your feet we will satisfy all your needs?” The Buddha without opening his eyes, ignored them,



and continued to enjoy the bliss of *Nibbāna* through Fruition-Absorption *Phala Samāpatti*.

These deities then discussed among themselves, saying: “Men have varied tastes; some love the young ones, others like women of different ages and looks. So let us assume various ages and looks and each psychically create a hundred ladies of different ages, looks etc., and allure him.” Accordingly, after creating three hundred ladies, they formed six groups of different ages and looks, and invaded the *Ajapāla* grounds, wave after wave, repeatedly accosting the Buddha to accept their offer of satisfying his needs. The Buddha remained immersed in the Transcendental Fruition Absorption. Being thus ignored, these divine temptresses then mounted their offensive even more vigorously.

Thereafter the Buddha said: “Go away, deities. All your efforts to tempt me are in vain. I have gone beyond all temptations.” Then he uttered these two verses found in the *Dhammapada* (Verse. 179-180)

“By what track can you trace him,  
The trackless Buddha of limitless range,  
Whose victory nothing can undo,  
Whom none of the vanquished defilements,  
Can ever pursue?”

“By what track can you trace him,  
The trackless Buddha of limitless range,  
In whom no longer exists the  
Entangling and embroiling craving,  
That perpetuates repeated existence?”

*Māra*'s daughters praised the Buddha among themselves saying: “Our father has told us the truth. Having attained to

Supreme Enlightenment, he is altogether beyond enticements” and then returned to their father.

During the fifth weeklong stay under *Ajapāla* Banyan tree, the Buddha also contemplated on whom should he honour, as one would honour one's teachers, parents, elders etc. He asked himself: “Having reached the summit of virtue, morality, meditative concentration, wisdom and emancipation, whom should I honour?” Then he surveyed with the Eye of Omniscience, but found none who is superior to him in all the three spheres of existence. So he decided to live only honouring the *Dhamma* he has discovered.

*Brahma Sahampati*, lord of the radiant *brahma* gods becoming aware of the Buddha's thoughts, instantly appeared before him and said: “Blessed One, Buddha, God of gods, what you thought of is right and appropriate. All the past Buddhas only honoured the *Dhamma*. After saying this, the great *brahma* god circumambulated and saluted the Buddha and disappeared.

The great *brahma* god (*Mahābrahma*) lives for an entire aeon (*kappa*), an imponderably long existence which in human years would be virtually an eternity. In the present aeon, known as *Bhadda Kappa* (Auspicious Aeon), there are five Buddhas, four of them have already arisen. The fifth Buddha, Lord *Metteyya* will arise in the future. The longevity of *Mahābrahma*, ruler of the *Brahmaloka*, lasts till the end of the future Buddha's dispensation. Being a disciple of the Omniscient Buddha, he among other gods, is known as a *Sāsana Rakkhaka Deva*, one who protects the Buddha's dispensation. After *Mahābrahma* departed, the Buddha employed his omniscient vision, investigated as to what the great deity said was correct, as such was acceptable.

**VI. *Mucalinda Sattāha*:****Weeklong Absorption under *Mucalinda* Tree**

In the sixth week moving from *Ajapāla* banyan tree, the Buddha went to the *Mucalinda* tree on the bank of lake *Mucalinda*, east of *Mahābodhi* Tree. Sitting under the tree for seven days he remained steeped in the bliss of *Nibbānic* emancipation. As the Buddha sat plunged in ecstatic absorption, a great untimely rain set in. Heavy showers incessantly fell for seven days. Such untimely rains could fall before the onset of the rainy season in July, two months after May full-moon day, when he became the Buddha. Again such non-stop heavy rains fall only on two occasions: When a universal monarch or a *Dhamma* monarch, the Buddha, appears in the world.

Beneath the lake, there was the celestial abode of the great *Nāga* King *Mucalinda*. As the dark clouds gathered and lightening flashed and roared, the *Nāga* King became aware of the untimely rainfall and the presence of the Buddha. He thought: “This unseasonal rain has set in as the Buddha took shelter in my abode. It will be good if a suitable dwelling is provided to him.” The *Nāgarājā* had the power to psychically create a mansion forthwith. But he said to himself: “It will be impolite to display one’s abilities. Let me render service to the Blessed One with my bodily labour.”

So he assumed a huge form and encircled the Buddha with his seven coils and covered the Lord’s head with his expanded hood so as to protect the Buddha from the inclement weather. Severe rains with cold winds and storm blasts continued to pound the area for full seven days. Then *Mucalinda* thought: “Let me survey the upper regions of the sky.” Seeing a cloudless space, he said to himself: “Now, it is unnecessary to cover the

Lord with my coils and hood”, and instantly discarded his huge *Nāga* form and assumed the guise of a handsome youth and stood before the Buddha with clasped hands. Aware of *Nāga* King’s devout mind and service, the Buddha blessed *Mucalinda*. Thereafter he breathed forth the following *Udāna*:

**“*Sukho viveko tuṭṭhassa,  
Sutadhammassa passato,  
Avyāpajjam sukham loke,  
Pāṇabhūtesu saṃyamo.*”**

“In this world seclusion is blissful  
For one who is contented, who with penetrative wisdom, sees  
the true nature of *Dhamma* he has learnt.  
Universal Love (lit. Inoffensiveness) is blissful  
for one who exercises restraint towards all living creatures.”

**“*Sukhā virāgatā loke,  
Kāmānaṃ smatikkamo,  
Asmimānassa yo vinayo,  
Etaṃ ve paramaṃ sukham,*”**

“In this world virtue of dispassion, is blissful,  
Self mastery over sensual pleasures is also blissful;  
But elimination of self-conceit, which says ‘I am’,  
By far is most blissful indeed.”

**VII. *Rājāyatana Sattāha*:****Weeklong stay under the *Rājāyatana* Tree**

In the seventh week, the Buddha moved from the *Mucalinda* tree to *Rājāyatana* tree to the south of the *Mahābodhi* tree. Sitting under the spreading branches of this huge tree, he plunged into the ecstatic absorption of *Phala Samāpatti*, enjoying the bliss of emancipation for a whole week.

On emerging from the *Jhāna*, *Sakka* offered him tooth stick to clean his mouth, water for washing and myrobalan a medicinal fruit to facilitate nature's call. Having completed washing etc., he sat under the tree.

Now two merchant brothers, *Tapussa* and *Bhallika*, were on their way to *Majjhimadesa* from *Ukkala*, their native land, with five hundred cartloads of merchandize for trading. Travelling by the main road, as they neared the *Rājāyatana* tree, their carts stopped, as if stuck in mud, although the road was firm and dry. When the brothers were discussing as to the cause, suddenly a deva appeared from the fork of a tree in their full view. This male deity was closely related to them in the past life. He said to them: "The Buddha, after attaining Supreme Enlightenment, has spent seven weeks in and around the *Mahābodhi* tree, enjoying the *Nibbānic* bliss. Emerging from ecstatic absorption, he is sitting under the *Rājāyatana* tree. He has not taken any food during these forty-nine days. Young men, go and reverentially offer alms-food. It will bring you well-being, prosperity and happiness for a long time!" Then the deva disappeared.

Greatly delighted the merchant brothers carried churned-curd drink (*mantha*) and roasted and powered grain mixed with honey and made into balls (*Madhupiṇḍika*). Having approached the Buddha, they prostrated before him and reverentially offered the alms-food, saying: "Lord, may the Exalted One accept this alms-food. It will conduce to our well-being and happiness for a long time!"

Thereupon the Buddha thought: "The earthen bowl which *Ghaṭikāra Brahma* gave on my renunciation day, disappeared since *Sujātā's* offering of *Pāyāsa* in a golden bowl. Past *Tathāgatas* never received alms-food with their hands. They received alms-food only in bowls." Becoming aware of the

Buddha's thought, the Four Divine Kings and regents of the four cardinal directions, forthwith offered four stone-ware bowls which the Buddha accepted, and placing one bowl upon another, resolved: "Let these become one bowl." Instantly the four bowls were reduced to one bowl with four rims. The Buddha then received the alms-food of churned- curd drink and honey balls in that alms-bowl, partook of them and gave an appropriate *Dhamma* discourse to the merchant brothers.

Then *Tapussa* and *Bhallika* took refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma, saying: "Venerable Sir, we take refuge in the Blessed Lord and his *Dhamma*." They became the first two male followers (*Upāsakas*) who took the two-worded refuge (*Dve vācikā saraṇam*), since the *Saṅgha*-refuge had not yet come into existence. Then the two *upāsakas* earnestly requested: "Blessed Lord, out of compassion, please give us something for our worship in future."

Responding to their devout feeling, the Buddha rubbed his head with the hand and gave them the relics of his hair. After receiving the hair-relic of the Buddha, they exulted in sheer joy, and after completing their trading, returned home, built a votive shrine (*Cetiya*) and enshrined the precious relic in golden casket therein.

### VIII. *Brahma Yācana*

#### *Brahma's request to teach the Dhamma*

Having partaken of the alms-food of the merchant brothers after forty-nine days of ecstatic absorption, the Buddha rose from his seat under the *Rājāyatana* tree and went back to the foot of the *Ajapāla* tree. Sitting crossed-legged in the solitude of this huge banyan tree, he began deeply reflecting on his future course of action. With his omniscient vision he reviewed

the immense profundity and subtlety of the Four Noble Truths he has discovered.

He thought: “Indeed the *Dhamma* is boundless and profound like the vast and fathomless expanse of water that upholds and sustains from below this solid earth. It is also subtle like the tiny and invisible mustard seed that lies under the Mt. Meru. Furthermore this *Dhamma* is noble and peaceful leading one to the state of immortality and absolute peace, bliss and security. This deathless dimension of the *Dhamma* cannot be delved into by logical reasoning. It is beyond the reach of intellect. It can only be realised by Supramundane intuitive insight or wisdom.”

“On the other hand, sentient beings are caught in the net of craving and attachment. They delight in sensual pleasure and cling to worldly existence, therefore are unable to discern the universal law of Dependent Origination, i.e., the mutual relationship of cause and effect which perpetuates worldly existence indefinitely without any purpose. Repeated existence born of craving and attachment is indeed suffering. Only a direct knowledge and vision (*nāṇadassana*) of *Nibbāna* stops the wheel of worldly existence (*samsāra*). If I were to teach this profound *Dhamma* to human and divine beings who are spiritually not yet matured and developed for emancipation from the bonds of worldly existence, they will not understand this noble *Dhamma*. Teaching such beings would only mean tedium and exhaustion for me.”

So the Buddha began to wonder whether it was opportune to teach the *Dhamma* of Four Noble Truths discovered by him through great effort and sacrifice extending to an incalculable period of time. Then these reasons occurred to him for not making an effort yet to teach the *Dhamma*: 1. The minds of

sentient beings were full of defilements, as such are not ready. 2. The noble *Dhamma* is indeed profound and subtle. 3. The *Tathāgatas* greatly revere the *Dhamma* and are disinclined to compromise. 4. Fulfilment of the two essential conditions, namely, the internal condition (*ajjhattika nidāna*) and external condition (*bāhirika nidāna*), have yet to occur. The former is arising of the mind of great compassion (*Mahā Karuṇa nāṇa*) in the Buddha, which had occurred. The latter is the request of the Great Brahma (*Mahā Brahma*) who has lived long enough to have encountered the previous Buddhas, is himself a Buddha-votary, and he is well respected in the world. This second condition has yet to be fulfilled.

Since both conditions had yet to exist, the Buddha continued to reflect. His mental state was comparable to that of a skilled physician who, after examining a patient with serious afflictions, explores about the various ways open to him in order to treat and cure the patient.

Some scholars have tried to make out that this was a dilemma for the Buddha which gave rise to indecision and doubt. Nothing can be more misconstrued than this. It means deliberately misleading people. The Buddha became an Omniscient One. As such he had no doubt whatsoever. Long before he became *Arahat*, he uprooted sceptical doubt even as a Stream-Enterer (*Sotāpanna*).

As the Buddha reflected, looking for the opportune set of circumstances, the great *Brahma Sahampati* became aware of Buddha's thoughts. Concerned about the possibilities of the Buddha being disinclined to teach the *Dhamma*, he thought: “Indeed it would be a misfortune and a loss for devas and men if the Buddha does not teach the *Dhamma*. There will be sentient beings whose eyes are hardly covered with the dust of defilements.

By hearing the *Dhamma* they will comprehend the Noble Truths and be delivered from *saṃsāra*. If such human and divine beings are deprived of the opportunity to hear the *Dhamma*, they will remain in bondage for a long time”.

So he quickly disappeared from the *Brahma loka* and stood before the Buddha. After paying homage, he said: “Blessed Lord, please do teach the *Dhamma*. There will be those who will comprehend the Noble Truths and be delivered. O Deliverer, and *Saviour (Bhagavā)*! There are beings whose eyes are hardly covered with defilements. If they are deprived of this opportunity to listen to the *Dhamma* and attain *Nibbāna*, they will remain in the bondage of *saṃsāra* for a long time. Now in *Magadha*, there are false *Dhammas* propagated by heretics and the people are misled. May the true *Dhamma* be made known for the benefit of human and divine beings.”

After hearing the great *Brahma* god, the Buddha surveyed the world of sentient beings with his omniscient vision and saw beings at different levels of spiritual evolution, comparable to four types of lotus. 1. The type that comes into being and grows at the bottom of the lotus pond. 2. The type that grows and develops halfway between the pond - floor and the water surface. 3. The type that grows and develops at the level of the water surface. 4. The type that grows and stands aloft above the water-surface, so that water cannot wet it.

The Buddha identified four types of individuals corresponding to the types of lotuses:

1. Individuals, who cannot realise *Nibbāna* in the present lifetime, no matter how much they hear and practise the *Dhamma*. Nevertheless, they will build a mental inclination (*vāsanā*) to actualise the *Dhamma* in future lives. They correspond to the first type of lotus.

2. The individuals whose minds remain unchanged no matter how much *Dhamma* they hear, read and try to practise. But upon understanding the Four Noble Truths and by persistent practise, in due course, they could realize the *Dhamma*. They correspond to the second type of lotus.
3. The individuals who remain unchanged by hearing the *Dhamma* in outline. But they would understand the Four Noble Truths when instructed in detail. And upon assiduous practise, could realize the *Dhamma*. They correspond to the third type of lotus.
4. The individuals who understand the Four Noble Truths after hearing the *Dhamma* in outline. And upon brief instruction and practise, they realize the Supramundane *Dhamma* and are spiritually transformed forever. They correspond to the fourth type of lotus.

After discerning the four types of individuals and reflecting on the *Dhamma* suitable to each type, the Buddha decided to teach the *Dhamma* methodically, and in a step by step way. Then he divided all individuals in two categories:

1. Those who are matured and ready to realize the higher (*Supramundane*) truths leading to deliverance (*Bhabba puggalā*).
2. Those who have yet to become matured and ready to realize the higher truths and win deliverance (*Abhabba puggalā*).

Of these two categories, he set aside the consideration of those yet to mature, and took into consideration those who are matured and ready, within the fold of his omniscient vision (*sabbāññūtā nāṇa*). Further he divided them into six groups in keeping with the dormant tendencies or character traits. He thought: “These individuals are passionate type (*rāga carita*),

these are hostile (hateful) type (*dosa carita*), these are deluded type (*moha carita*), these are faithful type (*saddhā carita*), these are discursive type (*vitakka carita*), and these are intelligent type (*buddhi carita*). Thereafter, he resolutely decided to teach the *Dhamma* as suitable to each type of character. Having determined thus, he now replied to the *Mahā Brahma* god in this verse:

**“Apārūtā tesam amatassa dvārā,  
Ye sotavanto pamuccantu saddham,  
Vihimsāsāññī pagunaṃ na bhāsīṃ,  
Dhammaṃ paṇītaṃ manujesu Brahme.”**

“O *Sahampati*, the Great *Brahma*!  
The doors to immortality are now open.  
Let them listen to *Dhamma*, reposing faith,  
So profound, so sublime!  
I did not teach the *Dhamma* to mankind,  
Wondering if it be futile and wearisome.”

Thereupon, *Sahampati Mahā Brahma*, with a feeling of triumph, rejoiced and exclaimed: “The Blessed Lord, the Buddha, has now given the word of assent to teach the *Dhamma*!” Then after saluting and circumambulating the All-Knowing Enlightener vanished and returned to the realm of the *Mahā Brahma*.

### IX. Whom to Preach the *Dhamma* First

After the *Mahā Brahma* left, the Buddha reflected: “To whom should I teach the *Dhamma* first? Who would quickly understand the *Dhamma*?” Then it occurred to him: “The sage *Ālāra* of the *Kālama* clan, is one whose eye of wisdom is free from the dust of defilements (*Apparajakkho puggalo*). It would be good if I taught him first. He will discern the Noble Truths. Just then a deva informed that the sage *Ālāra* has died a week

ago. The Buddha then looked with his omniscient vision to confirm and saw that sage *Ālāra* died a week ago and is reborn in the *Arūpa Brahmalo*. He mused: “It was a great loss for *Ālāra* to have missed the opportunity of realizing *Nibbāna*.”

The Buddha then reflected again: “Now to whom should I teach the *Dhamma* first?” It occurred to him: “The sage *Uddaka Rāmaputta*, like *Ālāra Kālama*, is one whose eye of wisdom is free from the dust of defilement. He will discern the *Dhamma*. Again a deva informed that sage *Uddaka* died at the middle of last night. The Buddha too confirmed with his omniscient vision that sage *Uddaka* died on the previous night and is reborn in the *Arūpa Brahmalo*. He mused: “It was a great loss for sage *Uddaka* to have missed the opportunity of realizing *Nibbāna*. Had he listened to the *Dhamma*, he would have quickly understood the Four Noble Truths and realized *Nibbāna*.”

Then the Buddha reflected further: “Now to whom should I teach the *Dhamma* first?” It occurred to him: “The Group of five ascetics (*Pañcavaggiya*) had served me when I was practising self-mortification for six years in the *Urubela* forest. It would be good if I teach the *Dhamma* to them first. Thereafter through his supernormal power of Divine Vision (*Dibba Cakkhu abhiññā*) he saw them living in the Deer Sanctuary (*Migadāya*) at *Isipatana* (modern Saranath) near *Bārānasi*.

The Buddhas are ever grateful. They never forget any service rendered to them by anyone. So he chose to go to *Isipatana* rather than anywhere else because of a sense of gratitude he owed to them. Having decided to go to the Group of Five to teach the *Dhamma* first, he went for alms-round and then stayed in the high ground of the *Mahābodhi* Tree (*Bodhi Maṇḍala*) for six days, steeped in the bliss of *Nibbāna*.

On the full-moon day of *Āsālha* (July), seven days after forty-nine days of ecstatic absorptions, and two months after becoming the Supremely Enlightened Buddha, he proceeded to *Isipatana*. The Buddhas of the past went to *Migadāya* by air, our present Buddha decided to go to *Isipatana* on foot. He made this change in travelling because he foresaw that Ascetic *Upaka* endowed with merits of past good deeds and destined to become an *Anāgāmi*, was travelling on that road. Having covered by psychic power a distance of about one hundred and twenty five miles (18 *yojana*), between the *Mahābodhi* and *Isipatana*, he arrived at the Deer Sanctuary in the evening.

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## Meeting Ascetic *Upaka*

As he proceeded on foot, Ascetic *Upaka* saw him travelling. So he asked him: “Friend, your complexion is so radiant, your appearance and the sense organs are so bright and clear. Pray, under whom have you become a monk? Who is your teacher? Whose doctrine do you profess?” The Buddha in reply, revealed the nature of his Supreme Enlightenment in these verses:

**1. “*Sabbābhibhu sabbāvidū’hamasmi,  
Sabbesu dhammesu anupalitto,  
Sabbañjaho taṇhakkhaye vimutto,  
Sayam abhiññāya kamuddiseyyam?*”**

“Possessing total knowledge of everything in the three sphere of sentient existence, I have mastery over all things. Free from all mental defilements of the three worlds and having overcome all attachments and destroyed all worldly cravings, I am a Liberated One. Having penetrated all things by myself, with Supramundane Direct Knowledge and Power, whom could I point out as my teacher?”

**2. “*Na me ācariyo atthi,  
Sadiso me na vijjati,  
Sadevakasmiṃ lokasmiṃ,  
Natthi me paṭipuggalo.*”**

“There is no teacher for me,  
There is none who is my peer,  
In this sentient world including gods,  
There is none who can rival me.”

**3. “*Ahaṃ hi Arahā loke,  
Ahaṃ Satthā anuttaro,  
Ekomhi Sammā Sambuddho,  
Sītībhutosmi nibbuto.*”**

“I alone am the Perfect One (*Arahat*) in the world,  
I am also the Incomparable Teacher (of gods and men),  
I am the Sole Supremely Enlightened One,  
Who has extinguished and cooled down the fire of defilements.”

**4. “*Dhammacakkam pavattetuṃ,  
Gacchāmi Kāsinam puram,  
Andhībhūtasmiṃ lokasmiṃ,  
Āhañcham amatadundubhim.*”**

“To set in motion the Wheel of *Dhamma* (Truth),  
I am going to the (*Bārānasi*) city of the Kāsi people.  
To beat the drum of Deathlessness of the *Dhamma.*”  
In this blinded world groping in darkness.

**5. “*Mādisāve Jinā honti,  
Ye pattā āsavakkhayam,  
Jitā me Pāpakā dhammā,  
Tasmā’ham Upako Jino.*”**

“Only Buddhas, as I am, are True Victors,  
Having attained to the Canker-Free state,  
I have vanquished all evil forces,  
Therefore, *Upaka*, I alone am the Victor.”  
Then nodding his head, the ascetic *Upaka* said:  
“My friend, your claim to be the conqueror,  
With infinite knowledge should be true.”  
And turning into a crossroad, he departed.

The Buddha continued on his journey and arrived at the Deer Sanctuary of *Isipatna* in the evening. The five ascetics,

who had served him during his six-year’s self-mortification, and had left him when he took to the path of moderation, were staying at the *Isipatana* Deer Sanctuary. When they saw him from a distance, they made an agreement among themselves, saying: “Friends, here comes the renegade monk *Gotama*. Abandoning the path of penance, he has chosen the life of ease. He gave up practising meditation and began accumulating the four monastic requisites. Let us ignore him when he comes to us. Let us not show respect to him as before, i.e. by bowing to him, carrying his robe, bowl etc., offering him a seat, providing water to wash his feet etc. And let us address him as a friend, not as a teacher.

However, as the Buddha approached closer and closer, they became increasingly affected by the sheer grace and majesty of the Omniscient One (*Buddhānubhāva teja*). Moved by the Buddha’s powerful radiations of loving kindness (*Buddhamettā teja*) all their resolve collapsed. One by one they went forward and received him respectfully, carried his bowl and robe, offered him a seat and water to wash his feet etc. But addressed him as *Āvuso Gotama*, as one would to an equal, and not Venerable Sir (*Bhante*), as one would to a teacher or elder. The Buddha corrected them saying: “Monks, do not address the *Tathāgata* (Truth-Bearer) by the term *Gotama*. I have attained Supreme Enlightenment and have come here to teach you the path to *Nibbāna*, which I have discovered. Give ears and listen heedfully to the *Dhamma* of Four Noble Truths.”

Sceptical that they were, they said: “Despite all your intense efforts and severe penances, you could not achieve enlightenment. Therefore you took to the life of ease, gave up meditation and began collecting the four monastic requisites. Now you are claiming to be an Enlightened One in spite of your lax life-



style.” The Buddha repudiated their false charges, and said: “Give ears and listen heedfully to the *Dhamma*. I will reveal to you the path to enlightenment.” For the second time they repeated their misgivings. For the second time the Buddha said the same thing. For the third time, Being still sceptical when the ascetics persisted, the Buddha emphatically, mentioned in positive terms that he indeed has become a Canker-Free *Arahat*, a Perfect One.

He said: “Monks have you ever heard me speaking to you, in this manner about what has been attained? To this the ascetics became convinced and replied: “No, Venerable Sir (*no hetam Bhante*).” Thereupon the Buddha enunciated about what he has discovered and the nature of his enlightenment. As soon as they heeded to his words paying rapt attention, the Buddha then delivered his first discourse entitled **Setting in motion the Wheel of Truth (*Dhammacakka Pavattana Sutta*)** with the words: “Monks, there are these two extremes (*Dve me, Bhikkhave, antā...*) etc.

This historic sermon was delivered by the All-Knowing Buddha on the full moon day of *Āsāḷha* (July), exactly two months after his Enlightenment on the *Vesakhā* (May) fullmoon day, in the early cool morning at the juxtaposition of the moon setting in the west and the sun rising in the east.

At this sacred moment many things simultaneously occurred: 1. The history of Buddha’s Noble *Dhamma* (Buddhism as the Teaching) of Enlightenment, actually commenced. 2. *Dhamma Ratana* (jewel of the Buddha’s Noble Teaching), known as the *Dhammakāya* (Spiritual Body of the Omniscient Buddha) unfolded to illuminate the hearts of countless beings in all the three spheres of sentient existence. 3. The Buddha *sāsana* (The Noble Dispensation of the Buddha) began to establish those,

who are spiritually matured having fulfilled the Ten Perfections (*Pārami*), on the Path to Nibbāna. 4. The Buddha as the Enlightener (*Bodhetā*) and the Spiritual Master (*Satthā*) of gods and men (*Devamanussānam*), irreversibly rolled forward the heritage of enlightenment (*Bodhi parāyana*) into a living, productive and pragmatic spiritual path. 5. As soon as the Buddha pronounced: “*Dve me Bhikkhave antā* (Monks, there are these two extremes)” the sound spread throughout the universe (lit. ten thousand world-system), illuminating the hearts of those who are ready to be spiritually transformed, crores of *Brahma* gods being among them. 6. As on the occasions of conception, birth and enlightenment, thirty-two extraordinary and awe-inspiring omens appeared throughout the universe impacting on the minds of the seekers of truths.

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## Turning the Wheel of Dhamma

### *Dhammacakka Pavattana Sutta*

*Evaṃ me sutāṃ. Ekaṃ samayaṃ Bhagavā Bārāṇasīyaṃ viharati Isipatane Migadāye. Tatra kho Bhagavā pañcavaggiye bhikkhū āmantesi:*

*“Dveme, bhikkhave, antā pabbajītena na sevitaḃbā. Katame dve? Yo cāyaṃ kāmesu kāmasukhallikānuyogo-hīno, gammo, pothujjaniko, anariyo, anattasamhito.*

*Yo cāyaṃ attakilamathānuyogo-dukkho, anariyo, anattasamhito.*

*Ete kho, bhikkhave, ubho ante anupagamma majjhimā paṭipadā Tathāgatena abhisambuddhā cakkhukaraṇī ñāṇakaraṇī upasamāya abhiññāya sambodhāya nibbānāya samvattati”.*

*“Katamā ca sā, bhikkhave, majjhimā paṭipadā Tathāgatena abhisambuddhā-cakkhukaraṇī, ñāṇakaraṇī, upasamāya, abhiññāya, sambodhāya, nibbānāya samvattati?*

*Ayameva ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo, seyyathīdaṃ:*

*Sammādiṭṭhi, sammā saṅkappo, sammā vācā, sammā kammanto, sammā ājīvo, sammā vāyāmo, sammā satī, sammā samādhī.*

*Ayaṃ kho sā, bhikkhave, majjhimā paṭipadā Tathāgatena abhisambuddhā-cakkhukaraṇī, ñāṇakaraṇī, upasamāya, abhiññāya, sambodhāya, nibbānāya samvattati.*

*“Idaṃ kho pana, bhikkhave, dukkhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ: Jātipi dukkhā, jarāpi dukkhā, byādhīpi dukkho, maraṇampi*

*dukkhaṃ, appiyehi sampayogo dukkho, piyehi vippayogo dukkho, yampicchaṃ na labhati tampi dukkhaṃ; saṅkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā.*

*Idaṃ kho pana, bhikkhave, dukkhasamudayaṃ ariyasaccaṃ: Yāyaṃ taṇhā ponobbhavikā nandirāgasahagatā tatrataṭṭhābhinandinī, seyyathidaṃ: kāmataṇhā, bhavataṇhā, vibhavataṇhā.*

*Idaṃ kho pana, bhikkhave, dukkhanirodhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ: Yo tassāyeva taṇhāya asesavirāganirodho cāgo paṭinissaggo mutti anālayo.*

*Idaṃ kho pana, bhikkhave, dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā ariyasaccaṃ: Ayameva ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo, seyyathidaṃ: sammādiṭṭhi, sammā saṅkappo, sammā vācā, sammā kammanto, sammā ājīvo, sammā vāyāmo, sammā satī, sammā samādhī.*

*Idaṃ dukkhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ’ti me, bhikkhave, pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhuṃ udapādi, ñāṇaṃ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi.*

*Taṃ kho paṇidaṃ dukkhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ pariññeyyaṃ’ti me, bhikkhave, pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhuṃ udapādi, ñāṇaṃ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi.*

*Taṃ kho paṇidaṃ dukkhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ pariññātan’ti me, bhikkhave, pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhuṃ udapādi, ñāṇaṃ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi.*

*Idaṃ dukkhasamudayaṃ ariyasaccaṃ’ti me, bhikkhave, pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhuṃ udapādi, ñāṇaṃ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi.*

*Taṃ kho paṇidaṃ dukkhasamudayaṃ ariyasaccaṃ pahātabban'ti me, bhikkhave, pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhuṃ udapādi, ñāṇaṃ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi.*

*Taṃ kho paṇidaṃ dukkhasamudayaṃ ariyasaccaṃ pahīnan'ti me, bhikkhave, pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhuṃ udapādi, ñāṇaṃ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi.*

*Idaṃ dukkhanirodhaṃ ariyasaccan'ti me, bhikkhave, pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhuṃ udapādi, ñāṇaṃ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi.*

*Taṃ kho paṇidaṃ dukkhanirodhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ sacchikātabban'ti me, bhikkhave, pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhuṃ udapādi, ñāṇaṃ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi.*

*Taṃ kho paṇidaṃ dukkhanirodhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ sacchikatan'ti me, bhikkhave, pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhuṃ udapādi, ñāṇaṃ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi.*

*Idaṃ dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā ariyasaccan'ti me, bhikkhave, pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhuṃ udapādi, ñāṇaṃ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi.*

*Taṃ kho paṇidaṃ dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā ariyasaccaṃ bhāvetabban'ti me, bhikkhave, pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhuṃ udapādi, ñāṇaṃ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi.*

*Taṃ kho paṇidaṃ dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā ariyasaccaṃ bhāvitan'ti me, bhikkhave, pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhuṃ udapādi, ñāṇaṃ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi.*

*“Yāva kīvañca me, bhikkhave, imesu catūsu ariyasaccesu evaṃ tiparivaṭṭaṃ dvādasākāraṃ yathābhūtaṃ ñānadassanaṃ na suvisuddhaṃ ahosi, neva tāvāhaṃ, bhikkhave, sadevake loke samārake sabrahmake sassamaṇabrāhmaṇiyā pajāya sadevamanussāya ‘Anuttaraṃ Sammāsambodhiṃ abhisambuddho’ti paccaññāsim.*

*Yato ca kho me, bhikkhave, imesu catūsu ariyasaccesu evaṃ tiparivaṭṭaṃ dvādasākāraṃ yathābhūtaṃ ñānadassanaṃ suvisuddhaṃ ahosi, athāhaṃ, bhikkhave, sadevake loke samārake sabrahmake sassamaṇabrāhmaṇiyā pajāya sadevamanussāya ‘anuttaraṃ sammāsambodhiṃ abhisambuddho’ti paccaññāsim.*

*Ñāṇaṃca pana me dassanaṃ udapādi ‘Akuppā me cetovimutti, ayamantimā jāti, natthidāni punabbhavo’ti.*

*Idamavoca Bhagavā. Attamaṇā pañcavaggiyā bhikkhū Bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinanduntī.*

*Imasmiñca pana veyyākaraṇasmim bhaññamāne Āyasmato Koṇḍañña virajaṃ vītamalaṃ dhammacakkhuṃ udapādi: “Yaṃ kiñci samudayadhammaṃ, sabbaṃ taṃ nirodhadhammaṃ”ti.*

*Pavattite ca pana Bhagavatā Dhammacakke Bhumā devā saddamanussāvesuṃ: Etaṃ Bhagavatā Bārāṇasiyaṃ Isipatane Migadāye anuttaraṃ Dhammacakkaṃ pavattitaṃ appaṭivattiyāṃ samaṇena vā brāhmaṇena vā devena vā mārena vā brahmunā vā kenaci vā lokasmin’ti.*

*Bhumānaṃ devānaṃ saddaṃ sutvā Cātumahārājikā devā saddamanussāvesuṃ: Etaṃ Bhagavatā Bārāṇasiyaṃ Isipatane Migadāye anuttaraṃ Dhammacakkaṃ pavattitaṃ appaṭivattiyāṃ samaṇena vā brāhmaṇena vā devena vā mārena vā brahmunā vā kenaci vā lokasmin’ti.*

*Cātumahārājikānaṃ devānaṃ saddaṃ sutvā Tāvatiṃsā devā saddamanussāvesuṃ: Etaṃ Bhagavatā Bārāṇasiyaṃ Isipatane Migadāye anuttaraṃ Dhammacakkaṃ pavattitaṃ appaṭivattiyaṃ samaṇena vā brāhmaṇena vā devena vā mārena vā brahmunā vā kenaci vā lokasmin”ti.*

*Tāvatiṃsānaṃ devānaṃ saddaṃ sutvā Yāma deva saddamanussāvesuṃ: Etaṃ Bhagavatā Bārāṇasiyaṃ Isipatane Migadāye anuttaraṃ Dhammacakkaṃ pavattitaṃ appaṭivattiyaṃ samaṇena vā brāhmaṇena vā devena vā mārena vā brahmunā vā kenaci vā lokasmin”ti.*

*Yāmānaṃ devānaṃ saddaṃ sutvā Tusitā devā saddamanussāvesuṃ: Etaṃ Bhagavatā Bārāṇasiyaṃ Isipatane Migadāye anuttaraṃ Dhammacakkaṃ pavattitaṃ appaṭivattiyaṃ samaṇena vā brāhmaṇena vā devena vā mārena vā brahmunā vā kenaci vā lokasmin”ti.*

*Tusitānaṃ devānaṃ saddaṃ sutvā Nimmānaratī devā saddamanussāvesuṃ: Etaṃ Bhagavatā Bārāṇasiyaṃ Isipatane Migadāye anuttaraṃ Dhammacakkaṃ pavattitaṃ appaṭivattiyaṃ samaṇena vā brāhmaṇena vā devena vā mārena vā brahmunā vā kenaci vā lokasmin”ti.*

*Nimmānaratīnaṃ devānaṃ saddaṃ sutvā Paranimmita Vasavattino devā saddamanussāvesuṃ: Etaṃ Bhagavatā Bārāṇasiyaṃ Isipatane Migadāye anuttaraṃ Dhammacakkaṃ pavattitaṃ appaṭivattiyaṃ samaṇena vā brāhmaṇena vā devena vā mārena vā brahmunā vā kenaci vā lokasmin”ti.*

*Paranimmita Vasavattīnaṃ devānaṃ saddaṃ sutvā Brahmakāyikā devā saddamanussāvesuṃ: Etaṃ Bhagavatā Bārāṇasiyaṃ Isipatane Migadāye anuttaraṃ Dhammacakkaṃ pavattitaṃ appaṭivattiyaṃ samaṇena vā brāhmaṇena vā devena vā mārena vā brahmunā vā kenaci vā lokasmin”ti.*

*Itiha tena khaṇena tena layena tena muhuttena yāva brahmalokā saddo abbhuggacchi. Ayaṅca dasasahassi lokadhātu saṅkampi sampakampi sampavedhi.*

*Appamāṇo ca ulāro obhāso loke pāturahosi atikkamma devānaṃ devānubhāvan.*

*Atha kho Bhagavā imaṃ udānaṃ udānesi:*

*“Aññāsi vata bho Koṇḍañño, aññāsi vata bho Koṇḍañño”ti.*

*Iti hidaṃ Āyasmato Koṇḍaññaassa ‘Aññā Koṇḍañño’ tveva nāmaṃ ahosīti.*

## Discourse On Setting In Motion The Wheel Of Truth

Thus have I heard. Once the Blessed one was staying at the Deer Sanctuary in *Isipatana* near *Bārānasi*. There the Blessed one addressed the Group of Five bhikkhus.

*Bhikkhus*, these two extremes, should not be resorted to by one who has renounced worldly life. Which two?

Indulgence in sensual pleasures which is base, vulgar, worldly, ignoble and unsalutary.

And adherence to self-mortification which is painful, ignoble and unsalutary.

*Bhikkhus*, the Middle Path which does not take recourse to both these extremes, and which produces Vision, arouses Insight, leads to Peace, to Supramundane Direct Knowledge, to Enlightenment, to *Nibbāna*, has been discovered by the Truth-Bearer (The Supremely Enlightened One).

And what, *Bhikkhus*, is the Middle Path, discovered by the Truth-Bearer, that produces Vision, arouses Insight, leads to Peace, to Supramundane Direct Knowledge, to Enlightenment, to *Nibbāna* ?

This very Noble Eightfold path, namely, Right Understanding, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Meditative Concentration.

“*Bhikkhus*, indeed, this is the Middle Path, discovered by the Truth-Bearer, that produces Vision, arouses Insight, leads to Peace, to Supramundane Direct Knowledge, to Enlightenment, to *Nibbāna*.

“*Bhikkhus*, this is the noble truth of Suffering, namely: birth is suffering, ageing is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, coming in contact with the disliked is suffering, separation from the liked is suffering, not to get what one desires is suffering, in short, the five aggregates (as objects) of clinging are suffering.

“*Bhikkhus*, this is the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering, namely, this very craving, which gives rise to rebirth, which is accompanied by delight and lust, now taking pleasure in this and now in that. That is, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for recurring existence and craving for annihilation.

“*Bhikkhus*, this is the Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering: The remainderless fading away and cessation of that very craving, abandoning it, turning away from it, freedom and detachment from it.

“*Bhikkhus*, this is the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the cessation of suffering: That is, the Noble Eightfold Path, namely, Right Understanding, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Meditative Concentration.

“*Bhikkhus*, with the realization: “This is the Noble Truth of Suffering” there arose in me the vision of things hitherto unknown (to beings), there arose Insight, Wisdom, Penetration and Light!

“*Bhikkhus*, with the realization: “This Noble Truth of Suffering must be fully comprehended”, there arose in me the vision of things hitherto unknown (to beings), there arose Insight, Wisdom, Penetration and Light!

“*Bhikkhus*, with the realization: “ This Noble Truth of Suffering has been fully comprehended”, there arose in me

the vision of things hitherto unknown (to beings), there arose Insight, Wisdom, Penetration and Light!

“*Bhikkhus*, with the realization: “This is the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering”, there arose in me the vision of things hitherto unknown (to beings), there arose Insight, Wisdom, Penetration and Light!

“*Bhikkhus*, with the realization: “This Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering must be abandoned”, there arose in me the vision of things hitherto unknown (to beings), there arose Insight, Wisdom, Penetration and Light!

“*Bhikkhus*, with the realization: “This Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering has been abandoned”, there arose in me the vision of things hitherto unknown (to beings), there arose Insight, Wisdom, Penetration and Light!

“*Bhikkhus*, with the realization: “This is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering”, there arose in me the vision of things hitherto unknown (to beings), there arose Insight, Wisdom, Penetration and Light !

“*Bhikkhus*, with the realization: “This Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering must be realized”, there arose in me the vision of things hitherto unknown (to beings), there arose Insight, Wisdom, Penetration and Light !

“*Bhikkhus*, with the realization: “This Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering has been realized”, there arose in me the vision of things hitherto unknown (to beings), there arose Insight, Wisdom, Penetration and Light !

“*Bhikkhus*, with the realization: “This is the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering”, there arose in me the vision of things hitherto unknown (to beings), there arose Insight, Wisdom, Penetration and Light !

“*Bhikkhus*, with the realization: “This Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering must be developed”, there arose in me the vision of things hitherto unknown (to beings), there arose Insight, Wisdom, Penetration and Light !

“*Bhikkhus*, with the realization: “This Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering has been developed”, there arose in me the vision of things hitherto unknown (to beings), there arose Insight, Wisdom, Penetration and Light !

“*Bhikkhus*, until my Insight and Vision of these Four Noble Truths, in three modes and twelve ways, had become absolutely perfect and in accordance with Reality, not till then, *bhikkhus*, did I make known to the world, with its *bhikkhus* and holy men, its deities, *māra* gods and *brahma* divinities, kings and commoners, that I had discovered the summit state of Supreme Enlightenment.

But *Bhikkhus*, when my Insight and Vision of these Four Noble Truths, in three modes and twelve ways, had become absolutely perfect and in accordance with Reality, only then, *bhikkhus*, did I make known to the world, with its *bhikkhus* and holy men, its deities, *māra* gods and *brahma* divinities, kings and commoners, that I had discovered the summit state of Supreme Enlightenment.

Indeed, the Insight and Vision arose in me that unshakable is the deliverance of my mind. This is the last birth. Now there is no more rebirth!

Thus spoke the Blessed One. Inspired, the Group of Five *bhikkhus* rejoiced at the words of the Blessed One.

When the discourse was delivered, this Unsullied and Stainless Vision of Truth arose in the Venerable *Konḍañña*, viz., “Whatever is subject to arising, all that is subject to ceasing.”

With the Wheel of Truth thus set in motion by the Blessed one, the Earth-bound (*Bhumma*) Deities proclaimed in one voice, “This Incomparable Wheel of Truth has been set in motion by the Blessed One at the Deer Sanctuary in *Isipatana* near *Bārānasi*, which cannot be reversed by anybody in the world, whether a monk, a holy man, a deity, a *māra* god or a *brahma* divinity.”

Having heard this proclamation of the *Bhumma* deities, the four Regent Deities (*Cātummahārājikā*) proclaimed in one voice, “This Incomparable Wheel of Truth has been set in motion by the Blessed One at the Deer Sanctuary in *Isipatana* near *Bārānasi*, which cannot be reversed by anybody in the world, whether a monk, a holy man, a deity, a *māra* god or a *brahma* divinity.”

Having heard this proclamation of the *Cātummahārājikā* deities, the group of Thirty-Three Deities (*Tāvātimsa*) proclaimed in one voice, “This Incomparable Wheel of Truth has been set in motion by the Blessed One at the Deer Sanctuary in *Isipatana* near *Bārānasi*, which cannot be reversed by anybody in the world, whether a monk, a holy man, a deity, a *māra* god or a *brahma* divinity.”

Having heard this proclamation of the *Tāvātimsa* deities the *Yāma* (Deities Wielding Sway over the Underworld) proclaimed in one voice, “This Incomparable Wheel of Truth ..... or a *brahma* divinity.”

Having heard this proclamation of the *Yāma* deities, the *Tusitā* (Happy Deities) proclaimed in one voice, “This Incomparable Wheel of Truth ..... or a *brahma* divinity.”

Having heard this proclamation of the *Tusitā* deities, the *Nimmānarati* (Deities Delighting in Creativity) proclaimed in

one voice, “This Incomparable Wheel of Truth ..... or a *brahma* divinity.”

Having heard this proclamation of the *Nimmānarati* deities, the *Paranimita Vasavatti* (Deities Having Sway Over Other’s Creativity) proclaimed in one voice, “This Incomparable Wheel of Truth ..... or a *brahma* divinity.”

Having heard this proclamation of the *Paranimita Vasavatti* (*Māra*) deities, the Radiant *Brahma* gods (*Brahmakāyika devā*) proclaimed in one voice, “This Incomparable Wheel of Truth has been set in motion by the Blessed One at the Deer Sanctuary in *Isipatana* near *Bārānasi*, which cannot be reversed by anybody in the world, whether a monk, a holy man, a deity, a *māra* god or a *brahma* divinity.”

Thus, promptly, instantly, and in a flash, this message went forth up to the Realm of the Brahma gods. And indeed this entire universe of ten thousand world-systems quaked, trembled and shook.

Lo! A boundless and sublime illumination manifested surpassing the radiance of the gods.

Then the Blessed One breathed forth this inspired utterance: “Indeed *Kondañña*, you have Realized! Indeed, *Koṇḍañña*, you have Realized !”

It was thus that the Venerable *Kondañña* came to be called ‘*Kondañña*–the-wise.’

## II. Note on *Dhammacakka Pavattana Sutta* – Setting in Motion the Wheel of Truth

Setting in motion the Wheel of Truth is the first discourse of the Buddha delivered after the attainment of Supreme Enlightenment.

The Wheel (*Cakka*) is a Buddhist holistic symbol which stands for the dispensation (*Sāsana*) of the Buddha. Setting in motion the wheel of truth is a picturesque metaphor. The *Buddha Sāsana* was put into operation by the delivery of the first discourse. The dispensation of the Buddha is a design for life to form a bridge between mundane existence and the Transcendental Dimension of Spiritual Freedom.

*Dhammacakka Pavattana Sutta* is the heart of Buddhism comprising the following:

1. Avoidance of extremes, by the middle path.
2. The Noble Eight-fold Path which concretises the Middle Path.
3. The twelve specifics of the Four Noble truths bringing about the spiritual transformation from the mundane to the Supramundane, from bondage to Deliverance.

What the Buddha taught during forty five years of his spiritual mission are the elaboration of these three basic teachings.

The first discourse was addressed to the Group of Five Ascetics at the Deer Sanctuary in *Isipatana* near *Bārānasi*. These ascetics later on became the first five Enlightened Disciples (*Arahats*) of the Buddha.

After the attainment of Supreme Enlightenment, the Buddha had remained immersed in *Samādhi* for seven weeks. Emerging

from these Supramundane ecstatic absorption states, he foresaw his mission. Scanning with his Divine Vision for those who had the capacity to understand his teaching (*Dhamma*), he first saw two sages, *Ālāra* and *Uddaka* with whom he had stayed after he had renounced his princely life, and who had the capacity to understand, but had recently passed away. Projecting his vision, he then saw the five ascetics staying at *Isipatana* who had served him when he was practising self-mortification, but had left him because he had taken to the middle path approach.

So the Buddha journeyed to *Bānārasi* and in due course arrived at Deer Sanctuary. Seeing the Buddha approaching towards the sanctuary the ascetics decided not to welcome him. But as he approached nearer and nearer, their resolve too became weaker and weaker and they ended up welcoming him. However, they addressed the Buddha as they would a friend.

The Buddha immediately corrected them saying: “Do not address the Truth-Bearer (*Tathāgata*) as you would a friend. Monks, the Truth-Bearer is a Perfect One, a Supremely Enlightened One. The Deathless had been realized. Monks, give ear and I will make known the *Dhamma* to you. By committing yourself to *Dhamma* you will soon realize *Nibbāna*.”

The ascetics found fault with him, saying: “Even by those hard, fierce and difficult penances, you could not realize *Nibbāna*, now that you lead a comfortable life, having strayed from the path of penance, how do you say that you have realized *Nibbāna*?”

The Buddha replied: “Monks, the Truth-Bearer has not strayed, nor lives a life of comfort. *Nibbāna* has been achieved give ear to *Dhamma*. By putting it into practise you too will realize *Nibbāna*”. For the second time, they stuck to their sceptical stance. For the third time also the ascetics too raised doubt, the Buddha repeated the same. Now the Buddha asked: “Monks,



do you agree that I have never spoken to you like this before?” Convinced, they said: “Yes Lord.” And positively responded to the call of the Master.

Now their consciousness inclined towards truth. They were open towards truth, a prerequisite for higher spiritual experience. Thereafter the Buddha delivered the *Dhammacakka Pavattana Sutta*, which is a testimony of the Buddha’s spiritual discovery. It is a succinct Sutta enunciating the essence of the Omniscient Buddha’s Teachings, comprising:

1. The two Extreme ways (*Antā*).
2. The Middle Path, also called the Noble Eight Fold Path (*Majjhimāpaṭipadā*).
3. The four Noble Truths (*Cattāri Ariya Saccāni*).
4. The twelve facets of the Fourfold Truth (*Dvādasākāraṃ*).

The Middle or Eightfold Path can be reduced to three modes of developments.

1. *Sīla* - Virtue through practice of moral precepts leading to purification of morality.

2. *Samādhi* – Concentration through meditative practice leading to purification of mind.

3. *Paññā* - Wisdom through practice of *Vipassanā* (insight) meditation leading to transformation of the mind and therewith realisation of *Nibbāna*.

The Four Noble Truths are: Suffering, its cause, its cessation, and the way leading to cessation. When these Four Noble Truths are actualised in three distinct ways, one is established in the Supramundane path leading to *Nibbāna*. One becomes an *Ariya*,

a Noble One, is lastingly settled in the transcendental dimension of spiritual freedom (*Nibbāna*).

When the Buddha delivered the *Dhammacakka Pavattana Sutta*, the ascetic *Kondañña* followed the Teaching with rapt attention and developed the penetrating insight into the Four Noble Truths and became established in the first stage of the Supramundane Fruition stage of Stream-Entrance (*Sotāpatti Phala*) and became an Enlightened Disciple, a Noble Saint of the Holy Order (*Ariya Saṅgha*) of the Buddha. At that very moment eighteen crores of radiant *Brahma* gods, all spiritually matured, also attained to the *Sotāpatti Phala*.

No sooner the Buddha with his omniscient vision saw the spiritual transformation of Venerable *Kondañña*’s mind into a Supramundane State, he joyously exclaimed: “*Aññāsi vata bho Kondañño – Ah, Kondañña* has realized *Nibbāna* with the penetrating Supramundane Fruition Insight of Stream-Entrance.” That is, he has entered into the irreversible stream leading to Enlightenment. Now firmly established in the transcendental dimension, Venerable *Kondañña* requested the Buddha to bestow monastic ordination of a *Bhikkhu*. Thereupon the Buddha stretched out his right hand, in the mode of giving blessings, and declared: “*Ehi Bhikkhu! Svākkhato Dhammo. Cara brahmacariyaṃ sammā dukkhassa antakiriyāya – Come, Bhikkhu!* The Dhamma has been perfectly enunciated. Lead the holy life for the total destruction of suffering of conditioned existence, *samsāra*.” As soon as the All-Knowing Lord pronounced this, the original ascetic appearance of the Venerable *Kondañña* disappeared and he was transformed into a *Bhikkhu* duly provided with all the monastic requisites. Being eighty years of age, he appeared like a senior Elder (*Thera*) with sixty years of monk-hood or monastic seniority.

The Buddha took up the three-month-long Retreat (lit. Residence) of the Rainy season (*Vassā vāsa*) at Deer Sanctuary of *Isipatana*. On the following day he had ascetic *Vappa* stayed at the Park while the four others went out for alms-round and returned with alms-food which all the six partook of. On this day (second) the Buddha intensively instructed ascetic *Vappa* and he too became a Stream-Enterer. Then he asked the Lord for ordination and as in the case of Venerable *Kondañña*, received the ‘*Ehi Bhikkhu*’ ordination. On the third day the Buddha instructed ascetic *Bhaddiya* who also became a Stream-Enterer and received the ‘*Ehi Bhikkhu*’ ordination. On the fourth day the ascetic *Mahānāma* similarly became a Stream-Enterer and was given the ‘*Ehi Bhikkhu*’ ordination. On the fifth day the ascetic *Assaji* stayed back with the Lord while the four others went out for alms-food which all the six partook of. With intensive instruction he too became a Stream-Enterer and received the ‘*Ehi Bhikkhu*’ ordination.

Thus on this fifth day after the *Asāḷha* (July) full-moon day, opened another epoch-making chapter in the history of Buddhism. With all the five monks now established in the Supramundane path, having attained to the first stage of Stream-Entrance Fruition-Insight, the Omniscient Buddha delivered his second discourse entitled the *Anatta Lakkhana Sutta* – Discourse on the characteristics of Non-self or Unsubstantiality. At the conclusion of this major sermon all the five Noble *Bhikkhus* (*Ariyā*) became Arahats, Canker-freed Perfect Ones. They attained to *Arahatta Bodhi*, the Enlightenment of the Perfect Disciple of the Supremely Enlightened Buddha. This fifth day, after the delivery of the discourse on Setting in Motion the Wheel of Truth, has an added significance. It marks the establishment of the Holy Order (*Ariya Saṅgha*) of Enlightened Disciples of the Buddha. Now all the Three Jewels of Buddhism came

into being to fulfil the Mission of the Compassionate Buddha, namely, spreading the *Dhamma*, the Teaching of Enlightenment.

With the attainment of Supreme Enlightenment on the full-moon day of *Vesākha* (May) the Buddha Jewel as the Supreme Teacher of gods and men, came into being. With the Setting in Motion of the Wheel of Truth by the Buddha on the full-moon day of *Āsāḷha* (July), the *Dhamma* Jewel as the Teaching of Enlightenment came into being. With the arising of the Five *Arahats*, Enlightened Disciples, after the delivery of the second sermon, the Discourse on the Characteristics of No-self, the *Saṅgha* Jewel, as the Holy Order of Enlightened Disciples, came into being to perpetuate the Buddha’s Heritage of Enlightenment.

During the first Retreat of the rainy season the nascent *Saṅgha* of five grew quickly. So that by the time the retreat ended, three months later, on the full-moon day of October, there were sixty *Arahats*, Perfect Ones, Enlightened Disciples of the Buddha.

## Anattalakkhaṇa Suttam

### Discourse on Characteristics of No-self

(Saṃyutta Nikāya 2.3.59)

*Ekam samayaṃ Bhagavā Bārāṇasīyaṃ viharati Isipatane migadāye. Tatra kho Bhagavā pañcavaggiye Bhikkhū āmantesi, “Bhikkhavo”ti. “Bhadante”ti te Bhikkhū Bhagavato paccassosum. Bhagavā etadavoca:*

*“Rūpaṃ, bhikkhave, anattā. Rūpañca hidam, bhikkhave, attā abhavissa, nayidam rūpaṃ ābādhāya saṃvatteyya, labbhettha ca rūpe ‘evaṃ me rūpaṃ hotu, evaṃ me rūpaṃ mā ahoṣī’ti. Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, rūpaṃ anattā, tasmā rūpaṃ ābādhāya saṃvattati, na ca labbhati rūpe – ‘evaṃ me rūpaṃ hotu, evaṃ me rūpaṃ mā ahoṣī’ti.”*

*“Vedanā anattā. Vedanā ca hidam, bhikkhave, attā abhavissa, nayidam vedanā ābādhāya saṃvatteyya, labbhettha ca vedanāya, ‘evaṃ me vedanā hotu, evaṃ me vedanā mā ahoṣī’ti. Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, vedanā anattā, tasmā vedanā ābādhāya saṃvattati, na ca labbhati vedanāya, ‘evaṃ me vedanā hotu, evaṃ me vedanā mā ahoṣī’ti.”*

*“Saññā anattā. Saññā ca hidam, bhikkhave, attā abhavissa, nayidam saññā ābādhāya saṃvatteyya, labbhettha ca saññāya, ‘evaṃ me saññā hotu, evaṃ me saññā mā ahoṣī’ti. Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, saññā anattā, tasmā saññā ābādhāya saṃvattati, na ca labbhati saññāya, ‘evaṃ me saññā hotu, evaṃ me saññā mā ahoṣī’ti.”*

*“Saṅkhārā anattā. Saṅkhārā ca hidam, bhikkhave, attā abhavissamsu, nayidam saṅkhārā ābādhāya saṃvatteyyum, labbhettha ca saṅkhāresu ‘evaṃ me saṅkhārā hontu, evaṃ me saṅkhārā mā ahesu’nti. Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave,*

*saṅkhārā anattā, tasmā saṅkhārā ābādhāya saṃvattanti, na ca labbhati saṅkhāresu – ‘evaṃ me saṅkhārā hontu, evaṃ me saṅkhārā mā ahesun’ti.”*

*“Viññāṇam anattā. Viññāṇaṃca hidam, bhikkhave, attā abhavissa, nayidam viññāṇam ābādhāya saṃvatteyya, labbhettha ca viññāṇe – ‘evaṃ me viññāṇam hotu, evaṃ me viññāṇam mā ahoṣī’ti. Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, viññāṇam anattā, tasmā viññāṇam ābādhāya saṃvattati, na ca labbhati viññāṇe – ‘evaṃ me viññāṇam hotu, evaṃ me viññāṇam mā ahoṣī’ti.”*

*“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, bhikkhave, rūpaṃ niccaṃ vā aniccaṃ vā”ti? “Aniccaṃ, Bhante”. “Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vā taṃ sukhaṃ vā”ti? “Dukkhaṃ, bhante”. “Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vipariṇāmadhammaṃ, kallaṃ nu taṃ samanupassitum – ‘etaṃ mama, esohamasmi, eso me attā’ti?” “No hetam, Bhante”.*

*“Vedanā niccā vā aniccā vā”ti? “Aniccā, Bhante”. “Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vā taṃ sukhaṃ vā”ti? “Dukkhaṃ, Bhante”. “Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vipariṇāmadhammaṃ, kallaṃ nu taṃ samanupassitum – ‘etaṃ mama, esohamasmi, eso me attā’ti?” “No hetam, Bhante”.*

*Saññā niccā vā aniccā vā”ti? “Aniccā, Bhante”. “Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vā taṃ sukhaṃ vā”ti? “Dukkhaṃ, Bhante”. “Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vipariṇāmadhammaṃ, kallaṃ nu taṃ samanupassitum – ‘etaṃ mama, esohamasmi, eso me attā’ti?” “No hetam, Bhante”.*

*Saṅkhārā niccā vā aniccā vā”ti? “Aniccā, Bhante”. “Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vā taṃ sukhaṃ vā”ti? “Dukkhaṃ, Bhante”. “Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vipariṇāmadhammaṃ, kallaṃ nu taṃ samanupassitum – ‘etaṃ mama, esohamasmi, eso me attā’ti?” “No hetam, Bhante”.*

*Viññāṇam niccam vā aniccam vā'ti? "Aniccam, Bhante".*  
*"Yaṃ panāniccam dukkham vā taṃ sukham vā'ti?*  
*"Dukkham, Bhante". "Yaṃ panāniccam dukkham*  
*vipariṇāmadhammam, kallaṃ nu taṃ samanupassitum – 'etaṃ*  
*mama, esohamasmi, eso me attā'ti?" "No hetam, Bhante".*

*"Tasmātiha, bhikkhave, yaṃ kiñci rūpaṃ*  
*atītānāgatapaccuppannam ajjhataṃ vā bahiddhā vā oḷārikam*  
*vā sukhumam vā hīnam vā paṇītam vā yaṃ dūre santike vā,*  
*sabbaṃ rūpaṃ – 'netam mama, nesohamasmi, na meso attā'ti*  
*evametaṃ yathābhūtam sammappaññāya datṭhabbam.*

*Yā kāci vedanā atītānāgatapaccuppannā ajjhata vā*  
*bahiddhā vā oḷārikam vā sukhumam vā hīnam vā paṇītam*  
*vā yā dūre santike vā, sabbā vedanā – 'netam mama,*  
*nesohamasmi, na meso attā'ti evametaṃ yathābhūtam*  
*sammappaññāya datṭhabbam.*

*"Yā kāci saññā atītānāgatapaccuppannā ajjhata vā*  
*bahiddhā vā oḷārikam vā sukhumam vā hīnam vā paṇītam*  
*vā yā dūre santike vā, sabbā saññā – 'netam mama,*  
*nesohamasmi, na meso attā'ti evametaṃ yathābhūtam*  
*sammappaññāya datṭhabbam.*

*Ye keci saṅkhārā atītānāgatapaccuppannā ajjhataṃ vā*  
*bahiddhā vā oḷārikam vā sukhumam vā hīnam vā paṇītam*  
*vā yā dūre santike vā, sabbe saṅkhārā – 'netam mama,*  
*nesohamasmi, na meso attā'ti evametaṃ yathābhūtam*  
*sammappaññāya datṭhabbam.*

*"Yaṃ kiñci viññāṇam atītānāgatapaccuppannam ajjhataṃ*  
*vā bahiddhā vā oḷārikam vā sukhumam vā hīnam vā paṇītam*  
*vā yaṃ dūre santike vā, sabbaṃ viññāṇam – 'netam mama,*  
*nesohamasmi, na meso attā'ti evametaṃ yathābhūtam*  
*sammappaññāya datṭhabbam.*

*"Evaṃ passam, bhikkhave, sutavā ariyasāvako rūpasmimpi*  
*nibbindati, vedanāyapi nibbindati, saññāyapi nibbindati,*  
*saṅkhāresupi nibbindati, viññāṇasmimpi nibbindati. Nibbindam*  
*virajjati; virāgā vimuccati. Vimuttasmiṃ vimuttamiti ñāṇam*  
*hoti. 'Khīṇā jāti, vusitaṃ brahmacariyam, kataṃ karaṇīyam,*  
*nāparam itthattāyā'ti pajānātī'ti."*

*Idamavoca Bhagavā. Attamanā pañcavaggiyā bhikkhū*  
*Bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinandum.*

*Imasmiṃca pana veyyākaraṇasmiṃ bhaññamāne*  
*pañcavaggiyānam bhikkhūnam anupādāya āsavehi cittāni*  
*vimuccimsū'ti.*

### Discourse on Characteristics of No-self

*(Saṃyutta Nikāya 2.3.59)*

Once the Blessed One was staying at the Deer Sanctuary in *Isipatana* near *Bārānasi*. There the Blessed One addressed the group of five monks saying: "Monks", "Most Venerable Sir" those monks replied. The Blessed One said this.

"Monks, body (lit. material form) is no-self. For, monks, if body were self, this body would not tend to affliction, and it should be possible for one to say of it: 'Let my body be thus; let my body not be thus'. But because the body is no-self, body tends to affliction, and it is not possible for one to say of it: 'Let my body be thus, let my body not be thus'."

"Feeling is no-self. For, monks, if feeling were self, this feeling would not tend to affliction, and it should be possible for one to say of it: 'Let my feeling be thus; let my feeling not be thus'. But because the feeling is no-self, feeling tends to affliction and it is not possible for one to say of it: 'Let my feeling be thus, let my feeling not be thus'."

“Perception is no-self. For, monks, if perceptions were self, this perception would not tend to affliction, and it should be possible for one to say of it: ‘Let my perception be thus, let my perception not be thus’. But because the perception is no-self, perception tends to affliction, and it is not possible for one to say of it: ‘Let my perception be thus, let my perception not be thus’.”

“Mental formations are no-self. For, monks, if mental formations were self, these mental formations would not tend to affliction, and it should be possible for one to say of them: ‘Let my mental formations be thus, let my mental formations not be thus’. But because mental formations are no-self, mental formations tend to affliction, and it is not possible for one to say of it: ‘Let my mental formations be thus, let my mental formations not be thus’.”

“Consciousness is no-self. For, monks, if consciousness were self, this consciousness would not tend to affliction, and it should be possible for one to say of it: ‘Let my consciousness be thus, let my consciousness not be thus’. But because consciousness is no-self, consciousness tends to affliction, and it is not possible for one to say of it: ‘Let my consciousness be thus, let my consciousness not be thus’.”

“Monks, what do you think: ‘Is body permanent or impermanent?’” “Impermanent, Most Venerable Sir.” “What is impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?” “Suffering, Most Venerable Sir.” “What is impermanent, suffering and subject to change for the worse, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self?’” “No, Most Venerable Sir.”

“Monks, what do you think: ‘Is feeling permanent or impermanent?’” “Impermanent, Most Venerable Sir.” “What is impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?” “Suffering, Most

Venerable Sir.” “What is impermanent, suffering and subject to change, for the worse, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self?’” “No, Most Venerable Sir.”

“Monks, what do you think: ‘Is Perception permanent or impermanent?’” “Impermanent, Most Venerable Sir.” “What is impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?” “Suffering, Most Venerable Sir.” “What is impermanent, suffering and subject to change, for the worse, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self?’” “No, Most Venerable Sir.”

“Monks, what do you think: ‘Are mental formations permanent or impermanent?’” “Impermanent, Most Venerable Sir.” “What is impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?” “Suffering, Most Venerable Sir.” “What is impermanent, suffering and subject to change, for the worse, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self?’” “No, Most Venerable Sir.”

“Monks, what do you think: ‘Is consciousness permanent or impermanent?’” “Impermanent, Most Venerable Sir.” “What is impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?” “Suffering, Most Venerable Sir.” “What is impermanent, suffering and subject to change, for the worse, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self?’” “No, Most Venerable Sir.”

Therefore, monks, any kind of body whatsoever, whether past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near, all kinds of body should be insightfully seen as it really is, thus: “This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.”

Therefore, monks, any kind of feeling whatsoever, whether past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near, all feelings should be insightfully

seen as it really is, thus: “This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.”

Therefore, monks, any kind of perception whatsoever, whether past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near, all perceptions should be insightfully seen as it really is, thus: “This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.”

Therefore, monks, any kind of mental formation whatsoever, whether past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near, all mental formations should be insightfully seen as it really is, thus: “This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.”

Therefore, monks, any kind of consciousness whatsoever, whether past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near, all kinds of consciousness should be insightfully seen as they really are, thus: “This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.”

Monks, seeing thus: the instructed noble disciple experiences distaste towards body, feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness. Experiencing distaste, he becomes dispassionate. Through dispassion he (his mind) is liberated. When so liberated, the knowledge, rooted in clear understanding, arises: “It is liberated”. Wisely he understands: “Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no other task left for this state of being.”

This is what the Blessed One said. Inspired those monks, exulted in the Blessed One’s enunciation. And while this discourse was delivered, the minds of the group of five monks became freed from cankers, through non-clinging.

### **Note on *Anattalakkhana Sutta***

*Anattalakkhana Sutta* is the second discourse of the Buddha, hearing which the first five disciples became *Arahats*, Perfect Ones. These five disciples had gained the first stage of Supramundane path and fruition insights. This *Sutta* describes the nature or characteristics of non-self. *Anatta* is the profoundest and singularly unique teaching of the Buddha, therefore very specific to Buddhism. All religions and philosophic systems in the world posit the concept of a self, soul, ego or *attā*. The Buddha unambiguously rejected this assumption as a mental construct, a concept or idea. Since *Anatta*, no-self, is the true nature of everything, it is a reality, not a concept. Unfortunately, in a world of blind beliefs and wrong views, reality is the casualty. Thus the idea of a self is taken for granted, not examined rationally.

What exactly is non-self? Phenomenal existence (*Samsāra*) is basically ‘conditioned,’ i.e. dependent on many causes and conditions. Everything that exists is impermanent and subject to suffering. There is no abiding substance or core-element which is unaffected by changes and afflictions. Self implies something that is substantial. But, everything, sentient or insentient, is unsubstantial, i.e. an impersonal process dependent on cause-effect relationship.

Again, ‘self’ signifies something that is permanent, which abides on its own, underlies all phenomena, as the master and owner of everything, including one’s personality. Since it owns, it is averse to change and affliction. The truth, however, is that nobody owns anything, much less one’s body and mind, which are changeful, subject to afflictions and death.

The Buddha rejected the idea of ‘self’ on very sound and objective grounds. The *Anattalakkhana Sutta* analyses why everything is *anatta*, non-self. Life, when reduced to its ultimate

content, amounts to a psycho-physical complex, called Mind-Body (*Nāma-Rūpa*) combination. This combination is not arbitrary, nor is it conceptual. It actually exists. It is divided into five aggregates (*Pañca khandhā*), which are visible and verifiable realities. Self, however, is a concept at best, something not factual and not verifiable.

The Buddha said that the five *Khandhas* consist of: Body (*Rūpa*), Feeling (*Vedanā*), Perception (*Saññā*), Mental formations (*Saṅkhārā*) and Consciousness (*Viññāṇa*). *Rūpa* is matter in every form - gross, subtle etc. In this context, it stands for the body, and the remaining four constitute the mind. Mind and body are interdependent, supporting each other, and cannot be separated in a living being.

In the *Anattalakkhana Sutta*, the Buddha taught: “Body is non-self. If body were self, this body would not tend to affliction, and it should be possible for one to say of it: ‘Let my body be thus; let my body not be thus.’ But because the body is non-self, body tends to affliction, and it is not possible for one to say of it: ‘Let my body be thus, let my body not be thus.’ The same logic applies to the remaining four *Khandhas*. This is irrefutable truth!

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## The First Rains Retreat

The two Great Discourses (*Suttas*), namely, Setting in Motion the Wheel of Truth (*Dhammacakka Pavattana Sutta*) and Characteristics of No-self (*Anattalakkhana Sutta*) led the first five monks (*Pañcavaggiya bhikkhu*), to become *Arahats*, Perfect Ones, fully enlightened disciples of the Buddha. The All-Wise One then took up the monastic observance of “Residence of Rains” (*Vassāvāsa*) at the *Isipatana* Deer Sanctuary. During these three months of ‘Rains Retreat’, the Blessed One established the Holy Order (*Saṅgha*) with the addition of fifty-five more *Arahat Bhikkhus*, *Yasa* being the first of them.

### Story of *Arahat Yasa*

*Yasa* was born-high, the son of a wealthy millionaire merchant of *Bārānasi*. His mother was *Sujātā*, daughter of the chief of the *Senāni Gāma*, who had offered the special *pāyāsa*, milk-rice, cooked with honey in a special way with the thick milk drawn from thousand cows, to the Would-be-Buddha (*Bodhisatta Siddhattha*). He had made forty-nine morsels out of this and had eaten them all. These sustained the *Bodhisatta* to become the Supremely Enlightened Buddha who remained immersed in *Sāmadhi* for seven weeks under and in the vicinity of the *Mahā Bodhi* Tree. *Sujātā* played a distinctive role by supplying the nutritious food needed for the *Bodhisatta*’s body during the seven weeks of *Samādhi*. Being privileged to offer the first *Piṇḍapāta*, alms-food, she gained a special place in the history of Buddha *Dhamma*.

The only son of *Sujātā* and her millionaire husband, *Yasa* was brought up in the lap of luxury befitting the status of his

high social standing. He owned three mansions, one for the winter, one for the summer and one for the rainy season. He was provided with all the good things of life and was entertained by a bevy of girls, musicians and dancers. It is said that all the mansions were managed only by these female companions and entertainers. He was kept immersed in this grand sensual indulgence so that he may not be exposed to any form of worldly suffering.

One day while residing at the rain's mansion, he experienced something which profoundly moved him leading to becoming a monk. It seems one night as he was entertained by these beautiful female dancers and musicians, he fell asleep. Seeing him sleeping, all these providers of comfort and pleasure thought it was useless entertaining the young master while he was deeply asleep. So they too went to sleep, some hugging the instruments, some lying in abominable postures, their hairs dishevelled, and saliva trickling from their mouths.

In the middle of the night, *Yasa* suddenly woke up, and seeing this abhorrent sight, began to profoundly reflect, thus: "Look at the loathsome aspect of human body which otherwise appears to be so beautiful and attractive! Seized with an emotional revulsion, he now burst into a solemn utterance (*Udāna*), saying: "Oh, I am so distressed by this (*Upaddutaṃ vata bho*)! Oh, I am so oppressed by this (*Upassatthaṃ vata bho*)! He went through a tormenting experience that shook his entire being. He put on his golden footwear and fled from his mansion that now had the grim appearance of a charnel house. It seems that the guardian devas helped him to come out of his mansion and then through the city gate. He rushed out towards the Deer Sanctuary.

Lord Buddha was walking to and fro at the ambulatory as usual. When *Yasa* approached the place distressfully uttering the *Saṃvega Udāna* (Oh, I am so distressed etc.), the Buddha interrupted his walking meditation, and sat down in a suitable place. Addressing *Yasa* with comforting words he said: "Come hither *Yasa*, this place is free from all distress and oppression!" *Yasa* took off his golden footwear, approached the Buddha, prostrated before him and respectfully sat down on one side.

Thereupon the Buddha began his discourse on *Dhamma* in a gradual way, and step-by-step led him towards the Supramundane attainment of *Sotāpatti*. This step-by-step approach is the special method the Buddha formulated. It comprises of *Dāna Kathā* (Talk on giving), *Sīla Kathā* (Talk on virtue), *Sagga Kathā* (Talk on the divine realms), *Kāmānaṃ ādīnava Kathā* (Talk on the dangers of sensuality), *Nekkhamme ānisaṃsā Kathā* (Talk on the benefit of renunciation) etc. *Yasa's* mind now went through a spiritual transformation as a result of this nine fold (*Navaṅga Dhamma*), step-by-step development of the Dhamma.

When the Buddha became aware of this profound spiritual change of his mind which being free from defilements, was now pellucid and receptive, he then delivered that special teaching of *Dhamma* (*Samukkaṃsika Dhamma*) discovered by him, namely, the Four Noble Truths leading to Supramundane insight and direct vision of *Nibbāna*. *Yasa* now gained the 'Eye of Truth' (*Dhamma Cakkhu*), and became a Stream-Enterer (*Sotāpanna*).

Early in the morning *Yasa's* mother noticed the absence of her son. She quickly went to her husband and said: "Your son is absent". The father immediately dispatched horsemen in all directions to find out *Yasa*. And he himself went towards



the Deer Sanctuary. *Yasa's* wife and mother anxiously went about searching for him but to no avail.

The millionaire businessman found imprints of *Yasa's* golden footwear on the way to *Isipatana*, and carefully following which he reached the place where *Yasa* was seated near the Buddha. When the Buddha saw *Yasa's* father approaching, he exercised his supernormal powers, and willed that *Yasa* be invisible. The father approached the Buddha and respectfully asked whether he had seen his son. The Buddha said: "Well, please sit down, before long you will be able to see your son." The father was greatly pleased when he heard the good news and sat down.

The Buddha then gave a *Dhamma*-discourse in gradual order leading him to the higher stages. When he became aware that the mind of *Yasa's* father had become sufficiently pliable and matured to be able to penetrate into the deeper teachings of the Four Noble Truths, he heightened his discourse in a manner that the wealthy man too became spiritually transformed. With the spiritual transformation, having become *Sotāpanna*, he exulted with rapture and devoutly exclaimed 'Wonderful, Oh, Lord!' 'Excellent, Oh, Lord! As if a man sets upright a thing overturned or reveals that which is hidden, or points out the way to one who has lost his way, or holds a lamp in darkness so that those with eyes may see, even so, the Blessed One has enunciated the teaching so as to open my "Eye of Truth" (*Dhammacakkhu*).

Then he sought to be accepted as a lay follower who has taken refuge in the Buddha, his *Dhamma* and *Saṅgha* from this day to life's end. Thus *Yasa's* father became the first lay follower to seek the triple refuge with the threefold formula of *Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*.

*Tapussa* and *Bhallika*, having offered the first meal under the *Rājāyatana* Tree, at the end of the seventh week, had sought the refuge with the twofold formula, since at that time the *Saṅgha* refuge had not come into being.

On hearing this *Dhamma* discourse given to his father, *Yasa* too underwent a spiritual transformation and become an *Arahat*. The Buddha now withdrew his supernormal power so as to make *Yasa* visible to his father. After seeing the son transformed into a Noble One in the dispensation of the Buddha, he greatly rejoiced. Having become a *Sotāpanna*, he had now gone beyond the egoistic possessive sense. He then invited the Buddha and his disciples for alms-food which the Buddha accepted.

After the departure of his father, *Yasa* requested for monastic ordination and duly received the "*Ehi Bhikkhu*" higher ordination. With the Venerable *Yasa* as a monk, the number of *Arahat* increased to six. The Buddha went to the millionaire's house with his six disciples. The wealthy merchant and his family reverentially offered alms-food. Before the meal the Blessed One delivered a *Dhamma* discourse which brought about spiritual transformation of *Yasa's* mother and former wife who then sought and received the Triple Refuge and became the first two female noble disciples (*Ariyā*).

Venerable *Yasa* had fifty-four friends, all from various distinguished families, with the best of upbringing and education. Four of these friends named *Vimala*, *Subāhu*, *Punnaji* and *Gavampati* were specially close to the Venerable *Yasa*. They heard that their noble friend had become a monk (*Bhikkhu*) in the Holy Order (*Saṅgha*) of the Buddha and has attained to the highest state of spiritual perfection. He was an *Arahat*. They approached the Venerable *Yasa* and was profoundly impressed by seeing the spiritual transformation in him. So

they wanted to follow him and expressed their desire to become monks in the *Saṅgha*. Venerable *Yasa* introduced them to the Lord Buddha, who then delivered a discourse in a way that greatly moved these four friends.

When the Lord became aware that their minds now were ready, he taught them step-by-step the *Dhamma* leading to the Supramundane state, hearing which they also became *Arahats*, and received higher ordination. The remaining fifty friends of Venerable *Yasa* heard that their former friends had become monks and that they had achieved great spiritual perfection. So they all went to Venerable *Yasa* in the same way as the other four friends did. And they too expressed their desire to follow in the footsteps of the Venerable *Yasa* and their friends. Then they were introduced to the Lord who now delivered a discourse on *Dhamma* leading them to the Supramundane state of perfection. They too became *Arahat bhikkhus*, Enlightened Disciples of the Buddha.

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## Sixty Messengers of *Dhamma*

Now the number of *Arahats* rose to sixty within a very short time. They stayed with the Buddha during the entire Rainy Retreat. The Buddha instructed them on *Dhamma* in many ways. When the retreat was over Lord Buddha addressed them thus:

“Monks, I am freed from all bonds whether divine or human.

“You too, monks, are freed from all bonds whether divine or human.

“Go forth, Oh, monks, for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, for the benefit and for the happiness of both gods and men. Let not two of you go by the same way. Preach, Oh, monks, the *Dhamma* which is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle and excellent in the end, both in spirit and latter. Proclaim the Holy life which is altogether perfect and pure.

“There are beings, Oh, monks, with little dust in their eyes, who, not hearing the *Dhamma*, will fall away. There will be those who will understand the *Dhamma*.

“Hoist the Flag of the Sage, preach the sublime *Dhamma*, work for the good of others, you who have accomplished your task.”

These are the first sixty Enlightened Disciples who were sent by the Supreme Teacher (*Satthā*), as the first missionaries of *Dhamma*. They wandered from place to place to preach the Noble *Dhamma*. They had no permanent abode, no material possessions except their three robes to cover and protect the body, and an alms-bowl to collect alms-food. As they wandered

from place to place, their whole time was spent, for the moral and spiritual upliftment of the people, by example and by precept. These sixty enlightened disciples (*Arahats*) of the Buddha, now formed the nucleus of the Holy Order which stand to this day as the oldest historic body of homeless ones, renunciates, leading a pure celibate life and dedicated to the spiritual and moral well-being of all beings, divine and human.

The members of the Holy Order were drawn from all sections of society, from the highest status - kings, nobles, community leaders etc., to the humblest ones, the outcastes and deprived ones. The order was open to all irrespective of caste, class or rank. Both men and women, who were well-educated and from rich families, the sophisticated from the cities and the rustic villagers from rural areas, were admitted as *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunies*.

In the dispensation of the Buddha, many lay followers, both men and women, having led the life of *Dhamma*, attained to the Supramundane states and became Noble Ones, *Ariyas*, who had reached sainthood. Venerable *Yasa's* parents and former wife were the foremost lay followers. They had attained to first stage of sainthood, as the Stream-Enterers, who had entered the irreversible Supramundane stream leading to *Nibbāna*.

These first sixty *Arahats* were ideal Messengers of Truth (*Dhammadūtas*) who propagated the Sublime *Dhamma* of the Buddha, for the good of all; they never resorted to the so-called evangelism, converting people on mass by various dubious worldly ways, such as, by using money and political power. These great *Dhammadūtas* expounded the Noble *Dhamma* entirely out of compassion and concern for other's good, and only to those who wished to hear. The Buddha himself went towards *Uruvela*.

## Thirty Princes

On the way he sat at the foot of a tree in the *Kappāsika* woods. At that time thirty happy young princes, who were half-brothers of the King of Kosala, and lived in *Pāveyya* city, went about tours together. They had the same father but different mothers. They went for a water sport in *Kappāsika* woodland. Twenty-nine of the thirty princely youths went with their wives. Since one of them had no wife, he hired a courtesan and took her with him to amuse themselves. While both men and women were enjoying, the courtesan who did not join in the sport, quietly absconded with the valuable possessions of the princes. Returning from the water sport, to the place where they had kept their belongings, they found out that the woman had stolen their valuables and left, while they were amusing. So they started searching for her all over the woodland and failed to find her. As they moved about searching for the woman, they saw the Buddha seated under a tree. They went to him and enquired whether he had seen a woman passing that way.

The Buddha, who was aware of the entire episode and saw through their spiritual potential, asked them thus: "Young men, which do you think is better, seeking a woman or seeking oneself?" The young men were greatly inspired by the question and said: "Lord, seeking oneself is better". In that case, please sit down, I will make known the *Dhamma* to you". They respectfully bowed down before the Buddha in salutation and said: "Very well, Lord," and sat down. The Buddha taught the *Dhamma* in the step-by-step gradual way leading to the Supramundane states of insight. They all gained the "Eye of

Truth” (*Dhammacakkhu*) and became *Ariyas* in different Supramundane stages of intuitive insight.

Now having become Noble Ones, they sought and received “*Ehi Bhikkhu*” ordination in the Holy Order. As they mostly lived in *Pāveyyaka* city in the western part of *Kosala*, they became known as *Pāveyyaka Theras*. Later they became *Arahats* after hearing the Buddha’s discourse of “*Anamatagga Saṃsāra Vaṭṭa*, The Wheel of Worldly existence has no beginning.”

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### Three *Jaṭila* Hermits and their Disciples

After having established the thirty Noble companions, half-brothers of King *Pasenādi*, in the Supramundane states, leading to irreversible spiritual transformation and after ordaining them as monks, he sent them to the kingdom of *Kosala*, and himself continued on his journey to *Uruvela*.

There were three *Jaṭila* brothers: 1. *Uruvela Kassapa*, the eldest, with five hundred disciples. 2. *Nadi Kassapa*, the middle with three hundred disciples. 3. *Gaya Kassapa*, the youngest with two hundred disciples. They lived in the *Uruvela* area, close to each other on the bank of *Nerañjarā* river. Each brother had established a hermitage, down stream of the river *Nerañjarā*.

When the Buddha arrived at *Uruvela*, he went to the hermitage of *Uruvela Kassapa* and requested him thus: “If it is not too much of a burden to you, Oh, *Kassapa*, I would like to stay at your fire-worshipping place for one night.” *Kassapa* said: “It’s not a burden to me, Oh, Monk, but there is a very Savage and powerful *Nāgā*. I do not want this serpent king to harm you.”

The Buddha again requested for the second time, and again for the third time and received the same reply from *Kassapa*. But since the Buddha requested for the fourth time, saying: “Oh, *Kassapa*, the *Nāga* king cannot harm me, you rest assured,” so *Kassapa* said: “Please stay happily as long as you like.”

After receiving *Kassapa*’s consent the Buddha entered the fire-worshipping place, spread out a small grass mat, and sat cross-legged, practising meditation. As soon as the *Nāga* king saw the Buddha entering the fire shrine, he became very angry,

and instantly blew forth poisonous fumes wanting to destroy him. The Buddha thought: “Why not I overwhelm the *Nāga*’s power with mine, and that without injuring him?” Then he blew forth fumes of greater force, through his supernatural power. Unable to control his anger, the *Nāga* now sent blazing flames. The Buddha counteracted by mightier blazing flames, and soon, having overpowered the *Nāga*, tamed him, and placed him inside his alms bowl.

Seeing the blazing fire illuminating the entire fire shrine, *Uruvela Kassapa* and his hermit disciples gathered and said: “Oh, this handsome monk has now been destroyed by the *Nāga*.” As the night passed and morning came, *Kassapa* came into the fire shrine to see and found the Buddha sitting serenely in meditation. The Buddha told him what happened and how he has tamed the *Nāga*, then showed him the bowl.

This was Buddha’s first miracle. He performed this, firstly to tame and make the *Nāga* King harmless; secondly, in order to send a message to the *Jaṭilas*, particularly to *Uruvela Kassapa*. They got the message and were greatly impressed by the supernatural power of the Buddha.

*Urubela Kassapa*, however, thought: “Indeed, he is a mighty monk with immense supernatural power. But he is not an *Arahat* like me, with the cankers (*āsava*) destroyed.”

The Buddha became aware of his thought and patiently ignored his delusional thinking. *Kassapa* then invited the Buddha saying: “Oh, great Monk, do stay there as long as you want, and I will supply you with food and all other needs”.

The Buddha thought: “Let me live in this wooded place close to *Kassapa*’s hermitage. He became fully aware that *Kassapa* and his hermits had accumulated a great deal of merit, as a spiritual capital. But they need to invest this merit into

the ripening of their spiritual faculties which are still not fully matured. Let me help them to become canker-free *Arahats*”. So he took up residence in the nearby wood and spent the day in meditation.

In the mid-night the Four Divine Kings, regents of the four cardinal directions (*Cātummahārājika devas*), came with all their splendors illuminating the forest to where the Buddha was. Then they paid homage before the Buddha and remained standing at a proper place.

When night had passed *Kassapa* came and said: “The meal is ready, Oh, Great Monk. Please come and have it. Pray who were those bright figures like four big heap of bonfires? They came to your presence illuminating the forest, and devoutly paid homage and remained standing?” The Buddha replied: “*Kassapa*, they were the Four Divine Kings, regents of the four quarters. They came to me to hear the *Dhamma*.”

*Kassapa* thought: “Oh, what a mighty monk he is, endowed with great supernatural powers. So that even the Divine Kings have to come to him to learn the *Dhamma*. But still he is not an *Arahat* like me.”

The Buddha became aware of his thought and although he could prove to the contrary, remained patient, thinking that his spiritual faculties have not yet matured. So he stayed on in the wood, taking the food offered by *Kassapa*. This was the Buddha’s second miracle, performed with the specific purpose of inspiring the *Jaṭilas* who had great faith in supernatural powers.

On the subsequent night, *Sakka*, the Divine Ruler of the *Tāvatiṃsa devaloka*, and overlord of the four regents, illuminating the entire forest with his splendors, came to the presence of the Buddha, paid homage and stood respectfully at one side.

When the night was over, *Kassapa* came early in the morning and said: “It is meal time, Oh, Great Monk. Please come and have your meal. Who was he visiting you in the mid-night illuminating the entire forest with greater brightness, then those of the four divine regents”. The Buddha said: “*Kassapa*, he was *Sakka* the paramount ruler of the devas, He came to hear the *Dhamma*”.

*Uruvela Kassapa* thought: “Oh, what a great monk he is, what a mighty monk he is, that even the divine ruler *Sakka* came to him to hear the *Dhamma*”. Then he thought: “Though he is endowed with such supernormal power, but he is not an *Arahat* like me”. The Buddha remained patient knowing that his spiritual faculties have yet to mature. This was the Buddha’s third miracle, performed to send a message to the *Jaṭila* hermits.

Then on another mid-night *Brahma Sahampati*, with greater splendour illuminating the entire forest, and with greatest brightness, than those of *Cātummahārājika* and *Sakka* devas, came to where the Buddha was, paid homage with due devotion and stood nearby like a huge bonfire.

The following morning *Kassapa* came and informed saying: “The meal is ready Oh, Great Monk. Please come and have it. Who was he that came in your presence, in such great splendour illuminating the entire forest in greater brightness than those who came before and after paying homage, stood nearby like a huge bonfire?” The Buddha replied: “He was *Brahma Sahampati*, *Kassapa*. He came to hear the *Dhamma*”.

*Kassapa* thought in the usual way: “Although he is a mighty monk so that *Brahma Sahampati* came to hear the *Dhamma* from him. But he is not an *Arahat* like me. The Buddha became aware of his delusional thinking, but restrained himself knowing

that he is not yet matured. This was the fourth miracle Buddha performed to send a message to the *Jaṭilas*.

It was the custom of the people of *Aṅga* and *Magadha* to flock and pay homage to *Uruvela Kassapa* once every month in a grand alms-giving festival. On the festive day the Buddha who was in the nearby woods heard all the noise of preparing food, arranging seats, and getting ready to make a ceremonial prostration. Just then *Kassapa* thought: “Such a great alms-giving festival is now underway and people in great masses of *Aṅga* and *Magadha* have come to the hermitage to pay homage and offer large quantities of gifts. If the great monk with his mighty psychic abilities were to display miracle amidst these people, they will pay greater respect and devotion to him. Then his reputation will increase and my decrease. It will be good if the mighty monk will desist from coming to the hermitage for his next meal”.

The Buddha became aware of *Kassapa*’s thought and went to *Uttarakuru* in the Himalayas, gathered alms-food, ate it on the shore of *Anotatta* Lake and passed the day meditating in the nearby sandal wood grove. According to *Mahāvamsa*, he also visited the island of Sri Lanka, knowing that his teachings would flourish there. He returned before the dawn, the next day.

When *Kassapa* came to invite him for the meal, he asked very courteously: “We were wondering why you did not show up. We however kept aside your food.” Then the Buddha asked: “Did you not think in this way before the great festival?” And he mentioned all his thoughts, and concluded, saying: “I therefore went to *Uttarakuru* and spent the day there.”

*Kassapa* now thought: “What a mighty monk as to read my mind! But he is still not an *Arahat* like me.” The Buddha remained patient as usual for his spiritual faculties to ripen.

This was the fifth miracle the Buddha performed to send a message to the *Jaṭilas*.

One day *Paññā*, a girl who served as a maid servant in the home of a merchant of *Senāni Gāma*, died. Her dead body was draped in a coarse cloth and abandoned in the charnel ground. The Buddha picked up this rag from a dust heap to prepare a *paṃsukula* robe. The great earth shook with roaring sound to acclaim this act, the whole sky too roared with thundering sounds as *devas* and *brahmas* applauded this act. Then the Buddha went back to the forest and thought: “Where should this rag be washed?”

*Sakka* became aware of this thought and in an instant created a pond with his supernormal power and told the Buddha: “Lord, may this *paṃsukula* rag be washed in this pond.” When the Buddha washed the rag, again the earth shook and roared as *devas* and *brahmas* applauded. The Buddha, having washed the rag, thought: “Where should this be dyed?” *Sakka* became aware of Buddha’s thought and created a hollowed stone slab on which to dye the cloth etc. then he thought again: “Where shall it be hung to dry?” A deva who lived in the *Kakudha* tree in the vicinity, immediately caused the branch of the tree to bend down and asked the Buddha: “Please hang your cloth on this tree.” After the cloth was hung up he wondered: “Where should it be spread out to make it even?” *Sakka* appeared and said: “Lord, please use this stone slab to make the cloth even.”

In the morning when *Kassapa* came to call him for the meal, he saw this big pond, two stone slabs and bent *Kukudha* branch and asked the Buddha: “How did these happen?” Thereupon the Buddha related all that had happened. *Kassapa* again thought in the same delusional way and the Buddha remained patient. This was the sixth miracle the Buddha performed to send a message to the *Jaṭilas*.

Again on another morning *Kassapa* came to inform that the meal was ready. The Buddha sent him away saying: “You go ahead, *Kassapa*. I will follow”. Then quickly the Buddha disappeared, went to a *Jambu* tree growing at the tip of *Jambudīpa* (southern tip of India), got a *Jambu* fruit and appeared at the hermitage before *Kassapa* had arrived. When *Kassapa* reached his hermitage he saw that the Buddha has arrived before him. So he asked: “Even though I went ahead of you and you were coming after me: “How have you reached here already, by what route did you come?”

The Buddha then described what had happened and gave *Kassapa* the *Jambu* fruit to eat. The fruit had wonderful colour, smell and taste. *Kassapa* was greatly amazed and thought: “What a mighty monk he is with such supernormal power! But he is not an *Arahat* like me”. The Buddha remained patient and accepted the alms-food. This was the seventh miracle the Buddha performed to send a message to the *Jaṭilas*.

The following morning as *Kassapa* came to invite for the meal, Buddha sent him away, saying, you go ahead, I will follow. 1) Then he disappeared, went to the same spot at the tip of *Jambudīpa* and picked up a mango from the tree next to the *Jambu* tree. 2) In the vicinity of the *Jambu* tree there was a *Āmalaka* (Myrobalan) tree, picked up a few fallen fruits. 3) Then he went to the nearby *Haritaka* (Yellow Myrobalan) tree picked up a few fallen fruits. 4) Then he quickly vanished to *Tāvātimsa deva loka*, got a divine coral flower, and with all the four items, arrived at the hermitage before *Kassapa* reached.

*Kassapa* was amazed and said: “What a mighty monk, but still he is not an *Arahat* like me.” These four miracles, eight, ninth, tenth and eleventh, he performed to send a message to the *Jaṭilas*.

On another occasion five hundred *Jaṭilas* wanting to perform fire-worship, were trying to split firewood logs, but failed to do so. *Uruvela Kassapa* reported the matter to the Buddha. The Buddha asked him: “Do you want to have these logs split *Kassapa*?” “Yes, Great Monk” he said, using his supernormal power the Buddha had these logs neatly split into pieces. *Kassapa* thought: “Oh, what a mighty monk! He had five hundred logs split at once, but still he is not an *Arahat* like me”. This was the twelfth miracle, the Buddha performed to send a message to the *Jaṭilas*.

On another occasion five hundred hermits failed to make fire burn in a blaze for the performance of fire-worship. They told *Kassapa* who told the Buddha. He asked: “Do you want to have fires blazing?” “Yes, we do”, said *Kassapa*. The Buddha with his supernormal power had five hundred heaps of bonfire blazing forth at once for each *Jaṭila* to perform fire-worship. *Kassapa* was greatly amazed and appreciated the help he received from the Buddha. But continued to harbour the same delusion that he was the *Arahat*, while Buddha was not. This was the thirteenth miracle, the Buddha performed to send a message to the *Jaṭilas*.

During the winter nights *Uruvela* is extremely cold with icy wind blowing and mist covering the entire area. In this bitter cold temperature these *Jaṭila* hermits observed a painful self-mortifying ritual known as *Antaratthaka*. In the middle of the night when the temperature had fallen very low, these *Jaṭilas* went to the river *Nerañjarā* to have holy dips. That is, they immersed themselves in this terribly cold water, and emerging, violently shivered. This they practised with the false belief that by dipping in the icy cold water in the middle of winter, their sins will be washed away.

Seeing their plight the Buddha created five hundred braziers so that they could warm themselves when they came out of the water. The *Jaṭilas* associated this welcome development with the presence of the Buddha. They told this to *Kassapa* who in turn asked the Buddha. The Buddha gave a positive reply.

*Kassapa* thought: “What a mighty monk he is, to be able to produce five hundred heaps of red hot embers and provide warmth to my followers. But he still is not an *Arahat* like me”. The Buddha became aware of his thought and remained patient waiting for the occasion when his spiritual faculties will ripen. This was Buddha’s fifteenth miracle, performed to send a message to the *Jaṭilas*.

One day suddenly there was a great down pour of torrential, unseasonal rain which submerged the *Uruvela* forest, particularly the low lying areas where the Buddha was staying. Streams of water gushed constantly. So the Buddha thought: “It will be good if I ward off this torrential stream” and then created a dry ground encircled by the flowing water. By applying his supernormal power he warded off the flow of water all around and in this dry ground started practising walking meditation.

When *Uruvela Kassapa* faced this torrential rain and the flood of water rushing with great force he thought: “Let not the Great Monk be carried away”. So he had a boat brought. Then he stood with a few *Jaṭilas* in the boat and went rowing to where the Buddha was staying. He was greatly amazed, when he saw how the Buddha had warded off the torrents and having created a tiny island amidst this gushing flow, was walking to and fro. Unable to believe what he was seeing, he shouted “Great Monk, are you walking up and down in the middle of the water?” The Buddha replied: “Yes, *Kassapa*” and then rising in the sky allowed the hermits to see him. This was Buddha’s



sixteenth miracle. However, *Kassapa* thought: “He certainly is a very mighty monk, but still he is not an *Arahat* like me”.

All along this period Buddha had patiently awaited. After about three months, he became aware that the faculties of the *Jaṭilas* had matured. Then he thought: “Now it is time to instil in *Kassappa* a sense of urgency. I have disregarded his delusional thinking all these months. Now is the time when I should candidly tell him the truth”. So when *Kassapa* approached him to invite for meal, he told him: “*Kassapa* you are not an *Arahat* with the *āsavas* destroyed, nor are you on the Supramundane path leading to the attainment of *Arahatta magga* and *phala*, Path and Fruition insights. It is time for you to understand this.”

Thereupon *Kassapa*, feeling a strong sense of urgency (*saṁvega*), prostrated before him. Then holding the feet of the Lord rubbed his head thereon and requested: “Oh, Blessed One, may I seek to be ordained as a *bhikkhu* in your sacred presence”. The Buddha said: “*Kassapa*, you are the leader of five hundred *Jaṭilas*. It will be improper not to inform them. You should therefore seek their consent and allow them to do whatever they think fit”.

So *Kassapa* went to his five hundred *Jaṭila* disciples and frankly told them: “I want to lead the holy file under the Great Monk, you may do whatever you think fit”. Said the disciples in one voice “Venerable Teacher, we have had faith for a long time in the Great Monk. That is, from the time he tamed the *Nāga*. If you lead the holy life under him all of us would like to do the same”.

Then *Uruvela Kassapa* and his five hundred disciples cut off their matted locks, hair and beard, carried all the fire-sacrificing requisites and threw them into the river *Nerañjarā*. Then they went to the Buddha sought and received the “*Ehi*

*Bhikkhu*” ordination. The Buddha raised his right hand and said “*Etha Bhikkhave*, “Come Monks. Well Proclaimed is The *Dhamma*. Strive to lead the holy life to make an end of the round of suffering”. Instantly by the supernormal powers of the Buddha, all the five hundred *Jaṭilas* were transformed into *bhikkhus*, with all their monastic requisites. Then they paid grateful homage for conferring ordination on them.

*Nadi Kassapa*, the middle brother, with three hundred disciples, noticed all the *Jaṭila* paraphernalia and heaps of matted locks and hair adrift in the *Nerañjarā* river. They lived down stream, not very far away. *Nadi Kassapa* became alarmed and sent a few disciples ahead to find out what had happened and then himself with his disciples went to *Uruvela Kassapa*’s hermitage. Seeing the change in *Uruvela Kassapa* and his disciples, he asked: “Elder brother, is this state of *bhikkhu* nobler than our way?” *Uruvela Kassapa* said that it is not only nobler but it’s a good fortune to have the Buddha as teacher. So they too followed what *Uruvela Kassapa* did, threw away all their *Jaṭila* gears, went before the Buddha, prostrated and requested for *bhikkhu* ordination.

Then the Buddha with the words “*Etha Bhikkhave*” conferred the *bhikkhu* ordination to *Nadi Kassapa* and his three hundred disciples. Further down the stream lived *Gaya Kassapa*, the youngest brother, with two hundred disciples. He too noticed the same as *Nadi Kassapa* did. He went to *Uruvela Kassapa* and did as his middle brother. The Buddha conferred “*Etha Bhikkhave*” ordination to *Gaya Kassapa* and his two hundred disciples. All of them were transformed instantly.

After having freed the three *Jaṭila* brothers and their one thousand hermit followers from their self-mortifying life and belief, the Buddha now set out for *Gayāsīsa*, a rocky outcrop

near *Gayā* town. Having reached *Gayāsīsa*, he sat down on a flat rock together with his thousand and three monks. Then he considered what kind of discourse will be appropriate for these former fire-worshippers and decided to deliver *Āditta pariāya Sutta* – Discourse on burning; that is, the constant burning of the twelve sense-bases (*āyatana*) by eleven types of fire.

This great sutta describes, in detail, how the six senses, their objects and the consciousness based on them, the contact arising thereof and the eighteen kinds of feeling, are constantly burning with the fires of lust, hatred, delusion, birth, ageing, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness and despair.

While the discourse was being delivered by the Buddha, all the one thousand and three monks attained in successive order, the four Supramundane path and fruition insights and became *Arahats* with the *āsavas* destroyed. They were now the Enlightened disciples (*Ariyas*) of the Supremely Enlightened One (*Sammā Sambuddha*).

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## ĀDITTA PARIYĀYA SUTTAM

*Samyutta Nikāya - S.6.6*

*Ekam samayaṃ Bhagavā gayāyaṃ viharati Gayāsīse saddhiṃ bhikkhusahassena. Tatra kho Bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi – “sabbaṃ, bhikkhave, ādittaṃ. Kiñca, bhikkhave, sabbaṃ ādittaṃ? Cakkhu, bhikkhave, ādittaṃ, rūpā ādittā, cakkhaviññāṇaṃ ādittaṃ, cakkhu-samphasso āditto. Yampidaṃ cakkhusamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tampi ādittaṃ. Kena ādittaṃ? ‘Rāgagginā, dosagginā, mohagginā ādittaṃ, jātiyā jarāya maraṇena sokehi paridevehi dukkhehi domanassehi upāyāsehi āditta’nti vadāmi.*

*Soto bhikkhave, ādittaṃ, saddā ādittā, sotaviññāṇaṃ ādittaṃ, sota-samphasso āditto. Yampidaṃ sotasamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tampi ādittaṃ. Kena ādittaṃ? ‘Rāgagginā, dosagginā, mohagginā ādittaṃ, jātiyā jarāya maraṇena sokehi paridevehi dukkhehi domanassehi upāyāsehi āditta’nti vadāmi.*

*Ghānaṃ bhikkhave, ādittaṃ, gandhā ādittā, ghānaviññāṇaṃ ādittaṃ, ghāna-samphasso āditto. Yampidaṃ ghānasamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tampi ādittaṃ. Kena ādittaṃ? ‘Rāgagginā, dosagginā, mohagginā ādittaṃ, jātiyā jarāya maraṇena sokehi paridevehi dukkhehi domanassehi upāyāsehi āditta’nti vadāmi.*

*Jivhā bhikkhave, ādittāṃ, rasā ādittā, jivhāviññāṇaṃ ādittāṃ, jivhāsamphasso āditto. Yampidaṃ*

*jivhāsamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tampi ādittaṃ. Kena ādittaṃ? ‘Rāgagginā, dosagginā, mohagginā ādittaṃ, jātiyā jarāya maraṇena sokehi paridevehi dukkhehi domanassehi upāyāsehi ādittan’ti vadāmi.*

*Kayo bhikkhave, ādittāṃ, phoṭṭabbā ādittā, kāyaviññāṇaṃ ādittaṃ, kāyasamphasso āditto. Yampidaṃ kāyasamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tampi ādittaṃ. Kena ādittaṃ? ‘Rāgagginā, dosagginā, mohagginā ādittaṃ, jātiyā jarāya maraṇena sokehi paridevehi dukkhehi domanassehi upāyāsehi ādittan’ti vadāmi.*

*Mano ādittaṃ, dhammā ādittā, manoviññāṇaṃ ādittaṃ, manosamphasso āditto. Yampidaṃ manosamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tampi ādittaṃ. Kena ādittaṃ? ‘Rāgagginā, dosagginā, mohagginā ādittaṃ, jātiyā jarāya maraṇena sokehi paridevehi dukkhehi domanassehi upāyāsehi ādittan’ti vadāmi.*

*Evam passam, bhikkhave, sutavā ariyasāvako cakkhusmimpi nibbindati, rūpesupi nibbindati, cakkhuvīññāṇepi nibbindati, cakkhusamphassepi nibbindati. Yampidaṃ cakkhusamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tasmimpi nibbindati.*

*Sotasmiṃpi nibbindati, saddesupi nibbindati, sotaviññāṇepi nibbindati, sotasamphassepi nibbindati. Yampidaṃ sotasamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tasmimpi nibbindati.*

*Ghānasmiṃpi nibbindati, gandhesupi nibbindati, ghānaviññāṇepi nibbindati, ghānasamphassepi nibbindati.*

*Yampidaṃ ghānasamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tasmimpi nibbindati.*

*Jivhāsmimpi nibbindati, rasesupi nibbindati, jivhāvīññāṇepi nibbindati, jivhāsamphassepi nibbindati. Yampidaṃ jivhāsamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tasmimpi nibbindati.*

*Kāyasmimpi nibbindati, phoṭṭabbesupi nibbindati, kāyaviññāṇepi nibbindati, kāyasamphassepi nibbindati. Yampidaṃ jivhāsamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tasmimpi nibbindati.*

*Manasmimpi nibbindati, dhammesupi nibbindati, manoviññāṇepi nibbindati. Yampidaṃ manosamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tasmimpi nibbindati.*

*Nibbindam virajjati; virāgā vimuccati; vimuttasmiṃ vimuttami’ti ñāṇaṃ hoti. ‘Khīṇā jāti, vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ, nāparam itthattāyā’ti pajānātī’ti.*

*Idamavoca Bhagavā. Attamanā te bhikkhū Bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinandum. Imasmiṃca pana veyyākaraṇasmiṃ bhaññamāne tassa bhikkhusahassassa anupādāya āsavehi cittāni vimuccimsūti.*

## Discourse on Burning

### *Samyutta Nikāya – S. 6. 6*

Once the Blessed One was staying at *Gayāsīsa*, near *Gayā*, together with a thousand monks. There the Blessed One addressed the monks thus:

“Monks, all is burning. And what, monks, is the all that is burning? The eye is burning; visible forms are burning; eye-consciousness is burning; eye-contact is burning; whatever feeling that arises dependent on eye-contact, whether pleasant or painful or neither pleasant no-painful, that too is burning. Burning with what? Burning with the fire of lust, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of delusion; burning with birth, ageing and death; with sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness and despair, I say.

“Monks, the ear is burning; sounds are burning; ear-consciousness is burning; ear-contact is burning; whatever feeling that arises dependent on ear-contact, whether pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant not-painful, that too is burning. Burning with what? Burning with the fire of lust, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of delusion; burning with birth, ageing and death; with sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness and despair, I say.

“Monks, the nose is burning; smells are burning; nose-consciousness is burning; nose-contact is burning; whatever feeling that arises dependent on nose-contact, whether pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant not-painful, that too is burning. Burning with what? Burning with the fire of lust, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of delusion; burning with birth, ageing and death; with sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness and despair, I say.

“Monks, the tongue is burning; tastes are burning; tastes are burning; tongue-consciousness is burning; tongue-contact

is burning; whatever feeling that arises dependent on tongue-contact, whether pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant no-painful, that too is burning. Burning with what? Burning with the fire of lust, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of delusion; burning with birth, ageing and death; with sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness and despair, I say.”

“Monks, the body is burning; tangibles are burning; body-consciousness is burning; body-contact is burning; whatever feeling that arises dependent on body-contact, whether pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant not-painful, that too is burning. Burning with what? Burning with the fire of lust, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of delusion; burning with birth, ageing and death; with sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness and despair, I say.

“Monks, the mind is burning; mental objects are burning; mind-consciousness is burning; mental-contact is burning; whatever feeling that arises dependent on mental-contact, whether pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant nor-painful, that too is burning. Burning with what? Burning with the fire of lust, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of delusion; burning with birth, ageing and death; with sorrow, lamentation, pain, depression and despair, I say.”

Seeing thus, monks, an instructed noble disciple experiences distaste for the eye, the visible objects, the eye-consciousness, the eye-contact, and the feeling that arises dependent on eye-contact, whether pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant nor-painful.

He experiences distaste for the ear, the sounds, the ear-consciousness, the ear-contact, and the feeling that arises dependent on ear-contact, whether pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant nor-painful.

He experiences distaste for the nose, the smells, the nose-consciousness, the nose-contact, and the feeling that arises dependent on nose-contact, whether pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant nor-painful.

He experiences distaste for the tongue, the tastes, the tongue-consciousness, the tongue-contact, and the feeling that arises dependent on tongue-contact, whether pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant nor-painful.

He experiences distaste for the body, the tangibles, the body-consciousness, the body-contact, and the feeling that arises dependent on body-contact, whether pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant nor-painful.

He experiences distaste for the mind, the mental objects, the mind-consciousness, the mental-contact, and the feeling that arises dependent on mental-contact, whether pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant nor-painful.

By experiencing distaste, he becomes dispassionate. By being dispassionate he (his mind) is liberated. When so liberated there comes the insightful-knowledge: “I am now liberated”. When liberated, with intuitive wisdom he understands: “Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no other task left for this state of being”.

This is what the Blessed One said. Inwardly elated, those monks delighted in Blessed One’s discourse. And while this discourse was being delivered the mind of the thousand monks were liberated from the cankers by non-clinging.

## Note on *Aditta Pariyāya Sutta*

### *Samyutta Nikāya – S. 6.6*

#### The Discourse on Burning

This is Buddha’s third discourse which was delivered at *Gayāsīsa* for the emancipation of these prominent *Jaṭila* teachers and their one thousand disciples. The word *Jaṭila*, lit. means ‘One with matted locks’. *Jaṭilas* were ascetics who practiced fire-sacrifice and self-mortification as means for salvation. With their matted locks, long hair and beard, smeared with ashes, wielding long iron tongs to stir embers during fire-worship, and living a semi-nude life, they looked fierce. They had great faith in magical powers and miracles which inspired fear rather than respect for them among people.

The Buddha, with his ‘All-Knowing Eyes’ saw their spiritual possibilities and stayed in the wood near their hermitage at *Uruvela* forest. He was aware that they had accumulated a great deal of merit, but because of their wrong beliefs and bizarre life-style, this formidable asset remained unutilized and their spiritual faculties not maturing to bring about freedom from worldly bondage.

So the Buddha decided to exercise his supernormal powers to inspire faith in the *Jaṭilas*. Immensely impressed though the teacher *Kassapa* was, he stuck to his delusional thinking thus: “This great monk does possess immense supernormal powers. But he is not an *Arahat*, perfect one, like me”.

At last, the Buddha candidly told him that he is neither an *Arahat* not on the path leading to *Arahatship*. This roused in *Kassapa* a sense of spiritual urgency (*Samvega*) and he prostrated before the Buddha seeking to be accepted as a disciple.

As advised by the compassionate Lord, he went to his disciples and frankly told them that he was seeking refuge in the Buddha, and that they are free to do anything they deemed fit. In one voice, the disciples replied that they too will follow suit.

Thus all three *Jaṭila* teachers and their one thousand disciples sought and received “*Ehi Bhikkhu*” ordination. Then the Buddha accompanied by these former fire-worshippers went to *Gayāsīsa* and delivered *Aditta Pariyāya Sutta*, a befitting discourse on Burning to enable them to attain *Nibbāna*.

The theme of the discourse is the constant burning of the twelve sense bases, (*Āyatana*) by eleven types of fire. The *Sutta* describes in detail how the six senses, their external objects, the six states of consciousness interact, the six types of contact and the eighteen kinds of feeling, arising therewith, are constantly burning with the fires of lust, hatred, and delusion, and of birth, ageing, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, depression and despair.

While this discourse was being delivered by the Buddha, all the one thousand and three monks became *Arahats*.

Having stayed in *Gayāsīsa* for a while he now set out towards *Rājagaha* the capital of King *Bimbisāra* of *Magadha*, together with his *Arahat* Disciples. The Buddha went to *Rajagaha* to comply with the request made by King *Bimbisāra* that when he gain Enlightenment he will visit *Rājagaha*. When he arrived at the outskirts of *Rājagaha* he stayed under the *Suppatittha* banyan tree which offered an extensive shade. Regarded as a shrine, people worshiped the tree. He had arrived in the shrine on the full moon day of *Phussa*.

The king heard from his royal gardener that the Buddha had arrived at the *Supatthita* banyan tree shrine. Hearing this good news, King *Bimbisāra* accompanied by a hundred and

twenty thousand householders went to the shrine. On reaching, King *Bimbisāra* paid homage and sat down in an appropriate place. Among these householders there were two categories of brahmins, some holding right views and others wrong views. The people of first category paid homage to the Buddha and the second just exchanged greeting, some pronounced their names before the Blessed One saying: “Friend *Gotama*, I m the son of so and so” and some make known their clan: “I am of *Vasetha* clan (*gotta*) etc. some brahmins were poor, some wealthy.

Some of the wealthy ones, who did not pay homage, thought: “We should not be familiar and friendly with these monks, lest we have to feed them and so on”. They sat at a distance, many of these brahmins wondered: “Does the Great Monk lead holy life under our great teacher *Uruvela Kassapa* as a disciple, or does *Uruvela Kassapa* lead holy life under the Great Monk?” Being aware of what these brahmins were thinking, the Buddha asked Venerable *Uruvela Kassapa* in verse: “Seeing what, did you abandon fire-worship?” Venerable *Uruvela Kassapa* replied: “Having seen and known the danger of sense pleasures and women who serve in these sacrifices, I have abandoned fire-sacrifices”. The Buddha then asked: “If sense pleasures and females do not delight you, what objects of the divine and human worlds delight you?” Venerable *Kassapa* replied: “Having realized the peace of *Nibbāna* leading to freedom from the bondage of worldly existence, I no longer delight in offering sacrifice or in any other things of the world.

Thereafter Venerable *Uruvela Kassapa*, in order to make known that he was a disciple of the Buddha, and not the other way, arranged his robe revealing the right shoulder. Then he prostrated at the feet of the Buddha, saying: “Blessed Lord, the Supremely Enlightened Buddha is my teacher, I am but a disciple of the Lord.”

Then he rose to the sky first to the height of one Palm tree, and descending prostrated at the feet of the Buddha. Again he rose to the height of two Palm trees and did the same. In this way he went up seven times upto the height of seven Palm trees, and descending prostrated at the feet of the Buddha. Having observed these miracles many brahmins, acclaimed: “Oh, how mighty is the Buddha, so that even the head of the *Jaṭila* hermits, *Uruvela Kassapa*, who had the wrong notion of being an *Arahat*, now has been tamed by the Buddha and liberated him and his disciples from the bondage of *samsāra*.”

The Buddha then gave an appropriate discourse of *Dhamma* in gradual order, step-by-step, leading to the opening of the “Eye of Truth” of a large number of hearers King *Bimbisāra* and hundred ten thousand householders became *Sotāpanas*, being fully established in the Supramundane Threefold Refuge.

Then King *Bimbisāra* addressed the Buddha: “Lord, when I was a young prince I had five aspirations. They are now fulfilled. Firstly, I had wished that the people of *Magadha* anointed me as their king. Secondly, I had wished that the Blessed One, the Buddha, visited this kingdom with me as the king. Thirdly, I had wished that may I be able to pay homage and offer worship to the Buddha when he visited my kingdom. Fourthly, I had wished that the Buddha who visited my kingdom taught me the *Dhamma* leading to *Nibbāna*. Fifthly, I had wished that I understood the Buddha’s *Dhamma* fully. Lord all these five aspirations have now been fulfilled. The Lord has opened my *Dhamma*-Eye of truth, so oh, Blessed One, I take refuge in the Buddha, in his *Dhamma* and *Saṅgha*. May the Lord accept an alms-meal together with the monks in the morning.

Next morning, the Buddha and the monks entered *Rājagaha* for the alms-food from the king. The people of *Rājagaha* jammed

all the roads on both sides to welcome the Buddha and his monks. They chanted verses of praise. *Sakka* himself walked in the guise of a youth, went in that procession along with the monks reciting the well known *gāthā* of worship saying: “*Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā Sambuddhassa.*”

King *Bimbisara* conducted the Buddha and his monks to the royal palace. Served them with choice alms-food with his own hand. While Buddha and his monks were taking the alms food, the king thought about the accommodation of the Buddha in one of his appropriate groves with these five characteristics 1. That it should not be too far from the city. 2. Nor too close to the city, 3. It should have a road both for going to the city and coming from it. 4. Easy excess to it for everybody, 5. Avoidance of the noises of the city, and of the surrounding villages and of the people who are clamouring for pleasures.

After the meal was over, the king offered *Veḷuvana*, the Bamboo grove, to the *Saṅgha* headed by the Buddha. The Buddha accepted the donation. The king had a magnificent monastery built where thousands of monks could reside. After the construction of the monastery the king arranged for a grand festival marking the inauguration of the monastery.

After accepting the *Veḷuvana* monastery from the king, the Buddha addressed the Bhikkhus thus: “*Anujānami, bhikkhave ārāmanī* – monks I allow you to accept the gift of a grove and monastery”. A day after the acceptance of the *Veḷuvana* monastery, the Buddha delivered the *Tirokuḍḍa Sutta* for the release and wellbeing of the large number of *petas*, sprits, who were his former relatives. The background of the *Sutta* is indeed instructive and interesting.

## The Background Story of the *Tirokuḍḍa Sutta*

In the mid-night of the day he had offered the *Veḷuvana* monastery, King *Bimbisāra* experienced a frightful nightmare. He saw around his apartment a huge crowd of evil spirits (*petas*) making terrifying noises. They had very ugly appearances. So the king could not sleep for the whole night.

At daybreak he went to the Buddha and related his terrifying experience and asked the Buddha whether the nightmare presaged any danger to his life. The Buddha calmed him down by saying: “Fear not, Oh king, no danger will befall you.” Then the Lord revealed the account of his past life, saying: “Those evil spirits (*petas*) were your former relatives. At that time you were the chief minister of King *Jayasena*, who was the father of the Buddha *Phussa*, who had appeared in the world ninety-two aeons (*kappa*) ago.

The Buddha *Phussa* had a large retinue of monks. King *Jayasena* became very possessive of his son, now the Buddha. He had three other sons. While these princes were looking after the affairs of the state, the king spent his entire time in looking after the Buddha *Phussa* and his *Saṅgha*. He always referred to them saying: “This is my Buddha, my *Dhamma* and my *Saṅgha*. He built a covered and walled pathway from the palace to the monastery for the Buddha and his disciples to come for the alms-food and return by that walk way.

No citizen ever got a chance to offer alms-food to the Buddha and his community of *Arahat* monks. Even the three princes did not get a chance to serve the Buddha, their elder brother.

So the citizens discussed this matter along with the princes. Together they created a ruse, by way of arranging a fake insurgency in the border areas. The King deputed his three sons to put down the uprising.

On returning from the successful campaign, the King was so pleased with them that he offered to reward them in the form of whatever they wished. The sons said: “Father, we wish no other reward. We only want the reward of permitting us to attend upon the Buddha and honour him. Being possessive of the Buddha he at once refused to grant this reward and said: “You ask any reward other than this. The princes also refused any other reward. So the princes had to modify by asking for the duration of seven years, which the King turned down. So the princes reduced the duration from seven to six then to five, four, three, two, one year. On being denied by the king, they came down further, from twelve months to three months, to receive the king’s reward.

After receiving this reward they quickly got in touch with the chief minister and asked him to have suitable dwellings immediately built for the Buddha and his disciples to spend the next three months of Rain’s Retreat. After making all arrangements, the chief minister informed the princes. Then the three princes with their one thousand body guards conveyed the Buddha and his *Arahat* disciples to their monastery, which was purposely built in a rural, wooded place, not far from the capital. The chief minister also appointed two thousand five hundred attendants to wait upon and serve the Buddha and his monks.

The royal Treasurer and his wife had profound faith in the Triple Gem. They offered to have choice alms-food cooked and served to the Buddha *Phussa* and his monks, and also arranged to feed everyone who served them. The chief minister



also employed eleven thousand people to collect and supply materials for cooking the alms-food in time and offer the alms-meal with devotion.

The alms-offering programme went on very well to the satisfaction of the king, the princes, the chief minister, the treasurer and his wife. Of these eleven thousand people appointed to collect materials, there were a large number of relatives of the chief minister who were corrupt, greedy and wicked. They had even plotted to disturb the alms-offering. But were prevented in time. Then, surreptitiously they stole and ate the food prepared for the Buddha and his *Saṅgha* even before serving the alms-food. They stole a great deal of the cooking provisions and fed their children with the cooked alms-food before the alms-offering. Once they even set fire to the dining pavilion.

After the three months Rain's Retreat, the Buddha and his *Saṅgha* were conveyed back to their monastery in the capital city of *Kāsi*. In due course the Buddha attained *Mahāparinibbāna*. King *Jayasena*, the three princes, the chief minister, the royal treasurer and his wife passed away one after another. All of them were reborn, together with the attendants who devoutly served the Buddha in the divine realms.

The wicked relatives of the chief minister were all reborn in the hell (*Niraya*). Having suffered intensely for long, these denizens of hell were reborn in the world of petas during the time of the Buddha *Kassapa*. One day they went to the Buddha and asked whether they will be freed in his time. The Buddha said: "You will be freed only when the Buddha *Gotama* appeared in the world. Your former relative, the chief minister, will then be King *Bimbisāra*. He will make a great offering of alms-meal, the merits of which will be shared with you. Only when that happened you all will be freed from your misery.

What the Buddha *Kassapa* had predicted that has now happened, said the Buddha to the terror-stricken king. These petas were delivered from that world when king *Bimbisāra* devoutly offered alms-meal to the Buddha and his disciples. First the Buddha applied his supernormal power in such a way that the king was able to see these petas, his former relatives, now in utter misery before alms giving, and in a very happy state after the alms-offering.

The Buddha then gave a discourse for the edification of the listeners. This discourse is known as *Tirokuḍḍa Sutta*.

Later the Buddha related this account many times in order to rouse a sense of spiritual urgency (*Samvega*) among his disciples. From then on the people invariably shared the merits they had acquired through meritorious deeds, with their departed relatives in a solemn ceremony conducted after the alms-offering.

**Tirokuḍḍa Suttam**  
**Discourse on Outside-the-walls**

*1. Tirokuḍḍesu tiṭṭhanti,  
sandhi-saṅghāṭakesu ca;  
Dvārabāhāsu tiṭṭhanti,  
āgantvāna sakam̐ gharam̐.*

The departed spirits keep wailing outside the walls of their former homes or at street junctions and road-forks. They anxiously wait at the entrance doors of their homes.

*2. Pahūte annapānamhi,  
khajjabhojje upaṭṭhite;  
Na tesam̐ koci sarati,  
sattānam̐ kammaṭṭaccayā.*

Though an abundant feast is set out,  
With foods, drinks, eatables and snacks of every kind.  
Yet none of their relatives ever remember them,  
As the result of their past misdeeds.

*3. Evaṃ dadanti nātīnam̐,  
ye honti anukampakā;  
Sucim̐ paṇītam̐ kālena,  
kappiyam̐ pānabhojanam̐.  
Idam̐ vo nātīnam̐ hotu,  
sukhitā hontu nātayo.*

But there are benevolent relatives,  
Who make befitting and timely offerings of  
Wholesome and delicious foods and drinks.  
Then they earnestly wish: “May this offering be  
For our departed relatives, so that they are  
Satisfied and happy with this offering.”

*4. Te ca tattha samāgantvā,  
nātīpetā samāgatā;  
Pahūte annapānamhi,  
sakkaccam̐ anumodare.*

And these departed relatives waiting there for long,  
Now hastily gather there to partake of  
The abundant offerings of foods and drinks,  
And with joyous heart gratefully acknowledge.

*5. Ciram̐ jīvantu no nātī,  
yesam̐ hetu labhāmase;  
Amhākañca katā pūjā,  
dāyakā ca anipphalā.*

They wish “May our relatives be ever happy.  
We have now received the benefits  
of this offering and homage due to us.  
So may our benevolent givers never be without rewards.”

*6. Na hi tattha kasi atthi,  
gorakkhettha na vijjati;  
Vaṇijjā tādisī natthi,  
hiraññena kayākkayam̐.  
Ito dinnena yāpentī,  
petā kālaṅkatā tahiṃ.*

In the realm of the departed spirits  
No such thing exists as agriculture,  
And cattle breeding nor commerce,  
Buying and selling in exchange of money.  
In that forlorn state the departed spirits  
Sustain themselves only with the share of merit  
Made over to them from here.

7. *Unname udakaṃ vuṭṭhaṃ,  
yathā ninnam pavattati;  
Evameva ito dinnam,  
petānam upakappati.*

Just as the rainwaters which fall  
On higher grounds flow downwards to lower areas,  
Even so the shares of merit made over here,  
Accrue to the departed spirits in their realm.

8. *Yathā vārivahā pūrā,  
paripūrenti sāgaram;  
Evameva ito dinnam,  
petānam upakappati.*

Just as, the waters of clouds fill the ocean,  
Even so the shares of merit  
Made over here, accrue  
To departed ones in their realm.

9. *Adāsi me akāsi me,  
ñātimittā sakhā ca me.  
Petānam dakkhiṇam dajjā,  
pubbe katamanussaram.*

“He had given me gifts, he had done me good,  
He was my relative, my friend, my companion.”  
Remembering the past relations  
And actions of the departed relatives  
Should one make over to him  
The share of merit accruing from ones good deeds.

10. *Na hi ruṇṇam vā soko vā,  
yā caññā paridevanā;  
Na tam petānamatthāya,  
evam tiṭṭhanti ñātayo.*

No amount of weeping, grieving or mourning,  
Can ever help the departed spirits.  
By acting thus, the relatives  
Only are unhelpful to them.

11. *Ayañca kho dakkhiṇā dinnā,  
saṅghamhi suppatiṭṭhitā;  
Dīgharattam hitāyassa,  
ṭhānaso upakappati.*

But when this share of merit earned through offerings,  
Are made to the members of the Holy Order,  
Only such acts, then serve the departed  
Relatives for long, by accruing them benefits  
That are instantly effective.

12. *So ñātidhammo ca ayam nidassito,  
Petānam pūjā ca katā uḷārā.  
Balañca bhikkhūnamanuppadinnaṃ,  
Tumhehi puññaṃ pasutaṃ anappakanti.*

The obligation of relatives to their departed ones  
has now been clearly explained.  
An excellent offering is made over  
to the departed spirits.  
The monks too have been nourished  
And at the same time given strength.  
Thus indeed have you acquired great merit!

### Note on *Tirokuḍḍa Sutta*

*Tirokuḍḍa Sutta* is from *Khuddakapāṭha Pāli*, a compact collection of nine suttas. It is also found in *Petavatthu Pāli*. Both *Khuddakapāṭha* and *Petavatthu* belong to *Khuddhaka Nikāya* of the *Sutta Piṭaka*, which contains thousands of Buddha's discourses delivered during forty-five years of his mission of spreading the Enlightening Teaching (*Dhamma*).

The theme of *Tirokuḍḍa Sutta* is sharing of merits acquired by performing good deeds, Such as, offering of alms food to the monks of the holy order (*Saṅgha*). Sharing the merits with the departed ones is a spiritual obligation, the avoidance of which through ignorance or any other mental defilements, handicaps a person in many ways. The living ones owe a duty to the departed ones who anxiously seek help from the former relatives.

The only way one could help a departed one, particularly those who are born in the realm of evil spirits (*Peta*), is by undertaking acts of giving or charity (*dāna*). When somebody dies, no amount of wailing, grieving or mourning helps the departed one. Only acts of generosity and open handed giving in the name of the departed ones can help them. The merits acquired from such good deeds, reach the departed ones and help them in many ways.

Just as rainwater from the high grounds flow down to low lands, even so, the merits earned by a person in the human world, accrue to those former dear ones. Hence merits should be shared with those unfortunate beings who are born in the spirit world and who anxiously seek help from the former relatives.

Lord Buddha delivered *Tirokuḍḍa Sutta* at King *Bimbisāra*'s palace in *Rājagaha*, to bring home the importance of sharing merits with the departed ones.

The *Tirokuḍḍa Sutta* vividly describes the miserable conditions of the spirit world. The beings born there sustain themselves only with what they gain as a result of sharing merits by former relatives. Lord Buddha encouraged his followers to earnestly perform the act of sharing merits as a part of their moral and spiritual practice. Good deeds are to be followed

by a solemn declaration of sharing the merits earned through such acts with all departed ones.

Buddhists belonging to all traditions throughout the world, invariably make over earned merits to departed ones with a solemn declaration saying: “May the merits earned through this good deed, reach my departed ones for their well-being and freedom from suffering”.

The background story of the *Sutta*, provides all the informations concerning how merit is to be shared with the departed ones through a solemn declaration, at a special function arranged for this purpose.

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## The Compact Anthology

### *Khuddaka Pāṭha*

*Khuddaka Pāṭha* is an anthology used as a manual for under-training monks. It is the first book which belongs to the *Khuddaka Nikāya* of the Sacred Buddhist scripture “*The Tipiṭaka*”. It comprises nine suttas culled from different books of the *Tipiṭaka*. For instance, the Three Refuges (*Saranattaya*) and Ten Precepts (*Dasa Sikkhāpadāni*) are collected from the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, the Book of Monastic Discipline; the Thirty two parts of the body (*Dvātiṃsākāra*) is culled from *Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, *Dīgha Nikāya*; Novice Monk’s Catechism (*Kumāra Pañha*) is collected from *Saṅgīti Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*; the Three Protective Discourses (*Paritta Suttas*), namely, *Mahā Maṅgala*, *Ratana* and *Karaṇīya Mettā Suttas*, are chosen from the *Sutta Nipāta* of *Khuddaka Nikāya*; *Tirokuḍḍa Sutta* is from the Stories of the Departed ones (*Peta Vatthu*); Treasure Trove (*Nidhikaṇḍa Sutta*) is the only *Sutta* which belongs to *Khuddaka Pāṭha*. That is, with this *sutta* as the original text, eight others were added to form the anthology.

As to the arrangement of this small work, there seems to be a consistency of purpose, which is, conformity with the step-by-step, gradual (*anupubba*) teaching and training of the *Dhamma*. This is a special method the Buddha adopted to help the spiritual seekers.

When a spiritual aspirant goes for refuge to the *Buddha*, to the *Dhamma* and to the *Saṅgha* (Three Refuges), he is seeking protection against evil and safety for himself. He undertakes to observe the Ten Precepts (*Dasa Sikkhāpadāni*) for cultivation of virtue through moral purification and practises meditation to remove defilements and to purify the mind.

He takes up the *Asubha* (impurity) meditation with the thirty-two bodily parts as objects, to overcome sensual desire (*kāma*

*rāga*). When a person becomes aware of the inherent impurities of the body, he abandons his infatuation with the bodily attractiveness or beauty, thus develops mental purity and wisdom (=insight into reality). Then he takes up an in-depth study (*pariyatti*) and practise (*Paṭipatti*) of the Buddha’s teachings (*Dhamma*) as found in *Kumāra Pañha*.

The Ten Questions in this section were put by the Lord Buddha himself and answered by a young (*Kumāra*) novice, who had already become an *Arahat*. He answered all the questions with consummate skill and clarity, which only an enlightened disciple can do. The Questions were put in a numerical order; e.g. what is the One? What are the twos... threes... etc., upto the tenth? The answers being ‘Nutriment’ that sustains life of beings, i.e., the one factor which sustains life is Nutriment, both material and mental. Similarly, the two factors to which all phenomena of existence could be reduced to, are Mind and Matter (*Nāma-rūpa*, lit. Mentality and Materiality). Answer to the tenth is ‘The ten Supramundane attainments of an *Arahat* – a Perfected disciple of the Buddha. These attainments constitute the ultimate state of spiritual perfection. That means, there is nothing higher than the spiritual attainments of a Perfect One.

To augment his study and practise of basic *Dhamma*, the understanding monk memorizes and contemplates on the four protective discourses (*paritta*), namely, *Mahā Maṅgala*, *Ratana*, *Karaṇīya Mettā* and *Tirokuḍḍa Suttas*. A clear understanding of these *Suttas*, profoundly influences the aspirant’s progress on the spiritual path. These suttas are solemnly recited as protective formulas, which are both auspicious and effective in safeguarding one’s well-being.

*Nidhikaṇḍa Sutta* underlines the importance of merit (*puñña*) earned by doing good deeds, as the real treasure, which goes with a person after death and assures a happy destiny. Material treasures can always be lost, but not the spiritual treasure (*puñña*).

## Going to The Buddha for Refuge

***Buddhaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi.***

***Dhammaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi.***

***Saṅghaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi.***

‘Going to the Buddha’ is an act of free will. It is a profound spiritual commitment.

‘Going to the Buddha’ makes the unenlightened mind aspire to win enlightenment, and change the entire direction of life.

Most people grope in the darkness of life’s struggles. ‘Going to the Buddha’ raise their minds to the light of spiritual fulfilment and to material prosperity as well.

‘Going to the Buddha’ is a positive accomplishment, an act of acquiring merit, that no one can take away. Beings are fortunate and intelligent because they have acquired merit.

Therefore ‘Going to the Buddha’ means, making definite and verifiable progress here and now.

The historical Buddha is no more alive. How then do we go to Him? How do we find refuge in Him?

The physical body of Lord Buddha is known as *Rūpa Kāya*. But the state of Enlightenment, which transformed Prince *Siddhattha* into the Supremely Enlightened Buddha, is called *Dhammakāya*, Buddha’s Spiritual Body.

*Dhammakāya* is no other than the *Dhamma*, the Noble Truths, which the Buddha discovered and made known to the world for the benefit of all beings. These Noble Truths are the central teachings of the Enlightened One.

The Buddha declared: “***Yo Dhammaṃ passati so maṃ passati. Yo maṃ passati so Dhammaṃ passati***” – Whoso sees the Teaching, sees me (in it). And whoso sees me, sees the

Teaching (in me). So His Noble Teaching is Buddha’s Spiritual Body, the all-powerful external emanation of His internal Illumination. *Dhamma* reaches out as his infinite spiritual presence and light that kindles countless hearts throughout the universe.

The sun as the source of heat and light radiates warmth and illuminates the celestial bodies of the solar system. Likewise Lord Buddha, the Spiritual Sun, being Supremely Enlightened, radiates his spiritual light and enables beings to become Enlightened.

The ‘Spiritual Presence’ of the Lord, transmitted through his teachings, *Dhamma*, and *Saṅgha*, Holy Order, is felt by the followers by ‘Going to the Buddha’, by aspiring to win enlightenment, saying ‘*Buddhaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi*’ – I go to the Buddha for refuge.

Thus ‘Going to the Buddha’ is not an act of blind faith, nor a matter of intellectual acceptance. It means choosing to experience a spiritual reality that is alive, and working, to raise one’s mind towards deliverance from worldly bonds.

Buddha’s Spiritual Body, His Infinite Light, is brilliant and shines in all directions. This has to be visualized as a meditative exercise. For, it exists, it is indeed real!

‘Going to the Buddha’ empowers the mind to visualize this infinite Buddha-Light in the dhamma-practices and spiritual accomplishments of his followers.

Buddha’s *Dhammakāya* consists of:

1. Virtue (*Sīla*) born of moral conduct)
2. Meditative Concentration (*Samādhi*) born of unification of mind through meditation.
3. Wisdom (*Paññā*) born of Insight Meditation.
4. Deliverance (*Vimutti*) born of Supramundane Attainments.

5. Direct Knowledge and Vision of Deliverance, born of spiritual freedom.

These visible and spiritual attainments of his human and divine followers, in the three spheres of existence, reflect the Buddha's compassionate and vibrant spiritual presence.

'Going to the Buddha' raises the mind to experience and to feel being a part of this immensely uplifting vision of light. For, this is how Buddhists relate themselves to the living spiritual presence of the Buddha. Hence the saying:

***Dhammakāyo yato Satthā,  
Dhammo Satthā, tato mato,  
Dhamme ʒhito so Saṅgho ca,  
Satthu Saṅkham nigacchati.***

The Supreme Teacher of gods and men,  
Is the Embodiment of *Dhamma*, Truth.  
So His Teaching, reflecting truth,  
Indeed represents the Supreme Teacher,  
And being perfectly established in *Dhamma*,  
The Noble Disciples of his Holy Order,  
Also represent the Supreme Teacher.

What appears in the surface is not the reality. Only unbiased, objective probe shows the underlying truth. 'Going to the Buddha' makes the mind penetrate, clearly comprehend, what lies behind the deceptive external appearance and superficial luster of life. Therefore Buddhists do not gloss over life's realities. Instead, they make the best use of an otherwise imperfect, conditioned and impermanent existence, by turning it into an 'opportunity' for further progress and perfection.

Today there are lot of lonely, disillusioned people who grope in hopelessness, who feel trapped in an atmosphere of moral

degeneration and materialistic opportunism. Having grown weary of mindless strife, they see no way out and all opportunities cut off for them. 'Going to the Buddha' restores normalcy to such minds. It revives confidence and strength and opens up a new path to infinite opportunities.

This is the Buddha's measureless and precious gift to the earnest followers. Known as the Middle Path, it empowers the disciple to avoid all extremes and eliminate all problems. The Middle Path is an approach to right and meaningful living. It consists of Right understanding, Right thought, Right speech, Right action, Right livelihood, Right effort, Right mindfulness and Right meditative concentration.

All these eight factors are simultaneously practiced and perfected under three basic modes of development: Wisdom – 1, 2 factors, Virtue – 3,4,5 factors and Meditative Concentration – 6,7,8 factors. As one applies them in daily life, Buddha's light becomes alive and dazzling and Buddha's presence becomes real. One acquires a 'here and now' experience of his *Dhammakāya* from practising His Teaching. The Holy Order, *Saṅgha*, exemplifies this sublime bestowal of the Buddha's Light. And this explains the significance of 'Going to the Buddha'.

***Buddham Saraṇam Gacchāmi.  
Dhammam Saraṇam Gacchāmi.  
Saṅgham Saraṇam Gacchāmi.***

## ***Khuddaka Pāṭha Pāli***

### **Compact Collection of *Dhamma***

#### **Homage**

#### ***Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā Sambuddhassa!***

Homage to Him, the Blessed One, the Perfect One, the Supremely Enlightened One!

This one line devotional outpouring (*Udāna*) was first uttered by the divine ruler *Sakka* when the Buddha entered *Rājagaha*. It was to keep his promise given to king *Bimbisāra* that when he becomes the Buddha he will first visit *Rājagaha* and bless the King.

When the Buddha had arrived in the outskirts of *Rājagaha*, the king went to welcome him and his *Saṅgha* of thousand *Arahats*. On hearing the discourse of the Lord, he and a large number of people who went with him, were spiritually transformed. They became *Ariyas*. The king then invited the Buddha to partake of an alms-meal together with his *Saṅgha* of monks.

Accordingly, on the next morning when the Buddha entered *Rājagaha*, the inhabitants of the capital gathered in great numbers on two sides of the main road seeking the Lord's blessings. *Sakka*, disguising himself as a handsome youth, walked ahead of the great procession of monks and devotees, with Buddha at the head, and chanted this particular one-line devotional *gāthā* to make the people know who the Buddha was.

Being the true Saviour of beings seeking freedom from worldly bondage, he is the **Blessed One** (*Bhagavā*). Having vanquished *Māra* and his evil forces, and having transcended the mental defilements that keep beings in the bondage of

recurring existence (*saṃsāra*), he is the **Perfect One** (*Arahat*). Having attained to the summit spiritual state of **Omniscience**, he is the **Supremely Enlightened One** (*Sammāsambuddho*). The All-Knowing Buddha discovered the nature of ultimate truth leading to freedom from *Samāsāra*. So the people responded with such devotional fervour that this *gāthā* poured out from every lips. Since then this *gāthā* became the standard formula for worshipping the Buddha.

#### **1. *Tisarāṇa* – The Three Refuges**

***Buddhaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi.***

***Dhammaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi.***

***Saṅghaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi.***

I go for Refuge to the *Buddha* (The Supremely Enlightened One).

I go for Refuge to the *Dhamma* (His Teaching).

I go for Refuge to the *Saṅgha* (His Holy Order).

***Dutiyaṃpi Buddhaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi.***

***Dutiyaṃpi Dhammaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi.***

***Dutiyaṃpi Saṅghaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi.***

For the second time, I go for Refuge to the *Buddha* (The Supremely Enlightened One).

For the second time, I go for Refuge to the *Dhamma* (His Teaching).

For the second time, I go for Refuge to the *Saṅgha* (His Holy Order).

***Tatiyaṃpi Buddhaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi.***

***Tatiyaṃpi Dhammaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi.***

***Tatiyaṃpi Saṅghaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi.***

For the third time, I go for Refuge to the *Buddha* (The Supremely Enlightened One).



For the third time, I go for Refuge to the *Dhamma* (His Teaching).  
For the third time, I go for Refuge to the *Saṅgha* (His Holy Order).

Going to the *Buddha*, *Dhamma* and *Saṅgha* for refuge is an act of unreserved self-surrender (*atta-pariccāga*) dedicating oneself to follow in the footsteps of the Blessed Lord and win Enlightenment. Caught up and struggling in the world, one faces many dangers and temptations from evil forces.

Going for refuge means seeking protection against all such impediments on the path of freedom, as well as seeking safeguards to be able to progress on the spiritual path. No blind faith is involved in seeking refuge. Faith in the *Buddha*, *Dhamma* and *Saṅgha* is rooted in wisdom, in clearly understanding how the Supremely Enlightened One, being himself enlightened, enlightens others. Being the liberated One, he infuses wisdom, virtue and purity, thus emancipates beings from the slavery of *samsāric* existence.

The Buddha as a historical personage has passed away, no longer living in his physical form (*Rūpakāya*). But what made the Buddha Enlightened One, i.e., his Supreme Enlightenment (*Bodhi*), that does exist in the form of his *Dhamma*. Thus his teachings constitute his *Dhammakāya*, spiritual body, which prevails in all the three spheres of existence. The Buddha said: “He who sees the *Dhamma*, sees me”.

As long as the *Dhamma* prevails in the universe so long the Buddha’s presence continues. The light of the *Dhamma* illuminates the hearts of his followers, inspiring them to strive for enlightenment.

*Saṅgha* (The Holy Order) consists of his Enlightened Disciples, who constitute the noble exemplars of the *Dhamma*, leading others to enlightenment. These liberated and enlightened

saints who exist in great numbers both among his divine and human followers, are the spiritual descendents of the Buddha. They represent the Buddha and are responsible to protect and preserve the Dispensation (*Sāsana*) of the Buddha.

## 2. Dasa Sīla

1. *Pānātipātā Veramanī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi.*
2. *Adinnādānā Veramanī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi.*
3. *Abrahmacariyā Veramanī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi.*
4. *Musāvādā Veramanī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi.*
5. *Sūrā-meraya-majja-pamādaṭṭhānā Veramanī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi.*
6. *Vikālabhojanā Veramanī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi.*
7. *Nacca-Gīta-Vādita-Visūkadassanā Veramanī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi.*
8. *Mālā-Gandha-Vilepana-Dhāraṇa-Mañḍana-Vibhūsanāṭṭhānā Veramanī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi.*
9. *Uccāsayanā-Mahāsayanā Veramanī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi.*
10. *Jātarūpa-rajata-paṭiggahanā Veramanī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi.*
  1. I (voluntarily) undertake the precept of abstaining from killing.
  2. I (voluntarily) undertake the precept of abstaining from stealing.
  3. I (voluntarily) undertake the precept of abstaining from non-celibacy (=precept of practicing celibacy).
  4. I (voluntarily) undertake the precept of abstaining from lying.

5. I (voluntarily) undertake the precept of abstaining from liquor, alcoholic drinks, or intoxicants that cause heedlessness.
6. I (voluntarily) undertake the precept of abstaining from taking (solid) food after midday.
7. I (voluntarily) undertake the precept of abstaining from participating in or witnessing dancing, singing, instrumental music performances and unseemly shows or sights.
8. I (voluntarily) undertake the precept of abstaining from wearing garlands or using perfumes, cosmetics, embellishments, adornments and beautifying accessories.
9. I (voluntarily) undertake the precept of abstaining from using high and luxurious couches (furniture).
10. I (voluntarily) undertake the precept of abstaining from accepting gold and silver (i.e. handling money).

According to the Path of Purification, the monumental commentary, by Acharya Buddhagosa (5 A.D), there are four types of voluntary undertaking of moral precepts (1) Precepts of *Bhikkhus*, those who have received the monk's higher ordination (2) Precepts of *Bhikkhunis* those, who have received the nun's higher ordination (3) Precepts for beginner monks and nuns (*Sāmanera, Sāmaneri*) who have been ordained as probationers and have to receive higher ordination (4) Householder's precepts. There are the five precepts, the basic minimum for every lay followers of the Buddha. These precepts constitute the very foundation of moral and spiritual progress. Apart from these five universally valid basic precepts, the lay followers also undertake, on retreat days known as *Uposatha*, eight or ten precepts.

The aforesaid, ten precepts are compulsory undertaking for monastic life. These are so formulated as to conform with

the life style of the *Arahats*, who are incapable of violating any of these ten precepts, which constitute his natural mode of living. (*See Manual of Buddhist Devotional Practice*).

### 3. *Dvāṭimsākāra*

*Atthi imasmim kāye:*

*Kesā, lomā, nakhā, dantā, taco, (5)*

*mamsam, nahāru, aṭṭhi, aṭṭhimiñjā, vakkam, (10)*

*hadayam, yakanam, kilomakam, pihakam, papphasam, (15)*

*antam, antagunam, udariyam, karisam, matthalungam, (20)*

*pittam, semham, pubbo, lohitaṃ, sedo, medo, (26)*

*assu, vasā, kheḷo, siṅghāṇikā, lasikā, muttanti. (32)*

### Body-Contemplation - Thirty two parts of the body

There are in this body:

Hairs of the head, hairs of the body, nails, teeth, skin, (5)

flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys, (10)

heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs, (15)

intestines, mesentery, gorge, faeces, brain, (20)

bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, (26)

tears, oily fat, saliva, mucus, synovial fluid, urine. (32)

### *Asubha* Meditation

Meditation on the impurities of the body with thirty two aforesaid parts is a very popular meditation subject in *Therāvāda* Buddhist countries.

The *Kāyagatāsati Sutta*, clearly states how the *Asubha* meditation is practiced based on the thirty two parts. The *Visuddhimagga* also presents the meditation technique with thirty two parts as the object for contemplation.

This technique is applied to overcome lust and sensuality. Those who have the problem of sensuality, particularly sexual desire, for them this meditation is a boon. When the attractive aspect of the body overtakes the mind, the impurity aspect of the body remains concealed. If the body appears very attractive and beautiful, it is because of sensual desire, rooted in the compulsion to enjoy sexual pleasure.

One who become a slave to sensual desire the only way to overcome this blind drive is by visualizing the disgusting aspect of the body. When each of the thirty two parts are objectively viewed in the mind, they don't look beautiful at all. On the contrary they bring out vividly how disgusting the parts can be. When this perception of the loathsomeness of bodily parts arises, then all the compulsions for sensual desire forthwith disappear. Having developed the skill for quickly visualizing the thirty two parts, in forward and backward orders, repeatedly, the sexual drive, based upon the illusory attractiveness, instantly vanishes. Each time the desire for pleasure arises, and the *Asubha* aspect is quickly conjured up in the mind, then there is a balanced view of the two aspects of the body, the beautiful and the disgusting.

Ability to do this means cultivating insight into the nature of the body. Insight cuts at the root of the desire, there by progressively purifies the mind. A purified mind has the capacity to restrain and overcome mental defilements. The more self-restrain one develops, the more self-mastery one acquires.

The commentaries underline that *Asubha* meditation is entirely the specific discovery of the Buddha. The Buddha alone formulated the method and nobody else, not even his Enlightened Disciples, much less other religious teachers.

#### 4. *Kumāra-Pañha*

*Eka nāma kiṃ? Sabbe sattā āhāraṭṭhitikā.*

*Dve nāma kiṃ? Nāmañca rūpañca.*

*Tīṇi nāma kiṃ? Tisso vedanā.*

*Cattāri nāma kiṃ? Cattāri Ariyasaccāni.*

*Pañca nāma kiṃ? Pañcupādānakkhandhā.*

*Cha nāma kiṃ? Cha ajjhātikāni āyatanāni.*

*Satta nāma kiṃ? Satta bojjhaṅgā.*

*Aṭṭha nāma kiṃ? Ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo.*

*Nava nāma kiṃ? Nava sattāvāsā.*

*Dasā nāma kiṃ? Dasahaṅgehi samannāgato arahā'ti vuccatī.*

#### *Kumāra's Questions*

1. What is one? \*  
All beings are sustained by nutriment.
2. What are two?  
Mind and matter.
3. What are three?  
The three feelings.
4. What are four?  
The Four Noble Truths.
5. What are five?  
The five aggregates of clinging.
6. What are six?  
The six internal sense-bases.
7. What are seven?  
The seven factors of Enlightenment.

\* What is that one fact which obtains universally. Similarly, what are the two factors, having universal significance, and so on. All the ten questions should be understood in this manner.

8. What are eight?  
The Noble Eightfold Path.
9. What are nine?  
The nine spheres of sentient existence.
10. What are ten?  
One endowed with the ten Supramundane spiritual qualities is called the Perfect One.

These Ten Questions were asked by the Buddha himself and answered by *Sopāka*, a young novice of seven years, who had already become an *Arahat*. When he answered clearly and forthwith, his mastery of the *Dhamma*, in spite of his age, became apparent to the large number of monastic and lay disciples present on that occasion.

Normally a novice monk is given the higher *Bhikhu* ordination only when he is twenty years old. But on this occasion seeing his mastery of the *Dhamma* and spiritual maturity, he was ordained by the Lord himself. He became one of the prominent *Arahats*, known as *Mahāsāvako*, the Great Enlightened Disciple. Later on another 7 year old novice monk who too was an *Arahat*, *Kumāra Kassapa* by name, received *Bhikku* ordination by delivering a brilliant discourse on *Kumāra Pañha* the Lord himself conferred on him this distinction after listening to his discourse.

All these ten Questions deal with the fundamentals of the *Dhamma*. When memorized and studied diligently, one not only becomes learned, but also a wise person capable of penetrating into the true nature of sentient and insentient existence. For instance, the first question relates to what prevails universally that all category of beings, from the highest brahma gods to the denizens of the lowest hell, (*Āvīci*), depend upon some kind of nutriment, lit. food, for the sustenance of life. Both body

and mind have specific foods. The body depends upon material food (*kavalīṅkāra āhāra*), while the mind depends on three types of mental feeding namely, 1. *Phasso* – contact or sense impression, 2. *Mano sañcetanā* – mental volition or willing to act mentally, 3. *Viññāna* – consciousness. In this context the first rebirth-consciousness (*Paṭisandhi viññāna*) that feeds the new state of existence.

The remaining questions are to be understood in the same way. Each one comprehensively dealing with facts that exist universally.

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## The *Paritta Suttas*

### Protective Discourse

#### Lord Buddha's Protective Gift

Paritta suttas are special discourses of the Buddha given specifically for the purpose of providing protection to those who have taken refuge in the Triple Gem, *Tiratana*. That means these *Dhamma* teachings are so spiritually vitalized as to be able to ward off misfortunes and difficulties in life.

Special recitation ceremonies are conducted regularly among Buddhist *Vihāras* as also in Buddhist's houses to safeguard and to provide wellbeing to the devotees. Buddhists love to attend such functions and listen to such recitations with great earnestness and devotion. All-night functions are organised very often. People not only remain awake to listen, meditate and reflect on the significance of the paritta suttas with single-minded attention.

It is necessary to emphasize the fact that participation in Paritta recitation is never out of blind faith. But there is a well-defined and well-understood rationale. Firstly, the participant subjectively cultivates higher faculties of the mind and thus makes definite spiritual progress. Secondly, the effectiveness of such a devotional act lies in the ability to invoke the blessings of invisible divine beings.

Before starting the *Paritta* chanting, the participation of divine beings, *devas*, is solemnly invoked. For the *Devas* themselves also benefit from listening to the *Dhamma*. Besides, they receive the merits of the devotional service offered by the recitation and by the devotees. Honoured and rightly propitiated, the *Devas* bestow their blessings for the protection and wellbeing of the *paritta* participants.

In the interaction between the human and divine participants, both being followers of the Supreme Teacher of gods and men, the Buddha, is very much a part of the Buddhist spiritual life. It is common experience for people who witness such intense devotional exercises, to find a large number of sick, disabled individuals and those possessed by spirits, being cured of their maladies. This visible proof of the protective power of the recitation, contemplation and intense devotion, further reinforces the faith of the devotees in the *Dhamma* of the Buddha.

#### 5. *Maṅgala Sutta*

##### Discourse on Great Blessings

###### *Nidānam:*

*Yaṃ maṅgalaṃ dvādasahi cintayīmsu sadevakā,  
Sothānaṃ nādhigacchanti aṭṭhatīmsaṅca maṅgalaṃ,  
Desitaṃ devadevena sabbapāpavināsaṇaṃ,  
Sabbalokahitathāya maṅgalaṃ taṃ bhaṇāmahe.*

###### Occasion:

For twelve long years both gods and men had pondered, but failed to determine what true blessings were. The Buddha, Supreme Teacher of Gods and men, then enunciated thirty-eight kinds of blessings that destroy all evils. To promote the well-being of all in the world, I now recite these blessings!

*Evam me sutam. Ekaṃ samayaṃ Bhagavā Sāvattihyaṃ  
vihārati Jetavane Anāthapiṇḍikassa ārame. Atha kho aññatarā  
devatā abhikkantāya rattiyā abhikkantavaṇṇā kevalakappaṃ  
jetavanaṃ obhāsetvā yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkamī.  
Upasaṅkamitvā Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ aṭṭhāsi.  
Ekamantaṃ ʘhitā kho sā devatā Bhagavantaṃ gāthāya  
ajjhabhāsi.*

Thus have I heard: Once the Blessed One was staying at *Anāthapiṇḍika's* monastery in *Jeta's* Grove near *Sāvatti*. Now as the night advanced far, a certain deity with surpassing brilliance illuminating the entire *Jeta* grove, came into the presence of the Blessed One. Drawing close, he paid his respects to the Lord and stood at one side. Standing thus, the Deity addressed the Blessed One in verse:

**Deity:**

1. *Bahu devā manussā ca*  
*Maṅgalāni acintayum,*  
*Ākaṅkhamānā sothānam;*  
*Brūhi maṅgalamuttamaṃ.*

**Deity:**

1. Many deities and men,  
In quest of well-being,  
Have pondered on blessings,  
Pray, reveal what are great blessings.

**Blessed One:**

2. *Asevanā ca bālānaṃ*  
*Paṇḍitānañca sevanā,*  
*Pujā ca pujaṇīyānaṃ;*  
*Etaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ.*

**Blessed One:**

2. Avoiding wrong company,  
Associating with the wise,  
And revering those to be revered,  
Each is a great blessing.
3. *Paṭirūpadesavāso ca*  
*Pubbe ca katapuññatā,*

*Attasammāpaṇidhi ca;*  
*Etaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ.*

3. Residing in a suitable locality,  
Possessing merits of past deeds,  
And setting oneself on the right path,  
Each is a great blessing.
4. *Bāhusaccañca sippañca,*  
*Vinayo ca susikkhito,*  
*Subhāsītā ca yā vācā;*  
*Etaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ.*
4. Being learned and skillful in craft,  
Disciplined in morals and well cultivated,  
Being gifted with words of wisdom,  
Each is a great blessing.
5. *Mātā pitu upaṭṭhānaṃ,*  
*Puttadārassa saṅgaho,*  
*Anākulā ca kammantā;*  
*Etaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ.*
5. Looking after mother and father,  
Supporting wife and children,  
And pursuing a blameless career,  
Each is a great blessing.
6. *Dānañca dhammacariyā ca*  
*ñātakānañca saṅgaho,*  
*Anavajjāni kammāni;*  
*Etaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ.*
6. Being generous and virtuous in conduct,  
Being helpful to relatives,  
And irreproachable in actions,  
Each is a great blessing.

7. *Āraṭi virati pāpā,  
Majjapānā ca saññamo,  
Appamādo ca dhammesu;  
Etaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ.*
7. Abhorring and refraining from evils,  
Abstaining from intoxicating drinks,  
And being heedful in spiritual practices,  
Each is a great blessing.
8. *Gāravo ca nivāto ca,  
Santuṭṭhi ca kataññutā,  
Kālena dhammassavanaṃ;  
Etaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ.*
8. Being reverential and modest,  
Being contented and grateful,  
And listening to *Dhamma*-discourses,  
Each is a great blessing.
9. *Khanti ca sovacassatā,  
Samanānañca dassanaṃ,  
Kālena dhammasākacchā;  
Etaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ.*
9. Being patient and open to correction,  
Respectfully attending on bhikkhus,  
And timely *Dhamma*-discussions,  
Each is a great blessing.
10. *Tapo ca brahmacariyā ca,  
Ariyasaccānadassanaṃ,  
Nibbāna sacchikiriya ca;  
Etaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ.*
10. Practising austerity, leading holy life,  
Gaining the vision of Noble Truths,  
And realizing *Nibbāna*, Ultimate Peace,  
Each is a great blessing.

11. *Phuṭṭhassa loka-dhammehi,  
Cittam yassa na kampati,  
Asokaṃ virajaṃ khemaṃ;  
Etaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ.*
11. Pressured by worldly dichotomies,  
When one's mind does not tremble,  
Being sorrowless, taint-free and secure,  
Each is a great blessing.
12. *Etādisāni katvāna,  
Sabbatthamaparājitā,  
Sabbattha sotthiṃ gacchanti;  
Taṃ tesaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ 'ti.*
12. Having acted in this way,  
They are invincible everywhere,  
And remain ever secure;  
To them these are the great blessings.

### Note on *Maṅgala Sutta*

The Discourse on the Great Blessings – *Mahā Maṅgala Sutta*, is a protective discourse, meaning that it is so spiritually vitalized as to 1. Provide protection against all evil and unwholesome things; 2. Safe-guard one's spiritual life; 3. Bring good fortune. It is a very popular discourse recited both by monks and lay devotees and contemplated on to provide practical guidance to right living.

The Background of the *Sutta* is very instructive. A certain deity approached the Buddha illuminating the entire Jeta's Grove, and said: "Both human and divine beings have been debating for years as to what are the great blessings in life. The word 'blessing', *maṅgala*, also means auspicious omen, good luck etc.

The debate was concerned with 'what is meant by auspicious omen?' Is it a visible form, or a sound, or any other sense

object? There were some who thought that a particular visible thing is a good omen, such as, seeing first thing in the morning an object like a pregnant woman or baby or a certain bird or a cow and so on. Others rejected it, saying it is not what one sees, but what one hears etc. Based upon such speculations all kinds of superstitious beliefs and fears prevailed in the world.

Not being able to decide what truly brings good luck and blessing, and what is a superstitious belief, the wise among them thought of going to the Omniscient Buddha, one who knew everything of the past, present and future. So when the deity asked, the Buddha forthwith enumerated thirty-eight modes of right living which bring great blessings here and now and hereafter, and which enable one to attain spiritual freedom, *Nibbāna*.

## 6. *Ratana Sutta* – Discourse on Treasure Gem

### *Nidānam:*

*Paṇidhānato paṭṭhāya,  
Tathāgatassa dasapāramiyo,  
dasa upāpāramiyo,  
dasa paramatthapāramiyo'ti  
samatiṃsa pāramiyo;  
pañca mahāpariccāge,  
lokatthacariyaṃ, nātattha cariyaṃ,  
Buddhatthacariyanti,  
tisso cariyāyo  
pacchimabhava gabbhokkantim,  
jātim, abhinikkhamanaṃ,  
padhānacariyaṃ;  
bodhipallaṅke māravijayaṃ,  
sabbaññūtañāna paṭivedaṃ;  
Dhammacakkapavattanaṃ,*

*nava lokuttara dhamme'ti,  
sabbe pi'me Buddhagūṇe  
āvajjjetvā, vesāliyā tisu  
pākārantaresu tiyāmarattim  
parittaṃ karonto,  
āyasmā Ānanda thero viya,  
kāruṇṇāṃ cittaṃ upaṭṭhapetvā,  
koṭisatasahassesu  
cakkavālesu devatā,  
yassānampaṭiggāhanti,  
yañca vesāliyā pure,  
rogāmanussa dubbhikkha -  
sambhūtaṃ tividhaṃ bhayaṃ;  
khippamantaradhāpesi;  
parittaṃ tam bhaṇāmahe.*

### **Occasion:**

The Elder *Ānanda* saw the plight of the *Vesalians*, who were stricken by successive outbreaks of famine, epidemic and possession by evil spirits. Profoundly moved by compassion, he chanted the protective hymn of the Triple-Gem for an entire night and warded off these pestilences. First, he spiritually vitalized himself by meditating on the Transcendental Excellences of the Buddha and then on the nine-fold Supramundane States discovered by the Lord. These spiritual excellences are unique attainments only of a *Tathāgata* Buddha, the Supremely Enlightened Bearer of Truth. Lord Buddha brought to consummation the thirty spiritual perfections – ten perfections, ten sublime perfections and ten absolute perfections to win Supreme Enlightenment.

Likewise were his heroic deeds, which are: 1) The five consummate acts of giving. 2) The three unique ways by which



he promoted universal welfare of others, welfare of his kinsfolk and his own welfare to achieve Enlightenment. 3) In the last state of existence, the sublime way, he entered the human world from the glorious state of a divine monarch; his unparalleled birth, renunciation and austerities; his victory over Māra at the foot of the Tree of Wisdom; his attainment of Omniscience and the discovery of nine Supramundane Path and Fruition Insight States. Then having meditated on the nine special qualities of the Buddha, the Elder recited the Protective Hymn of the Triple-Gem.

Following the footsteps of the Venerable Elder *Ānanda*, filling our hearts with compassion, we do chant this protective hymn. Enunciated by the Exalted One, this Teaching is fervently followed by countless gods inhabiting a crore and hundred thousand world systems. As the Venerable *Ānanda* recited this hymn at *Vesāli*, it warded off the threefold fear of famine, epidemic and evil spirits that plagued the city. This protective hymn do we now recite.

1. *Yānīdha bhūtāni samāgatāni,  
Bhummāni vā yāni vā antalikkhe,  
Sabbeva bhūtā sumanā bhavantu,  
Athopi sakkacca suṇantu bhāsitaṃ.*

Whatever beings are gathered here,  
Whether terrestrial, or celestial,  
All beings, abide ye with loving hearts,  
And listen carefully to these words;

2. *Tasmā hi bhūtā nisāmetha sabbe,  
Mettaṃ karotha mānusiya pajāya,  
Divā ca ratto ca haranti ye balim,  
Tasmā hi ne rakkhatha appamattā.*

Pay heed, then, ye beings all,  
Show loving kindness to human beings,  
Day and night, they bring thee offerings,  
So protect them ever with diligence.

3. *Yaṃ kiñci vittaṃ idha vā huraṃ vā,  
Saggesu vā yaṃ ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ,  
Na no samaṃ atthi Tathāgatena,  
Idampi Buddhē ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ,  
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*
3. Whatever Treasure Gem there be in this or other worlds,  
Whatever precious gem there be in the heavens,  
There is nothing to equal the Bearer of Truth,  
This is the matchless excellence in the Buddha,  
By this assertion of truth, may well-being prevail!
4. *Khayaṃ virāgaṃ amataṃ paṇītaṃ,  
Yadhajjhagā sakyamunī samāhito,  
Na tena dhammena samatthi kiñci,  
Idampi Dhamme ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ,  
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*
4. By the extinction of defilements,  
The tranquil Sākyan Sage realized,  
The highest passion-free, deathless state.  
There is nothing to equal that Supreme state.  
This is the matchless excellence in the *Dhamma*,  
By this assertion of truth, may well-being prevail!
5. *Yaṃ Buddha-seṭṭho parivaṇṇayī sucim,  
Samādhi mānantarikaññamāhu,  
Samādhinā tena samo na vijjati,  
Idampi Dhamme ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ,  
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*

5. The Supreme Sanctity which the Buddha extolled,  
As Transcendental Uninterrupted Ecstasy,  
Nothing equals that blissful Supramundane Absorption,  
This is the matchless excellence in the *Dhamma*,  
By this assertion of truth, may well-being prevail!
6. *Ye puggalā aṭṭha satam pasatthā,*  
*Cattāri etāni yugāni honti,*  
*Te dakkhiṇeyyā Sugatassa sāvakā,*  
*Etesu dinnāni mahapphalāni,*  
*Idampi Saṅghe ratanam paṇītam,*  
*Etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*
6. The Supreme Sage extolled eight individual Saints,  
Who form the Four Pairs of Sanctified Seers,  
They are Exalted One's Noble Disciples, worthy of offerings,  
Offerings made to them yield abundant fruit,  
This is the matchless excellence in the *Saṅgha*,  
By this assertion of truth, may well-being prevail!
7. *Ye suppayuttā manasā daḷhena,*  
*Nikkāmino Gotamasāsanamhi,*  
*Te pattipattā amataṃ vigayha,*  
*Laddhā mudhā nibbutim bhūñjamānā,*  
*Idampi Saṅghe ratanam paṇītam,*  
*Etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*
7. Fully committed with a steadfast mind,  
In *Gotama's* Dispensation,  
They have gone beyond passion,  
Having plunged unto the Deathless,  
Partaking of Ultimate Peace, won by spiritual excellence,  
They have reached the highest state,  
This is the matchless excellence in the *Saṅgha*,  
By this assertion of truth, may well-being prevail!

8. *Yathindakhīlo paṭhavim sito siyā,*  
*Catubbhi vātehi asampakampiyo,*  
*Tathūpamaṃ sappurisaṃ vadāmi,*  
*Yo ariyasaccāni avecca passati,*  
*Idampi Saṅghe ratanam paṇītam,*  
*Etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*
8. As a votive column sunk deep in earth,  
Remains unshaken by the four winds;  
Even so, is the Holy One, I declare,  
Who dwells ever-seeing the Noble Truths;  
This is the matchless excellence in the *Saṅgha*,  
By this assertion of truth, may well-being prevail!
9. *Ye ariyasaccāni vibhāvayanti,*  
*Gambhīrapaññena sudesitāni,*  
*Kiñcāpi te honti bhusappamattā,*  
*Na te bhavam aṭṭhamam ādiyanti,*  
*Idampi Saṅghe ratanam paṇītam,*  
*Etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*
9. Those who have actualized the Noble Truths,  
Well expounded by Him of profound wisdom,  
Even if they have not been ever so mindful;  
They never are reborn more than seven times.  
This is the matchless excellence in the *Saṅgha*,  
By this assertion of truth, may well-being prevail!
10. *Sahāvassa dassanasampadāya,*  
*Tayassu dhammā jahitā bhavanti,*  
*Sakkāyadiṭṭhī vicikicchitañca,*  
*Sīlabbatam vāpi yadatthi kiñci,*  
*Catūhapāyehi ca vippamutto,*  
*Cha cābhiṭṭhānāni abhabbo kātum,*  
*Idampi Saṅghe ratanam paṇītam,*  
*Etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*

10. One who has gained the Supreme Vision,  
For him these three fetters have been uprooted:  
Self-illusion, skeptical doubt and superstitious  
Adherence to rules and rituals,  
Wholly freed from the four states of woe,  
He is incapable of committing six heinous crimes.  
This is the matchless excellence in the *Saṅgha*,  
By this assertion of truth, may well-being prevail!

11. *Kiñcāpi so kammaṃ karoti pāpakam,  
Kāyena vācā uda cetasā vā,  
Abhabbo so tassa pañicchādāya,  
Abhabbatā diṭṭha padassa vuttā,  
Idampi Saṅghe ratanaṃ pañītaṃ,  
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*

11. Whatever error he might make,  
Whether by deed, word or thought,  
He is incapable of concealing it,  
Impossible to do so, it is said,  
Being endowed with Vision of the Supramundane.  
This is the matchless excellence in the *Saṅgha*,  
By this assertion of truth, may well-being prevail!

12. *Vanappagumbe yathā phussitagge,  
Gimhānamāse paṭhamasmim̐ gimhe,  
Tathūpamaṃ Dhammavaram̐ adesayi,  
Nibbānagāmiṃ paramaṃ hitāya,  
Idampi Buddhē ratanaṃ pañītaṃ,  
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*

12. Just as forest groves, in springtime,  
Burst forth in blossoms of myriad hues,  
Even so, did He teach the Sublime *Dhamma*,  
Leading to *Nibbāna*, for the highest good,

This is the matchless excellence in the Buddha,  
By this assertion of truth, may well-being prevail!

13. *Varo varaññū varado varāharo,  
Anuttaro Dhammavaram̐ adesayi,  
Idampi Buddhē ratanaṃ pañītaṃ,  
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*

13. Having gained the highest of Excellence, He is  
The Knower, Giver and Bringer of Supreme Excellence.  
Being ever the Unexcelled One,  
He expounded the most Excellent Teaching.  
This is the matchless excellence in the Buddha,  
By this assertion of truth, may well-being prevail!

14. *Khīṇaṃ purāṇaṃ navaṃ natthi sambhavaṃ,  
Virattacittā āyatike bhavasmiṃ,  
Te khīṇabījā avirūḥhicchandā,  
Nibbanti dhīrā yathā yaṃ padīpo,  
Idampi Saṅghe ratanaṃ pañītaṃ,  
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*

14. With the past karmas fully wiped out,  
And no possibility of fresh accumulation,  
Severed from future rebirths, their minds are free,  
Where desire, like burnt-up seeds, sprout no more,  
These Wise Ones cease like a blown-out lamp.  
This is the matchless excellence in the *Saṅgha*,  
By this assertion of truth, may well-being prevail!

15. *Yānīdha bhūtāni samāgatāni,  
Bhummāni vā yāni vā antalikkhe,  
Tathāgataṃ deva-manussa-pūjitaṃ,  
Buddhaṃ namassāma suvatthi hotu!*

15. Whatever beings are gathered here,

Whether terrestrial or celestial,  
The Bearer of Truth is worshipped by gods and men,  
Let us worship the Supremely Enlightened One,  
May by this act, well-being prevail!

16. *Yānīdha bhūtāni samāgatāni,  
Bhummāni vā yāni vā antalikkhe,  
Tathāgataṃ deva-manussa-pūjitaṃ,  
Dhammaṃ namassāma suvatthi hotu!*

16. Whatever beings are gathered here,  
Whether terrestrial or celestial,  
The Bearer of Truth is worshipped by gods and men,  
Let us worship the Sacred Teaching of the Buddha,  
May by this act, well-being prevail!

17. *Yānīdha bhūtāni samāgatāni,  
Bhummāni vā yāni vā antalikkhe,  
Tathāgataṃ deva-manussa-pūjitaṃ,  
Saṅghaṃ namassāma suvatthi hotu!*

17. Whatever beings are gathered here,  
Whether terrestrial or celestial,  
The Bearer of Truth is worshipped by gods and men,  
Let us worship the Holy Order  
Established by the Buddha,  
May by this act, well-being prevail!

### **Background story of Discourse on Treasure Gem (*Ratana Sutta*)**

*Ratana Sutta*, Discourse on Treasure Gem, is a protective teaching (*paritta*) of tremendous mystic power. It was delivered by the Blessed Lord (*Bhagavā*), the Possessor of the Ten Forces, under circumstances of great calamity in the land of the *Vajjis*,

one of the oligarchic republics in the time of the Buddha. That there was a well-developed governmental system, more than two thousand and six hundred years ago, speaks amply of the advanced civilization of India.

People were highly politically conscious, culturally developed and had built a very flourishing economy which included foreign trade. *Vesāli* was the capital of the *Vajjian* republic which at that time was populous and prosperous with thriving trade, industry, and all sorts of civic amenities. People had plentiful supply of provisions, clothings and basic requirements.

It is said the country was ruled by warrior families (*Khattiyas*). The head of these families represented certain areas as members of the council of state. There were seven thousand seven hundred and seven members, each owning a place with hundreds of acres, having gardens, orchards and *dānasālas*, -houses of charity, which remained open at all times for all seeking food, shelter and medicaments. In other words, there were leaders of the common folks who acted as the trustees of the land.

It is said the Licchavi warriors who ruled *Vajji* were so powerful that even an expansionist empire like that of *Magadha* respected this small republic and kept away from its borders, scrupulously avoiding any involvement. The prosperity and the power of the republic were attributed to the virtue and nobility of the elected king and the leaders. For generations Licchavis never suffered from any want or from any natural calamities. Now suddenly the kingdom faced an unknown and unheard of situation. There was no rain and the otherwise well irrigated lands, the tanks and the streams were drying. For three consecutive years severe drought conditions prevailed, leading to famine which was followed by an outbreak of epidemic.

The commentary vividly describes how the three pestilences of drought, famine and epidemic completely broke the economy of the country, how thousands of people died so much so that the atmosphere was filled with the stench of corpses of human beings and animals strewn all over in the cities, towns and countrysides. Those who lived were under the grip of terror.

The king, it is said, got the council of state repeatedly assembled to find out a solution to this unprecedented calamity. He offered to abdicate several times but when the investigations proved that his virtue was intact and the cause must be found elsewhere, it was suggested that the holy saints from all over the subcontinent of India, may be invited to visit the state and invoke their spiritual power to ward off the calamities.

Accordingly, six well-known religious teachers, were brought and honoured, but to no avail, to the utter dismay of the people. It was at this dark hour that somebody in the council said: ‘The Enlightened One has, indeed, arisen in the world, and we have not sought his blessings, because he happened to stay in the capital of *Magadha*, with which country our relations are hardly cordial. At this hour of national catastrophe, it behoves us to make peace with *Magadha’s* emperor *Bimbisāra*, the ardent disciple of the Blessed One, and seek the blessings of the Buddha.

In normal days the council would have adversely viewed this proposal, but now in its hour of despair, it considered the proposal opportune, and that is how senior ministers were quickly dispatched to the court of King *Bimbisāra*.

These ministers requested the King to send the Buddha. While having full sympathy for their plight, he mentioned that he was only a humble disciple. However, he said, the Lord was all-merciful, even as he was all-powerful and omniscient. Therefore they themselves should directly approach the Lord and seek

his blessings. When the ministers went to the Lord and apprised him of the suffering, the All-compassionate Buddha consented to forthwith go with them.

He looked through his omniscient eyes and saw the future unfolding: how he will preach the *Ratana Sutta* and provide a mystic protection (*paritta*) that will last for the whole aeon; how the sutta be effective through a myriad world-systems, where it’s rays penetrated by the invocatory action of those who recited and meditated upon it; he saw how both the kings of *Magadha* and *Vajji* and the people of the two countries would vie with each other to honour the Lord and the order of monks, how torrents of rain will pour down the sky to the utter relief of all; how the evil spirits will disappear in the presence of the deities accompanying the Lord, how various other blessings would accrue to the people, like the sick getting healed, the blind, deaf and dumb regaining their vision, speech and hearing, the paralytic gaining their ability to move, the poor what they needed, the insane restored to sanity and a myriad other blessings.

When the king came to know that the Blessed One had decided to forthwith visit *Vesāli*, he sent hundreds of messengers all along the route from *Rājagaha* to *Pāṭaliputta* (Patna), a distance of fifty miles, to fittingly honour the Blessed One. The King informed the Buddha that he will follow the Lord upto the Ganges and bring him back on his return journey.

There is a moving description in the commentary by *Bhadanta Acharya Buddhaghosa*; how people built camps every tenth mile with elaborate arrangements for thousands of monks to be devoutly looked after, how in grand style, the entire route was strewn with flowers. The commentary said that the Buddha had to literally wade through the knee-deep heaps of flowers. Further the King ordered a double white parasol to be held

over the Buddha and a single white parasol over each of the five hundred Enlightened Disciples accompanying the Lord. In five days the party reached the Ganges where the King had arranged a huge ferry elaborately decorated to carry the Blessed One and his retinue to a distance of ten miles upstream forming his territory, then on the other side to the *Vajji* land.

After the Blessed One and his retinue sat down in the allotted seats, the king descending into *Gaṅga* pushed the boat up to neck deep water, then worshipping the Lord with folded hands placed on his head, said: 'I shall be camping here till the Exalted One returns and take the Lord back'. The *Vajjians* too had made up their minds to honour the Lord in a grand style. So starting from the landing on their side to *Vesāli* a distance of thirty miles, elaborate arrangements were made, such as, flower decked paths, big camps every ten miles, four parasols for the Lord and two for the monks etc. The King with his ministers and high officials waded into the Ganges neck-deep and welcomed the Lord by touching the ferry with their foreheads.

It is vividly recorded, how the moment the Buddha entered the *Vajjian* territory, dark clouds rushed in from every side swiftly covering the sky. This is how the commentary describes: "At that moment, at that very instant, a great cloud, the darkness of whose broad summit was laced with flashes of lightening, began to rain down in torrents in the four directions." (Path of Purification, *Visiddhi Magga*, translated by Venerable *Ñānamoli Thera*). It is said that it rained so much as to make even a lotus wet. Everywhere the water flowed knee deep, thigh deep, waist deep, even neck deep and all the dead bodies were swept away into the river *Gaṅga* till the whole countryside became fresh and clean. The *Licchavis* lavishly spread a carpet of flowers through the entire thirty miles from the bank of the Ganges

to *Vesāli* as the *Magadhans* had done. They put up decorated arches every few yards and the multitude stood on both sides of the road with incense and flower imbued with a heart of great devotion and awe.

At each interval of ten miles, camps were put up for the Enlightened One and his retinue and the following crowd to rest. The *Licchavis* honouring the Lord in a grand style, conducted him and the monks to *Vesāli* in three days. With the arrival of the Lord a great multitude of deities headed by *Sakka*, the divine king, appeared in the scene and forthwith put to flee in utter confusion the evil spirits, who had caused havoc and heightened the effect of pestilences. A climate of well-being was thus ushered in throughout the land of the *Licchavis* to the great rejoicing of the people.

When the Blessed One arrived at the city gate of *Vesāli*, he called the Venerable *Ananda Thera* and gave him the mystic formula of the *Ratana Sutta* with instruction to perform the protection ceremony by solemnly chanting it in a procession around the three city-walls. Having learnt the Hymn of the Treasure Gem, the Venerable *Ananda Thera* carried the Blessed One's bowl filled with water. Preceded by the king and important ministers, and followed by the great procession of monks and laity, he went round the whole city chanting the sacred *Ratana Sutta* and while doing so, sprinkled the holy water from the Lord's bowl.

There were auspicious showers of rain. And in the presence of the deities, the evil spirits were forced to flee. Now all manners of miraculous events were witnessed everywhere, the sick got cured, the blind restored to sight etc., and after a lapse of at least three years, throughout the city unprecedented scenes of joy and happiness spontaneously broke out. The King of the

Licchavis and the leaders conducted the Lord to the centre of the city and arranged for the Lord's residence. There was great community alms-giving and from the king down to the humblest offered alms. There were continuous discourses of *Dhamma* and numberless citizens of *Vesāli* crowded the whole area day and night receiving the precious blessings of the Blessed One.

Having stayed for some time the Blessed One returned to *Rājagaha*. Even today in Buddhist lands the *Ratana Sutta* chanting ceremonies are frequently arranged everywhere with great enthusiasm and devotion. It is a common sight to see how the people undergoing difficult times or facing calamities find instant relief. The healing power of *Ratana Sutta* is indeed a universal experience where the *Buddha Treasure Gem*, the *Dhamma Treasure Gem* and the *Saṅgha Treasure Gem* constitute the surest refuge for the multitude.

### **7. *Karanīya Mettā Sutta* – Discourse on Universal Love**

#### **Background story of Discourse on Universal Love**

#### **(*Karanīya Mettā Sutta*)**

The historical background of the Buddha's discourse on Universal Love, *Karanīya Mettā Sutta*, is described in *Bhadanta Acharya Buddhaghosa's* commentary. The great *Acharya* had received it from an unbroken line of Elders going back to the days of the Buddha himself.

We are told that five hundred monks paid a visit to the Buddha and went to the foothills of the Himalayas to spend the four months of the Rain's retreat by living a life of seclusion for intensive meditation. In those days, a month or two before the Rain's retreat started, monks from all parts of the country would assemble wherever the Buddha stayed in order to receive

direct instruction from the Supreme Master. Then they would go back to their monasteries, forest dwellings or hermitages to make a vigorous attempt at spiritual liberation. This was how these five hundred monks went to the Buddha who was then staying at *Jeta's Grove* in the monastery built by *Anāthapiṇḍika* near *Sāvatti*.

After paying homage they went in search of a suitable place, and in the course of their wandering, soon found a beautiful hillock at the foothills of the Himalayas. This, according to the commentary, "Appeared like a glittering blue quartz crystal; it was embellished with cool, dense, green forest grove and a stretch of ground strewn with sand, resembling a pearl net or a silver sheet, and was furnished with a clear spring of cool water." The *Bhikkhus* were captivated by the sight. There were a few villages nearby, and also a small market-town ideal for alms-round. The monks spent a night in that idyllic grove and the next morning went to the market-town for alms.

The residents were overjoyed to see the monks, since rarely did a community of monks come to spend the retreat in that part of the Himalayas. These pious devotees fed the monks and begged them to stay on as their guests, promising to build each a hut near the grove on the sandy stretch so that they could spend their days and nights plunged in meditation under the ancient boughs of the majestic trees. The *bhikkhus* agreed and the devotees of the area soon built little huts with a wooden cot, a stool and pots of water for drinking and washing.

After the monks had contentedly settled down in these huts, each one selected a tree to meditate under, by day and by night. Now these great trees were inhabited by tree-deities who had a celestial mansion built, appropriately using the trees as the base. These deities, out of reverence for the meditating monks,

stood aside with their families. Virtue is revered by all, particularly so by deities, and when the monks sat under the trees, the deities, who had families, did not like to remain above them. They had thought that the monks would remain only for a night or two, and gladly bore the inconvenience. But when day after day passed and the monks still kept occupying the bases of the trees, the deities wondered when they would go away. They were like dispossessed villagers whose houses had been commandeered by officials of the visiting royalty and they kept anxiously watching from a distance wondering when they would get their houses back.

These dispossessed deities discussed the situation among themselves and decided to frighten the monks away by showing them terrifying sights, by making dreadful noises and by creating a sickening stench. Accordingly, they materialized all these terrifying conditions and afflicted the monks. The monks soon grew pale and could no longer concentrate on their subjects of meditation. As the deities continued to harass them they lost even their basic mindfulness, and their brains seemed to become smothered by the oppressing visions, noises and stench. When the monks assembled to wait upon the senior-most Elder of the group, each one recounted his experiences. The Elder suggested: “Let us go, brethren, to the Blessed One and place our problem before him. As you know there are two kinds of Rain’s retreat – the early and the late. Though we will be breaking the early one by leaving this place, we can always take upon ourselves the late one after meeting the Lord.” The monks agreed and they set out at once, it is said, without even informing the devotees.

By stages they arrived at *Sāvatti*, went to the Blessed One, bowed down at his feet, and related their frightful experiences,

pathetically requesting for another place. The Buddha, through his supernormal power, scanned the whole of India, but finding no place except the same spot where they could achieve spiritual liberation, told them: “Monks, go back to the same spot! It is only by striving there that you will effect the destruction of inner cankers. Fear not! If you want to be free from the harassment caused by the deities, learn this sutta. It will be a theme for meditation as well as a formula for protection (*paritta*).” Then the Master recited the *Karaṇīya Mettā Sutta*, the Hymn of Universal Love, which the monks learnt by heart in the presence of the Lord. Then they went back to the same place. As the monks neared their forest dwellings reciting the *Mettā Sutta*, thinking and meditating on the underlying meaning, the hearts of the deities became so changed with warm feelings of goodwill that they materialized themselves in human form and received the monks with great piety. They took their bowls, conducted them to their huts, caused water and food to be supplied, and then, resuming their normal forms, invited them to occupy the bases of the trees and meditate without any hesitation or fear. Further, during the three months of the ‘Rain’s retreat’, the deities not only looked after the monks in every way but made sure that the place was completely free from any noise. Enjoying perfect silence, by the end of the rainy season all the monks became *Arahats*, the pinnacle of spiritual development. Indeed, such is the power intrinsic in the *Mettā Sutta*. Whoever with firm faith will recite the sutta, invoking the protection of the deities and meditating on universal love, *mettā*, will not only safeguard himself in every way but will also protect all those around him, and will make spiritual progress that can be actually verified. No harm can ever befall a person who follows the path of *mettā*.



**Karaṇīya Mettā Sutta – Discourse on Universal Love****Nidānaṃ:**

*Yassānubhāvato yakkhā  
Neva dassenti viṃsanaṃ,  
Yamhi cevānuyuñjanto,  
Rattindivamatandito,  
Sukhaṃ supati sutto ca,  
Pāpaṃ kiñci na passati,  
Evamādi gunūpetam,  
Parittam tam bhaṇāmahe.*

**Occasion:**

This spiritual power, which prevents evil spirits from making fearful appearances and which when assiduously practised day and night, brings excellent benefits, such as, one sleeps happily, enjoys sound sleep undisturbed by bad dreams etc. This Protective Hymn do I now recite.

1. *Karaṇīya matthakusalena,  
Yam tam santam padaṃ abhisamecca,  
Sakko ujū ca sūjū ca,  
Suvaco cassa mudu anatiṃāni.*

Whoso his welfare seeks to promote,  
Having glimpsed the state of perfect peace,  
Should be able, honest and upright,  
Gentle in speech, meek and not proud.

2. *Santussako ca subhara ca,  
Appakicco ca sallahukavutti,  
Santindriyo ca nipako ca,  
Appagabbho kulesu ananugiddho.*

He should be contented, easy to support,  
Not over-busy, and be simple in living,

Tranquil in his sense, let him be prudent,  
Not brazen, nor fawning on families.

3. *Naca khuddaṃ samācare kiñci,  
Yena viññū pare upavadeyyuṃ,  
Sukhino vā khemino hontu,  
Sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhittā.*

He should refrain from any action  
That gives the wiser reason to reprove.  
May all beings be happy and secure,  
May all be well-disposed at heart!

4. *Ye keci pāṇabhūtatti,  
Tasā vā thāvarā vā anavasesā,  
Dīghā vā ye mahantā vā  
Majjhimā rassakānukathulā.*

Whatever living creatures there be,  
Without exception, weak or strong.  
Long or huge, middle-sized,  
Short, minute or bulky,

5. *Diṭṭhā vā yeva adiṭṭhā,  
Ye ca dūre vasanti avidūre,  
Bhūtā vā sambhavesi vā,  
Sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhittā.*

Whether visible or invisible,  
And those living afar or near,  
The born and those seeking birth,  
May all beings be happy!

6. *Na paro param nikubbetha,  
ñātimaññetha katthacinaṃ kañci.  
Byārosanā paṭighasaññā,  
Nāññamaññassa dukkhamiccheyya.*

Let none deceive or decry  
His fellow anywhere.  
With resentment or hate  
Let none wish another's harm.

7. *Mātā yathā niyaṃ puttāṃ  
Āyusā ekaputtamanurakkhe,  
Evaṃpi sabbabhūtesu,  
Mānasā bhāvaye aparimānaṃ.*

Just as with her own life, a mother  
Shields her own, her only child,  
So let him have a mind  
Of boundless love for all beings.

8. *Mettaṅca sabbalokasmiṃ,  
Mānasā bhāvaye aparimānaṃ,  
Uddhaṃ adho ca tiriyaṅca,  
Asambādhaṃ averaṃ asapattaṃ.*

Let him cultivate a mind of boundless love,  
For all, throughout the universe,  
In all its height, depth and breadth,  
Love that is unrestricted  
And beyond hatred or enmity.

9. *Tiṭṭhaṃ caraṃ nisīno vā,  
Sayāno vā yāvatassa vigatamiddho  
Etaṃ satim adhiṭṭheyya,  
Brahmametaṃ vihāraṃ idhamāhu.*

Whether he stands, walks, sits or lies,  
As long as he is awake,  
Let him maintain this mindfulness of love,  
Deemed here a Divine State.

10. *Diṭṭhiṅca anupagamma sīlavā  
Dassanena sampañño,  
Kāmesu vineyya gedhaṃ  
na hi jātu gabbhaseyyaṃ punareṭi'ti.*

Holding no wrong views, virtuous  
And with vision of the Ultimate,  
Having overcome all sensual desire,  
Never in a womb is he born again.

*Dukkha pattā ca niddukkha  
Bhaya pattāca nibbhayā  
Soka pattāca nissokā  
Hontu sabbepi pānino.*

May all beings who are suffering, be free from suffering!  
May all beings who are in fear, be free from fear!  
May all beings who are grieving, be free from grief!

8. *Tirokuḍḍa Suttaṃ - Discourse on Outside the walls  
(Already presented. See Page no. 119)*

9. *Nidhikaṇḍa Suttaṃ  
Discourse on the Treasure Trove*

1. *Nidhiṃ nidheti puriso,  
Gambhīre odakantike.  
Atthe kicce samuppanne,  
Atthāya me bhavissati.*

A person stores away a treasure,  
Under the ground or water,  
Thinking: 'When needs arise,  
It will be useful to me.'

2. *Rājato vā duruttassa,  
Corato pīlitassa vā;*

***Inassa vā pamokkhāya,  
Dubbhikkhe āpadāsu vā.  
Etadatthāya lokasmiṃ,  
Nidhi nāma nidhīyati.***

A treasure is stored away by a person to meet these circumstances, namely, when one is accused by the king, (government) or when one's security is threatened by blackmailers and robbers, or when one has to redeem oneself from debts, or when one has to face calamities like famine etc., or when misfortune befalls and threatens one's life. Only for such emergency situations do people resort to storing away a treasure under the ground or near water etc.

**3. *Tāvassunihito santo,  
Gambhīre odakantike;  
Na sabbo sabbadā eva,  
Tassa taṃ upakappati.***

Though this hidden treasure is so well stored away as under the ground or water etc., yet not all such measures can suffice to serve or guarantee one's safety for all times.

**4. *Nidhi vā thānā cavati,  
Saññā vāssa vimuyhati;  
Nāgā vā apanāmenti,  
Yakkhā vāpi haranti naṃ.***

For instance, the treasure may disappear, or be displaced from its place, or the owner may lose the memory of the mark of the spot under which the treasure lies, or the *Nāgas*, celestial beings, may spirit it away, or the *Yakkhas*, the demoniac beings, may simply carry it off.

**5. *Appiyā vāpi dāyādā,  
Uddharanti apassato;***

***Yadā puññakkhayo hoti,  
Sabbametariṃ vinassati.***

Or yet his heirs may become hostile and in his absence dig it up and carry away, or yet when his merit is exhausted, all these hidden treasures may then utterly be lost.

**6. *Yassa dānena sīlena,  
Saṃyamena damena ca;  
Nidhī sunihito hoti,  
Itthiyā purisassa vā.***

But, when one gives generously and practises the moral precepts and applies self-restraint and gains mastery over his mind, only then these real treasures are well stored up both for women and men.

**7. *Cetiyamhi ca Saṅghe vā,  
Puggale atithīsu vā;  
Mātari pitari cāpi,  
Atha jeṭṭhamhi bhātari.***

Again the merits one gains by building a shrine, a temple or by making offerings or rendering service to the Holy Order, or by generously serving a worthy individual, or one's guests, or by lovingly looking after one's father, mother and elders (brother) etc.

**8. *Eso nidhi sunihito,  
Ajeyyo anugāmiko;  
Pahāya gamanīyesu,  
Etaṃ ādāya gacchati.***

It is through these acts that one stores up well, the real treasure of merit. Indeed these merit-treasures alone are impregnable. For no one can take them away from one. And when one dies, these treasures alone one carries with oneself.

Indeed all the changeable worldly things are left behind. And one departs only with these real possessions of merit.

9. *Asādhāraṇamaññesaṃ,  
Acorāharaṇo nidhi;  
Kayirātha dhīro puññāni,  
Yo nidhi anugāmiko.*

A share of this real treasure none can ever claim, nor robbers can ever steal. So let the wise accumulate spiritual merit, which alone is the real treasure and which accompanies him when he dies.

10. *Esa devamanussānaṃ,  
Sabbakāmadado nidhi;  
Yaṃ yadevābhipatthenti,  
Sabbametena labbhati.*

This real treasure alone brings forth all the wishes of both divine and human beings. Indeed whatever they do desire all that they gain only through their spiritual merits.

11. *Suvaṇṇatā susaratā,  
Susanṭhānā surūpatā.  
Āhipaccaparivāro,  
Sabbametena labbhati.*

Whether it is the beauty of complexion or the sweetness of one's voice, or again the beauty of one's figure and other features, or power of authority and of following. Indeed all these are gained only through one's merit.

12. *Padesarajjāṃ issariyaṃ,  
Cakkavattisukhaṃ piyaṃ;  
Devarajjampi dibbesu,  
Sabbametena labbhati.*

Whether it is the rulership of a state, or indeed the sovereignty of the entire land, or the happiness and pleasures of a universal monarch, or the sovereignty in divine realms. All these are gained only through one's merit.

13. *Mānusikā ca sampatti,  
Devaloke ca yā rati;  
Yā ca nibbānasampatti,  
Sabbametena labbhati.*

Whatever wealth and treasure there be in human world, whatever bliss and delight there be in the heavenly realm, whatever transcendental attainment there be, indeed, all these are gained only through one's spiritual merit.

14. *Mittasampadamāgama,  
Yonisova payuñjato.  
Vijjā vimutti vasībhāvo,  
Sabbametena labbhati.*

Whatever psychic powers, supernormal mastery, transcendental knowledge, which a person can gain through association with wise friends and through one's own energetic effort, all these are gained only through one's own spiritual merit.

15. *Paṭisambhidā vimokkhā ca,  
Yā ca sāvakapāramī;  
Paccekabodhi Buddhabhūmi,  
Sabbametena labbhati.*

The higher analytical wisdom and freedom of mind which one gains through the fulfilment of three types of spiritual perfections, namely, that of the enlightened disciple, *Arahat*, that of the Hermit Enlightened One, *Pacceka Buddha* and that of the Supremely Enlightened Buddha, all these Supramundane and superhuman attainments are gained only through one's spiritual merit.

**16. *Evaṃ mahatthikā esā,  
Yadidaṃ puññasampadā;  
Tasmā dhīrā pasāmsanti,  
Paṇḍitā katapuññatanti.***

Because the possession of spiritual merit is the real boon in life, therefore those who are wise and discerning, they ever extol the accumulation of spiritual merit.

**The Background of *Niḍikanda Sutta***

According to the *Khuddaka Pāṭha Aṭṭhakathā*, commentary to the Compact Collection, it seems, there was a very wealthy householder belonging to a well-known family. He was very generous and devout. He lived the householders life with a heart filled with magnanimous charity. He offered alms-food to the Holy Order with Buddha at the head, very frequently. One day having invited the Buddha and a large number of his Enlightened Disciples, as he devoutly served food to the Lord and his monks with his own hand, a messenger from the king arrived at his house.

It seems that the king needed money for some reason or other. So he thought of sending for the wealthy devotee of the Master since he also acted as one of his treasurers, to tell him to arrange for the money. He sent a man saying: “Well, dear man, go to so and so wealthy treasurer and tell him that the king wants to see you. Accordingly the messenger went and informed the wealthy devotee, that the king wants to see him.

Just then the wealthy devotee, filled with great devotion and humility, himself was serving food to the Buddha and his monks. Since he didn’t want to be interrupted, he told the messenger: “Well, good man, you can see that I m very busy now, storing up great treasure. I will come later on”.

Any other person would not dare to disobey forthwith in the manner the devotee householder did. For, those days kings had absolute power. Any act of disobedience could cost a man his wealth, his life or be banished from the kingdom. But the devotee obviously did not consider the consequences that may follow.

By offering alms-food he said he was storing up a great treasure of merits, which he could carry with him when he dies. His material wealth could be confiscated by the king, he may even lose his life, but the treasure of merit he was acquiring can not be taken away by any one, however mighty. So he continued to serve with calm and devout mind.

When the Buddha and his monks had partaken of the alms-food, he and his family worshiped the Buddha and his *Saṅgha* and sat down to hear the *Dhamma*, which the Buddha invariably delivered after an offering of alms-food.

The Buddha on that occasion delivered the *Nidhikaṇḍa Sutta*, which was most appropriate and timely for that occasion. So his thanks giving sermon began with the verse: “A man stores away a treasure .....etc.” Now this discourse became widely known and was respected.

The king came to know what transpired. He too was greatly moved and commended the devoted treasure for his single minded dedication to the *Buddha*, to the *Dhamma* and to the *Saṅgha*.

## Basics Teachings

### The Triple Gem and Triple Refuge

To the question what is most precious? What has the power and excellence to protect one from suffering, and to deliver one from the bondage of mundane existence, (*saṃsāra*)?

The *Buddha*, the *Dhamma* and the *Saṅgha* are the most precious of all gems and treasures. There is nothing more invaluable and worthy than them. Because the Triple Gem provides total security and protects one in every way, therefore they constitute the three Refuges.

### The Threefold Dispensation (*Sāsana*)

The Teaching (*Dhamma*) of the Buddha is threefold:

1. ***Pariyatti*** : The *Tiṭṭaka*, the *Pāli* canon, containing the original Teaching of the Master.
2. ***Paṭipatti*** : Systematic practice of the Teachings, which can be reduced to the Noble Eightfold Path, consisting of *Sīla*, development of moral purity; *Samādhi*, development of mind through meditation; and *Paññā*, development of intuitive wisdom through insight meditation.
3. ***Paṭivedha***: Realization of the *Dhamma* as Supramundane Path and Fruition Insight, by which *Nibbāna* is directly experienced.

The *Sāsana* disseminates methods to destroy the ten fetters that bind one to *saṃsāra* and thus attain to the highest Truth.

### The Three Exemplars

The Holy Order (*Saṅgha*) established by the Buddha consists of three kinds of spiritual guides:

1. ***Asekha***, the *Arahat*, the Perfect One, or the Enlightened Saint-disciple of the Buddha.
2. ***Sekha***, the three other types of saints who have gained the Supramundane Path and Fruition Insights. They are: *Anāgāmi* (Non-Returner), *Sakadāgāmi* (Once Returner) and *Sotāpanna* (Stream-Enterer).
3. ***Bhikkhu/Bhikkhuni***, Buddhist monks and nuns, members of the Buddha's monastic order which continues to this day and perpetuates the *Dhamma*.

### The Supramundane (*Lokuttara*)

The Supramundane dimension comprises four Path Insights, four Fruition Insights and *Nibbāna*. These are *Sotāpatti*, *Sakadāgāmi*, *Anāgāmi* and *Arahatta Magga* (Path) and *Phala* (Fruition) *Ñānas* (Insights). *Nibbāna* is the object of these eight stages of transmudane intuitive insight.

### The Mundane (*Lokiya*)

The mundane dimension comprises three spheres of existence (*lokas*): *Kāmaloka*, the sphere of sense desire; *Rūpaloka*, the realm of *Brahma* gods with subtle form and *Arūpaloka* the realm of formless *Brahma* gods.

*Kāmaloka* consists of four netherworlds (*apāyas*), the human plane (*manussa*) and six divine (*deva*) realms. Thus there are eleven distinct planes of existence in this sphere where desire rules.

*Rūpaloka* contains sixteen realms of higher *Brahma* divinities with subtle form. These realms represent the various stages of *samādhi*, ecstatic absorption. The five highest planes are known as *Suddhāvāsa* (Pure Abodes). Only *Anāgāmis* are born there to make the final ascent to the summit state of *Arahatship*.

Of the sixteen the eleventh one is the realm of the unconscious *Asaññasattā* beings, where the Brahmas only have subtle radiant forms, devoid of consciousness.

The *Arūpaloka* consists of four realms of infinite consciousness, wholly detached from any form of corporeality. This is a purely mental existence.

Thus, the difference between the Supramundane and mundane dimensions is that the former consists of transcendental insights with *Nibbāna* as the object, and represents progressive stages of liberation. The mundane comprises different planes of existence, all in different degrees of bondage in *samsāra*.

### **Kamma and Rebirth**

In Buddhism, willful or volitional activity is the psychological core of *kamma*. It is due to *kamma* that one is reborn endlessly and aimlessly in any of the thirty one planes of existence. Thus *kamma*, as volition-based creativity, explains the cause or origin of mundane existence. A ‘creator god’ is only a concept or belief.

One’s destiny in the happy realms of human beings, gods and brahmas, or in the unhappy realms of the nether worlds, is determined by the moral nature of volitional action. That is, whether a *kamma* is morally wholesome (*kusala*) or unwholesome (*akusala*).

A *kamma* is unwholesome when it is rooted in greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*). It is wholesome when rooted in non-greed (*alobha*) non-hatred (*adosa*) non-delusion (*amoha*).

Non-greed does not mean the mere absence of greed. It means the presence of a positive factor like generosity, which makes it impossible for greed to obtain. *Kammas* are threefold: in deed (*kāyakamma*), in speech (*vacīkamma*) and in thought (*manokamma*).

There are ten *Akusala kammas* in three modes, which determine rebirth or recurring existence in the four nether worlds. These are:

**Killing** (*Pānātipātā*)

**Stealing** (*Adinnādānā*)

**Sexual misconduct** (*Kāmesumicchācārā*)

**Lying** (*Musāvādā*)

**Slandering** (*Pisunāvācā*)

**Abusing** (*Pharusāvācā*)

**Gossiping** (*Samphappalāpā*)

**Covetousness** (*Anabhijjā*)

**Ill-will** (*Vyāpāda*)

**Wrong views** (*Micchādiṭṭhi*)

These are the ten *Akusala Kammas*, which are the opposite of the *Kusala Kammas*, i.e., refraining from killing, etc. which determine rebirth in happy realms of the human and divine beings.

The ten *Akusala Kammas* perpetually relegate one to realms of woe (*duggati*) and bring suffering in the human world in various ways. The ten *Kusala Kammas* free one from the *dugatis*, and progressively help one to evolve from the human world upwards. These provide happiness and security in varying degrees. Meditation leading to *samādhi* brings about purification of the consciousness and represents the most refined form of *manokamma*, enabling one to be born in the *Rūpa* and *Arūpa Brahmalo*ka.

The four *Lokuttara* Path Insights represent *Lokuttara kusala*, which free one altogether from the bondage of *kamma* and rebirth. Thus, like pulling out a thorn with another thorn, by one set of *kammas*, one can outgrow another set of *kammas*, and finally be liberated from *kamma* and rebirth. The four

*lokuttara* Fruition Insights are resultants of the Path, in which the Saints enjoy the bliss of emancipation.

### Living Being

Ultimately a living being is the manifestation of volitional action conjoined with consciousness and other mental factors. In the Buddhist context a being is a process of becoming, concretizing karmic patterns, in the form of various destinies, in the thirty one realms of existence. Since life basically is momentary, a being or personality lives and dies from moment to moment.

The wholesome or unwholesome kammās also constitute good or bad states of consciousness. What an apex is to a pyramid, consciousness is to a personality. The immensely complex phenomena of personality can be reduced to five basic components or aggregates (*khandhas*), each a world by itself. These are:

Corporeality	( <i>Rūpakhandha</i> )
Feeling	( <i>Vedanākhandhā</i> )
Perception	( <i>Saññākhandha</i> )
Mental formation	( <i>Saṅkhārakhandha</i> )
Consciousness	( <i>Viññānakhandha</i> )

This classification, from the gross to subtle, indicates relative strength of the *khandhas*. Consciousness, being the psychological focal point, is the subtlest and controls the others. A being knows things because it is conscious of things.

A being can also be viewed in terms of bases or spheres (*āyatana*) representing specific and unique functions. These are: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. The corresponding external objects are: sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and mental objects-ideas, concepts, etc. Mutually interacting, the *āyatanas*

and their objects perpetuate subject-object relationship and create a notion of self-consciousness, a sense of belonging. These *āyatanas* are primal functions of the mind. Also called *indriyas*, faculties, they are repositories of specific ability and power.

A being can also be viewed in terms of eighteen elements (*dhātus*), the ultimate, irreducible factors.

These are:

Eye	sight	eye-consciousness
Ear	sound	ear-consciousness
Nose	smell	nose-consciousness
Tongue	taste	tongue-consciousness
Body	touch	body-consciousness
Mind	mind object	mind-consciousness

A visible object or sight impinges on the sense organ of eye; due to this impact there arises eye-consciousness. It is the same with other organs.

The mind element is a purely functional consciousness. It is the psychological doorway allowing sensory and mental impressions to find access into the mind. The mind object element is a mental image, an idea or concept which acts as the object of a consciousness. The mind-consciousness element refers to all the other state of consciousness.

There are also other modes by which a being can be objectively analyzed. Whatever the manner of analysis, all phenomena comprising the being are essentially momentary and changeable (*anicca*), thus unstable. Whatever is transitory-one state leading to another, then to another-involves one in desire, in craving to survive. This means affliction (*dukkha*). Anything, which is unstable and afflicting is essentially conditioned (*anattā*). That is to say, a stream of life is an



impersonal psycho-physical continuum, basically unsatisfactory, limited and imperfect.

*Anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta* are the three characteristics of the truth of Suffering, *dukkha sacca* – the cause of which is craving, not only for sensual pleasure but for survival and even for annihilation. In *Nibbāna*, the dimension of freedom and bliss, neither unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*) nor craving (*taṇhā*) obtains. The Noble Eightfold Path leads one from *saṃsāra*, representing *dukkha* and *taṇhā*, to *Nibbāna*.

Intuitive insight into the structure and function of the five khandhas, reveals the true nature of being and the world around. It leads one from the mundane to the Supramundane. The Noble Truths summarise the Teachings of the Buddha.

### Perfections (*Pārami*)

There are ten perfections (*pāramis*) which enable a being to make an end of *saṃsāra* and realize *Nibbāna*. *Pāramis* form the spiritual foundation. These are: Giving (*dāna*), Morality (*sīla*), Renunciation (*nekkhamma*), Wisdom (*paññā*), Self-effort (*virīya*), Enduring patience (*khanti*), Truthfulness (*sacca*), Determination (*adiṭṭhāna*), Universal love (*mettā*), Equanimity (*upekkhā*).

The *Pāramis* are integral to the attainment of sainthood and to spiritual evolution leading to Buddhahood. In accordance with the aspiration, they are fulfilled at three levels of intensity. As a prerequisite to enlightenment all of them must be perfected. The seeker of enlightenment treading the Path discovered and taught by the Buddha fulfils ten *pāramis* and becomes an *Arahat* and attains *Nibbāna*. The aspirant to Buddhahood, however, must perfect the ten *pāramis* thrice over and reach supreme enlightenment.

Fulfillment of the *pāramis* twice over, through the course of many lifetimes, is necessary for the arising of a *Paccekabuddha*. These solitary Buddhas like the Supreme Buddha, discover *Nibbāna* by themselves. They appear during cycles when the *Dhamma* is lost to the world. But they cannot impart the Teachings or help others attain enlightenment, unlike a *Sammā Sambuddha* or an *Arahat*.

In order to become the Supremely Enlightened One, the *Bodhisatta* must exert for incalculable aeons to perfect the *pāramis* thrice over. The *Jātaka* stories chronicle the great sacrifices made by Gotama Buddha in fulfilling these exalted perfections. The *Sammāsambuddhas* not only discover *Nibbāna* by themselves but enable innumerable beings to attain enlightenment. When they themselves no longer exist physically, the Teachings are perpetuated through their disciples, the *Arahats*.

## ĀRAKKHĀ BHAVANĀ

### Four Protective Meditations

#### I. *Buddhānussati*

##### Recollection of The Buddha's Surpassing Qualities

#### 1. *Buddhānussati mettā ca*

*Asubhaṃ maranassati,  
Iti imā caturārakkhā,  
Bhikkhu bhāveyya sīlavā.*

A virtuous monk should practise  
These four Protective Meditations:  
Recollection of the Buddha's surpassing qualities,  
Development of universal love,  
Perception of impurities and  
Reflection on death.

#### 2. *Ananta-vitthāra guṇaṃ,*

*Guṇatonussaraṃ muniṃ,  
Bhāveyya buddhimā bhikkhu,  
Buddhānussatimādito.*

Beginning with the Buddha's surpassing qualities,  
Or dwelling on the Sage's virtue and  
His all-embracing spiritual excellences,  
Should the wise *bhikkhu* develop his meditation.

#### 3. *Savāsane kilese so,*

*Eko sabbe nighātiya,  
Ahu susuddha-santāno,  
Pūjānañca sadāraho.*

Of all liberated saints, he alone expunged,  
The mental defilements, together with their traces,\*  
Thus winning the State of Immaculate Purity,  
And truly became the worthiest  
To be worshiped for all times.

#### 4. *Sabbakālagate dhamme, Sabbe sammā sayamṃ munī, Sabbākārena bujjhitvā, Eko sabbaññutaṃ gato.*

The Sage discovered on his own,  
And totally, all knowledge,  
In every conceivable form,  
Of the past, present or future,  
He alone thus won Omniscience.

#### 5. *Vipassanādi vijjāhi, Sīlādi caraṇehi ca. Susamiddhehi sampanno, Gaganābhehi nāyako.*

With all supernormal attainments, including  
Supramundane Path and Fruition Insights,  
Beginning with unequalled virtuous conduct.  
The Supreme Leader, like the sky,  
Is boundless in accomplishments,  
Each mastery reaching its apex state.

#### 6. *Sammāgato subhaṃ thānaṃ, Amoghavacano ca so. Tividhassāpi lokassa, ñātā niravasesato.*

\* Like rings of a coconut tree, mental defilements leave traces on the psyche. These form one's predilections. A saint may have a predilection, but the Buddha transcends all.

He alone trod the Path of Truth,  
To reach the Perfect State.  
Himself, the embodiment of Truth,  
His words are infallible ever.  
In the three spheres of existence  
He is the All-Knower,  
With Knowledge without remainder!

7. *Anekehi guṇogehi,  
Sabbasattuttamo ahu,  
Anekehi upāyehi,  
Naradamme dāmesī ca.*

He is the Most Exalted,  
Having rained floods of virtue,  
On the hearts of beings,  
And having tamed in many ways  
Those who are worthy to be tamed.

8. *Eko sabbassa lokassa,  
Sabbamatthānusāsako,  
Bhāgya-issariyādinam,  
Guṇānam paramo nidhi.*

For the whole universe He alone,  
Is the true guide to the Supreme Good,  
Being himself the Fountainhead of  
All excellences, powers and good fortunes.

9. *Paññāssa sabbadhammesu,  
Karuṇā sabbajantusu,  
Attatthānam paratthānam,  
Sādhikā guṇajettḥikā.*

Highest ever, he accomplished,  
The utmost good for himself and others,  
With supreme wisdom in all things  
And boundless compassion for all beings.

10. *Dayāya pārami citvā,  
Paññāyattāna-muddhari,  
Uddhari sabbadhamme ca,  
Dayāyaññe ca muddhari.*

Out of compassion he fulfilled the Perfections,  
And ascended upon the summit of wisdom;  
Thus did he salvage all knowledge;  
By means of which he delivered,  
All beings with all-embracing mercy.

11. *Dissamānopi tāvassa,  
Rūpakāyo acintiyo,  
Asādhārana-nāṇaḍḍhe,  
Dhammakāye kathāva kā'ti?*

His physical body, though visible to all,  
Was matchless, beyond belief.  
What to say, then, of his spiritual body,  
Indeed incomparable and so wondrous!

**II. *Mettā Bhāvanā*****Development of Universal Love**

1. *Attuppamāya sabbesaṃ,  
Sattānaṃ sukhakāmatāṃ,  
Passitvā kamato mettāṃ,  
Sabbasattesu bhāvaye.*

Making oneself the example,  
Let one seek happiness for all beings.  
Having visualized them in a progressive order,  
Let one develop universal love,  
By extending it to all beings.

2. *Sukhī bhaveyyaṃ niddukkho,  
Ahaṃ niccaṃ ahaṃ viya,  
Hitā ca me sukhī hontu,  
Majjhatṭhā catha verino.*

Just as I yearn to be happy,  
To be ever free from suffering,  
Even so, may all beings be happy,  
Whether friendly, neutral or hostile.

3. *Imamhi gāmakkhettamhi,  
Sattā hontu sukhī sadā,  
Tato parañca rajjesu  
Cakkavālesu jantuno.*

All those living within the limits  
Of our village and surrounding areas,  
Within our district, our country,  
Indeed, in the whole world-  
May all be happy ever!

4. *Samantā cakkavālesu,  
Sattānantesu pāṇino,  
Sukhino puggalā bhūtā,  
Attabhāvagatā siyuṃ.*

Likewise, all the countless beings,  
Inhabiting the boundless universe,  
All creatures, all sentient life  
With individualized existence,  
May all beings be happy!

5. *Tathā itthi pumā ceva,  
Ariyā anariyā pi ca,  
Devā narā apāyaṭṭhā,  
Tathā dasa disāsu cā'ti.*

Similarly, all females and males,  
All Noble Saints and those not liberated,  
All divine and human beings,  
All denizens of the nether worlds,  
May they all be happy ever!

**III. Asubha Saññā****Perception of Impurities**

1. *Aviññāṇa subhanibham,  
Saviññāṇa subham imam,  
Kāyam asubhato passam  
Asubham bhāvaye yati.*

As one discerns the impurities  
In attractive inanimate things,  
So should one perceive impurities in  
Sentient beings that appear attractive.  
Seeing the body's basic rot, let one  
Develop the perception of impurities.

2. *Vañṇa-sañṭhāna-gandhehi,  
Āsayokāsato tathā,  
Paṭikkulāni kāye me,  
Kuṇapāni dvisoḷasa.*

Impurities are due to decomposition  
Inherent in the thirty-two parts of my body.  
Thus should one perceive impurities-  
By way of colour, shape, smell  
Location and section of each of the parts.

3. *Patitamhāpi kuṇapā,  
Jeguccham kāyanissitam,  
Ādhāro hi suci tassa,  
Kāyo tu kuṇape ṭhitam.*

Bodily impurities are more loathsome,  
Than those existing in a place,  
Where corpses are buried.  
There the earth surely is clean.

The constantly rotting body,  
However, has nothing clean in it.

4. *Milhe kimi va kāyo yam,  
Asucimhi samuṭṭhito,  
Anto asuci sampuṇṇo,  
Puṇṇa-vaccakuṭi viya.*

Indeed renewal of the body  
In a setting of unceasing decay  
Resembles the rampant maggots  
In a sewage tank.  
Inside, the body is filled with filth,  
Like an over-flowing privy.

5. *Asuci sandate niccam,  
Yathā medakathālikā,  
Nānā kimi kulāvāso,  
Pakka candanikā viyā.*

Ever the impurities flow out,  
Like fat from an overflowing pan.  
And, as in a putrid village pond,  
The body harbours varieties of worms.

6. *Gaṇḍabhūto rogabhūto,  
Vaṇabhūto samussayo,  
Atekkicchoti jegguccho,  
Pabhinna kinapūpamo'ti.*

As the source of all disease, the body is  
Like a bagful of boils and sores,  
Often untreatable, and ever repulsive,  
Resembling that of a decomposing corpse.

**IV. Maranānussati****Reflection on Death**

1. *Pavāta-dīpa tulyāya,  
Sāyusantatiyākkhayaṃ,  
Parūpamāya sampassaṃ,  
Bhāvaye maraṇassatiṃ,*

Like a blown-out lamp is life when  
Cut off by exhaustion of the vital force.  
Visualizing how others died, should  
One cultivate the reflection on death.

2. *Mahāsampatti-sampattā,  
Yathā sattā matā idha,  
Tathā ahaṃ marissāmi,  
Maraṇaṃ mama hessati.*

In this world, even those beings  
Who were immensely fortunate, died.  
Similarly I too will have to die.  
Death will surely overtake me.

3. *Uppattiyā sahevedaṃ,  
Maraṇaṃ āgataṃ sadā,  
Maraṇatthāya okāsaṃ,  
Vadhako viya esati.*

Indeed death invariably comes  
Together with birth itself,  
Even as a murderer eagerly looks,  
For the opportunity to kill his victim.

4. *Īsakaṃ anivattantaṃ,  
Satataṃ gamanussakaṃ,  
Jīvitāṃ udayā atthaṃ,  
Suriyo viya dhāvati.*

Just as the sun rises only to set,  
Even so, without stopping, and  
Ever on the move, death follows,  
Only to make an end of life!

5. *Vijjububbula ussāva,  
Jalarāji parikkhayaṃ,  
Ghātakova ripū tassa,  
Sabbatthāpi avāriyo.*

Bubbles break up, dew-drops dry,  
A line drawn in water disappears,  
And the victim falls prey to his enemy.  
So indeed is death ever inevitable!

6. *Suyasatthāma-puññiddhī,  
Buddhivuḍḍhi jinadvayaṃ,  
Ghātesī maraṇaṃ khippaṃ,  
Kātu mādisake kathā,*

Even those peerless Self-Awakened Ones,  
The Supremely Enlightened Ones  
And the Hermit Enlightened Ones,  
Endowed with great wisdom,  
Immense merits, supernormal powers,  
Vast fame and following, passed away.  
So what to speak of a person like me?

7. *Paccayānañca vekalyā,  
Bāhirajjhattupaddavā,  
Marāmorāṃ nimesāpi,  
Maramāno anukkhaṇantī.*

Due to the manifold working of conditions,  
Supporting life, within and without,  
Or the various distresses afflicting it,  
In just a flash we could die!  
Indeed, we are dying every moment.

### ***Abhiñham Paccavekkhitabbaṃ***

#### **Constant Reflection of Realities**

*Pañcimāni bhikkhave tñānāni abhiñham  
paccavekkhitabbāni itthiyā vā purisena vā gahaṭṭhena vā  
pabbajitena vā. Katamāni pañca?*

*Bhikkhus*, these are the five realities which should be reflected upon, over and over again, by woman and man both lay and monastic. Which five?

*Jarādhammomhi; jaraṃ anatīto'ti abhiñham  
paccavekkhitabbāṃ.*

“I am subject to ageing. I have not gone beyond ageing.” So it should be reflected upon, over and over again.

*Byādhidhammomhi; byādhim anatīto'ti abhiñham  
paccavekkhitabbāṃ.*

“I am subject to disease. I have not gone beyond disease.” So it should be reflected upon, over and over again.

*Maraṇadhammomhi; maraṇam anatīto'ti abhiñham  
paccavekkhitabbāṃ.*

“I am subject to death. I have not gone beyond death.” So it should be reflected upon, over and over again.

*Sabbehi me piyehi manāpehi  
Nānābhāvo vinābhavo'ti  
Abhiñham paccavekkhitabbāṃ.*

“Inevitably there comes change in, and separation from, all that are dear to and cherished by me.” So it should be reflected upon, over and over again.

*Kammassakomhi kammadāyādo  
Kammayoni kammabandhu kammaṭṭisaraṇo.  
Yaṃ kammaṃ karissāmi kalyāṇaṃ vā,  
Pāpakam vā tassa dāyado bhavissāmīti  
Abhiñham paccavekkhitabbāṃ.*

“I am the owner of my action. I am the heir of my action. My action is the womb whence I have sprung. My action is my kin. My action is my protection. Whatever action I do, good or evil, of that I shall be the heir.” So it should be reflected upon, over and over again.

*Imāni kho, bhikkhave, pañca tñānāni abhiñham  
paccavekkhitabaṃ itthiyā vā purisena vā gahaṭṭhena vā  
pabbajitena vā.*

*Bhikkhus*, these are the five realities which should be reflected upon, over and over again, by woman and man, both lay and monastic.

**Cattāri Ariyasaccani****Four Noble Truths**

1. *Idaṃ kho pana, bhikkhave, dukkhaṃ ariyasaccam: Jātipi dukkhā, jarāpi dukkhā, byādhipi dukkho, maraṇampi dukkhaṃ, appiyehi sampayogo dukkho, piyehi vippayogo dukkho, yampicchaṃ na labhati tampi dukkhaṃ; samkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā.*

“*Bhikkhus*, this is the Noble Truth of Suffering, namely: birth is suffering, ageing is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, coming in contact with the disliked is suffering, separation from the liked is suffering, not to get what one desires is suffering, in short, the five aggregates (as objects) of clinging are suffering.

2. *Idaṃ kho pana, bhikkhave, dukkhasamudayaṃ ariyasaccam: Yāyaṃ taṇhā ponobbhavikā nandirāgasahagatā tatrataṛbhīnandinī, seyyathidaṃ: kāmataṇhā, bhavataṇhā, vibhavataṇhā.*

“*Bhikkhus*, this is the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering, namely, this very craving, which gives rise to rebirth, which is accompanied by delight and lust, now taking pleasure in this and now in that. That is, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for recurring existence and craving for annihilation.

3. *Idaṃ kho pana, bhikkhave, dukkhanirodham ariyasaccam: Yo tassāyeva taṇhāya asesavirāganirodho cāgo paṭinissaggo mutti anālayo.*

“*Bhikkhus*, this is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering: The remainderless fading away and cessation of that

very craving, abandoning it, turning away from it, freedom and detachment from it.

4. *Idaṃ kho pana, bhikkhave, dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā ariyasaccam: Ayameva ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo, seyyathidaṃ: sammādiṭṭhi, sammā saṅkappo, sammā vācā, sammā kammanto, sammā ājīvo, sammā vāyāmo, sammā sati, sammā samādhi.*

“*Bhikkhus*, this is the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering: That is, the Noble Eightfold Path, namely, Right Understanding, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Meditative Concentration.



## Basic Meditations

The Triple Gem (*Ratanattaya*), or the Three-fold Refuge (*Saraṇattaya*), comprising the *Buddha*, the *Dhamma* and the *Saṅgha*, constitutes the object of devotion in Buddhism. The *Ratanas* are so called because nothing can be more precious. Bestowing incomparable and unalloyed peace and happiness, they are the highest refuge, the peerless source of security and protection.

Meditation as an act of devotion consists in wise reflection (*anussati*) on the attributes of the Triple Gem. These qualities are embodied in the Hymns of worship of the Triple Gem (*Ratanattaya Vandana Gāthā*), familiar to all Buddhists from the time they learn to speak, and recite on all occasions of worship.

In earnestly reflecting on these qualities- nine of the *Buddha*, six of the *Dhamma* and ten of the *Saṅgha*, one brings about an inner transformation by implanting them within. For example, in recollecting the Buddha's attributes, each one is mentally visualised in conjunction with an attainment or event in the life of the Buddha. Then these qualities become real, lively and visible. They can be related to one's own life and made relevant to one's spiritual growth.

### ***Buddhānussati* – Recollections of the Buddha's Qualities**

*Iti'pi so Bhagavā:*

Thus indeed is the Blessed Lord:

1. *Araham*,  
He is the Perfect One,
2. *Sammāsambuddho*,  
The Supremely Enlightened One,

3. *Vijjācaraṇa sampanno*,  
The Embodiment of Wisdom and Virtue,
4. *Sugato*,  
The Sublime One,
5. *Lokavidu*,  
The Knower of all Realms,
6. *Anuttaro Purisadamma Sārathi*,  
The Incomparable Tamer of Individuals ready to be tamed,
7. *Satthā Deva-manussānaṃ*,  
The Supreme Master of Gods and Men.
8. *Buddho*,  
The Enlightener,
9. *Bhagavā ti*.  
The Blessed Lord.

### **1. ARAHAM**

The Buddha is the Perfect One (*Araham*), because he achieved self-transcendence by winning Nibbāna entirely through his own spiritual excellence. By self-transcendence he went beyond the reach of cankers and mental defilements, he went beyond the vicious circle of *kamma* and rebirth. Having reversed the process of dependent origination, he also went beyond the possibility of falling back into any plane of existence, however sublime. Thus he went beyond even the highest of the divine states. Out of boundless compassion and all-embracing love, the Perfect One then fully and unreservedly made known the Truth he had discovered. As the precursor, he brought into being innumerable *Arahats*, his Perfected Disciples. Therefore he is the *Arahat* of *Arahats* – the Perfect of the Perfected Ones, the God of Gods – *Devātidevā*.

## 2. SAMMĀSAMBUDHO

The Buddha is the Supremely Enlightened One (*Sammāsambuddho*), because, as the discoverer of the Noble Truths, he was the first and the only one to attain the highest and perfect Enlightenment. He did so unaided unguided by any teacher, and fully on his own. He is the Supremely Enlightened One because he is the repository, source, and the manifestation of all knowledge. That is, he knows and sees (*jānāti, passati*) everything of the past, present and future. This quality of the Buddha represents the consummate fulfillment of spiritual glory, hence he is the Omniscient One (*Sabbāññū*) and the Self-Arisen One (*Sayambhu*). He is the Spiritual Sun (*Dharmabhānu*).

## 3. VIJĀCARAÑA SAMPANNO

As the perfect Embodiment of Wisdom and Virtue (*Vijjācaraṇasampanno*), the Buddha is the fountainhead of wisdom and compassion. Limitless wisdom arose from his unobstructed omniscient knowledge gained through the discovery of the Four Noble Truths. His limitless virtue and unbounded compassion became the fount whence flowed the liberating knowledge of his discovery to others. With Enlightenment he could have easily passed into the bliss of *Nibbāna*. Instead, through his wisdom he penetrated others' suffering, and through his compassion, undertook to remove this suffering. Through his wisdom he himself crossed over the ocean of *saṃsāra*, and through his compassion and virtue he was able to take others across the ocean.

## 4. SUGATO

Buddha is called the Sublime One (*Sugato*) because of his auspicious advent and because of the promise and guidance

that his dispensation bestows upon the world. There are ten exalted spiritual perfections, the fulfillment of which is a prerequisite to the arising of a Buddha. Their fulfillment entails superhuman sacrifice and heroism. For hundreds of lives the Would-be-Buddha (*Bodhisatta*) labours consciously and perseveringly to perfect those spiritual excellences. Having accomplished this, a Buddha is the Bringer of All Excellence – One who has come (*su+āgato*) most auspiciously bringing unprecedented promise; One who has departed (*su+gato*) uniquely, leaving a heritage that continues to illuminate the lives of countless beings; and one who has perfectly proclaimed (*su+gado*) a peerless Teaching (*Dhamma*), emancipating all from the bonds of universal suffering.

## 5. LOKAVIDŪ

As the Omniscient One, the Buddha is the Knower of All Realms (*Lokavidū*). Nothing can obstruct his knowledge, whether of the past, or of the present or of the future, whether of the near or far, subtle or gross, whatever the Buddha wants to know, he penetrates superbly and totally. This does not mean knowing everything all at once. Such an inundation would be an obstruction to knowledge. It means the capacity to know everything about all beings, all planes of existence, all spiritual states, all kinds of knowledge, and everything about the path by which to outgrow the limitations of *saṃsāric* existence and find access to *Nibbāna*. This power as Knower of All Realms, enables the Buddha to guide a being in a way that suits his character, potential and level of evolution.

## 6. ANUTTARO PURISADAMMA SĀRATHĪ

As the peerless trainer of spiritual seekers, the Buddha is called the Incomparable Tamer of Individuals (*Anuttaro*

*Purisadamma Sārathī*). Innumerable instances during the forty-five years of his ministration, bear witness to this attribute. The Master was challenged by wicked and vicious humans as well as diabolical fiends, spirits and divinities. All of them were invariably over-powered and tamed by his awesome spiritual might, and were set upon the right path. As the tamer of evil, which is more than being a vanquisher and as the protector of the good, the Buddha has no compeer. Hence the Blessed Lord indeed is the Incomparable Tamer of beings to be spiritually transformed.

### 7. *SATTHĀ DEVA-MANUSSĀNAM*

The Buddha is the Supreme Master of Gods and Men (*Satthā Deva-manussānam*) because he is the spiritual teacher and guide for all human and divine beings who seek enlightenment and liberation. This designation emphasizes the transcendental stature of the Master. Having gone beyond the divine realms, he is superior to the highest of gods. With utmost devotion the gods approached him to resolve their spiritual problems and to lead them to deliverance. In fulfilling the role of the Supreme Master for all Truth-Seekers, the Buddha is the only True Refuge and Saviour.

### 8. *BUDDHO*

The eighth attribute, The Enlightener (*Buddho*), stands for him who, being the Perfect One, the Discoverer of Truths, the Self-Risen, the Perfect Embodiment of Wisdom and Virtue, the Sublime One, the All-Knower, the Incomparable Tamer and the Supreme Teacher, the Buddha is truly the Supremely Enlightened One, and the Enlightener of all seekers of truth. Just as the sun, being self-illuminated, illuminates everything around, so the Buddha, being himself the Supremely Enlightened

One, enlightens all. He is not only a liberated individual but is a liberator. By his unique accomplishment, he liberated countless beings from the bonds of worldly existence, and continues to do so, by the bestowal of the *Dhamma* and the *Saṅgha*. As liberator he keeps intact the lineage of the Enlightened Ones. He consecrates others to the mission of the *Bodhisattas*, who, as future Buddhas, continue the Spiritual lineage. Thus does the Supremely Enlightened One keep alive hope and promise in a world otherwise filled with gloom, misery and hopelessness.

### 9. *BHAGAVĀ*

Invested with the above mentioned qualities, the Blessed one indeed is the Lord (*Bhagavā*), who demolishes the prison of *saṃsāric* existence, and who saves all beings seeking emancipation and light. He rescues the seekers entrapped in the snares of evil wrought by the spell of *Māra*, the evil one. Thus, as the Blessed Lord, the Buddha is the true Saviour.

### *Dhammānussati* – Recollection of the Qualities of *Dhamma*

1. *Svākkhāto Bhagavatā dhammo*,  
The Teaching has been perfectly enunciated by the Blessed One,
2. *Sandiṭṭhiko*,  
It is verifiable here and now,
3. *Akāliko*,  
With immediate fruit,
4. *Ehipassiko*,  
Inviting all to test for themselves,
5. *Opanayiko*,  
Leading onward to *Nibbāna*,

6. *Paccattam veditabbo viññūhī'ti.*

To be comprehended by the wise, each for himself.

Reflective meditation on the *Dhamma* is far from being a mere intellectual exercise. The awe and conviction which insight into *Dhamma* inspires, brings about a qualitative improvement of the mind. It exercises devotion and develops dedication, which is distinct from mere intellectual thinking.

The Teaching has been perfectly enunciated by the Enlightened One since it is free from ambiguity, contradiction and irrelevance. There cannot be any discrepancy between what one thinks, says and does, between precept and practice in the Teaching. And it is perfectly enunciated because it enables one to transcend all extremes and it establishes one, both at the mundane and Supramundane levels, of the Noble Eightfold Path.

This perfectly enunciated Teaching, in the words of the Enlightened One himself, is “good in the beginning, good in the middle and good in the end.” As the discovery of the Master, it is auspicious, bringing unparalleled blessings to countless beings, thus good at its commencement. As a mode of living based on the Noble Eightfold Path, it is free from all distortions, it is entirely unblemished, thus good in its continuity. As the Supramundane spiritual experience, it brings about transformation of the consciousness, it results in the realization of *Nibbāna* and liberation from *samsāra*. Thus it is good at its conclusion. The first attribute, when thus meditated upon, enables one to develop a reverential approach, earnestness and devout commitment towards the *Dhamma*.

The five remaining attributes refer to the Supramundane aspect of the Master’s Teaching. Verifiable here and now” means that its effectiveness, relevance and excellence are evident from the spiritual transformation brought about by the Supramundane

Path and Fruition Insights. When transmutation of the consciousness occurs, it is an elemental change, that is, change in substance. The life of the *Ariya* becomes verifiably different. So there is nothing arcane about this noble state. The proof is eminently visible, beyond any doubt and clear to all.

The immediate fruit of the *Dhamma* is the blissful, ecstatic happiness directly following each Path Insight and culminating in the bliss of emancipation. At the mundane level the immediate benefits are also present, though less intense and more fluctuating. For instance, if a man practices loving-kindness, anger is dispelled. Many examples of this kind can be adduced to show the quick response and immediacy intrinsic in the application of *Dhamma*.

‘Inviting to test for themselves’ is a unique feature of the *Dhamma*. The Supramundane experience is always direct, as distinct from inferential or scriptural knowledge. It admits only direct scrutiny and objective test.

Theories and intellectual skill, however clever, can never match the impact of direct experience. Thus *Dhamma* invites all to test it for themselves. Its complete reliability and predictability is based on timeless universal laws. Only that which is true and perfect can confidently call for this ‘come and see’ approach.

The *Dhamma* irrevocably and invariably leads one onward to *Nibbāna*, which is beyond all dichotomies, free of deception and deviation into blind alleys. It is onward-leading because it transcends not only evil but also good. Although the good brings worldly happiness and rebirth in heavenly realms, such happiness is conditioned and within the range of *samsāric* involvement and affliction. The glories of heaven must come to an end when the *kamma* which produced them is exhausted. True security therefore, lies in going beyond both good and bad to the Transcendental. Since *Dhamma* has only *Nibbāna*

as its goal, it leads one to the beyond, the transcendental dimension of freedom.

Because of the aforementioned qualities the Teaching is fully realized only by the wise. Mere learning, piety or psychic abilities, do not make one wise. Wisdom essentially is born of direct contact with reality, as enunciated in the Four Noble Truths by the Lord of Wisdom, the Buddha. Only those who comprehend the Four Noble Truths attain the Supramundane states and directly realize *Nibbāna*. This comprehension of the *Dhamma* by its very nature is always personal. Hence the attribute ‘to be comprehended by the wise, each for himself’.

### ***Saṅghānussati* – Recollection of the Qualities of *Saṅgha***

*Supatipaṇṇo Bhagavato Sāvakaṣaṅgho,  
Ujupaṭipaṇṇo Bhagavato Sāvakaṣaṅgho,  
Ñāyapaṭipaṇṇo Bhagavato Sāvakaṣaṅgho,  
Sāmīcipaṭipaṇṇo Bhagavato Sāvakaṣaṅgho,  
Yadidaṃ cattāripurisayugāni aṭṭhapurisapuggalā,  
Esa Bhagavato Sāvakaṣaṅgho;  
Āhuneyyo, Pāhuneyyo, Dakkhineyyo, Añjalikaraṇīyo,  
Anuttaraṃ puññakkhettaṃ lokassā’ti,*

The Blessed One’s Noble Disciples form the Holy Order, thus is established on the Right Path;

The Blessed One’s Noble Disciples form the Holy Order, thus is established on the Direct Path;

The Blessed One’s Noble Disciples form the Holy Order, thus is established on the Just Path;

The Blessed One’s Noble Disciples form the Holy Order, thus is established on the Proper Path;

The Blessed One’s Noble Disciples Comprising the four pairs of Noble Persons and the eight Spiritually transformed

Individuals, form this Holy Order, therefore it is ever worthy of offerings and hospitality, is worthy of gifts and reverential salutations, and is the incomparable Field of Merit for the World.

The *Saṅgha* is the Holy Order established by the Buddha, comprising the Noble Disciples (*Ariyas*), who have entered the Supramundane Path. These Noble Saints, whose qualities constitute the subject of this meditation are designated according to their attainments of the four Supramundane stages of the realization of *Nibbāna*. These stages are further divided into Path-Insight and Fruition-Insight states indicating the process of transmutation of the consciousness, as well as the enjoyment of the bliss of Emancipation arising therefrom. In this progressive order of eight spiritually transformed individuals, each step represents a distinct stage of emancipation from *samsāra*, born of destruction of fetters, and the degree of realization of enlightenment (*Nibbāna*).

These eight saints are called *Ariyas*, Noble Ones, because they are firmly established on the Supramundane level of the Noble Eightfold Path. It is the Right Path because it has transcended all mundane dichotomies and paradoxes and the evils associated therewith and because it reflects the excellence of *Nibbāna*. This pure ‘means’ is of the same perfect nature as the goal.

It is also the Direct Path because it avoids the two extremes and takes to the Middle Path and leads one directly and irrevocably to *Nibbāna*. It is beyond all crookedness and serpentine or wrapped conditions.

It is the Just Path because it has transcended all dubious, unreliable means, and reflects the Truth of *Nibbāna*. It is Just because it is realizable and visible here and now, admitting scrutiny and is ever progressive.

It is called the Proper Path, because it is most becoming and sure Path, reflecting the security and perfection of *Nibbāna*. These four qualities of rightness, directness, justness and properness, reflect the nature of *Nibbāna*, varifiably evident in the *Ariya's* life.

According to the four stages of Supramundane achievement, the Holy Saints are classified as *Sotāpanna*, Stream-Enterer; *Sakadāgāmi*, Once-Returner; *Anāgāmi*, Non-Returner; and *Arahat*, the Perfect One, each with Path and Fruition attainments. Hence the phrase “four pairs of holy Persons, forming the eight Noble individuals” who constitute the Holy Order of the Noble Disciples of the Blessed One.

Buddhist society consists of the members of the Order of monks and nuns and the laity. They live a life of mutual dependence on the basis of the Noble Teaching, a life that truly reflects harmony, concord, goodwill and purity. Saints of the Holy Order may belong to either category male-female, as well as to beings of human and the divine realms. Because the saints form the real Field of Merit, they are worthy of all offerings, hospitality, salutation and respect. One who offers gifts, hospitality etc., to those who are truly worthy, i.e., the holy ones, invests his own life with rich spirituality.

The analogy of a field is particularly apt. A field is the source of the basic needs of life, of prosperity and civilization. Just as the field is for growing various crops, fruits, flowers etc., to garner human needs, even so the Holy Order is the spiritual field for the seekers of enlightenment to acquire spiritual merit, which is essential to gain liberation. For, what capital is in commerce, merit is for spiritual life in Buddhism.

Merit stands for moral virtue and spiritual excellence. One acquires merit to gain insight into truth and thereby liberation. Merit also enables one to live a life of purity and prosperity in accordance with the Good Law (*Saddhamma*). By acquiring merit one is blessed with all the good things of life. Merit therefore assures both worldly gains as well as spiritual growth.

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