

Chapter 44

LIFE HISTORIES OF BHIKKHUNĪ ARAHATS

(1) MAHĀPAJĀPATI GOTAMĪ THERĪ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Mahāpajāpati Gotamī Therī was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, she was listening to a discourse by the Buddha when she happened to see a *bhikkhunī* being named by the Buddha as the foremost among the *bhikkhunis* who were enlightened earliest¹. She aspired to the same distinction in a future existence. So, she made extraordinary offerings to the Buddha and expressed that wish before Him. The Buddha predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

In Her Previous Existence as The Head of Water-carriers

The future Mahāpajāpati Gotamī Therī led a life of charity and observed the moral precepts and at the end of her life she was reborn in the deva realm. When she passed away from deva existence during the interval between the two Buddhas, she was reborn into the slave class in Bārāṇasī, as the head of water carriers.

Then, when the rains-retreat period was drawing near, five Paccekabuddhas who lived in Nandamū Cave, descended at the Migadāvana Forest, near Bārāṇasī, from the sky and went into the city to gather alms-food. They stayed at the Isipatana Migadāvana forest after the alms-round and discussed among themselves about seeking help in making small dwelling places for use during the rains-retreat.

(A *bhikkhu*, who vows to remain at a chosen place during the rains-retreat period, is required by the Vinaya Rules to live in a sort of dwelling with some roof (made of slate, or baked tile, or cement tile, or grass or leaves) and with a door. This rule has no exception even for those *bhikkhus* who have vowed to observe such austere practices as the *Nālaka* practice or the *Moneyya* practice. If a dwelling for the purpose is not offered to them ready-made, they have to seek assistance in getting one built. This dwelling is the place where they vow to live during the three-month rains-retreat period, and is essential for making the vow.)

The five Paccekabuddhas, who had to fulfil the need for a dwelling for use during the rains-retreat, arranged their robes in the evening and entered the city of Bārāṇasī to seek assistance. Their going into the city was noted by the chief of the water carriers. The Paccekabuddhas stood at the door of the rich man of Bārāṇasī but when they told him about their need, the rich man said, “We were not prepared to help. May the revered ones go elsewhere.”

The chief of water carriers met the Paccekabuddhas as they came out of the city at the city gate and putting down the water pot, she made obeisance. Then she asked the purpose of the revered ones in going into the city and coming out so soon from it. The Paccekabuddhas told her that they were seeking assistance to have a small dwelling built for use during the rains-retreat period. And also on further inquiry, she learnt that the need was still unfulfilled. She asked them: “Is this dwelling to be the gift of only well-to-do donors? Or is it proper for a slave like me to donate one?”

“Anybody may do so, female lay supporter,” they replied.

1. *Rattaññū Puggala*: one who was enlightened earliest. This is a technical term which means the bhikkhu who is the senior-most in the Order. It also means the bhikkhu who understands the Four Ariya Truths earliest. It also may mean the bhikkhu who attain arahatship earliest.

“Very well, Venerable Sirs, we shall donate the dwellings tomorrow. Meantime, may the Venerables accept my offering of food tomorrow.”

After making the invitation, she picked up her water pot and, instead of returning to the city, she went back to the water-hole and gathered her company of water carriers there. Then she said to them: “Now girls, do you want to be slaves to others all the time? Or do you want freedom from servitude?”

They answered in unison: “We want freedom from servitude!”

“If so, I have invited the five Paccekabuddhas to an offering tomorrow. They are in need of dwellings. Let your husbands give their helping hands for one day tomorrow.”

“Very well,” they all said. They told this to their husbands in the evening after the latter had come home from the forest where they worked. The men all agreed to help and made an appointment at the door of the chief of the male slaves. When they had assembled there, the head of the water carriers urged them to lend a hand in building dwellings for the five Paccekabuddhas during the rains-retreat period, and thus extolling great benefits of such contribution. A few of the men, who did not agree to help at first, were admonished by her and persuaded into the task.

The next morning, the head of the water carriers offered food to the five Paccekabuddhas. After that, she signalled the five hundred male slaves to start work. They promptly went to the forest, cut down trees, and each group of a hundred men built a modest dwelling unit for one Paccekabuddha, complete with an adjacent walk to it. They filled the water pots and saw to the bare essentials in five dwellings for the five Paccekabuddhas. They then offered them to the Paccekabuddhas, requesting them to dwell there during the rains-retreat period. Having received the consent of the revered ones, they also took turns to offer daily food to them.

If there was some poor water carrier who was unable to prepare a meal for the five Paccekabuddhas on her appointed day, the head of the water carriers would give her the necessary provisions. The three months of *vassa* thus passed. Near the end of the *vassa*, the head of the water carriers asked the five hundred slave girls each to weave a piece of rough cloth. The five hundred pieces collected from them were exchanged for five sets of fine robes which were offered, one set to each of the five Paccekabuddhas. The Paccekabuddhas, after receiving the robes, rose to the sky in the presence of their donors and went away in the direction of Gandamādana mountain.

In the Past Existence as The Chief Weaver

These water carriers slave girls spent the rest of their life in doing meritorious acts. On their death, they were reborn in the deva realm. The head of the deva girls, on her passing away, was reborn into the family of the chief weaver, in a weaver's village, near Bārāṇasī. One day, the five hundred sons of Queen Paduma devī, all Paccekabuddhas, went to the door of the royal palace at the Bārāṇasī on invitation. But there was no one to attend to them; to offer seats or to offer food. They had to return to their abode. As they left the city and were at the weaver's village, the chief weaver, who had much devotion for them and after paying obeisance to them, offered food. The Paccekabuddhas accepted her offering of food and, after finishing the meal, left for the Gandamādana mountain.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

The chief weaver spent the rest of her life in deeds of merit. After passing away from that existence, she was reborn in the deva realm or the human realm in turns. On the eve of the appearing of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into the Sakyan royal family as the younger daughter of King Mahāsuppabuddha in Devadaha. She was named Gotamī and was the younger sister of Princess Mahāmāyā. Court astrologers, learned in the Vedas and adept at reading human forms and marks (physiognomy) and palmistry, after scrutinizing the distinctive bodily features of the two sisters predicted that the sons born of the two sisters would become a Universal Monarch.

When the two sisters came of age, they were betrothed to King Suddhodāna and they were taken to Kapilavatthu where Princess Mahāmāyā was made the Chief Queen. Later,

the Buddha-to-be passed away from Tusitā Deva realm and was conceived in the womb of Queen Mahāmāyā. After the Queen had given birth to her son (on the full moon of Kason (May) in the 68th year of the Great Era), on the seventh day, she passed away and was reborn in Tusitā Deva realm by the name of Santusita. On the death of Queen Mahāmāyā, King Suddhodāna made the younger sister, Queen Gotamī, the Chief Queen.

After Queen Mahāmāyā had given birth to Prince Siddhattha, two or three days later, Queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, the step mother of Prince Siddhattha, gave birth to Prince Nanda. So, at the time Queen Mahāmāyā died, Prince Siddhattha was only seven days old while Prince Nanda was only four or five days old. Queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī nursed her nephew, Prince Siddhattha, from her own breast, while leaving her own son, Prince Nanda, to be nurtured by nurses. She devoted her whole attention to the bringing up of her little nephew, the Buddha-to-be.

Later, the Buddha-to-be renounced the world and attained Supreme Enlightenment. While He was on the Buddha's mission to bring welfare to the world, He made His first visit to Kapilavatthu. On the next day, after His arrival, He went into the city to collect alms-food. His father, King Suddhodāna, had the opportunity to listen to the Buddha's discourse while He was still on His alms-round and resulted in him attaining the Stream-Entry Knowledge. Then on the second day, Prince Nanda was admitted into the Order. On the seventh day, the Buddha's son, Rāhula, was admitted as a novice (The details of these events have already been given.)

The Buddha spent His fifth *vassa* in Kūṭagāra monastery in the Mahāvana forest, near Vesālī. During that time King Suddhodāna attained arahatship under the regal white umbrella at the court of Kapilavatthu and passed away the same day. Then Queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī renounced the world and become a *bhikkhunī*. Later, the five hundred queen consorts of the five hundred Sakyan princes, who became *bhikkhus* on the occasion of the expounding of the Mahāsamaya Sutta, unanimously decided to become *bhikkhunīs*. They made Queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī their spokeswoman to request the Buddha for admission into the Order. The first attempt by the Queen, the Buddha's step-mother, failed. Then she and the five hundred Sakyan princesses shaved their heads, donned dyed robes, and marched on foot from Kapilavatthu to Vesālī. They sought Venerable Ānanda's support in pleading for their admission. Finally, the Buddha admitted them into the Order as *bhikkhunīs* or female *bhikkhu*. Mahāpajāpati Gotamī was admitted by administering the eight principal vows (*garu dhamma*). The five hundred Sakyan princesses were admitted by an assembly of *bhikkhus* only. (Note: Later under normal procedure, a *bhikkhunī* had to be admitted by an assembly of *bhikkhunīs* also.) (The details about this paragraph may be found in Chapter Thirty-two.)

The Buddha's step-mother, Mahāpajāpati Gotamī Therī, attained arahatship after hearing the Saṅkhiṭṭa Sutta. The five hundred *bhikkhunīs* later attained enlightenment at various levels after hearing the Nandakovāda Sutta.

(c) Mahāpajāpati Gotamī Therī The Foremost Bhikkhunī

On one occasion when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery and naming foremost *bhikkhunīs*, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who are of long standing in the Order, Mahāpajāpati Gotamī is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

(Herein, the name ‘Gotamī’ represents the Gotama clan. ‘Mahāpajāpati’ is the epithet which means ‘mother of great offspring’. This epithet was based on the prognostication of physiognomists and palmists that, from the special features observed on her person, she was to be the mother of a Universal Monarch if she gave birth to a son, or the mother of the wife of a Universal Monarch if she gave birth to a daughter.) — **Commentary on Majja**

The Passing Away of Gotamī Therī

When Gotamī Therī was of 120 years' age, she was residing at a *bhikkhunī* monastery which was in the city of Vesālī. (As a rule, *bhikkhunī* monasteries were set up inside the town or village.) The Buddha was then staying at the Mahāvana monastery near Vesālī. One morning, after collecting alms-food in the city and finishing her meal, Gotamī Therī entered into the attainment of *arahatta-phala* for a predetermined period. After rising from the *jhāna* attainment, she remembered the long series of her acquisition of merits in her past existences and felt very delighted. Then she reviewed her life span. She saw that it had come to an end. She thought it proper to inform the Buddha at Mahāvana forest about her approaching death, as well as bidding leave of her passing away to her colleagues who had been a source of her inspiration such as the two Chief Disciples and co-resident *ariyas*. Then only she would return to her “monastery” and pass away. The same idea also arose in the minds of the five hundred *bhikkhunīs* of Sakyān origin.

(The touching events concerning the passing away of Gotamī Therī will now be told based on: (1) The **Chiddapīdhānanī** (Volume One, Chapter Twelve) by Mahāvisuddhārāma Sayadaw, and the **Apādāna, Khuddaka Nikāya, IV**. Only a gist of those texts is given here.)

The Buddha's step-mother, Gotamī Therī thought: “I am not going to live to see the passing away of my son, the Buddha, nor that of the two Chief Disciples, nor that of my grandson Rāhula, nor that of my nephew Ānanda. I am going to predecease them. I shall seek permission to pass away from my son, the Buddha now.” The same thoughts also occurred in the minds of five hundred *bhikkhunīs* of Sakyān origin.

At that moment, the earth quaked violently. Unseasonable rains thundered in the sky. The guardian spirits of the *bhikkhunī*-monasteries wailed. The five hundred *bhikkhunīs* went to Gotamī Therī and told her about the wailing of the guardian spirits and Gotamī Therī told them her plan to pass away. The five hundred *bhikkhunīs* also told her their plan likewise. They all asked the guardian spirits of the monastery to pardon them if they had offended them in any way. Then, casting her last glance at the “monastery”, Gotamī Therī uttered this verse:

“I shall now proceed to the unconditioned (Nibbāna) where there is no aging or death, no association with beings or things one dislikes, no separation from beings or things one holds dear.”

Among those who heard these words, those who had not rid themselves of attachment, devas and humans alike, wailed miserably. (The touching scene of their lamentation is vividly described in the **Pāli text**.)

When the *bhikkhunīs* came out of their *vihāra* (nunnery), along the main street, devotees came out of their homes, and kneeling themselves before Gotamī Therī, wailed, expressing their deep distress. The Buddha's step-mother, Gotamī Therī, spoke words that help quell their sorrow. (Her words, rich with the Doctrine, may be gleaned from the Pāli text. This remark also applies to other stanzas that she was to utter later on.) She uttered nine and a half stanzas to allay the lamentation of the citizens of Vesālī. When she arrived before the Buddha, she informed Him of her impending death and asked the Buddha's approval to release her life-maintaining thought process, in verse, sixteen in all, beginning with the words: *Aham sugata te mātā tum ca vīra pitā mama*. The Buddha gave His approval in a stanza. After that, she recited five stanzas in praise of the Buddha.

Then she asked permission of the Sangha, the Venerable Rāhula, the Venerable Ānanda and the Venerable Nanda, to approve of her passing away in two stanzas (beginning with the words, “*āsvīśālayasame*”) describing the banefulness of sentient existence. The Venerables Nanda and Rāhula who were then *arahats* took the words of the great Therī as inspiring emotional religious awakening; but as for the Venerable Ānanda, who was still training himself for arahatship, they caused much sorrow and lamentation. He expressed his grief in a stanza beginning with, “*hā santim Gotamī yā it*.” The great Therī solaced her nephew with words of wisdom.

Thereafter, the Buddha asked Gotamī Therī, in the following verse, to display her

supernormal powers:

“Gotamī, for the sake of those who have doubts about female devotees attaining Enlightenment in My teaching, to enable them shed those doubts, display your supernormal powers.”

The one hundred and twenty years old *bhikkhunī* complied by showing her supernormal powers as described in the text on Supernormal powers, such as from being one to become many; from being many to become one; to become visible and to become invisible; to pass through a wall or a mountain, etc. Then she walked in mid-air holding Mount Meru as the prop on which the great earth rested as an umbrella, and turning upside down this miraculous umbrella. She created an atmosphere of incense heat as when six suns arise simultaneously, etc. Having complied with the Buddha's request, she came down and making obeisance to Him, sat in a suitable place. She said: “Venerable son, I, your step-mother, is 120 years of age. I have grown old, I have lived long enough. May I be allowed to die.”

The audience, stunned by the miraculous powers displayed by Gotamī Therī, asked her: “Venerable, what was the extent of merit you had performed to be endowed with such power and capability?” And Gotamī Therī related to them the successive acts of merit she had performed since the days of Buddha Padumuttara to the last existence. Those events ran into a number of stanzas.

Then the five hundred *bhikkhunīs* rose up to the sky as a cluster of stars, captivating the eye of the audience, displayed their supernormal powers, and having obtained the Buddha's approval to end their miraculous feats, they made obeisance to Him and sat in a suitable place. They recounted to the Buddha in verses how much they owed to Gotamī Therī. Then they asked the Buddha's permission to pass away.

The Buddha said: “*Bhikkhunīs*, you know the time to pass away.” Thus having obtained the Buddha's approval, they made obeisance to Him and returned to their “monastery”. The Buddha, accompanied by a large company of devotees, saw Gotamī Therī off up to the entrance to His forest abode. There, the great Therī and her five hundred *bhikkhunīs* disciples made their last obeisance to the Buddha together. Then the five hundred *bhikkhunīs* entered the city and sat cross legged in their respective dwellings in the “monastery”.

At that time, many male and female lay disciples of the Buddha, seeing the time had come to see the last of the noble ones, gathered around to pay their last respect, beating their chests in great sorrow. They threw themselves down on the ground like a tree uprooted. Gotamī Therī caressed the head of the eldest of the female devotees and uttered this stanza:

“Daughters, lamentation leads only to Māra's domain and is therefore in vain. All conditioned things are impermanent; they end up in separation, they cause endless agitation.”

Then she told them to go back to their homes. When alone, she entered into the first *jhāna* of Fine Material Sphere and then, stage by stage, till the *jhāna* of the neither-consciousness-nor-nonconsciousness, and then back, stage by stage, to the first *jhāna* of Fine Material Sphere. Thus, back and forth, she dwelt in the eight mundane *jhānic* attainments. Then she dwelt in *jhānic* attainment beginning from the first *jhāna* up to the fourth *jhāna*. Arising from that *jhāna* she realized complete Cessation of the aggregates, just as a lamp goes out when the oil and the wick become exhausted. The remaining five hundred *bhikkhunī*-disciples also realized complete Cessation.

At that moment, the great earth quaked violently and meteors fell from the sky. The skies rumbled with thunder. The celestial beings wailed. Celestial flowers rained from the sky. Mount Meru tottered like a dancer swaying. The great ocean roared, as if deeply troubled. *Nāgas*, *asuras*, devas and Brahmās expressed their emotional religious awakening in such term as: “Impermanent are all conditioned things; they have the nature of dissolution.”

Devas and Brahmās reported the death of Gotamī Therī and the five hundred *bhikkhunīs*

to the Buddha. The Buddha sent the Venerable Ānanda to inform the matter to the *bhikkhus*. Then, accompanied by many *bhikkhus*, the Buddha joined the funeral procession which took this order: (1) devas, humans, *nāgas*, *asuras* and Brahmās marched at the head, followed by; (2) the five hundred Golden hearses of five hundred *bhikkhunīs* with multi-tiered roofs created by Deva Visukamina wherein were placed the remains of the *bhikkhunīs* on their cots, and these hearses were borne by devas; (3) then followed the hearse of Gotamī Therī, the Buddha's step-mother, which was borne by the Four Great Deva Kings; (4) then followed the Sangha and the Buddha. The whole route from the nunnery to the funeral ground was canopied and all along the route were placed streams, pennants, while all the ground was strewn with flowers. Celestial lotus flowers came down, thick and fast, as though they were hanging loosely in the sky. All sorts of flowers and perfumes wafted in the air. All sorts of music, singing and dancing took place in honour of the departed noble *arahats*.

During the progress of the funeral procession, both the sun and the moon were visible to the people. Stars were shining in the sky. Even at noon, the sun's rays were cool like that of the moon. In fact, the occasion of Gotamī Therī's funeral was surrounded by even more wonderful happenings than on the occasion of the funeral of the Buddha himself. On the occasion of the Buddha's funeral there was no Buddha nor the Venerable Sāriputta and *bhikkhu*-elders to supervise the funeral proceedings whereas on the occasion of the funeral of Gotamī Therī, there were the Buddha and the *bhikkhu*-elders, such as the Venerable Sāriputta, to supervise the proceedings.

At the charnel-ground, after the remains of Gotamī Therī were incinerated, the Venerable Ānanda picked up the relics and uttered this stanzas:

“Gone now is Gotamī. Her remains have been burnt up. And soon the passing away of the Buddha, the much anxiously awaited event, will take place.”

The Venerable Ānanda collected the relics in the alms-bowl used by Gotamī Therī and presented them to Buddha. Thereupon, the Buddha held up the relics of his step-mother for the audience to view and spoke to the assembly of devas, humans and Brahmās thus:

“Just as a big tree full of hard core standing firmly has a great trunk and that great trunk, being of impermanent nature, falls down, so also Gotamī who had been like a big tree trunk to the *bhikkhunī-sangha* is calmed (i.e. has entered Nibbāna.)”

The Buddha uttered altogether ten stanzas for the benefit of the audience on that memorable occasion. These ten stanzas with text and word-for-word meanings may be gleaned by the reader in the **Chiddapīdhānī**.)

2. KHEMĀ THERĪ

(The story of Khemā Therī is treated briefly in the Commentary on the **Āṅguttara Nikāya**, the Commentary on the **Therīgāthā** and the Commentary on **Dhammapada**. In the **Apādāna Pāli**, it is related in detail by the great Therī herself. What follows is mainly based on the **Apādāna** with selections from the three Commentaries.)

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Khemā Therī was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara, a hundred thousand world-cycles ago. One day, she listened to the Buddha's sermon and became a devotee of the Buddha, being established in the Three Refuges.

Then she had her parents approval to offer an extraordinary feast to the Buddha and His Sangha. At the end of seven days of the great offering, she saw Sujātā Therī whom the Buddha named as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in Knowledge. She was inspired by that. She gave an extraordinary offering again before expressing her wish to become such a foremost *bhikkhunī* in her own time later. Buddha Padumuttara prophesied that a hundred thousand world-cycles hence she would become the foremost *bhikkhunī* with regards to Knowledge in the time of Buddha Gotama.

Repeated Existences as Deva Queen or Human Queen

The future Khemā Therī, on passing away from that existence, was reborn in five deva realms, namely, Tāvātimsa, Yāmā, Tusitā Nimmānarati, and Paranimmitavasavati successively, as queen of the devas. When she passed away from there, she was reborn as queen of the Universal Monarch or as queen of a great king. Thus, wherever she was reborn, she was born as queen. She enjoyed the most glorious state in the deva-world and the human world for many many world-cycles.

Existence as A Bhikkhunī leading A Life of Purity

After being reborn in the fortunate existences only, during the time of Buddha Vipassī, ninety-one world-cycles previous to the present world-cycle, she was reborn into a worthy family. She had the opportunity of hearing the Buddha's Dhamma which made her solely devoted to the Pure Life and she became a *bhikkhunī* who was learned in the Doctrine, skilful in the knowledge of Paṭiccasamuppāda, a bold exponent of the Four Ariya Truths, and a persuasive preacher besides being a diligent one in the practice of the Dhamma. Thus she was a model to those who took up the Threefold Training under the Buddha's Teaching. She spent this life of Purity during her life span of ten thousand years.

Passing away from there, she was reborn in Tusitā Deva realm. After that, wherever she was reborn, the great merit, which she acquired in her existence during time of Buddha Vipassī, endowed her with the best that that particular existence could offer, such as making her talented, pure in morality, rich in resources attended by wise following, well provided with ease and comfort. Further, the religious practices observed in that existence led her to superior social status such as making her a queen, whether in deva existence or human existence and being loved and respected by her king.

Her Existence as Donor of A Monastic Complex

During the time of Buddha Koṇāgamaṇa, in the present world-cycle, she was reborn into a rich family in Bārāṇasī. Together with two other rich ladies by the name of Dhanañjānī and Sumedha (her own name being unknown but may be referred to as Khemā), they built a monastic complex for the Sangha as a whole. At their death, they were reborn in the Tāvātimsa Deva realm, and after that existence, they were reborn in the human world and the deva-world, enjoying superior social status too.

Her Existence as The Eldest of The Seven Daughters of King Kikī

During the time of Buddha Kassapa, in the present world-cycle, King Kikī of Bārāṇasī, in the province of Kāsi, was an ardent supporter of the Buddha. He had seven daughters by the names of: (1) Princess Samaṇī, (2) Princess Samaṇaguttā, (3) Princess Bhikkhunī, (4) Princess Bhikkhadāyikā, (5) Princess Dhammā, (6) Princess Sudhammā and (7) Princess Saṃghadāyikā. Later, during time of Buddha Gotama, they became respectively (1) Khemā Therī, (2) Uppalavaṇṇā Therī, (3) Paṭācārā Therī, (4) Kuṇḍalakesī Therī, (5) Kisāgotamī Therī, (6) Dhammadinnā Therī and (7) Visākhā, donor of Pubbārāma Monastery.

The future Khemā Therī (Princess Samaṇī), on hearing a sermon by Buddha Kassapa, was very keen to become a *bhikkhunī* but her father would not give her permission to do so. So, as the eldest, together with her six younger sisters, they made a common resolve not to marry and remained spinsters throughout their lives which lasted twenty-thousand years. They supported Buddha Kassapa with the four *bhikkhu* requisites for life.

On one occasion, the Buddha made a marvellous discourse entitled Mahānidāna Sutta, (which is recorded as the second sutta in Mahāvagga of **Dīgha Nikāya**). Princess Samaṇī was so absorbed in hearing it that she learnt it by heart, and recited it often.

As the result of these good deeds, on her death, she became the Chief Queen (of Sakka) in the Tāvātimsa.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn in her last existence as the daughter

of King Maddarāja of Sāgala. Since her birth brought peace to the land, she was named 'Khemā' (peace). When she came of age, she became the Queen of King Bimbisāra and was adored by her husband. She was conceited with her beauty.

The Buddha was then residing at the Veḷuvana monastery in Rājagaha. Queen Khemā had heard people saying that the Buddha always made discourses pointing out the faults of physical beauty, so she never went to see Him for fear that her beauty might well come under His censure.

King Bimbisāra's Clever Manoeuvre

King Bimbisāra thought: "While I am the most important lay supporter to the Buddha, it is inconceivable that my Queen has never visit the Buddha." He contrived a plan by having a song composed by an able poet, in praise of the Veḷuvana monastery, which he ordered songsters to sing within earshot of the Queen.

A Four-stanza Eulogy on The Veḷuvana Monastery

- (1) Anyone who is not fortunate enough to see the Veḷuvana monastery, the Bamboo grove residence of the Buddha, we consider him or her as one who has never seen the Nandavana Park of the celestial realm.
- (2) He or she who has seen the Veḷuvana Grove, which is so much cherished by King Bimbisāra of Rājagaha, the people's favourite ruler, the cynosure of the whole world, has truly seen the Nandavana Park, the favourite resort of Sakka, King of Devas.
- (3) Many of the Tāvātimsa devas, having abandoned the Nandavana Park and descended to the earth (the southern Island Continent) and cast their eyes on the Veḷuvana Grove, are astonished and all their cares forgotten, they are never satisfied with seeing it.
- (4) That Veḷuvana Grove has appeared due to the King's past merit and is adorned by the Buddha's majesty that poet could adequately describe its endless merits?

When Queen Khemā heard that song, although she had been to the Veḷuvana Grove on a pleasure visit with the King, her interest in the Grove was aroused afresh. She was very keen to visit it again. She asked the King's permission to go there and went there with a big retinue. She chose the hour of the day that she presumed the Buddha was surely not there, i.e. during the morning, when the Buddha usually went to the city for collecting alms-food. She roamed about the Bamboo Grove which was full of all kinds of flowering trees, fruit trees, where bees and bumble bees busied themselves collecting honey, and where the koels sang and the peacocks preened their feathers in the quiet seclusion of the park. She also visited the monastic dwellings of the religiously inclined men, their meeting halls, rest-houses and walks.

She came across a youthful *bhikkhu* sitting in meditation at the foot of a tree and thought that young man should be enjoying the pleasures of life at present and take up the religious life only in his old age. Feeling sure that the Buddha was not in his private chamber, she went near it. Instead, the Buddha knew that she would come and He remained in His private chamber. He had created, by His powers, a young maiden whose beauty surpassed that of Queen Khemā and was fanning Him.

When Queen Khemā saw that lovely maiden, she abandoned attachment to her own good looks but became fascinated and enamoured of the strange beauty in front of her. But even as she was gazing at the girl, due to the Buddha's powers, the beauty of the girl diminished perceptibly and within a few moments, she turned old and decrepit with wrinkled skin, gray hair, nursing teeth, black spots all over the skin, floppy breasts, bony joints protruding, veins twining about the body, bent double, and soon the old woman was trembling and breathing hard struggling for life and finally she gasped and collapsed. She was dead.

This vivid sight caused emotional religious awakening (*samvega*) in Queen Khemā. She realized thus:

"Oh, this form (body) is impure. It is indeed loathsome. Foolish women relish this

impure, loathsome body.”

Then the Buddha spoke to Queen Khemā in these verses:

- (1) “Khemā, look at the body that is afflicted with pain, impure, putrid, discharging impurities upwards and downwards, which foolish persons take so much delight in.
- (2) “Cultivate the mind to get fixed on an object of meditation, so as to be able to perceive the loathsomeness of the body. Let you be mindful of the thirty-two aspects (constituent parts) of the body; let there be weariness about them.
- (3) “(Khemā), just as the body of this woman by My side breaks up, so too will your body break up. Just as your body seem attractive for a while before death, so too the body of this woman by My side looked attractive before she died; (therefore) give up attachment to the body, both internally and externally.
- (4) “Cultivate a perception of unsubstantiality and noting closely the rising and falling of phenomena. Give up the notion of a self, by doing so, you will quell the eleven fires burning in you and reach Nibbāna.
- (5) “Just as the spider follows the web of its own making, so also sentient beings, who have attachment, follow the stream of defilements that are of their own making. The wise do not have any desire or regard for sense pleasures, but cut off the stream of defilements and go forth to Nibbāna.”

The Buddha knew that after listening to the discourse, the mind of Queen Khemā had become delighted and receptive, He continued with another discourse entitled *Mahānidāna Sutta* (which was the very *sutta* Queen Khemā had heard and learnt by heart from Buddha Kassapa in her previous existence as Princess Samañi). Queen Khemā remembered this *Sutta* and she attained Stream-Entry knowledge immediately.

After becoming an *ariya* as a Stream-Enterer, she wanted to make amends for her mistaken conceit about her beauty. She prostrated before the Buddha and submitted her apology in these five stanzas:

- (1) “The all-knowing One, I pay homage to You.
The Embodiment of Compassion, I pay homage to You.
Buddha who has crossed over the flood of *samsāra*, I pay homage to you.
Giver of the Deathless, I pay homage to you!
- (2) “I had been befuddled and led astray by attachment to sensuality, thus springing forward into the thicket of wrong view. By means of an appropriate device, you, the Bhagavā, have tamed me (who had been befuddled) and made me happy in being so tamed.
- (3) “Lacking an opportunity of meeting such a great One as Yourself, who is endowed with morality, concentration, etc., sentient beings suffer enormous *dukkha* in the ocean of *Samsāra*.
- (4) “Even though the Pure One, who has reached the Purity of Nibbāna, had been staying at the Veļuvana monastery, I had failed to come and pay homage to the Lord of the three worlds. That failure, on my part, I (now) admit to the Bhagavā as my fault.
- (5) “I had a mistaken idea about the Great Benefactor to the three worlds, the Bestower of the Ultimate Boon (*magga, phala, Nibbāna*) as one who is unprofitably censorious because I had been too fond of my beauty. My fault in having entertained such foolish thoughts and my failure to come and pay homage to you earlier, I (now) admit to the Bhagavā as my fault. (The Myanmar renderings are by the late Mahāvisuddhārāma Sayadaw in his **Chiddapīdhānānī**.)

Upon admission by Queen Khemā of her previous fault, the Buddha said: “Let it be Khemā”, which cooled her heart as though ambrosial water were poured onto her person. Then Queen Khemā made obeisance to the Buddha and respectfully left Him. Back at the royal palace, she saw King Bimbisāra and addressed him thus:

- (1) “O great conqueror with golden complexion, you had employed a most apt strategy to persuade me to visit the Veļuvana monastery. Marvellous indeed was your idea! For I had become keenly desirous of seeing the Veļuvana Park, (with the consequence that) I have seen (with both my physical eye and the eye of wisdom) the Buddha, the great sage.
- (2) “O King! If you would agree, I would take up bhikkhunihood in the Teaching (which is replete with eight marvels) of the Buddha of unrivalled wisdom, of the embodiment of the highest virtues. Thanks to the wise words of the Buddha, I have gained insight into the tiresome nature of my body.”

On hearing the two stanzas spoken by Queen Khemā, King Bimbisāra, who had even, from her mien, been recognizable as an *ariya*, one who had attained Path-knowledge, raised his joined palm to his forehead and said to his Queen: “My dear Queen, I allow you to become a *bhikkhunī*. May your renouncing the world come to its fulfilment (i.e. may you attain arahatship). (These words were spoken in half a stanza.) Thereupon the King put Queen Khemā on a golden Palanquin and sent her to the *bhikkhunī* ‘monastery’ in great state.

Khemā Therī gained Arahatsip

On the fifteenth day of her bhikkhunihood, Khemā Therī, while observing the *uposatha*, contemplated on the lamp in front of her, how the flame arose and how it went out. A keen emotional religious awakening took place in her mind. Applying the insight into the nature of the rise and fall of the flame to all conditioned phenomena, i.e. the mind-body complex that constituted her present existence, she gained arahatship together with the Four Discriminations and the Six Supernormal Powers. (This account of Khemā Therī’s attainment of arahatship is as described in the **Khemā Therī Apādāna Pāli**. The Commentary on the **Āṅguttara Nikāya** and the Commentary on the **Dhamapada** tell this event in a somewhat different manner. We have refrained from discussing them here lest it would confuse the reader.)

Khemā Therī was devoted both to the learning and the practice of the Doctrine and so she was most proficient in the Seven Stages of Purity, and was unrivalled in the exposition of the Ten Subjects of Discussion (*kathāvatthu*), most erudite in the application of the **Abhidhamma** method, outstanding both in learning and practice. The veracity of these statements may be gauged from Khemā Sutta, the first *sutta* in the *Abyākata Saṃgutta* of **Salāyatana Saṃyutta**.

Khemā Therī makes A Subtle Discourse to The Kosalan King

At one time, when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatti, Khemā Therī was making a tour of the Kosalan country, and was sojourning at Torāṇa, which lay between Sāvatti and Sāketa. At that time, King Pasenadi of Kosala was camping for the night at Torāṇa. Then the King said to a courtier: “So, man, make inquires in this place which *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* is fit for my spiritual guide for today.” The courtier made thorough inquires in Torāṇa but could find no *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* whom the King should go to for spiritual guidance. He only saw Khemā Therī who happened to be sojourning there. He went back to the King and said:

“There is no *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* in this place. But there is a *bhikkhunī* named Khemā Therī, a disciple of the Buddha. She is reported to be wise, skilful, learned, an expounder of the Doctrine in a fascinating way, endowed with a remarkable perspicacity. I would humbly suggest that your Majesty go to her for advice and guidance.” The King accepted the advice and went to Khemā Therī. He made obeisance to her and sitting in a suitable place, addressed Khemā Therī thus:

“Venerable, does a sentient being exist after death?”

“Great King,” replied Khemā Therī, “the Buddha does not say that a sentient being exists after death.”

“If so, Venerable, does a sentient being not exist after death?”

“Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being does not exist after death.”

“Venerable, does a sentient being exist as well as does not exist after death?”

“Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being exist as well as does not exist after death.”

“If so, Venerable, does a sentient being not exist after death?”

“Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death.”

The King was at his wit's end. He further put questions which were replied as follows:

“Venerable, (1) When I asked: ‘Does a sentient being exist after death?’ you replied: ‘Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being exists after death!’ (2) When I asked: ‘If so, Venerable, does a sentient being not exist after death?’ you replied: ‘Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being does not exist after death.’ (3) When I asked: ‘Venerable, does a sentient being exist as well as does not exist after death?’ you replied: ‘Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death.’ (4) When I asked: ‘If so, Venerable, does a sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death?’ you replied: ‘Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death.’ Now, Venerable, why does the Buddha not say anything regarding these four questions? What is the reason for the Buddha's refusal to answer these four questions?”

Khemā Therī then said:

“Great King, in that case, let me put you a question. You may answer it as you wish. What do you think of what I am going to say now? Do you have within your dominion any man who can practically count things or an arithmetician who can say: ‘There are such and such number of grains of sand in the Gaṅgā river?’ Or who can say: ‘There are so many hundreds, so many thousands, so many hundred thousand grains of sand in the Gaṅgā river?’ ”

“No, Venerable, there is none.”

“Great King, do you have any man who can practically count things or an arithmetician who can say: ‘There are so many vessels or bowls of water in the great ocean.’ Or who can say: ‘There are so many hundred, so many thousands, so many hundred thousands of bowls of water in the great ocean?’ ”

“No, Venerable, This is because the great ocean is too deep, beyond measure, incomprehensible.”

“Even so, Great King. The Buddha has given up materiality (corporeality) which may be referred to as sentient being; he has eradicated it completely. He has made it like an uprooted palm tree, has rendered it incapable of coming into being again, and has made it impossible to arise in the future.

“The Buddha, who is liberated from being called the aggregate of corporeality or the phenomenon of materiality, is endowed with attributes and disposition or intention which are as great as the great ocean, beyond measure, incomprehensible. As for the Buddha, the statement, ‘a sentient being exists after death’ is irrelevant statement, ‘a sentient being does not exist after death’ is equally irrelevant; the statement, ‘a sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death’ is equally irrelevant; the statement, ‘a sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death’ is equally irrelevant.”

(It is not proper for the Buddha to say that a sentient being exists after death; or a sentient being does not exist after death; or that a sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death, or that a sentient being neither exists nor

does not exist after death. This is a very profound matter.)

“The Buddha has given up Sensation.... p ...Perception... p ...Volitional activities... p ...Consciousness, which may be referred to as a sentient being; has eradicated it completely, has made it like a palm tree stump, has rendered it incapable of coming into being again, and has made it impossible to arise in the future.

“The Buddha who is liberated from being called the aggregate of Consciousness or the phenomenon of Consciousness is endowed with attributes and disposition or intention which are as great as the great ocean, beyond measure, incomprehensible. As for the Buddha the statement, ‘a sentient being exists after death’ is irrelevant statement, ‘a sentient being does not exist after death’ is equally irrelevant; the statement, ‘a sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death’ is equally irrelevant; the statement, ‘a sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death’ is equally irrelevant.”

(That was the discussion that took place between the Kosalan King and Khemā Therī for the second round. Explanations on this will be given later.)

King Pasenadi of Kosala was delighted with the words of Khemā Therī. He made obeisance to her and respectfully departed. Later on, the King visited the Buddha and put the same questions as he did to Khemā Therī. The Buddha answered them just as Khemā Therī did, (These questions and answers may be gleaned from the text.)

When the King found that the Buddha's answers and those of Khemā Therī were exactly the same, down to the letter, he was greatly astonished and exclaimed: “Marvellous it is, Venerable Sir! Astounding it is! The Buddha's exposition is exactly the same as that of His disciple, both in meaning and in words. They are in full agreement without any discrepancy. Venerable Sir, I had once put these questions to Khemā Therī and she had answered to me in exactly the a same way, both in essence and in words. Marvellous it is, Venerable Sir! Astounding it is! The Buddha's exposition is exactly the same with that of His disciple, both in meaning and in words. They are in full agreement without any discrepancy.” Then he begged leave of the Buddha. He was greatly delighted with the Buddha's answers. He rose, made obeisance to the Buddha and respectfully departed.

This is a gist of Khemā Sutta.

Explanation:

Why did the Buddha not give any reply to the questions which are so framed: ‘that a sentient being exists after death’; ‘that a sentient being does not exist after death’; ‘that a sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death’; ‘that a sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death’?

- (1) There is, in truth and reality, nothing in the sentient world other than the five aggregates. There is nothing, in the ultimate sense, such a thing as a sentient being. Therefore, whether a ‘sentient being’ exist or not is not for the Buddha to say. (**Abyākata Saṃyutta**; the third sutta therein).
- (2) Only to one, who does not understand the nature of the five aggregates according to the Four Ariya Truths, there arises the problem of a sentient being and its existence or non-existence, in the said four questions, which occur to him due to Wrong View. To one who understands the Four Ariya Truths, there is no Wrong View that gives rise to these four questions. Since the Buddha has the most complete understanding of the Four Ariya Truths, there do not arise in Him these four questions. That is why He does not say anything about them. (**Ibid.**, the fourth sutta.)
- (3) Such questions, based on wrong view, arise only in one who has not rid of attachment, or craving for the five aggregates. To one who has no craving for the five aggregates, they do not occur. The Buddha, who has rid of Craving for the five aggregates together with any trace of acquired habit, does not have these wrong concepts. Therefore, He remained silent when these questions were asked. (**Ibid.**, the fifth sutta).

(In the sixth sutta of the same Saṃyutta the four questions are dealt with adequately.)

In Khemā Sutta, Khemā Therī's answer was somewhat different; it had the undercurrent of reference to the Buddha. This was because she knew that the questioner (Kosalan King) had the Buddha also in mind when asking the four questions. So, Khemā Therī's answer in essence was:

The Buddha had (by getting rid of the cause of the five aggregates) rid of the five aggregates so that what was usually called a 'sentient being' was not coming into being after his death. He was freed from a future set of five aggregates, therefore, there was nothing that might be referred to as a being or a person. Since the Buddha knew this, a 'sentient being' after 'death was irrelevant for Him to speak of'. Therefore, He remained silent about the four questions.

One might argue thus: since the Buddha would not acquire a fresh set of the five aggregates, it is understandable that He refused to answer the first question, i.e. 'Does sentient being exist after death?' But why did He refuse to answer the second question: 'Does a sentient being not exit after death?' Should He say: 'No, it does not'? He refused to answer this question too because a 'sentient being' is not a real thing in the ultimate sense. (This is the explanation given in the Sub-Commentary.) Khemā Therī Sutta is profound in Dhamma. It is a matter for further inquiring for the virtuous.

(c) Khemā Therī is named as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

The discourse to the Kosalan King at Torāṇa was the immediate cause of Khemā Therī's being designated by the Buddha as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in the possession of profound Knowledge. On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery, in a *bhikkhu* congregation, while naming outstanding *bhikkhunīs* as foremost in their own areas (of proficiency), He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who have profound Knowledge, Khemā Therī is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

This declaration accorded her by the Buddha also had been happily recorded by Khemā Therī herself in the following stanzas, in her own life history:

- (1) “After I had become a *bhikkhunī*, I had explained to King Pasenadi of Kosala in accordance with the Doctrine on the profound questions he put to me at a place called Torana (which was between Sāvatti and Sāketa.)
- (2) “Later the King approached and put these same questions to the Buddha, and He answered these profound questions exactly as I had answered.
- (3) “The Conqueror of the five *māras*, the Supreme One among all men, being satisfied with my excellence in expounding the Dhamma, has designated me as the foremost *bhikkhunī* among the eminently wise.”

3. UPPALAVAṆṆĀ THERĪ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Uppalavaṇṇā Therī was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumutara. On one occasion, she listened to a discourse by the Buddha in the midst of a big audience, where she saw the Buddha named a *bhikkhunī* as the foremost *bhikkhunī* among those endowed with supernormal powers. She aspired to become such a great *bhikkhunī* in the future. She made an extraordinary offering to the Buddha and His Sangha for seven days. At the end of seven days, she placed seven bunches of lotus flowers at the feet of the Buddha as her tribute and expressed her aspiration to be the foremost *bhikkhunī* among those endowed with supernormal powers. Buddha Padumuttara prophesied that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

Offering of Lotus flowers to A Paccekabuddha

After passing away from that existence in which she made a lifelong dedication to the Buddha and the Sangha, she was reborn in the Tāvātimsa Deva realm. Next, she was reborn in the human world where she offered lotus flowers and alms-food to a Paccekabuddha.

In Her Existence as The Daughter of A Rich Man

Ninety-one world-cycles ago, there appeared Buddha Vipassī during which period the future Uppalavaṇṇā Therī was born into a Rich Man's family in Bārāṇasī. She invited the Buddha and the Sangha to her residence and made an extraordinary offering of food. Making a gift of lotus flowers to Buddha Vipassī, she mentally wished for personal charm in her future existences.

In Her Existence as A Daughter of King Kikī

After passing away from that existence, and as a result of her meritorious deeds, the rich man's daughter was reborn as a deva, and subsequently in the deva or human existence. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, in the present world-cycle, she was the second of the seven daughters of King Kikī of Bārāṇasī and was named Princess Samanaguttā. In that existence she, like her eldest sister, the future Khemā Therī, remained a spinster for life, which lasted twenty thousand years. They donated a monastic complex to the Sangha. At her death, she was reborn in the deva realm again.

In Her Existence as Ummādanṭī

After passing away from the deva realm, she was reborn into a worthy family in the human world. During that existence, she donated a gold coloured piece of cloth to an *arahat*, who was a disciple of Buddha Kassapa. (For details refer to **Ummādanṭī Jātaka**.)

She passed away from that existence to be reborn as Ummādanṭī, the exquisitely beautiful daughter of a rich brahmin named Tiriṭivaccha in Ariṭṭhapura, in the Province of Sivi. (For details refer to **Ummādanṭī Jātaka**, Paṇṇāsa Nipāta).

In Her Existence as A Watch Woman in The Field

Her next existence was the daughter of a farmer in a small village. Early one morning, as she went to the farm house, she found in a pond, on her way, a freshly blooming lotus flower. She went into the pond and plucked it. In the farm house she gathered some ears of rice and roasted them into pop corn which she counted up to five hundred. She put the pop corn in a lotus leaf which was gathered from the pond.

At that moment, a Paccekabuddha, after rising from His dwelling in the attainment of cessation, came by way of the air and stood not far away from the farmer's daughter. She saw Him and went to the farm house to get the pop corn and the lotus flowers, and then she put the pop corn into the Paccekabuddha's alms-bowl, covered it with the lotus flower, and offered it to Him.

After the Paccekabuddha had gone awhile, she thought: "A Paccekabuddha has no use with a flower, perhaps I should get it back and wear it." Hence, she went towards the Paccekabuddha and then asked back the lotus flower. But then she pondered: "Well, if the Paccekabuddha did not want my gift of the flower, He would have refused to accept it at the beginning. Now that He allowed me to put it on His alms-bowl, He must have liked it as a gift." So thinking, she placed the flower back into the alms-bowl. (For this wavering act, her future existences, as we shall see, were marked by mixed fortunes.)

Having thus returned the gift of the lotus flower, and admitting her fault for taking it back earlier, she expressed her wish: "“Venereal Sir, for offering this pop corn may I be blessed with five hundred sons in my future existence. This is equal to the number of pop-corn flowers that make up my gift.

Furthermore, for my gift of the lotus flower, may lotus flowers rise up from the earth to receive every step I make in my future existence!"

(According to the life history of Uppalavaṇṇā, while the farmer's daughter was

making her offerings to the Paccekabuddha, five hundred farm workers, who were watching the field, offered some honey to the Paccekabuddha and made their wish that in their future existence they be reborn as the sons (five hundred of them all) of the young lady.)

The Paccekabuddha then rose into the sky even while the girl was watching Him and returned to Gandamādāna mountain where He placed the lotus flowers at the entrance to Nandamūla Cave, for use by all Paccekabuddhas as a door-mat at the foot of the flight of steps.

In Her Existence as Queen Padumadevī

As the result of that good deed, when future Uppalavaṇṇā Therī passed away from that existence, and was reborn, by instantaneous full-grown birth, as a deva. There, in her own existence, a lotus flower arose from the earth at her foot at every step she made. When she passed away from this deva existence, she was reborn in the human world from a lotus flower in a big lake of lotus flowers at the foot of a mountain. A recluse living nearby, early one morning, went to the lake to wash his face and saw a lotus flower in bud which was already bigger than other buds. While the other buds had opened up their petals into full bloom, this bud remained in bud. He thought it strange and so he went into the lake and plucked it.

While in his hand, the big bud opened its petals and inside he saw a female child lying. He felt a curious sense of paternal love for the child. He took her to the hermitage along with the lotus flower, and put her on a small cot. Thanks to the past merits of the baby girl, milk oozed out from the big thumb of the recluse with which he nursed her. When the first lotus flower that she lay on became withered, a new lotus flower was placed underneath her.

When the young girl could walk and romp about, lotus flowers appeared from the earth, under her feet wherever she went. She had a saffron-coloured complexion. Her personal charm was super-human and would nearly equal that of a celestial maiden. Since she was born from the lotus, her foster father, the good recluse, named her Padumavatī (Miss Lotus). Whenever the recluse went out in search of fruit, she was left alone at the hermitage.

Padumavatī becomes A Queen

When Padumavatī came of age, one day, when the recluse was out gathering fruit, a hunter who happened to come to the hermitage saw her and thought: "There is no human being on earth as beautiful as this girl. I must find out what she is." And so he awaited for the return of the recluse. When the recluse was seen returning, the girl went out to meet him, took the yoke (laden with fruits) and the water pot from him, had her foster father seated and attended on him lovingly.

The hunter was now sure that the girl was, in fact, a human being, and after paying homage to the recluse, he sat. The recluse gave him fruits and water, then asked him: "Are you going to stay in the forest or, are you going back to your home?"

The hunter said: "I have no business in the future, Sir, I am going back to my home."

"Could you keep this experience of your meeting with the girl to yourself without letting anyone know about it?"

"If you would rather not let others know about this, Sir, why should I tell others?" But he said this merely to please his kind host. On his way home, after paying respect to the recluse, he carefully carved on the trees and arranged some branches along his way from the hermitage so that he could recognize his path.

And back at the city, he went to see the King who asked the purpose of his visit. He said: "Great King, I am your humble servant, a hunter. I come to report to you the presence of a most remarkable woman in the forest at the foot of the mountain, who would surely be an asset for Your Majesty." He explained the circumstance of his discovery to the King. The

King was deeply interested. He marched for the foot of the mountain without losing time. Having encamped at a place not far away from the hermitage, he awaited till the recluse had finished his meal and went to see the recluse, accompanied by a few courtiers. The recluse was then sitting in his hermitage where the King greeted him, exchanged courteous words and sat in a suitable place.

The King made offering to the recluse, articles used by recluse. And then as a 'feeler' he said: "Venerable Sir, what is the use of living here? Let us go to the city." "I am not going, Great King," said the recluse. "You may go." To which the King said: "Very well, Venerable Sir, but I am given to understand that there is a woman in your company. It is not proper for a woman to be living in the company of a recluse. I would request that the woman be allowed to go with me."

To this direct request made by the King the recluse replied: "It is not easy for one to please many people. How could my daughter fit in with the court life with its many queens and ladies in waiting?"

The King allayed the fear of the recluse, saying: "Venerable Sir, if I (am allowed to marry her and) have given my love to her, I will make her my Chief Queen."

Thereupon the recluse called his daughter, as he usually addressed her since childhood: "Padumavati, my little girl!" Young Padumavati promptly responded; she came out of the hermitage and, saluting her father, stood before him, who said: "Dear girl, you have come of age. From the moment the King has cast his eyes on you, you should not stay here any longer. Go along with the King, my little girl."

"Very well, dear father," she said, weeping, and still standing.

The King of Bārāṇasī, wishing to prove his sincerity, showered Padumavati with gold, silver and jewellery and anointed her as his Chief Queen immediately.

Queen Padumavati became A Victim of Court Intrigue

At the court of Bārāṇasī, the King's heart was captivated by the Chief Queen so much so that since her arrival, all the other queens and ladies-in-waiting were totally neglected by the King. The womenfolk felt bitter about this and they tried to undermine the King's affection for the Chief Queen, saying: "Great King, Padumavati is not a human being. Where on earth have you ever seen a human being whose every step is received by a lotus flower arising from the earth? She is a demon, for sure. She is dangerous. She ought to be banished forthwith!" The King did not say anything.

At another time, when the King was called away by duty to suppress a rising at the remote part of the kingdom, he had to leave behind Padumavati at the palace, knowing that she was pregnant. The womenfolk at court seized this opportunity to strike. They bribed Padumavati's attendant into a wicked plot. She was instructed to remove the infant when the Chief Queen gave birth to her child and replace it with a piece of wood smeared with blood.

When Padumavati delivered the child, Prince Mahā Paduma was the real off-spring whom she gave birth to, as he was the only child conceived in her womb. The other sons, four hundred and ninety-nine of them, arose from the drops of her blood splattered about at child birth. The attendant duly carried out the instruction and informed the news of the Chief Queen's delivery to the other queens. The five hundred womenfolk at the court stole one child each while their mother was still asleep after her labour. Then they ordered five hundred wooden caskets, made by turners, to put each child in one. They placed them inside the caskets, and put seals on each.

When Queen Padumavati woke up and asked her assistant about her child, the latter frowned and retorted: "When did you ever give birth to a child? This is what you have delivered," and produced the piece of wood smeared with blood. The Queen was very unhappy and asked her to put it away quickly. The woman quickly complied as if eager to safeguard the Queen's honour by splitting up the piece of wood and throwing it into the fireplace in the kitchen.

The King returned from his expedition and was camping outside the city awaiting the

auspicious time, according to astrological calculation. The women-folk went to greet the King there and pressed their case for banishing Queen Padumavati. "Great King, you did not believe our word about the Chief Queen. But now ask the assistant of Queen Padumavati who had given birth to a block of wood!" The King, without investigating on the matter, believed that Padumavati was a demon and ordered her banishment.

As she was banished from the palace, no lotus flowers appeared underneath her feet. Her good looks left her. She roamed about in the road, feeling forlorn. When an old woman saw her, she had an instinctive affection for her and said: "Where are you going, my daughter?" Padumavati replied: "O mother, I am looking for some place for shelter." The old woman said: "In that case, my daughter, come with me to my house," and taking her home, fed her and put her up there.

The Court Intrigue came to light

When Padumavati was staying at the old woman's house, the women-folk at the court said to the King in one voice: "O Great King, when you were on your military expedition, we had invoked the guardian spirit of the Gaṅgā river for your success and promised him to make offerings on your victorious return. So let the King and all of us go to the Gaṅgā river and make offerings to the river spirit and have fun bathing in the river." The King gladly consented and they all went to the river.

The five hundred women of the court secretly carried the caskets with babies in them and went into the water with their garments on, underneath which were the hidden caskets. Once in the river, they released the caskets which floated down-stream in the river. The five hundred caskets grouped together in the current, floated down together, and were caught in fishermen's net at down-stream. After the King had finished bathing in the river, the fishermen also raised their net from the water and to their great surprise, found the five hundred caskets, which they presented to the King. The King asked them: "What do the caskets contain?" And they answered: "We do not know what is inside them, Great King, we only believed them to be something strange." When the five hundred caskets were opened under the King's orders, the first one to be opened happened to contain Prince Mahāpaduma.

The past merit of the five hundred princelings was such that from the day of their confinement in the caskets, milk flowed from their thumbs to nourish them. Sakka also cleared the doubts in the King's mind by inscribing inside the caskets the message:

"These babies are born of Queen Padumavati and are the sons of the King of Bārāṇasī. They have been put inside the caskets by the five hundred Queens and their accomplices, who bore a grudge against the Chief Queen, and have them thrown into the river. Let the King of Bārāṇasī know these facts."

The King, being thus enlightened, took up Prince Mahāpaduma, and ordered: "O men, harness the chariots and dress up the horses quickly! I shall now go into the city and show my love to some womenfolk." So saying, he rode hastily into the city, entered his palace, and ordered the royal elephant fitted, for a tour of the land with (a velvet bag of) a thousand ticals tied at the neck of the elephant, and ordered the proclamation read aloud to all the people, announcing that whoever has seen Queen Padumavati may take the King's reward of one thousand ticals.

Padumavati, on hearing the proclamation, said to the old women: "Mother, take that one thousand from the neck of the royal elephant!" The old women said: "O daughter, I dare not do it." Padumavati urged her thrice to do so. Then the old lady said: "O daughter, what should I say in taking the reward?" Just say, mother: "I have seen Queen Padumavati?" The old lady then made herself bold to claim the reward.

The King's men asked her: "Have you actually seen Queen Padumavati?" "I have not seen her myself," she said, "but my daughter has."

"Where is your daughter now?" the men asked. And they were let to her house by the old lady. They recognized their queen and prostrated themselves before her. The old lady,

seeing only now the real identity of the young woman, affectionately chided her: “This noble lady has been so reckless. Notwithstanding her eminent position as the Chief Queen, she had chosen to live unattended in such a lowly place.”

The King's men then made an enclosure of white cloth around the humble house which Padumavati was staying, posted guards around it, and reported their discovery to the King. The King sent a golden palanquin to her. Padumavati however insisted that she deserved more ceremony on returning to the palace. She had a canopied walk decorated with gold stars set up all along her way to the palace with exquisite carpets. She also demanded that her regal paraphernalia be sent to her. “I am walking there,” she said, “Let my greatness be seen by all the citizens.” The King ordered that every wish of the Chief Queen must be complied. Then Queen Padumavati, outfitted with full regalia, announced: “I am now going to the palace.” Thereupon every step she made, a lotus flower arose from the earth through the exquisite carpets. Thus letting all the people witness her greatness as she entered the palace. After that, she gave the rich carpets to the old lady as taken of the gratitude she owed to her.

The Magnanimity of Queen Padumavati

The King summoned the five hundred women-folk to court and said to Queen Padumavati: “My Queen, I give these five hundred women as slaves to you.” The Queen said: “O King, let the whole city know about this giving of the five hundred ladies to me.” The King had the fact of this assignment of the five hundred women to Queen Padumavati proclaimed throughout the city by the beat of the gong. Having been satisfied with the public knowledge of the assignment, Queen Padumavati said to the King: “Great King, do I have the authority of emancipating my own slaves?” To which the King replied: “O Queen, you have the right to do whatever you wish with them.” “In that case, O King,” she said, “Let those men, who had made the proclamation of the assignment, made another round of the proclamation to the effect that all the five hundred slaves assigned to Queen Padumavati are hereby granted their freedom by the Queen.” Then the Queen entrusted the 499 princelings to the care of the emancipated women while she took charge of looking after Prince Mahāpaduma.

The Five Hundred Princes became Paccekabuddhas

When the five hundred princelings were of playing age, the King provided all sort of things in the royal gardens for the boys to play. When they were of sixteen years of age, one day, while they were playing in the royal lakes, where the *Paduma* lotus were growing in profusion, they observed the blossoming of the lotus flowers as well as the withering away and dropping off of old flowers which, thanks to their acquisition of sufficient merit, struck their young hearts as a phenomenon worth reflecting on. And this was how they reflected:

“Even these lotus flowers dependent only on temperature and nutrient are subject to ageing; how could our bodies, dependent on four factors (kamma, mind, temperature and nutrient) escape the same fate (i.e. we are likewise subject to ageing and death.)”

They reflected deeply on that phenomena (of impermanence of conditioned existence), gained insight into the nature of mind-and-body, and attained Enlightenment on their own, without being taught by anyone. This is called *Paccekabodhi-nāna*, which lead to the four Ariya Path-Knowledges. In other words, they became Paccekabuddhas. Then rising from their respective seats, they each sat cross-legged on a lotus flower by means of their supernormal powers.

Late in the evening, the attendants of the princelings reminded them: “O Lords, it is time to go home.” The five hundred Paccekabuddhas did not say anything. So the attendants went to the palace and reported the matter to the King about the princes remained silent, all of them sitting on the lotus flowers. The King merely said: “Let my sons remain as they wish.”

The five hundred Paccekabuddhas were placed under guard during the whole night, as

they remained sitting on the flowers. In the dawn, the attendants went near them and said to them: “O princes, it is time to go home.” Then the princes, who were Paccekabuddhas, said: “We are no more princes; we are Paccekabuddhas.” The men were sceptical and said: “You say in an irresponsible way. Paccekabuddhas are not like you, they have only two finger-breadths of hair and moustache or beard, they have recluse's paraphernalia on them. But you have your princely garb on, with long hair and moustaches, and with regal paraphernalia on you. How could you say you are Paccekabuddhas?” (The attendants were describing the Paccekabuddha as they knew it to be.) Thereupon the princes passed their hands on their heads, and lo! their appearance turned into Paccekabuddhas, and they were fully equipped with the eight requisites of a *bhikkhu* (Paccekabuddha). And while the people were looking at them, they rose into the air and went in the direction of Gandamādāna mountain.

The Future Uppalavaṇṇā Therī in Her Existence as A Farm Hand

Queen Padumavatī, after enjoying deep satisfaction on regaining her five hundred sons, was now shocked by the sudden loss of them. She did not survive the shock. After passing away from that existence, she was reborn, as a woman, into a family of labourers, in a village near a city gate in Rājagaha. She married, and went to live with her husband's family. One day, while she was carrying some gruel for her husband, who was working in the field, she saw eight of the five hundred Paccekabuddhas travelling by way of the air. She went quickly to her husband and said: “O Lord look at those Paccekabuddhas! Let us invite them to an offering of aims food.” But the husband who was a simpleton did not know what a Paccekabuddha meant. He said to her: “Dear wife, they are called flying *bhikkhus* (lit, ‘*bhikkhu*-birds’). They are also found in other places (at other times also. Sṛī Laṅkā version) flying about. They are not Paccekabuddhas, they are just (strange) birds.”

As the couple was still discussing, the eight Paccekabuddhas descended to the ground not far away from them. The wife offered her share of meal for the day to the eight Paccekabuddhas and invited them for the next days offerings. The Paccekabuddhas said: “Very well, female lay supporter, let your offerings be for eight donees only. And let your accommodation be for eight invitees only. When you see many other Paccekabuddhas besides ourselves, your devotion will grow even greater.” And the woman (who in her previous existence had been the mother of the Paccekabuddhas,) prepared eight seats and offerings for eight Paccekabuddhas.

The eight invitees said to the remaining Paccekabuddhas: “Do not go elsewhere today for alms-food, but bestow welfare to your mother of previous existence.” Those other Paccekabuddhas agreed, and all the five hundred of them went through the sky to their former mother's residence. The mother in her past existence who had wished of seeing all the five hundred sons, now Paccekabuddhas, did not have any worry about the insufficiency of her offerings. She invited all the five hundred into her house and offered eight seats. When the eight had taken their seats the ninth Paccekabuddha created through his supernormal powers another eight seats and sat there; and so on until the last of the five hundred was seated and her house was expanded through their supernormal powers.

The farm labourer, the mother in the previous existence, who had prepared alms food for eight donees went on serving it to all the five hundred as much as needed by them. Then she brought eight stalks of lotus flowers, and placing them before the original eight invitees, offered them, saying: “Venerable Sirs, for this act of merit, may I be born with a complexion like the colour of the inside of the pollen chamber of this brown lotus.” The five hundred Paccekabuddhas said complimentary words for her good deed, and went back to Gandamādāna mountain through the sky.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

The farm hand (the future Uppalavaṇṇā Therī) lived a life full of meritorious deeds and at the end of her life span was reborn in the deva-world. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into the family of a rich man in Sāvatti. She was born with a complexion like the inner side of the pollen chamber of the brown lotus and hence was

named Uppalavaṇṇā. When she came of age, all the worthy families; rich men and Princes of the whole of the Southern Island Continent, asked her father to give Uppalavaṇṇā in marriage to their sons.

Her father was in a quandary, he did not know how to reply to so many proposals from the worthy men. Not wishing to disappoint them, as a final resolve, he asked his daughter: "Dear daughter, would you become a *bhikkhunī*?" Now, Uppalavaṇṇā, being the bearer of the last burden of sentient existence, was extremely delighted to hear these words, just as rarefied scented oil, refined a hundred times over, were poured down her head. "Yes, father, I would become a *bhikkhunī*," she replied gladly.

As such, he sent his daughter Uppalavaṇṇā to the *bhikkhunis'* 'monastery', after paying great honour to her. Uppalavaṇṇā became a *bhikkhunī*. Not soon after, she was assigned to tidy up and light up the outside of the Sīmā (the congregation hall). There she observed the flame arising in a lamp which she used as her subject of meditation. She concentrated on the element of Heat in that flame, and achieved concentration (*jhāna*). Basing that concentration as object of insight meditation, (through contemplating the three characteristics of physical and mental phenomena, she gained insight into conditioned phenomena) and soon attained arahatship. As the result of her past aspiration to be outstanding in supernormal powers, she became endowed with facility in *jhānic* practice, which is the essential asset in bringing into effect her supernormal powers.

(c) Uppalavaṇṇā Therī as the Foremost Bhikkhunī

On the day Uppalavaṇṇā Therī displayed her miraculous powers, was during the Buddha's seventh year after His Enlightenment. Before doing so, she first asked the Buddha: "Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā allow me to display my miraculous powers. ". Referring to this, the Buddha, on another occasion when outstanding *bhikkhunis* were named at a congregation, declared:

"*Bhikkhus*, among my *bhikkhunī*-disciples endowed with supernormal powers, Bhikkhunī Uppalavaṇṇā is the foremost (*etadagga*)."

4. PAṬĀCĀRĀ THERĪ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Paṭācārā Therī was reborn into a rich man's family in the city of Hamsāvati during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, while she was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a *bhikkhunī* being named as the foremost among those who were most learned in the Vinaya Rules. She aspired to that honour. And after making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, she expressed her desire for the honour of being declared as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in Vinaya learning. Buddha Padumuttara prophesied that her wish would be fulfilled.

In Her Existence as One of The Seven Daughters of King Kikī

After filling her whole life with meritorious deeds, the future Paṭācārā Therī passed away and was reborn in the deva-world and subsequently the human world or the deva-world in turn. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, she was reborn as the third of the seven illustrious daughters of King Kikī (of Bārāṇasī). Her name was Bhikkhunī. She and the six sisters remained spinsters, living a life of chastity for their whole life span of twenty thousand years. Together with her sisters, they donated a big monastic complex.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

The King's daughter (the future Paṭācārā Therī), after passing away from that existence, was reborn in the deva-world. For the innumerable years of the intervening period between the two Buddhas she enjoyed celestial pleasures. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of the rich man of Sāvatti.

When she came of age, she fell in love with a servant of her father's household. When

her parents arranged for her betrothal to the son of another rich man, she warned her lover, on the day before the day of betrothal, that unless he was prepared to elope with her, their love affair would be ended. The man was true to her. He eloped with her, taking whatever little savings he had set aside. The two lovers ran away stealthily and took shelter in a small village three or four *yojanas* away from Sāvaththi.

Soon the rich man's daughter became pregnant and she said to her husband: "My Lord, this is a desolate place for us to give birth to my child. Let us go back to my father's house." Her husband was a timid man. He dared not face the consequences of returning to his master's house and, therefore, procrastinated. The wife then decided that her husband was not going to accompany her back to her father's house and she chose, during the absence of her husband, to return alone.

When the husband returned from his short trip and learnt that his wife had gone back to her parents' house, he felt pity for her. "She has to suffer because of me," he repented and went after her without delay. He caught up with her on the way but by then she had given birth. Then they agreed that since the purpose of her returning to her parents was for the safe birth of her child, and since she had given birth safely, there was no point in going there. So they went back to their small village.

When she was pregnant again, she asked her husband to take her to her parents' place. Her husband procrastinated as before, and getting impatient, she went alone. On the way, she gave birth to her second child safely before her husband could catch up with her. At that time, there was heavy rains everywhere. The wife asked her husband to put up some shelter from the rains for the night. He made a rickety shelter from whatever faggots he could find. He then went in search of some tufts of grass to build an embankment around the little hut. He started pulling out grass from a mound, regardlessly.

The cobra, which lay inside the mound, was annoyed and struck the husband who fell dead on the spot. The wife, who was kept waiting in the rickety hut, after awaiting the whole night, thought that her husband had deserted her. She went to look for him and found him dead near the mound. "Oh, me! my husband met his death all on account of me!" She wailed. And holding the bigger child by the hand and putting the infant on her waist, she took the road to Sāvaththi. On the way, she had to cross a shallow stream (which seemed deep). She thought she might not be able to cross it with both the children together. So she left her elder boy on this side of the stream and after crossing it, placed the infant on the other side, wrapped up snugly. She waded the stream back for the elder son. Just as she was half-way in the stream, a kite swooped down on the infant baby taking it for its prey. The mother became excited and tried to frighten away the kite but her throwing up the hands in the air was mistaken as beckoning to him by the elder son who ran into the stream. He slipped and was carried away by the swift current. Before the mother could reach her infant child, the kite had flew away with it. She wailed her fate in half a stanza thus:

"Both my two sons are dead and gone!
And my husband too had died on the way!"

Wailing in these desperate words, she proceeded along her way to Sāvaththi.

When she arrived in Sāvaththi, she was unable to find her parents' home. This was partly due to her intense grief but there was a substantial reason for her failure to recognize her own childhood home. For, as she asked the people where the Rich Man's house which used to be somewhere there, they answered: "What use is there if you find the house? It has been destroyed by last night's gale. All the inmates of the house died inside the house which collapsed. They were cremated on a single pyre. And that is the place of their burial," the people showed her the thin smoke from the burnt pyre.

"What, what did you say?" Those were the only words she could say and she fainted. When she recovered, she was not in her own wits. She could not care about decency: with no clothes on, her hands raised in the air wildly, she went near the burnt-up pyre and wailed:

“Both my two sons are dead and gone!
And my husband too has died on the way!
My mother, my father and my brother,
(Having perished together,)
Have been cremated on a single pyre.”

The Meaning of The Word 'Paṭācārī'

The Rich Man's daughter went about the city naked. When other people tried to cover up her body, she would tore off the clothes. Thus, wherever she went, she was surrounded by astonished crowds. Hence, she came to be referred to as 'The naked woman' (Paṭācārī). (Or in another sense of the Pāli word, 'the shameless woman'.) As she went about dazed and confused wailing the tragic stanza, people would say: “Hey go away, mad woman!” Some would throw dirt and refuse on her head, some would throw stones at her.

Paṭācārā found Peace

The Buddha saw Paṭācārā roaming about aimlessly while He was making a discourse to an audience at the Jētavana monastery. Seeing that her faculties had now ripened, the Buddha willed that Paṭācārā come to Him at the monastery. People tried to prevent her going into the monastery but the Buddha said to them: “Don't try to stop her.” When she went nearer, the Buddha said to her: “Paṭācārā be mindful.”

As soon as she heard the Buddha's words, Paṭācārā regained her senses. Awared of her nakedness, she sat down on her closed knees and remained with her body bent, and trying her best to cover up her naked body with her hands. Someone then threw to her a piece of garment which she picked up, cloaked herself, and drew near the Buddha. In worshipping posture, she related the tragic story thus:

“Venerable Sir, may you be my refuge! My younger son was swooped away by a kite. My elder son was drowned in the current of a stream. My husband died on the way. My parents and my brothers were killed in the house which collapsed and they were cremated on a single pyre.”

The Buddha said to her: “Paṭācārā do not vacillate. You have now come to one in whom you can take refuge. Just as you have shed tears for the loss of your sons, husband, mother, father and brother, so also had you shed much tears, even greater than the waters of the four great oceans, throughout the beginningless round of existences.” The Buddha also spoke in verse as follows:

“Paṭācārā, the waters of the four great oceans are little when compared to the amount of tears shed by one person on account of the grief suffered for loss of his or her beloved ones. Now, my daughter, why are you so negligent? Be mindful.”

On hearing the Buddha's discourse containing the perspective of *saṃsāra*, grief abated in the mind of Paṭācārā. The Buddha, knowing that Paṭācārā had been able to control her sorrow, discoursed further thus:

“Paṭācārā, neither son nor husband can protect one on the journey through afterlife, nor are they one's refuge. That being so, even though sons or husband may be living, they are as good as non-existent for a wayfarer in *saṃsāra*. Therefore a wise person should purify his morality and get himself or herself established on the Noble Practice leading to Nibbāna.”

Then the Buddha spoke in verse as follows:

“Paṭācārā, when one falls victim to Death, neither one's sons nor parents nor close relations can protect one; one's kith and kin have no power to give protection.”

— Dhammapadā, V-288 —

“Knowing this lack of protection against Death, the wise person restrained by morality, should make haste to clear the Ariya Path that leads to Nibbāna.”

At the end of the discourse, Paṭācārā burnt up the infinite defilements by means of Stream-Entry Knowledge and was established in *sotāpatti-magga*.

After becoming a Stream-Enterer, Paṭācārā requested the Buddha that she be admitted into the Order of Bhikkhunīs. The Buddha caused her to be taken to a *bhikkhunīs* and be admitted as a *bhikkhunī*.

How Paṭācārā attained Arahatsip

One day, Bhikkhunī Paṭācārā was washing her feet. As she poured down the water on her feet, the water flowed to a short distance and then stopped there. When a second cup was poured, the water flowed to a place slightly farther away than the first stream and then stopped. When a third cup was poured, the water flowed to a place slightly farther away than the second stream. Paṭācārā, already a Stream-Enterer, meditated on this phenomenon of the three stream of water, and applied it to the three periods of life thus:

“Just as the first stream of water stopped at a short place, sentient beings are liable to die during their first period of life. Just as the second stream flowed slightly farther than the first stream and stopped, so also sentient beings are liable to die during their middle age.

And just as the third stream flowed farther than the second stream and stopped, so also sentient being are liable to die in their last period of life.”

She reflected further that just as all the three streams must end and disappear, so also living beings must give up their tenure of life and perish. Thus, the impermanence of things gave her insight into all conditioned phenomena. From that insight into impermanence, the characteristic of the woefulness (*dukkha*) of all conditioned phenomena dawned on her conditioned mind and hence the insubstantiality, the emptiness of all and conditioned phenomena also was then perceived.

Pondering deeply on the three characteristics, she went into her monastic dwelling for a suitable change in the temperature. There she placed the lighted lamp at its usual place and, wishing to extinguish it, she pulled down the wick into oil with a pointed needle.

Just at that moment, the Buddha, while sitting in His private chamber, sent the Buddha-rays to Paṭācārā making Himself visible to her and said:

“Paṭācārā, you are thinking rightly: all sentient beings are subject to death. Therefore, it is in vain to be living for a hundred years without the right perception of the five aggregates, of their arising and dissolution, whereas it is really worthwhile to live even for a day with a full understanding of the five aggregates.”

The Buddha put this point in verse as follows:

“Paṭācārā, even if one were to live a hundred years without perceiving (with Insight) the arising and perishing of conditioned phenomena (i.e. mind-and-body), yet more worthwhile indeed is a single day's life of one who perceives the arising and perishing of mind-and-body.”

— Dhammapada, V 13 —

At the end of the discourse, Paṭācārā attained Arahatsip together with the Four Discriminative Knowledges.

(c) Paṭācārā as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

After attaining arahatsip, Paṭācārā learnt the Vinaya from the Buddha extensively and made wise judgments on matters concerning the Vinaya. Therefore, on one occasion when the Buddha named distinguished *bhikkhunīs* in a congregation at the Jetavana monastery, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who are wise in (adept in) the Vinaya, Bhikkhunī Paṭācārā is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

5. DHAMMADINNĀ THERĪ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Dhammadinnā Therī was born into a poor working class family in the city of Haṁsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She was wise and virtuous. One day, when the Venerable Sujātā, the Chief Disciple of Buddha Padumuttara, went on his alms-round, she met him in the course of carrying water and personally offered him her share of ration (a cake) for the day. The Venerable, as a mark of appreciation for her devotion, and intending to bestow welfare on her due to her meritorious deed, sat down and ate the cake immediately.

The Venerable had just arisen from dwelling in the attainment of Cessation, a condition which is conducive to immediate fruition of the merit.

The devotion, in the labourer girl slave, grew by leaps and bounds that she cut her (luscious) hair and sold it for whatever little price it could fetch. With that meagre but well-earned money, she bought a meal and offered it to Venerable Sujātā at her house. When the master of the slave girl heard this news, he was so pleased with her noble conduct that he gave his son in marriage to her and she became the Rich Man's (her master) daughter-in-law.

One day, she visited the Buddha's monastery together with her mother-in-law. When listening to the Buddha's sermon, she saw the Buddha naming a *bhikkhunī* as the foremost in expounding the Doctrine. She had a great desire to be honoured with the same title in future time. So, she made an extraordinary offering to the Buddha and His Sangha and aspired to that position. Buddha Padumuttara prophesied that her wish would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha Gotama.

Her Existence as Royal Treasurer

The future Dhammadinnā Therī lived a meritorious life and after her life span had ended, she passed away and was reborn in the deva realm. Thereafter, she was reborn only in the human world or the deva-world. Ninety-two world-cycles ago, she was reborn as the wife of a rich man, who was the official royal treasurer to three princes who were half brothers of the Buddha. She had a very generous mind so that when someone asked for one she would give two. (Regarding the story of the Treasurer and his wife read Chapter 15.)

Her Existence as One of The Seven Daughters of King Kikī

The rich man's wife had a life full of meritorious deeds. When she passed away, she was reborn in the deva realm. During Buddha Kassapa time, she was reborn as Princess Sudhammā, the sixth of the seven daughters of King Kikī of Bārāṇasī. Along with the other sisters, she remained a spinster, leading a noble chaste life for the whole life span of twenty-thousand years, and was a joint donor, with her sisters, of a great monastic complex to the Sangha.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

Princess Sudhammā spent the whole of her life doing meritorious deeds and at her death, she was reborn in the deva realm. Subsequently, for innumerable years, she was reborn either in the deva-world or the human world. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into the family of a rich man in Rājagaha. When she was of marriageable age, she married a rich man named Visākhā and she was called Dhammadinnā (the Rich Man's wife).

Visākhā and Dhammadinnā, ninety-two world-cycles ago, were also a rich couple, as the Royal Treasurer and wife during Buddha Phussa time, who were noted for their liberality. Visākhā, the rich man, was one of the one hundred and one disciples of the Buddha, who gained Stream-Entry Knowledge on the day the Buddha arrived in Rājagaha (on the full moon in the month of Pyatho (January) in the year 103 of the Great Era). He was a close friend of King Bimbisāra.

After having become an *ariya* as Stream-Enterer, Visākhā, on a later occasion, listened to

the Buddha's discourse and gained *sakadāgāmi-phala* (a Once Returner) and then on a later day *anāgāmi-phala* (a Never-Returner). Once he became a Never-Returner, his outlook and behaviour changed visibly. For whereas he would go home with expectancy to see his wife, his face full of smiles, he was now looking staid, his mien composed and mind tranquil.

His wife Dhammadinnā was, as usual, looking through the window with a long motif carved at the sill, awaiting his return. When she saw the sedate attitude of her husband treading home, it struck her as strange. "What has gone wrong?" she thought. She went down the stair and stretched out her hand to him at the landing. Although it was his custom to take hold of his wife's welcoming hand and go up the stairs (speaking amiably together), on that day, he withdrew his hand instead of holding hers. "Perhaps I shall find out about this at the table," she thought to herself. But at the morning meal, he did not sit at table together with his wife as usual, but took his meal alone in silence, like an elderly *bhikkhu* engaged in meditation. "Perhaps I shall find out about this in the evening," she thought to herself.

But when evening came, Visākhā did not go into their inner chamber, instead, he had a separate room prepared for him with a wooden cot on which he slept alone. His wife now started worrying. "Is my husband in love with another woman? Or has someone tried to cause misunderstanding between us? Or has he seen some fault in me?" These wild unfounded speculations gnawed at her innocent heart. After two or three days she could not bear it any further silently and standing by his side meekly, her joined palms raised in salutation to her husband, she awaited how he would respond. Then he said:

"Why do you come near me at this untimely hour?"

"Untimely, yes, my lord. But you have changed now. What's the matter with you? Is there another woman beside me?"

"No, Dhammadinnā, there is none."

"Then, has someone put in a wedge between us?"

"No, there is none of the sort."

"In that case, do you see any fault in me?"

"No, Dhammadinnā, you have no fault whatever."

"If so, why do you stay aloof from me as though we were total strangers and not husband and wife? You have not talked to me much these few days."

When confronted thus by his wife, Visākhā pondered: "Supramundane Dhamma is a profound thing, not easy to explain like mundane matters. If possible, it had better be kept to oneself. But now, if I did not talk about it Dhammadinnā would certainly take it amiss and be broken hearted."

Thus thinking to himself, Visākhā said to her:

"Dhammadinnā, after I have listened to the Buddha's discourses, I have comprehended the Supramundane Dhamma. One who comprehends the Supramundane finds mundane affairs incompatible with him. If you would agree, there are forty crore worth of treasures that your parents have endowed to us, and another forty crore worth of treasures that my parents have endowed to us, these eighty crore worth of treasures, I would bequeath to you as sole owner, and treat me just as a mother or an elder sister. I shall be content with whatever manner you might look after me. Or, if you so choose, you may take all those wealth with you and go back to your parents' house. If you have no other man to give your heart, I shall look after you as my younger sister or as my daughter."

On hearing these momentous and frank words from her husband, Dhammadinnā was deeply satisfied. She thought to herself: "It is no ordinary man to say such things. My husband surely must have comprehended the Supramundane Dhamma. But is the Supramundane solely for men? Is it possible for a woman to understand it?" Pondering thus, she said to her husband: "My lord, is the Supramundane Dhamma solely for men? Are women also capable of knowing it?"

“Why, Dhammadinnā, anyone, male or female, who practices the Dhamma according to the Doctrine, with due diligence can become heirs to the Buddha, in the matter of the Dhamma. If one has sufficing condition, i.e. a built-up of past merit for attaining the Path-Knowledge, the Supramundane is realisable.” answered Visākhā.

“If so, my lord, give me permission to become a *bhikkhunī*.”

“Very well, my dear, I am glad you aspire for the Supramundane. I have not suggested it to you only because I did not know your aptitude.”

Visākhā then immediately went to see King Bimbisāra who asked him: “O Rich Man, what is your purpose in seeing me at this untimely hour?”

“Great King,” Visākhā said, “Dhammadinnā wishes to become a *bhikkhunī*.”

“What shall I provide Dhammadinnā with?”

“Great King, I want just-two things: the golden palanquin and the tidying up of tile city.”

The King complied with these two requests.

Great Ceremony on Dhammadinnā becoming A Bhikkhunī

Visākhā had Dhammadinnā bathed in scented water, fitted out gorgeously, and got her seated in the palanquin. Then, surrounded by all her relatives (and the husband's relatives) she was carried to the *bhikkhunīs*’ ‘monastery’ through the city whose environment was rich with the fragrance of incense and flowers. At the *bhikkhunīs*’ ‘monastery’, Visākhā requested the *bhikkhunī*-elders to admit his wife Dhammadinnā into the Order of Bhikkhunīs. “O rich man,” they said, “forbear if she has been at fault for once or twice.” (They thought that Visākhā was forsaking his wife.)

“Venerable”, Visākhā replied, “My wife has no fault whatever, she is taking up the monastic life of her own accord.”

Thereupon, a *bhikkhunī* who was adept at the Vinaya gave Dhammadinnā instructions to reflect on the loathsomeness of the body, beginning with reflecting on the group of its five constituent parts, namely, hair, body hair, nails, teeth, and skin. Then she shaved Dhammadinnā’s hair, donned her with the robes. Visākhā then made obeisance to Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā and said: “Venerable, be happy in the monastic life in the Teaching. The Buddha has taught us the Doctrine which is superb in the beginning, in the middle, and in the end.” Then he went home.

From the day Dhammadinnā became a *bhikkhunī*, she received much respect and many gifts from the people. In seeing so many visitors, she had little time left to meditate alone. (Thus this much is the account of Dhammadinnā, taken from the Commentary on **Majjhima Nikāya**, Mūla paṇṇāsa, Cūḷvedalla Sutta).

Dhammadinnā Therī considered thus: “Visākhā has made an end of *dukkha* even while remaining in household life. I, as a *bhikkhunī*, must make an end of *dukkha*.” She went to her preceptor *bhikkhunī* and said: “Venerable, I am tired of living in this place which is full of five kinds of sense pleasures. I would like to go and live in a nunnery at a small village.” The preceptors knew well that Dhammadinnā’s wish could not be ignored as she came of a high class family, and so they took her to a nunnery at a small village.

Due to her meditative exercises, in her many past existences, in seeing through the nature of conditioned phenomena, Dhammadinnā did not take long to gain Insight and attained arahatship together with the Four Discriminate Knowledges. Then knowing her own attainment, she considered which place would suit her to help others attain Enlightenment. There was nothing much she could do in the small village whereas in Rājagaha she could help her own kith and kin. So she decided to return to Rājagaha and, requesting her preceptors to accompany her, she returned to Rājagaha.

Visākhā’s Questions on The Doctrine

When Visākhā learnt that Dhammadinnā Therī had returned to Rājagaha, he was eager to

know why, after having gone to live in a small village, she returned so soon. He would go to her and find out but he did not wish to ask a plain question whether she was quite at home with monastic life. Rather, he would pose profound questions relating to the five aggregates that are the objects of clinging (i.e. about *sakkāyaditti*), and judge her mind from the way she answered. So after paying homage to her, he sat in a suitable place and asked her doctrinal questions concerning the five aggregates that are the objects of clinging. (The series of these profound questions and answers may be found in **Mūlapaññāsa**, 5-Cūḷayamaka vaggā, 4-Cūḷavedalla Sutta.)

Dhammadinnā answered all the questions put to her by Visākhā as promptly as a racing horse gallops away and so precisely as if lotus stems were cut down by a sharp blade. Visākhā realized the high intellect of Dhammadinnā and proceeded from matters relating to the (three) lower *magga*-knowledges which was his limit of knowledge. He then proceeded to matters relating to *arahatta-magga* which he had not attained himself but about which he had merely hearsay knowledge. Dhammadinnā knew that Visākhā could properly ask about matters pertaining to the *anāgāmi-phala*, and that he had exceeded his limitation of knowledge when he asked:

“Venerable, what is the counterpart of Nibbāna?” She answered: “Friend Visākhā, your question has gone too far. It is not possible for you to reach the limit of such questionings. (It is not possible for him to reach the limit of such questionings because he has asked what the counterpart of Nibbāna is, whereas Nibbāna is unique and has no counterpart.) Indeed, friend Visākhā, the Noble Practice of Purity consisting of three kinds of training tends to Nibbāna, has its ultimate goal in Nibbāna, and ends in Nibbāna. Friend Visākhā, if you so desire, go to the Bhagavā and ask him to explain this matter. And bear in mind the explanation of the Bhagavā.”

Then Visākhā approached the Buddha and related to the Buddha all that had been said between him and Dhammadinnā Therī. When the Buddha heard the details of the questions and answers that took place between them, He said: “Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā is free of all forms of Craving, either of the past, or the future, or the present *khandha* (aggregates).” Then the Buddha spoke in verse thus:

“(Visākhā,) he who does not cling to the aggregates that are past, future, or present, who is free from moral intoxicants and attachment him I call a Brāhmana (i.e., an *arahat*).”

— **Dhammapada**, V. 421 —

By the end of the discourse, many in the audience attained Enlightenment and its Fruition at the various levels.

Then the Buddha praised Dhammadinnā, “Visākhā, layman devotee, Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā is wise. Visākhā, she is of great knowledge. Visākhā, had you asked Me the answers to those questions I, too, would have answered them in the same way Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā had answered. These are the answers to the questions. Bear in mind the answers given by Dhammadinnā.” (This event was an immediate cause of Dhammadinnā being designated as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in expounding the Doctrine.)

(Herein, it should be remembered that the discourse given by Dhammadinnā, when endorsed by the Buddha in those clear terms, becomes a discourse of the Buddha Himself. It is like in the case of a message (written by a writer) properly endorsed and sealed by the King's seal, becomes the King's message. Other discourses by other disciples that have the Buddha's endorsement also became the Buddha's discourses.)

(c) Dhammadinnā Therī being designated as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

On one occasion, when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatti, and naming distinguished *bhikkhunīs*, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who are skilled in expounding the Doctrine, Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

6. NANDĀ THERĪ

(Nandā Therī's full name was Janapadakalyānī Rūpanandā Therī. Her story has been told in detail in Chapter 34 on Vijaya sutta. In the present Chapter, only a short account will be given, as described in the commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**.)

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Nandā Therī was reborn into a rich man's family in the city of Hamsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumattara. On a certain occasion when she was attending to a sermon by the Buddha, she witnessed the Buddha naming a *bhikkhunī* as the foremost among *bhikkhunīs* who enjoyed themselves in abiding in *jhāna*. She aspired to that distinction and after making an extraordinary offering she wished that she be designated as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in *jhānic* ecstacy, some time in the future. The Buddha prophesied that her wish would be fulfilled.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

After passing away from that memorable existence, she was reborn in the fortunate existences for a hundred thousand world-cycles. In her last existence, she was reborn as a Sakyan Princess who later was intended to be betrothed to Prince Nanda. She was named Princess Abhirūpanandā, and her extreme attractiveness also earned her the endearing name of Princess Janapadakalyānī. She was born of Queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī

Prince Nanda, Prince Rāhula and some of the closest kith and kin of the Buddha were admitted into the Order of Bhikkhus during the Buddha's visit to Kapilavatthu. Later, after the death of King Suddhodāna, her own mother, Queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī and Queen Yasodaya, her sister, mother of Prince Rāhula, also joined the Order of Bhikkhunīs. As Princess Janapadakalyānī saw no point in her remaining at the royal palace, she joined her mother, Bhikkhunī Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, as a *bhikkhunī*.

After becoming *bhikkhunī*, she did not go to see the Buddha on the days scheduled for her to receive the Buddha's admonition, as other *bhikkhunīs* did. This was because the Buddha was reputed as being derogatory to personal attractiveness. So, she would send some other *bhikkhunīs* to receive the Buddha's admonition on her behalf. The Buddha knew that she was conceited about her personal beauty and ordered that *bhikkhunīs* must go personally to Him to receive admonition and not depute another. Bhikkhunī Rūpanandā had to abide by the rule and reluctantly she went to see the Buddha.

The Buddha had, by His powers, created a most attractive girl by His side, respectfully fanning Him with a palm-leaf fan. When Bhikkhunī Rūpanandā saw her, her vanity about her own personal beauty vanished. "Why," she thought to herself, "I had been so conceited about my beauty! Shame on me! Here is a girl whose beauty I could not match, for I am not even 256th part of her beauty. How foolish of me to stay away from the Bhagavā." She stood there awestruck by the beauty of the mind made girl near the Buddha.

Rūpanandā Therī had sufficing condition (of accumulated merit in the past), so that after hearing one stanza beginning with:

"*aṭṭhīnam nagaram katam...*" (On the loathsomeness of the body; **Dhammapada** V. 150) and one *sutta* entitled **Vijaya Sutta** beginning with:

"*caram vā yadi vā tiṭṭham nisinnō uda vā sayam...*" ("While walking, or standing, or sitting, or lying down...?" describing the constitution of the body which is basically no different from a corpse. — **Sutta Nipāta**, Vijaya Sutta), she meditated diligently on the emptiness of this sentient existence and in two or three days, she attained arahatship.

(c) Being designated as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

From the time of attaining arahatship, Rūpanandā Therī was unequalled by any other *bhikkhunī* in abiding in *jhāna*. Accordingly, when on the occasion of naming foremost *bhikkhunīs* during His residence at the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who derive pleasure from jhānic absorption, *Bhikkhunī Nandā* is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

7. (BAHUPUTTIKA) SOṆA THERĪ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Bahuputtika Soṇa Therī was reborn into a rich man's family in the city of Haṃsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She had occasion to listen to the sermon by the Buddha when she saw a *bhikkhunī* being named as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in earnest endeavour. She then had a strong desire to become such a foremost *bhikkhunī* in the future. So she made an extra-ordinary offering and later, aspired to the title. Buddha Padumuttara prophesied that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

The future Bahuputtika Soṇa Therī was reborn, for a hundred thousand world-cycles, in the fortunate destinations. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into the family of a rich man in Sāvātthi. She was married to the son of a rich man and went to live in her husband's house. She bore ten children and was known as Soṇa of the many children.

When her husband took up bhikkhuhood, she arranged for the marriage of her ten children and bequeathed all her property to them, leaving nothing for herself. The children were all ungrateful to her. None of them was willing to let her stay at their houses for more than two or three days, after which, they treated her unkindly.

The old lady became an unwanted, helpless mother, neglected by her own children. Realizing her dire position, she decided that she must renounce the world and became a *bhikkhunī*. After she had become a *bhikkhunī*, her seniors in the Order would scold her for any slight mistake or shortcoming in her community obligations. She was often required to serve out punitive measures by her seniors. When her unkind children saw her undergoing such punishment, instead of taking pity on their old decrepit mother, they made a laughing stock of her saying: “This old women has still not learnt monastic discipline.”

This ridicule by her own children caused emotional religious awakening in her. “I do not have to live long. I must safeguard myself against unfortunate destinies.” So reflecting, she let no time pass, whether sitting or going, or standing or lying down, without uttering and contemplating on the thirty-two aspects (constituent parts) of the body. Then, during all the free moment left to her, after discharging the communal duties to her co-residents, she went into meditation throughout the night. For she rightly realized that for her late age as a *bhikkhunī*, she could not afford to let a moment pass without being mindful. When she sat meditating at night, she held to a post on the ground floor of her nunnery, without losing hold of it. When she walked, meditating at night, she held a tree with her hand, never letting it go, for fear that she might otherwise bump her head against something in the darkness. (As per **Therīgāthā Commentary**)

Soṇa Therī's Name became associated with Earnest Endeavour

When she first became a *bhikkhunī*, she was called Bahuputtika Soṇa Therī. But later, her earnest endeavour in taking up the three kinds of training earned her the epithet ‘earnest endeavour’ and was known as *Āraddha vīriya Soṇa Therī*, — Soṇa Therī of earnest endeavour!

Attainment of Arahatsip

One day, when the *bhikkhunīs* went to the Jetavana monastery to receive the Buddha's admonition, they told Āraddha vīriya Soṇa Therī to boil some water for the community. But before attending to that task, the old *bhikkhunī* walked up and down the kitchen and contemplated on the thirty two aspects of the body, uttering each item. The Buddha saw her, while sitting in His private-chamber at the Jetavana monastery and sent forth the

Buddha-rays to her, making His person visible to her, and uttered this verse:

“Even though one should live a hundred years without seeing the sublime Dhamma (i.e. the Supramundane Dhamma comprising nine factors), yet more worthwhile indeed is a single day's life of one who perceives the sublime Dhamma.”

After thus hearing the Buddha's discourse made through the Buddha's rays (which also made her see the Buddha in person), Āraddha vīriya Soṇa Therī attained arahatship. She now thought: “I have attained *arahatta-phala*. Those who do not know this will, on their return from the Jetavana monastery, treat me with disrespect (as usual) which will result in them doing great demerit. I must let them know about my attainment of arahatship so as to forewarn them. She placed the pot of water for boiling on the fireplace but did not make the fire.

When the co-resident *bhikkhunīs* returned from the Buddha's monastery, they saw no fire at the fireplace and murmured: “We told the old woman to boil some water for the community but she has not even made the fire.” Then Soṇa Therī said to them: “Friends, what use with the fire? Let anyone who needs warm water take it from that pot (on the unlit fireplace).” The co-residents were surprised by these strange words and they realized that there must be some reason for the old *bhikkhunī* to say so. They went to the pot and felt the water inside. It was quite warm. They took an empty pot to the fireplace and poured out the warm water into it. Whenever they took out the water from that pot, the pot became filled up again.

Then only the *bhikkhunīs* realized that Soṇa Therī had attained arahatship. Those *bhikkhunīs* who were junior in *bhikkhunī* standing to Soṇa Therī made obeisance to her with fivefold contact, and said: “Venerable, we had been foolish in being disrespectful to you and bullied you. For all these transgressions, we beg your pardon.” Those *bhikkhunīs*, who were senior in *bhikkhunī* standing, sat squatting before Soṇa Therī, and said: “Venerable, pardon us for our misbehaviour.”

(c) Soṇa Therī as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

Soṇa Therī became an example of how an elderly person could become an *arahat* by dint of earnest effort. On one occasion, when the Buddha sat in congregation at the Jetavana monastery naming foremost *bhikkhunīs*, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who have diligence and make earnest effort, *Bhikkhunī* Soṇa is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

8. SAKULĀ THERĪ

(Sakulā Therī is mentioned by the name of Bākula in the Commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** in the recorded version of the Sixth Council, whereas in the Sri Laṅkā version, the name is mentioned as Sakulā. In the Commentary on **Therīgāthā** of the Sixth Council version, the name also appeared as Sakulā. Hence we have opted for the name Sakulā, and based our narration on the Commentary on **Therī-geṭ he** which gives a more extensive coverage.)

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Sakulā Therī was reborn into the family of King Ānanda of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She was the half sister of Buddha Padumuttara and was named Princess Nandā. When she had come of age, she attended the Buddha's sermon. She saw a *bhikkhunī* being named by the Buddha as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in the endowment of supernatural power of Deva Eye (characterized by a knowledge of past existences). She then had a strong desire to become one like that *bhikkhunī* with supernatural power of Deva Eye and accordingly she made an extra-ordinary offering and made her aspiration before Buddha Padumuttara. Buddha Padumuttara prophesied that her aspiration would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha Gotama. (For details of this part of the story, read

Sakulā Therī Apādāna.)

Her Past Existence as A Female Wandering Ascetic

Princess Nandā engaged herself in doing many great deeds of merit throughout her life, and, after passing away from that existence, she was reborn in the deva realm. Subsequently, she was reborn in the human or deva realm only. During Buddha Kassapa time, she was reborn into a brahmin family. She became a recluse and led a life of a secluded ascetic. After the passing away of Buddha Kassapa, His relics were enshrined in a great stupa. The ascetic, who was future Sakulā Therī, one day obtained some oil on her round for alms-oil. With that amount of oil she made an offering of lights throughout the night at the shrine where Buddha Kassapa's relics were enshrined.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

The wandering ascetic passed away and was reborn in Tāvātimsa Deva realm, as a deva endowed with special deva faculty of vision. For the whole period of the interval between the two Buddhas, she fared in the deva realm only. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into brahmin family in Sāvathi, by the name of Sakulā. When she became of age, she attended a ceremony which celebrated the donations of the Jetavana monastery (by Anāthapiṇḍika) to the Buddha where she listened to the Buddha's discourse and she became a lay disciple of His. Later, she received a discourse from an *arahat* which kindled her emotional religious awakening and resulted in her becoming a *bhikkhunī*. She strove diligently in the Noble Practice of Purity and soon attained arahatship.

(c) Sakulā Therī as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

After attaining *arahatta-phala*, Sakulā Therī, as the result of her past aspiration, was specially devoted to the exercise of the supernormal power of the Deva Eye, and was an adept at it. On one occasion, when the Buddha was naming outstanding *bhikkhunīs* at the Jetavana monastery, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who are proficient in the supernormal power of the Deva Eye, Sakulā Therī is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

9. KUṆḌALAKESĀ THERĪ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Kuṇḍalakesā Therī was reborn into the family of a rich man in the city of Hamsāvṭī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She was listening to the Buddha's discourse, when she saw Subha Therī being named as the foremost *bhikkhu* in attaining arahatship with the quickest Insight. She wanted most strongly to be named such a foremost *bhikkhunī* in future time. After making great offering, and she made known her aspiration in front of Buddha Padumuttara, who then made the prognostication that her aspiration would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha Gotama.

Her Past Existence as A Daughter of King of Bārāṇasī

After faring for a hundred thousand world-cycles, either in the deva or human realms, the future Kuṇḍalakesā Therī was reborn as the fourth daughter, named Bhikkhadāyikā, of the seven daughters of King Kikī of Bārāṇasī, during the time of Buddha Kassapa. In that existence, she, like her other sisters, led a life of chastity for her entire life span of twenty thousand years, observing the ten precepts. She was also a joint donor, together with her sisters, of a great monastic complex for the Sangha.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

Princess Bhikkhadāyikā was reborn either in the deva realm or the human realm for the whole world-cycle during the interim period between the two Buddhas. During the time of

Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as a rich man's daughter in Rājagaha, by the name of Bhadda. On the same day when she was born, a son was also born to the King's Counsellor in Rājagaha. At the moment of the birth of the Chief Counsellor's son, all weapons throughout the city, beginning with those at the King's palace, dazzled mysteriously.

The King's Counsellor went to see the King early in the next morning and asked the King: "Great King, did you sleep well?" To which the King replied: "Master, how could I sleep well? All the weapons in the palace dazzled mysteriously the whole night making us nervous." "Great King," the Counsellor said, "Do not be afraid. Dazzling of weapons took place last night not only in the palace but throughout the city."

"Why, Master, did that happen?"

"Great King, last night a son was born to my family, whose time of birth coincided with the dominance of certain planets in the zodiac, and whose influence will determine the character of the new-born child. Due to that planetary influence, my son will grow into an incorrigible thief, an enemy to the whole city. But your Majesty, if you so desire, I shall eliminate him."

"If there is no personal danger to me, there is no reason to eliminate the child."

The Counsellor named his son, Sattuka (Vile Enemy) as signifying innate quality of the child which was acquired through his stellar influence at birth. As the future Kuṇḍalakesā Therī grew to age, so also young Sattuka. Even as a young boy of two or three years old, wherever he went, he would snatch anything that he could lay his hands on and took them home. The father admonished him not to do so but he would not listen.

Sattuka The Bane of Rājagaha

When Sattuka attained adolescence, his father, seeing that the son was truly beyond his correction, abandoned him. Giving the youth two pieces of dark cloth (to use in nocturnal exploits), a gadget for breaking open walls and fences and a sweep of twine ladders to his son, he mournfully said to him: "Take these, you useless boy, make your living by robbery. And be off!"

The young waif proved himself a formidable robber. Making use of the housebreaking gadget and the rope ladder, he would execute housebreaking neatly and rob all the houses of the well-to-do. Not before long every house in the city suffered from his exploits, showing gaping holes in the walls.

When the King made a chariot ride around the city, these holes made a curious sight for the King who then asked the charioteer the reason for them. Being told by the charioteer that all of them were the work of Sattuka, the housebreaker, the King sent for the Mayor and asked him why the robber was not apprehended. The Mayor explained that nobody had ever caught the robber red-handed and hence he was not apprehended. The king ordered him: "Catch the robber today, or else your life is forfeit."

His very life being at stake, the Mayor posted undercover men throughout the city and was successful in catching the robber red-handed. Sattuka was apprehended and brought before the King who ordered: "Take Sattuka out of the city by the South Gate and execute him. (Note: this event took place during King Ajātasattu's reign.) The Mayor acknowledged the King's sentence. He took Sattuka to every cross road in the city where a thousand lashes of whipping were administered to him at each cross road. And thus he was taken towards the South Gate, his hands bound at the back.

The Affection of Bhaddā, The Rich Man's Daughter

At that time, the tumult caused by the people watching the thief being punished aroused the curiosity of Bhaddā (the future Kuṇḍalakesā Therī). She looked out through the window which was carved with a lion motif at the sill. When she saw Sattuka in bondage being savagely whipped (owing to the mutual love and affection that had existed in their past existences), Bhaddā felt great pity for the robber. She felt very unhappy. She went to her bed-room with her hands pressed on her bosom to check the mental pain and lay on her bed with face downwards. As the only child, Bhaddā was the cynosure of the family. The

slightest scowl on her forehead caused much concern on the part of the parents.

Her mother went to her and asked the reason for her despair. The daughter did not hide her emotions but opened her heart to the mother that she had such love and affection for Sattuka that she would not live unless she was married to the man. The parents and the relations tried their best to make her see sense but to no avail. Finally they had to yield to her wishes making the conclusion: “At least that (giving the daughter to the culprit) is better than her death.”

Her father approached the Mayor with a bribe of a thousand ticals to get the prisoner escape the death penalty, explaining that his daughter was hopelessly enamoured of the robber. The Mayor co-operated. He procrastinated the execution by all sorts of explanations until it was sundown. Then he substituted a prisoner with Sattuka, who was stealthily escorted to the rich man's house. The substituted prisoner was taken out of the city by the South Gate-and executed (in lieu of Sattuka).

Parental Love

When the rich man secretly received Sattuka from the Mayor's men, he decided to make his daughter happy by pampering the criminal. He had Sattuka bathed in scented water, dressed up finely, and sent to his daughter's mansion. Bhaddā was very happy for having obtained her prize. She made herself as lovely as possible with much adornment and attended on Sattuka fondly.

Sattuka's Wicked Plan

Sattuka's evilness was such that he coveted Bhaddā's personal adornments. He thought out a wicked plan and after two or three days, he said to Bhaddā: “I have to say something to you.”

“Say it, my dear,” said Bhaddā, anticipating some good words.

“You might think that you saved my life,” Sattuka said. “As a matter of fact, I owe my life to the guardian spirit of the Corapapāta mountain. I had promised him an offering, if I came out of my captivity alive. Now I am bound by my word to make the spirit an offering. Make necessary preparations.”

Bhaddā, being innocent and loving, readily agreed to comply with the wish of her husband. She prepared offerings, adorned herself fully, and rode in a carriage with Sattuka. At the foot of Corapapata mountain, she alighted from the carriage and made ready to go up the mountain, accompanied by her attendants. Sattuka, concealing his evil motive, persuaded Bhaddā to go up to the mountain alone because she must have no friend by her side. She carried the offering on her head and went up to the mountain with Sattuka.

Sattuka's Evil Motive Revealed

Once they were alone together on the ascent to the mountain, Sattuka's tone suddenly changed in his conversation with Bhaddā. His oily tongue now gave way to harsh usage. Bhaddā was intelligent enough to fathom the evil motive of her robber-husband. When they got to the top of the mountain, Sattuka commanded in his natural harshness: “Now Bhaddā, take off all your personal ornaments and wrap them up in your upper garment.”

Bhaddā, pretending not to know the evil motive of Sattuka, sweetly replied: “What wrong have I made against you, my Lord?”

“Foolish girl, do you think I came here to make offerings to the mountain spirit? Fie! I dare open the heart of the mountain spirit. I have brought you here alone to rob you of your ornaments.”

Bhaddā's Wisdom in Facing The Situation

Now that Sattuka's true colours had been revealed, Bhaddā employed her wit to save herself. Politely she asked: “But, my Lord, whose ornaments are all these? Whom do I belong to?”

“Look here, I do not understand what you mean. I only know that your property belongs

to you and you alone, and has nothing to do with me.”

“Very well, my Lord. My only request is that I be allowed to show my love before I take off my ornaments (and make myself less beautiful to you). Allow me to embrace you from the front, from the sides, and at the rear,” she begged him in a concerning voice.

“Very well,” said Sattuka unsuspectingly.

Bhaddā now quickly embraced Sattuka from the front, and then going to his rear, pretended to embrace him but shoved him off violently over the mountain top. He fell headlong into a deep crevice, his body torn up into parts all along the way down.

(Here is a subtle point in analysing Bhaddās' mind in her act of self defence. At the moment of her actually pushing the villain off the mountain top, her mind is rooted in hatred and dominated by the mental concomitant of killing. However, the thoughts immediately preceding that killing impulsion and those which immediately follow it are meritorious thoughts called great types of moral consciousness (or Sublime consciousness), *Upāya kosalla ñāna* dominated by skill in strategy to ward off the danger to her life.)

The Mountain Spirit lauds The Cleverness of Bhaddā

The mountain spirit who witnessed the astounding wit and courage of Bhaddā, sang two verses in praise of her astute wisdom thus:

- (1) A 'wise person' may not always be a man in all matters. A woman, with discerning wit in a given situation, may also prove herself to be a wise person.
- (2) A 'wise person' may not always be a man in all matters. A woman, who can quickly choose her solution to the problem, can very well be a wise person.

After what has happened to her, Bhaddā had no desire to return home. She left the mountain and not knowing where she was going. Her only thought was to become a recluse. She happened to arrive at a place of some (female) ascetics, and asked them to let her join their Order. They asked her: “Which mode of admission would you prefer? The inferior mode, or the superior mode?” Being a person endowed with the destiny of winding up her existence, she replied: “Let me be admitted into your Order by the most valued mode of admission.”

The Name 'Kuṇḍalakesā'

“Very well,” the leading female ascetic said, and they pulled out Bhaddā's hair one by one with a pair of the shell of the Palmyra fruit. No doubt, shaving the head in this manner is most painful but it was the belief of those ascetics that shaving the head with a blade or a pair of scissors was an inferior mode of admitting one into their Order, and that plucking the hairs one by one was the superior mode. When fresh hair grew again they formed small clusters of rings that resembled ear-rings. Hence Bhaddā came to be called by her new name of Kuṇḍalakesā, ‘one with little ear-ring-like coils of hair’.

Kuṇḍalakesā as A Doctrinaire Ascetics

Kuṇḍalakesā learned all that her ascetic teachers could teach her and, being a person of innate wisdom, decided that there was no superior kind of learning that she could get from them. So she left them and roamed the country in search of further knowledge, learning from various teachers. In time, she became learned in various doctrines which were acquired at various places and was also unequalled in expounding doctrines. She would go from place to place to find her match in the exposition of doctrines. As a mark of open challenge, she would set up a heap of sand at the entrance to the town or village she visited, on the top of which she would plant a twig of Eugenia. She would tell the children nearby to let everybody know that anyone, who could outwit her in the exposition of doctrines, might signal his or her challenge by destroying the Eugenia twig. If after seven days there appeared no challenger, she would pluck up the Eugenia twig in triumph and go on to another place.

Venerable Sāriputta tamed Kuṇḍalakesā

By that time, Buddha Gotama had appeared in the world and was residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvattī. The wandering ascetic Kundalakesā, who wore only a single garment, after touring cities, towns and villages, arrived at Sāvattī. At the entrance of the city, she set up her symbol of challenge, a heap of sand with a twig of Eugenia planted atop it. After giving word to the children nearby about the meaning of the twig of Eugenia being used, she entered the city.

At that time, the Venerable Sāriputta, the Marshal of the Doctrine, had entered the city for collection of alms-food. He went alone after the other *bhikkhus* had entered the city for alms-food. This was because he had been discharging the tasks, set by himself, of overseeing the tidiness of the entire Jetavana monastery such as putting *bhikkhus'* beddings and articles of use in order, filling water pots, sweeping the grounds, tending to the sick *bhikkhus*, etc. When he saw the Eugenia twig planted on a heap of sand he inquired the children nearby what that meant. The children explained to him about Kundalakesā's message. Thereupon the Venerable Sāriputta told them to destroy the Eugenia twig. Some children were reluctant to do so but a few daring ones trampled the Eugenia twig into pieces.

When Kuṇḍalakesā returned from the city after finishing her meal, she saw her Eugenia twig destroyed and asked the boys who was responsible for it. They told her that they did it as asked by Venerable Sāriputta. Kuṇḍalakesā pondered thus: "Someone who does not know my ability would not dare to challenge me. This Venerable must be someone who has great wisdom and virtue. Now I will announce to all the people that I am going to engage in a test of wits with Venerable Sāriputta, the Marshal of the Doctrine, and thus build up a following of my own before meeting him." She spread the news to the people and within a short time the whole city of eighty-thousand houses were informed of the event among themselves.

The Venerable Sāriputta, after having finished his meal, sat underneath a tree, and waited for Kuṇḍalakesā. Then she arrived with a large crowd behind her. After exchanging cordial greeting with the Venerable Sāriputta, she sat in a suitable place and said:

"Venerable Sir, did you ask the children to destroy Eugenia twig set up by me?"

"Yes, I did," replied the Venerable.

"Venerable Sir, if that is so, shall we enter into a debate?"

"So be it, young female ascetic."

"Who should start putting the questions, Sir?"

"It is my privilege to put questions. However, you can begin by asking me about what you know."

When she had the permission to ask, Kuṇḍalakesā asked the Venerable Sāriputta all the doctrines that she knew. He answered them all. Then he said: "Young female ascetic, I have answered all your questions. Now I shall ask you a question."

"Please do Venerable Sir."

"*Ekam nāma Kim?* — What is the one factor (that needs to be fully understood)?"

"Venerable Sir, I do not know it."

"Young female ascetic, you do not know even what a young *sāmaṇera* knows in our Teaching, what else would you know?"

Thereupon Kuṇḍalakesā, being a person of no mean past merit, knew the worth of her opponent. She said: "May Your Reverence be my refuge!"

"Kuṇḍalakesā," said Venerable Sāriputta, "You should not take refuge in me. There is the Buddha, the Supreme One among the three worlds, now residing at the Jetavana monastery, in His private chamber. Go and take refuge in the Buddha."

"Very well, Venerable Sir, I take your advice," she said.

In that evening she went to the Jetavana monastery where she found the Buddha delivering a discourse. She made obeisance to the Buddha with the five-fold contact and sat in a suitable place. The Buddha, knowing her ripeness for Enlightenment spoke this verse:

“Better than a thousand verses that deal with trash, not tending to edification, is a single verse (such as one who says: “Unforgetfulness is the way to the Deathless”), by hearing which one is calmed.”

— **Dhammapada**, V. 101. —

At the end of the verse, Kuṇḍalakesā attained arahatship and was endowed with the four Discriminative Knowledges. She requested the Buddha to admit her into the Order of *Bhikkhunīs*. The Buddha agreed. So, she went to a *bhikkhunī* ‘monastery’ and was admitted as *bhikkhunī*.

(c) Kuṇḍalakesā as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

When the Buddha sat amidst the four kinds of assemblies, there was the lively topic among the audience about the marvellous facility of Kuṇḍalakesā Therī in attaining arahatship after hearing just a stanza comprising four lines. The Buddha, with reference to that topic, declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who attain Path-Knowledge quickly, Bhikkhunī Bhaddā, known as Kuṇḍalakesā, is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

10. BHADDĀKĀPILĀNĪ THERĪ

(The story of Bhaddākāpilānī Therī is connected with that of the Venerable Mahā Kassapa whose elaborate account has been given in Chapter 43: Mahā Kassapa Mahāthera. The Commentary gives only brief account of this Therī. For a more complete account, the reader is advised to refer back to Chapter 43.)

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Bhaddākāpilānī Therī was born as the wife of Vedeha, the rich man of Hamsāvati, during the time of Padumuttra Buddha. When she was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, she saw a *bhikkhunī* being named as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in supernormal power of remembering past existences. She aspired to be such a *bhikkhunī* and, after making an extra-ordinary offering, mentioned that aspiration before the Buddha.

Her Existence as the Wife of A Householder

After passing away from her existence as a rich man's wife, she was reborn in the deva-world and subsequently either in the human world or the deva-world, for a hundred thousand world-cycles. Finally, she was reborn as the wife of a householder in Bārāṇasī. At one time, while she was having a quarrel with the sister of her husband, a Paccekabuddha arrived for alms-food. The householder's sister offered alms-food to the Paccekabuddha and said her wish which chafed his wife (the future Bhaddākāpilānī Therī), who became furious and took the alms-bowl from the Paccekabuddha, and threw away the alms-food in it. Further, she put mud in it, and offered it to the Paccekabuddha. Only when the astonished onlookers reminded her of her fault did she recover her proper sense. She threw out the mud from the Paccekabuddha's alms-bowl, cleansed it thoroughly, applied scented powder to it and then put in the four-food nutriment, *catu madhu*. In addition, she added ghee that had been made pure white, like the inside of the pollen chamber of the lotus, with the result that the food she offered glistened in the alms bowl. In returning the alms-bowl to the Paccekabuddha, she wished aloud that just as the food she offered glistened, so would she possess a glistening complexion. (All these happenings may be gleaned from the Chapter 43: Mahā Kassapa Mahāthera.)

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

It is noteworthy that both husband and wife renounced the world together. The husband,

the Venerable Mahā Kassapa-to-be, at a forked road took the right turn while his wife, Bhaddhākāpilānī, the left turn. The former, met the Buddha sitting under the great banyan (pipal) tree, known as Bahuputtaka. At that time, women were not yet admitted into the Order, so Bhaddākāpilānī had to spend five years as a wandering ascetic. (This fact was recounted by herself in her life story: “*Pañca vassānī nivasim̄ paribbājavate aham̄.*”)

(c) Bhaddākāpilānī Therī as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

Thanks to her past aspiration, Bhaddākāpilānī Therī, after attaining arahatship, was exceptionally competent in remembering past existences. Therefore, on one occasion when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery and naming distinguished *bhikkhunīs*, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who can recall past existences, Bhaddā, who is now called Kāpilānī, is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

(Kāpilānī was the family name of Bhaddā's husband Pippali.)

11. YASODHARĀ THERĪ

(As the Myanmar saying goes: “Masses of water follow the tide”, so also is the story of Bhaddhā Kaccānā (Yasodharā Therī), which is inseparably bound with that of the Buddha. The Commentary therefore treats her story only in a brief manner. We do likewise in this book.)

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Bhaddha Kaccānā (Yasodharā Therī), was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When she was attending a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a *bhikkhunī* being named by the Buddha as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in attaining great supernormal power. She aspired to that attainment. After making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, she made her aspiration in front of Him.

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

The future Bhaddha Kaccānā was reborn only in the deva realm or the human realm for one hundred thousand world-cycles. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of the Sakyan Prince Suppabuddha, who was an uncle of the Buddha. She was named Bhadda Kaccānā.

When she came of age, she was married to Prince Siddhattha and became his Chief Queen. She gave birth to Prince Rāhula. On the night she gave birth to Rāhula, Prince Siddhattha renounced the home life. After attaining Perfect-Enlightenment at the foot of the Mahābodhi tree, the Buddha concerned Himself with the spiritual welfare of the sentient world. He made a journey to Kapilavatthu where He caused the enlightenment of His kith and kin.

During the Buddha's fifth year (*vassa*) of Buddhahood, His father attained arahatship while reigning as a king and passed away the same day. Then Queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī and the five Sakyan Princesses, whose husbands had become *bhikkhus* (as a result of listening to the discourse of the Great Occasion of Mahāsamaya Sutta), became *bhikkhunīs* in the Buddha's Teaching. At that time, Queen Yasodharā (Bhaddha Kaccānā) and Princess Janapadakalyānī became *bhikkhunīs* with Mahāpajāpati Gotamī as the *therīs*' preceptress.

Yasodharā, as a *bhikkhunī* was referred to as Bhaddha Kaccānā Therī . She strove to gain Insight and in due time attained arahatship.

(c) Bhadda Kaccānā Therī as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

Bhaddha Kaccānā Therī, after attaining arahatship, was most proficient in the exercise of supernormal powers. At one sitting, in a single adverting of her mind (*āvajjana*), she could recall all her previous existences over one incalculable period and a hundred thousand world-systems. This extraordinary feat of hers became the talk of the *bhikkhu*-world. With

reference to that wide reputation, the Buddha, in naming distinguished *bhikkhūnīs* in a congregation in Jetavana monastery, declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhūnī*-disciples who are endowed with great supernormal powers, *Bhikkhūnī Bhaddha Kaccānā* is the foremost *etadagga*.”

(Note that there are only four outstanding disciples of the Buddha who are endowed with such great supernormal powers. They have exceptional powers to recall past lives over one incalculable period and a hundred thousand world-systems whereas other disciples can recall their past lives over a hundred thousand world-systems only. The four such exceptional disciples were the two Chief Disciples, Venerable *Bākula* and *Bhaddha Kaccānā Therī*.

The original name of the *bhikkhūnī* was *Bhaddha Kaccānā* but on account of her golden complexion she was also known as *Bhaddakañcānā*.)

12. KISĀGOTAMĪ THERĪ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future *Kisāgotamī Therī* was reborn into an unknown family in the city of *Hamsāvātī*, during the time of Buddha *Padumuttara*. When she was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a *bhikkhūnī* being named as the foremost *bhikkhūnī* in wearing coarse, inferior robes. She aspired to be like that *bhikkhūnī* in wearing coarse, inferior robes. After making an extraordinary offering, she expressed that wish before the Buddha. The Buddha prophesied that her aspiration would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha *Gotama*.

Her Existence as a Daughter of King Kikī

The future *Kisāgotamī Therī* was reborn in the fortunate destinations, and never into miserable states, for a period of a hundred thousand world-cycles. During the time of Buddha *Kassapa* in the present world-cycle which was graced by five Buddhas, she was reborn as the fifth daughter of King *Kikī* of *Bārāṇasī*. She was named *Dhammā*. For the whole of her life span of twenty thousand years, she led a life of purity, observing the Ten Precepts.

(b) Becoming A *Bhikkhūnī* in Her Last Existence

Princess *Dhammā* was reborn in the *Tāvātimsa Deva* realm. In her last existence, she was born into a rich man's family, whose fortunes had dwindled and was in a state of poverty. Her original name was *Gotamī* but due to her lean and emaciated body she was called *Kisāgotamī*, “*Gotamī* the lean one.”

(How *Kisāgotamī* became the daughter-in-law of a rich man will now be narrated, as told in the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**.)

"Exhaustion of Good Kamma causes Extreme Poverty."

Yadā kammakkhayo hoti, sabbametam vinasati
“When good kamma is exhausted everything is lost.”

So has the Buddha said in the *Nidhikaṇḍa Sutta*. There was a rich man in *Sāvattthi* whose property were all strangely turned into charcoal due to the exhaustion of his good kamma. The man was in a despondent state. He lost his appetite and lay on a couch. A friend came to his house and gave him encouragement. He also gave a practical way out of the stark poverty of the once rich man. His instruction was as follows:

“Friend, spread out a mat in front of your house as a bazaar seller would. For you are going to sell the heaps of charcoal that are now your only property. Passers-by will say: ‘Oh, other people sell oil, honey, molasses, etc. but you, rich man, are selling charcoal.’ Then you just said to them: ‘One sells what one owns. What's wrong with it?’ These people are the ordinary people with no great past merit.

“Someone will come and say to you: ‘Ah, other people sell oil, honey molasses, etc. but you, rich man, are selling gold and silver!’ To that person you should say: ‘Where are the gold and silver?’

“Then that person will point out to your heaps of charcoal and say: ‘There they are.’

“Then you should say: ‘Bring them to me,’ and receive with your hands what that person has brought (from your heaps of charcoal) to you in his or her hands. Since that person is one endowed with great past merit, all he or she had touched and delivered into your hands will be turned into gold and silver, as they originally had been.

“I must mention the stipulation. It is this, if the person who mention about your gold and silver (and turns them back to gold and silver) is a young woman, you must marry your son to her, entrust all your property with forty crores to her and let her, as your daughter-in-law, manage your household. If that person is a young man, you must marry your daughter to him, entrust all your property worth forty crores to him, as your son-in-law, and let him manage your household”

Kisāgotamī, The One With Great Past Merit

The ruined rich man took his friend's advice. He sat as a bazaar seller in front of his house where every passer-by could see him sitting there selling his charcoal. People said to him: “Ah, other people sell oil, honey, molasses, etc., but you are selling charcoal.” To them he simply said: “One sells what one owns. What's wrong with it?”

One day, Kisāgotamī herself, the daughter of another ruined rich man, happened to come along to the charcoal vendor. She said: “O father, other people sell oil, honey, molasses etc., but you are selling gold and silver!” The ruined rich man said to her: “Where are the gold and silver?”

“Well, are you not dealing in them here?”

“Bring those gold and silver to me, little daughter!”

Kisāgotamī took a handful of the vendor's ‘goods’ and handed it to him and to his amazement, all of them turned into gold and silver as they originally had been!

Kisāgotamī became The Daughter-in-law of The Rich Man

The rich man asked Kisāgotamī: “What is your family name?”

“It is called Kisāgotamī,” she replied. The rich man then knew her to be unmarried. He collected his riches from that place, took Kisāgotamī to his house and married his son to her. Then every of his former gold and silver items assumed its original form. (This is according to the Commentary to the Dhammapada.)

In due course, Kisāgotamī gave birth to a son. From that time onwards, she began to be treated with love and respect by her father-in-law's family (for at first she was looked down by them as the daughter of a poor man). Just when her son could romp about, he died. Kisāgotamī, who had never suffered loss of a child, was overwhelmed with grief. She valued her son as the condition for her improved status and wellbeing. Her fortunes had improved with his birth. She could not think of her dead child being thrown away at the cemetery. So she held the dead child fondly in her arms, and muttering continuously: “O, let me have the medicine to bring back life to my son!” she roamed about from house to house.

As she behaved in that senseless though pitiable manner, people had no sympathy with her. They said jeeringly, flipping their fingers: “Where have you ever seen a medicine that restores life to the dead?” These unkind but truthful words failed to bring her sanity. A wise man then considered: “This young woman has lost her good senses due to the death of her son. The right medicine for her can only be dispensed by the Buddha,” and said to her: “Little daughter, the medicine that can bring back life to your son is known only to the Buddha and to no one else. Indeed, there is the Buddha, the greatest person among devas

and humans, residing at the Jetavana monastery. Go and ask him.”

The Buddha's Strategy to quell Kisāgotamī's Sorrow

Kisāgotamī thought the man's advice was a wise one. She went straight to the Buddha's monastery, holding her dead child in her arms. The Buddha was seated on His throne amidst an audience and was about to make His discourse when Kisāgotamī shouted to the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, give me the medicine that will bring back life to my child!” The Buddha saw the sufficiency of her past merit in attaining Enlightenment and said to her: “O Gotamī, you have done the right thing in coming to this place to ask for the medicine to restore life to your dead child. Now go to every house in Sāvatti and ask for a small quantity of mustard oil from the house whose family has no death occurred, and bring it to me.”

(Herein, the Buddha's strategy is to be noted carefully. The Buddha merely says to Kisāgotamī to bring him a small quantity of mustard oil from the house whose family had no death occurred. He did not say that He would restore the dead child to life when she has got the oil. The Buddha's objective is to let the demented mother realized the point that loss of a son is not a unique experience but that everybody has suffered the same sorrow of death.)

Kisāgotamī thought that if she obtained the mustard oil, her son would be restored to life. She went to the first house and said: “The Buddha asks me to get a small quantity of mustard oil for making a medicine to restore life to my dead son. Kindly give me some mustard oil.”

“Here it is,” the householder said and gave some mustard oil.

“But, Sir,” she said, “I must know one thing: has nobody died in this family?”

“What a question! Who can remember the number of people that died in this family?”

“In that case, I am not taking the oil,” she said and went to another house. She heard the same reply there. At the third house she also heard the same reply. Now truth dawned into her merit. There can be no family in this city where death never occurred. Of course, the Buddha, the benefactor of the world, knew it.” An emotional religious awakening arose in her. She went to the country and left her dead child there, saying: “Dear son, as a mother, I had thought quite wrongly that death came to you alone. But death is common to everybody.”

Then, muttering this soliloquy (the meaning of which will be given later), she went to see the Buddha:

*Na gāmadhammo no nigamassa dhammo,
Na cāpiyaṃ ekakulassa dhammo.
Sabbassa lokassa sadevakassa,
Eseva dhammo yadidaṃ aniccatā.*

She approached the Buddha who asked her: “Have you got the mustard oil?”

“I have no need for mustard oil, Venerable Sir, only give me the firm ground to stand upon, let me gain a foothold!”

The Buddha, spoke this verse to her: (translated below)

“Gotamī, one who is intoxicated with one's children and wealth (lit. ‘herds of cattle’) and is attached to one's possessions (old and new), is carried away by Death, just as a sleeping village is swept away by a huge flood.”

— **Dhammapada**, V. 287. —

At the end of the discourse, Kisāgotamī was established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry Knowledge.

(This is according to the Commentary on **Aṅguttara Nikāya**.)

In the life story of Kisāgotamī, when she came back from her search for the mustard oil,

the Buddha spoke to her in two verses:

The first verse beginning with:

Yo ca vassasatam jīve, apassam udayabbayam

— **Dhammapada** verse 113 —

the meaning of which has been given in the story of Paṭācārā and the second as follows:

“Gotamī, the impermanence of all conditioned things is not a peculiar phenomenon confined to any village, or town, or a family, but an inescapable fact that concerns all sentient beings including devas, humans and Brahmās.”

After hearing these two verses, Kisāgotamī attained Stream-Entry. This is the Life Story of Kisāgotamī Therī as told in the **Apādāna Pāli**.

Having been established in *sotāpatti-phala*, Kisāgotamī requested the Buddha that she be allowed to become a *bhikkhunī*. The Buddha consented. Kisāgotamī left the Buddha after going three rounds around Him with the Him on her right. She went to the ‘monastery’ of *bhikkhunīs*, and was admitted into the Order of Bhikkhunīs. Then, she acquired the name of Kisāgotamī Therī.

Attainment of Arahatsip

Kisāgotamī Therī worked diligently to gain Insight. One day, it was her turn to look after lighting in and around the congregation hall. While watching a flame in a lamp, she had the perception of the flame as a phenomena of a series of rising and vanishings (i.e. perishing). Then she saw that all living beings are coming and going, that is, they are born only to die and that only those who attain Nibbāna do not come under this process of arising and falling.

The thoughts that were occurring in Kisāgotamī’s mind came to the notice of the Buddha who was sitting in His private chamber at the Jetavana monastery, and He sent His Buddha-rays to her, making her see Him sitting in front of her and said: “Gotamī, your thinking is right. All living beings rise and fall, just as the series of flames do. Only those who attain Nibbāna do not come under this process of arising and falling. It is living in vain for those who may live a hundred years without realizing Nibbāna through Path-Knowledge and its Fruition.” He made this point further in the following verse:

“(Gotamī,) even if one were to live a hundred years without perceiving through Path-Knowledge, the Deathless (Nibbāna), yet more worthwhile indeed is a single day’s life of one who perceives through Path-Knowledge, the Deathless (Nibbāna).”

At the end of the discourse, Kisāgotamī Therī attained arahatsip, having extinguished all mental intoxicants.

(c) Kisāgotamī as The Foremost Bhikkhunī

As aspired in her previous existence, Kisāgotamī devoted her entire *bhikkhunī* life to being contented with inferior robes, i.e. robes made of inferior cloth, sewn in inferior thread, and dyed in an inferior pale colour. Therefore, on one occasion, when the Buddha was naming outstanding *bhikkhunīs* during His residence at the Jetavana monastery, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who make do with inferior robes, Bhikkhunī Kisāgotamī is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

13. SIṄGALAKAMĀTU THERĪ

(What follows is a synthesis of the sketchy account of Siṅgalakamātu Therī in the Commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** and the Life Story of the Bhikkhunī in the **Apādāna Pāli**.)

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Siṅgālakamātu Therī was born as the daughter of a court official, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She went to the Buddha's monastery and after listening to His Doctrine, she became a *bhikkhunī* and flawlessly observed the morality consisting in the Four kinds of Purification. She had an exceptional devotion to the Triple Gem, very keen to listen to the Doctrine, and had an ardent desire to see the Buddha (just as Bhikkhu Vakkali).

One day, she saw a *bhikkhunī* being named by the Buddha as the foremost *bhikkhunī* in faith (*saddhā*). She aspired to be like that foremost *bhikkhunī* and redoubled her effort in the practice of the threefold training. The Buddha gave a discourse to her in three stanzas beginning with: “*Yassa saddhā tathāgate ...*” which in essence says: “One who has faith in the Triple Gem, morality and straight view or knowledge is not called a poor person, and so a wise person should cultivate devotion to the Buddha, morality, faith about the Doctrine and the Sangha, and perception or Insight that enables one to see the Dhamma.” (The three stanzas may be gleaned from the **Apādāna Pāli**, Book Two.)

On hearing the discourse, the young *bhikkhunī* was greatly encouraged and asked the Buddha if her aspiration would come true. Buddha Padumuttara prophesied that her aspiration would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha Gotama. She was elated by the prognostication and served the Buddha respectfully by living up to the Buddha's Teaching. (It should be noted that putting effort in the right practice of the Dhamma with devotion or loving thoughts about the Buddha itself amounts to serving or attending on the Buddha.)

(b) Becoming A Bhikkhunī in Her Last Existence

The future Siṅgālakamātu Therī was reborn in the fortunate destinations for a hundred thousand world-cycles. Then, during the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of the Rich Man in Rājagaha. When she came of age she was married to a son of another rich man of the same clan and went to live in her husband's resident. She gave birth to a child named Siṅgālaka. She acquired the name Siṅgālakamātu, Mother of Siṅgālaka.

Her son, Siṅgālaka had the wrong belief. He worshipped the eight directions daily. One day, as the Buddha was entering the city for alms-food, he saw young Siṅgālaka turning to the eight directions in the act of worshipping. The Buddha stood on the wayside and gave a discourse to the young boy. On that occasion, two crores of the listeners, both men and woman, realized the Four Truths. Saṅgālakamātu attained Stream-Entry Knowledge and joined the Order of Bhikkhunīs. Since then, she came to be called Siṅgālakamātu Therī. Due to her past aspiration, since she became a *bhikkhunī*, her faculty of faith was exceptionally strong. Wherever she visited the Buddha's monastery to listen to the sermons, she could not turn her gaze away from the glorious person of the Buddha. The Buddha, knowing her intense devotion to Him, gave discourses to her that tended to enhance her conviction. With faith as her stepping stone or springboard, she meditated on Insight and attained arahatship. (An *arahat* who attains Enlightenment with conviction as the dominant factor.)

(c) Siṅgālakamātu designated as The Foremost Bhikkhunī.

On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery and naming distinguished *bhikkhunīs* according to their merits, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My *bhikkhunī*-disciples who have strong conviction, Bhikkhunī Siṅgālakamātu is the foremost (*etadagga*).”

Chapter 45

THE LIFE STORIES OF MALE LAY DISCIPLES

1. TAPUSSA and BHALLIKA

(a) Their Past Aspirations

(I shall describe the story of the brothers, Tapussa and Bhallika, based on the Commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** and the Commentary on the **Theragāthā**, the Ekaka nipāta.)

The future Tapussa and future Bhallika were reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When they were listening to a discourse by the Buddha, they saw two disciples being named as the foremost in being the first of the Buddha's disciples who were established in the Three Refuges. The two brothers aspired to that distinction and after making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, they wished for that goal. (**Aṅguttara Commentary**)

Other Past Existences in The Intervening Period

The two brothers lived a life full of meritorious deeds and, after passing away from that memorable existence, they were never reborn into the miserable states of *apāya* but, instead, in the deva-world or the human world only. The future Bhallika was reborn, thirty-one world-cycles ago in a period which was devoid of any Buddhas, as a man who offered all kinds of fruits to a Paccekabuddha named Sumana. For that good deed, he was reborn only in the good destinations. During the time of Buddha Sikhī, he was reborn into a brahmin family in the city of Arunavati. He heard the news that two merchant brothers, Ujita and Ojita, had opportunity of offering first alms-food to Buddha Sikhī who had appeared from the seventh seven-day abiding in the attainment in Cessation and who was about to begin his eighth seven-day abiding in the attainment of Cessation. He went to visit Buddha Sikhī together with his friend, (the future Tapussa), and after paying homage to the Buddha, requested Him to accept their alms-food offering the next day. On the next day, they made an extra-ordinary offering to the Buddha and said: "Venerable Sir, for this good deed, let both of us have the opportunity of making the first alms-food to a Buddha in the future."

The two friends were reborn in various existences, during which they performed meritorious deeds together, resulting in rebirth at the fortunate destinations. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, they were born into the family of a cattle merchant. For a long period of life, lasting many years, they offered milk-food to the Sangha. (These events are described in the Commentary on the **Theragāthā**.)

(b) Discipleship in Their Last Existence

The two friends were reborn into the fortunate destinations for the infinite years which constituted the interim period between the two Buddhas. During the time of Buddha Gotama, before the Buddha attained Perfect Enlightenment, they were reborn as two sons to a travelling merchant who carried his goods, using a big caravan, from place to place. Their native town was called Asitañcana (the Commentary on **Theragāthā** refers to it as Pokkharavati). The elder brother was named Tapussa and the younger, Bhallika.

They became householders and carried on the trading together, using a caravan of five hundred bullock carts. At that time, Buddha Gotama had attained Perfect Enlightenment and had passed seven times the seven-days of abiding in the attainment of Cessation, and was about to enter into the eighth seven-days period of abiding in the attainment of Cessation at the foot of a 'Linlun' tree, (the *Sapium baccatum*).

The caravan of the two merchant brothers were then not far from that tree. At that

moment, the deva, who had been the mother to the merchant brothers in the immediately previous existence, saw the dire need of the Buddha for sustenance, who, after staying for forty-nine days (having last taken Sujātā's milk-rice in forty-nine morsels), must eat that day for His survival. She thought that her two sons should be able to provide the food just in time. So, using her psychic powers, she made the bullocks unable to move.

The two brothers inspected the bullocks, the carts, and all relevant conditions which made the carts immobile. They were at their wit's ends to find the reason. Their deva mother, seeing them disheartened, possessed a man in the caravan and said to them: "Dear sons, you are not harassed by any demon or *peta* or *nāga* but it is me, a deva of the terrestrial realm, who was your mother in your last existence, who is doing this. (Now, sons,) the Buddha, who is endowed with Ten Powers, is staying at the foot of a 'Linlun' tree. Go and offer alms-food to the Buddha which will be the first food He takes after attainment of Buddhahood."

The two brothers were delighted by the deva's word. And thinking that if they were to cook alms-food it would take too much time, therefore they took some of their choicest preserved food, put them in a gold salver, and, going near the Buddha, said: "Venerable Sir, may you, out of compassion, accept this victuals." The Buddha reviewed the situation and considered what action the previous Buddha did in such a case. The Four Great Deva Kings then visited the Buddha and each offered an alms-bowl, which was made of granite and having the colour of the green gram. The Buddha considered the great benefit that would accrue to the four devas, and so accepted all the four bowls, and (placing them one a top the other,) willed that the four bowls became one, and accordingly, the four granite bowls became a single alms-bowl with four rims.

The two brothers then put their alms-food into the Buddha's alms-bowl. (The Buddha ate the food.) After the Buddha had finished eating, the brothers offered water for drinking and washing. Then they made obeisance to the Buddha and sat in a suitable place. The Buddha gave them a discourse, at the end of which, both brothers were established in the Two Refuges. (The story of the establishment of the two brothers in the Two Refuges (*dve vācika saraṇagamaṇa*) has been described in Chapter 8.).

After having established in the Two Refuges, before departing, the two brothers requested from the Buddha: "Venerable Sir, may the Bhagavā, out of compassion, bestow on us something which we may revere every day." The Buddha passed His right hand over His head and gave them eight hairs as relics. The brothers put the hairs in a gold casket and took them home. Back at their town, they erected a shrine at the entrance of the town of Asitañcana where the eight relic-hairs from the living Buddha were enshrined. On *uposatha* days, the shrine emitted Buddha-rays.

(c) The Two Brothers being designated as Foremost Lay Disciples

On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery and acknowledging distinguished lay disciples accordingly to their merits, He declared:

"*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who have taken refuge earliest in the Buddha and the Dhamma, the merchant brothers, Tapussa and Bhallika, are the foremost."

The Attainment of Path-Knowledge

Tapussa and Bhallika were the earliest of the Buddha's lay disciples who took refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma. Later, the Buddha made His first discourse, the Dhammacakka, at the Migadāvana forest near Bereave. After that, He went and resided in Rājagaha. The two brothers also arrived at Rājagaha on a trading journey. They visited the Buddha, made obeisance and sat in a suitable place. The Buddha gave discourse to them, at the end of which, the elder brother Tapussa was established in Stream-Entry Knowledge and its Fruition. The younger brother became a *bhikkhu* and in due time attained arahatship and was endowed with the Six Supernormal Powers. (Commentary on the **Theragāthā**, Book I).

2. ANĀTHAPIṆḌIKA the Rich Man

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Anāthapiṇḍika was reborn into a wealthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When he was listening a sermon by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named as the foremost lay disciple among those who delight in charity. He had a strong desire to become such a distinguished disciple and after making an extra-ordinary offering to the Buddha, he expressed his aspiration before Him.

(b) His Last Existence as A Rich Man

The future Anāthapiṇḍika was reborn in fortunate destinations for a hundred thousand world-cycles and during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn as the son of Sumana, the Rich Man of Sāvatti. His name, given by his parents, was Sudattha.

How He came to be known as 'Anāthapiṇḍika'

Sudattha in time became the head of the family. He earned the reputation of 'one who gives food to the destitute' which in Pāli means *Anātha* (destitutes) + *piṇḍika* (rice-giver), hence Anāthapiṇḍika. (For more details about this remarkable man refer to Chapter 29. Here, only a brief account will be given as described in the Commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**.)

One day, Anāthapiṇḍika went to Rājagaha on a trading trip where he visited his friend the Rich Man of Rājagaha. There, he learned the great news that the Buddha had appeared in the world. He could not wait till the city gates of Rājagaha were open in the next morning to meet the Buddha. Such was his zeal. So he left the city at dawn with the devas helping him to have the gate open for his visit. He met the Buddha, benefitted from a discourse by Him, and was established in the Fruition of Stream Entry-Knowledge. On the next day, he made a great offering to the Buddha and His Sangha and had the Buddha's consent to visit Sāvatti. He returned to Sāvatti. On the way back to Sāvatti, he made arrangements with his friends of each location by providing them with one lakh of money to build a monastery at interval of one *yojana*, for the temporary residence of the Buddha and His company of *bhikkhus*. The distance between Rājagaha and Sāvatti being forty-five *yojanas*, therefore, he spent forty-five lakhs on the forty-five temporary transit monasteries. At Sāvatti, he bought a large park, which was the pleasure garden of Prince Jeta. He paid the sum of money according to the number of gold coins laid out over the entire park, with their rims touching each other. This amounted to eighteen crores. On that piece of land, he built a (golden) monastery costing another eighteen crores. At the formal dedication ceremony of the Jetavana monastery (meaning monastery built on Jeta's garden), which lasted for three months (some say five months, some even nine months), a lavish feast was provided to guests, both in the mornings and in the daytime. This cost him another additional eighteen crores.

(c) Anāthapiṇḍika The Foremost Giver

The Jetavana monastery alone cost fifty-four crores. The regular donations to the Buddha and His Sangha consisted of the following offerings:

- five hundred *bhikkhus* were offered with alms-food daily by the ticket system (*Salaka bhatta*-drawing lots);
- five hundred *bhikkhus* were offered with alms-food once during the waxing period of the month and once during the waning period;
- five hundred *bhikkhus* were offered with rice gruel daily by 'the ticket system';
- five hundred *bhikkhus* were offered with rice gruel once during the waxing period of the month and once during the waning period;
- daily offerings of alms-food were made to:
 - (a) five hundred *bhikkhus* who had arrived in Sāvatti recently and who had not acquainted themselves with the daily route for collecting alms-food;

- (b) five hundred *bhikkhus* who were about to go on a journey;
- (c) five hundred *bhikkhus* who were sick;
- (d) five hundred *bhikkhus* who tended the sick *bhikkhus*;
- there was always seating place for five hundred *bhikkhus* at any time at Anāthapiṇḍika's house.

Hence, on one occasion when the Buddha, while residing at the Jetavana monastery, was acknowledging lay disciples according to their merit, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who delight in giving, Sudattha the Householder, also known as Anāthapiṇḍika, is the foremost.”

The Anāthapiṇḍikovāda Sutta, the Favourite Discourse of Anāthapiṇḍika

(Here we shall give a condensed account of the Anāthapiṇḍikovāda Sutta which Anāthapiṇḍika liked very much. A full account of this discourse is contained in **Uparipañāsa**.)

During the Buddha's residence at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatti, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder was sick, in pain, and gravely ill. Then he called an attendant and said: “O man, go to the Bhagavā and approach Him. Prostrating yourself at His feet and says to Him: ‘Venerable Sir, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder is sick, in pain, and gravely ill. He pays homage with his head at the feet of the Bhagavā.’ (Further,) go to the Venerable Sāriputta, and approach him, prostrating yourself at his feet, and says to him: ‘Venerable Sir, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder is sick, in pain, and gravely ill. He pays homage with his head at the feet of the Venerable.’ And also say thus: ‘Venerable Sir, may the Venerable Sāriputta, out of compassion, come to the house of Anāthapiṇḍika.’ ”

(When Anāthapiṇḍika was in good health, he usually paid a visit to the Buddha at least once a day, and twice or three if he could manage it. But now that he was on his death bed, he was sending an attendant as messenger.)

“Very well, Sir,” replied the attendant to Anāthapiṇḍika, and went to the Buddha. He paid homage to the Buddha, prostrating himself at His feet, and said to Him as instructed by his master. Then it was nearly sundown. He next went to the Venerable Sāriputta, approached him, prostrating himself at his feet, and said to the Venerable as instructed by his master, requesting the Venerable to visit Anāthapiṇḍika. The Venerable Sāriputta signified his acceptance by remaining silent.

Then, the Venerable Sāriputta, re-robing himself, carrying his alms-bowl and great robe, went to the house of Anāthapiṇḍika the householder, accompanied by the Venerable Ānanda as his attendant (in place of another *bhikkhu* which was the custom). Upon arrival and after taking the seat prepared for him, he asked Anāthapiṇḍika: “Householder, are you feeling well? Are you feeling better? Is your pain decreasing and not increasing? Does it appear to be decreasing and not increasing?”

Anāthapiṇḍika, replied to the Venerable Sāriputta how he was feeling unwell, how he was not feeling any better, how his pain was increasing and not decreasing, and how it appeared to be increasing and not decreasing, by giving four examples.

The Venerable Sāriputta knew that the illness of the householder was not controllable but that it would end only with this death. So he considered it important not to talk about anything but to give a discourse that would be of benefit to him. (He gave the following discourse in a comprehensive manner: Since there is no possibility of checking an ailment which will end only with the death of the sufferer who, being under the influence of craving, conceit and wrong view, is attached to the six sense-doors, the six sense objects, the six kinds of consciousness, the six kinds of contact, the six kinds of sensation, etc.), He said: “Householder, you should practise thus:

‘I will have no attachment, by way of either Craving or Conceit or Wrong view, for the eye, which is corporeality with sensitivity of seeing; then the consciousness which is dependent on the eye (through a subtle fondness *nikanti taṇhā* for the eye)

will not arise in me!’ Householder, you should practise the Threefold Training in this way.”

(Herein, “You should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment to the eye’ is said to exhort the householder to view the eye as impermanent, woeful (*dukkha*) and unsubstantial. This is so because if one views the eye as impermanent, Conceit cannot have any foothold, i.e. it cannot arise; if one views the eye as woeful (*dukkha*), Craving, attachment to the eye as ‘my eye’ cannot arise; if one views that eye as unsubstantial, the Wrong View of a personal identity or the ego as ‘my Self’ cannot arise. Hence to be free of the misconceptions through Conceit, Craving and Wrong View, one should repeatedly view the eye as impermanent, woeful (*dukkha*) and unsubstantial.

The three misconceptions of Conceit, Craving and Wrong View are crude mental states. Even when those misconceptions may disappear, there is a subtle fondness (*nikanti*) for the eye that tends to persist in one. The Venerable Sāriputta exhorts the householder to have his consciousness to be free of this subtle fondness.

The same applies to the other five sense bases, such as ear, nose, etc. and also to sense objects, etc.)

Having exhorted Anāthapiṇḍika to train himself to be free of attachment to the eye through Conceit, Craving and Wrong View, and also to have no lingering fondness for the eye, the Venerable Sāriputta further exhorted him as follows:

- (1) “That beings so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for the ear ...p... the nose ...p..., the tongue ...p... for the mind, the mind-base; (not even a subtle fondness for the mind).’
- (2) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for visual objects ...p... sounds ...p... odours ...p... tangible objects...p...mind-objects (not even a subtle fondness for mind-objects).’
- (3) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for eye-consciousness ...p... ear-consciousness ...p... nose consciousness ...p... body-consciousness ...p... mind-consciousness (not even a subtle fondness for mind-consciousness).’
- (4) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for eye-contact ...p... ear-contact ...p... nose-contact ...p... tongue-contact ...p... body-contact ...p... mind-contact (not even a subtle fondness mind-contact).’
- (5) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for sensation arising out of eye-contact ...p... sensation arising out of ear-contact ...p... sensation arising out of nose-contact ...p... sensation arising out of tongue-contact ...p... sensation arising out of body-contact ...p... sensation arising out of mind-contact (not even a subtle fondness for sensation arising out of mind-contact).’
- (6) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for the Element of solidity ...p... the Element of cohesion ...p... the Element of heat ...p... the Element of motion ...p... the Element of Space ...p... the Element of consciousness (not even a subtle fondness for the element of consciousness).’
- (7) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for corporeality ...p... sensation ...p... perception ...p... volitional activities ...p... consciousness (not even subtle fondness for consciousness).’
- (8) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for the *jhāna* of infinity of Space ...p... the *jhāna* of infinity of consciousness ...p... the *jhāna* of Nothingness...p...the *jhāna* of Neither-consciousness-nor-non-consciousness (not even a subtle fondness for the *jhāna* of Neither-consciousness-nor-nonconsciousness).’
- (9) “That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for the present world; then the consciousness which is dependent on the present world

(through a subtle fondness for the present world) will not arise in me.’ Householder, you should practise the Threefold Training in this way.

“That being so, householder, you should practise thus: ‘I will have no attachment for the hereafter; then the consciousness which is dependent on the hereafter (through a subtle fondness for the hereafter) will not arise in me.’ Householder, you should practise the Threefold Training in this way.

(From the first to eight rounds of exposition, the sentient world is being referred to. In the last (ninth) round, ‘the present world’ refers to volitional activities related to dwelling, food and raiment and other possessions; ‘the hereafter’ means all forms of existence beyond the human existence. The Venerable Sāriputta, by mentioning the hereafter, hints that the householder should not crave for grand mansions, gorgeous food and raiment, etc. in any of the celestial world.)

Thus the Venerable Sāriputta give a comprehensive discourse in nine turns (on the same theme). It may be noted that the three roots, Craving, Conceit and Wrong View, are completely eliminated on attainment of *arahatta-phala*. Of the three, Wrong View is eradicated when Stream-Entry Knowledge is gained. The Venerable Sāriputta repeatedly exhorted Anāthapiṇḍika to practise so that no attachment to anything arises in the mind through any of these misconceptions. This connotes that *arahatta-phala* should be the goal. This theme he impressed on the householder by nine different factors, viz.: Sense-doors, Sense-objects, Consciousness, Contact, Sensation, Dhātu (Elements), Khandha (aggregates), *jhāna* of the Non-Material Sphere, and all things knowable (*sabba-dhamma*). The voidness, the emptiness, the unreality of these phenomena is comprehended when one attains *arahatta-phala*.

When the discourse had ended, Anāthapiṇḍika, wept bitterly. Then the Venerable Ānanda said to Anāthapiṇḍika: “Householder are you attached to your possessions? Householder, are you wavering about the meritorious deeds?”

“Venerable Sir,” replied Anāthapiṇḍika, “I am not attached to my possessions. Nor am I wavering. I have indeed, for a long time, attended upon the Bhagavā. I have also attended upon the *bhikkhus* who are worthy of respect. But, I have never heard such words of the Dhamma before.”

“Householder, the laity who wear white cloths cannot understand clearly this word of the Dhamma. (For lay persons it is not easy to follow the exhortation to break away from the dear ones, such as wife and children, and various other possessions, such as valued attendants, fertile fields, etc..) Householder, this word of the Dhamma can be understood only by *bhikkhus*. (Only *bhikkhu* can appreciate such admonition.)”

“Venerable Sāriputta, I beg of you. Let this word of the Dhamma be made clear to the laity who wear white cloths. Venerable Sir, there are many worthy men whose understanding is not clouded by the dust of defilements. For them, it is a great loss in not being able to see the Supramundane for not having heard the Dhamma. There are likely to be people who will be able to fully understand the Dhamma and attain arahatship, only if you expound the Dhamma to them.”

(“I have never heard such words of the Dhamma before.” These words spoken by Anāthapiṇḍika needs to be explained. It is not that the householder was never before admonished by the Buddha using words of the same profound meaning. But the Doctrine leading to *arahatta-phala* expounded by means of such a comprehensive arrangement involving nine different turns (or rounds), such as the six sense-doors, the six sense objects, the six kinds of Consciousness, the six Elements, the Aggregates, the four *jhānas* of the Non-Material Sphere, the present world and the hereafter, through all manner of knowing them, i.e. seeing, hearing, attaining, cognizing, has never been discoursed to him before.

To explain in another way: Charity and the delight in giving is the hallmark of Anāthapiṇḍika's character. Never would he pay a visit to the Buddha or to *bhikkhus* worthy of respect empty-handed: in the mornings, he would take gruel and eatables

to them, in the afternoons, ghee, honey or molasses, etc. Even on some rare occasions when he had no offering to make to them, he would take his attendants along, carrying fine sand with them, which he let them spread about the monastic compound. At the monastery, he would make his offering, observe the precepts, and then go home. His noble behaviour was reputed to be one worthy of a Buddha-to-be. The Buddha, during the twenty-four years of association with Anāthapiṇḍika, mostly praised him for his charity: “I had practised charity over four incalculable period and a hundred thousand world-cycles. You are following my footsteps.” Great disciples, like the Venerable Sāriputta, usually discoursed to Anāthapiṇḍika on the benefits of giving in charity. That is why the Venerable Ānanda said to him: “Householder, the laity who wear white clothes cannot understand clearly this word of the Dhamma” with reference to the present discourse by the Venerable Sāriputta.

This should not be taken to mean that the Buddha never discoursed to Anāthapiṇḍika on the cultivating of Insight, leading to Path-Knowledge and its Fruition. In fact, the householder had heard the need for Insight-development. Only that he had never listened to such an elaborate discussion running to nine turns (round) as in the present discourse. As the Sub-Commentary on Anāthapiṇḍiko-vāda Sutta has pointed out: “As a matter of fact, the Bhagavā had discoursed to him (Anāthapiṇḍika) on the subject of Insight development as the straight course to the attainment of the Ariya Path.”)

Anāthapiṇḍika was reborn in The Tusitā Deva Realm

After admonishing Anāthapiṇḍika, the Venerables Sāriputta and Ānanda departed. Not long after they had left, Anāthapiṇḍika passed away and was reborn in the Tusitā Deva realm.

Then, around the middle watch of the night, Deva Anāthapiṇḍika approached the Buddha, made obeisance to Him in verse:

(Herein, before mentioning the verses, the reason for Deva Anāthapiṇḍika's visit to the Buddha should be noted. Being reborn in the Tusitā Deva realm, Anāthapiṇḍika found out, was a great thing full of sense pleasure. His body, three gāvutas long, was shining like a mass of gold. His mansion, pleasure gardens, the Wish Tree where he could get anything by mere wishing, etc. were indeed alluring. He reviewed his past existence and saw that his devotion to the Triple Gem had been the causes of this resplendent fresh existence. He considered his new deva life. It was full of ease and comfort which could easily make him drowned in sense pleasures and forgetting the Good Doctrine. “I must now go to the human world and sing in praise of the Jetavana monastery (my past deed of merit), the Sangha, the Buddha, the Ariya Path, and Venerable Sāriputta. Only on returning from the human world will I start enjoying this fleshly acquired life,” thus he decided.)

Four Stanzas address to The Buddha

1. “(Venerable Sir,) this Jetavana monastery as the resort by day and by night, of the Sangha (Comprising *bhikkhus* who are *arahats* as well as those training themselves for arahatship.) It is the residence of the Bhagavā, King of the Dhamma. (That is why) it is source of delight to me.

(The Jetavana monastery was a monastic complex comprising the Buddha's Private (Scented) chamber, the square Pinnacled monastery, a number of monastic dwellings with exquisite ornate designs with fruit trees, flowering trees and shrubbery and restful seats. It was a religious premise of rare elegance, a visitor's delight. However, the real attraction of the Jetavana monastery lay in its residents, the taint-free *ariyas* such as the Buddha and His noble disciples. And it was that spiritual beauty of the place rather than the sensual attraction that appealed to an ariya like Anāthapiṇḍika.)

2. “It is through action (i.e. volitional activities associated with *magga*), Knowledge (i.e. Right View and Right Thinking), Dhamma (i.e. Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration), and virtuous living based on morality (i.e. Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood) that beings are purified. They are not purified through lineage or wealth.

(In this stanza, Anāthapiṇḍika extols the Ariya Path of eight constituents.)

3. “That being so, the wise person, discerning his own welfare (culminating in Nibbāna), should contemplate, with right perception, the impermanence, the woefulness and the unsubstantiality of five aggregates (i.e. this body) which are the object of Clinging, Contemplating, thus, that person is purified through realizing the Four Ariya Truths.

(This body, the mind-body complex which one clings to as oneself, when brought to its ultimate analysis by means of Insight-development, reveals its true nature. As Insight fully develops into Path-Knowledge, the Truth of *dukkha* or woefulness of repeated existences, is seen through by the full understanding of phenomena. The Truth of the Origin of *dukkha* is seen through and discarded. The Truth of the Cessation of *dukkha* is realized by direct experience. The Truth of the Path is penetratingly understood by developing it. Then the yogi is free from of the defilements and purity is achieved. In this stanza, Anāthapiṇḍika extolled the development of Insight and the realization of the Path-Knowledge.)

4. “A certain *bhikkhu* reaches the other shore (that is Nibbāna). In this respect, he is equal to Sāriputta. But Sāriputta, with his knowledge, morality and calm (pacification of *āsava*), *paññā*, *sīla*, *upasama*, is the noblest among those *bhikkhus* who reach the other shore (that is Nibbāna).”

(In this stanza, Anāthapiṇḍika extols the virtues of Venerable Sāriputta.)

Deva Anāthapiṇḍika addressed these four stanzas to the Buddha. The Buddha listened to them without making any interruption, thus showing His approval. Then Deva Anāthapiṇḍika gladly thinking: “The Teacher is pleased with these words, of mine,” made obeisance to Buddha and vanished there and then.

Then, when the night passed and morning came, the Buddha addressed the *bhikkhus* thus: “*Bhikkhus*, last night, about the middle watch of the night, a certain deva approached Me, made obeisance to Me, and stood in a suitable place. Then he addressed to Me with these stanzas.” The Buddha recited to the *bhikkhus* the verses spoken by Deva Anāthapiṇḍika.

(Here, the Buddha did not mention the name of Anāthapiṇḍika because he wanted the intuition of Ānanda to be brought to the fore.)

Accordingly, as soon as the Buddha had spoken, the Venerable Ānanda, without hesitating a moment, said: “Venerable Sir, that deva must have been Deva Anāthapiṇḍika. Venerable Sir, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder had much devotion to the Venerable Sāriputta.”

“Well said, Ānanda, well said, Ānanda, you do have the right intuition. Ānanda, that deva is indeed Deva Anāthapiṇḍika,” thus said the Buddha.

3. CITTA The Householder

(Both Anāthapiṇḍika and Citta are termed as *gahapati*, the English rendering being ‘Householders’. In Myanmar renderings, Anāthapiṇḍika is usually termed as ‘*thuthay*’ whereas Citta is usually rendered as ‘*thukywe*’. Both these Myanmar terms are synonymous.)

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Citta the householder was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Haṃsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, while listening to the

Buddha's discourse, he saw a certain disciple being named by Him as the foremost in expounding the Doctrine. The worthy man aspired to that distinction. After making an extraordinary offering, he expressed his wish that, at some future existence, he would be designated by a Buddha as the foremost disciple in expounding the Doctrine.

In His Existence as The Son of A Hunter

The future Citta was reborn either in the deva realm or the human realm for a hundred thousand world-cycles. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, he was born as a son of a hunter. When he came of age, he took up the vocation of hunter. One rainy day, he went to the forest to hunt, carrying a spear. While searching for games, he saw a *bhikkhu* with his head covered with his robe of dirt-rags, sitting on a rock platform inside a natural cavern. He thought that must be a *bhikkhu* meditating. He hurried home and had two pots cooked simultaneously, one in which rice was boiled and the other for meat.

When the rice and the meat had been cooked, he saw two *bhikkhus* coming to his house for alms-food. He invited them into his house, took their alms-bowls, and requested them to accept his offering of alms-food out of compassion for him. Having had the two *bhikkhus* seated, he let his family to take care of the offering of alms-food to them while he hurried back to the forest to offer the alms-food to the meditating *bhikkhu*. He carried the rice and the meat in a pot properly covered with banana leaves. On the way, he gathered various kinds of flowers and wrapped them in some leaves. He went to the *bhikkhu* in the cavern, filled his alms-bowl with the alms-food and offered it and the flowers to him reverentially.

Then he sat in a suitable place and said to the *bhikkhu*: “Just as this offering of delicious food and flowers makes me very glad, may I, in the future existences in the course of *samsāra*, be blessed with all kinds of gifts. May flowers of five hues shower down on me!” The *bhikkhu* saw that the donor was destined to gain sufficient merit leading to attaining of *maggā-phala* and taught him in detail the method of contemplating the thirty-two aspects of parts of the body.

That son of the hunter (the future Citta) lived a life full of good deeds and at his death, he was reborn in the deva realm. There, he was blessed with showers of flowers that rained down on him up to knee-deep.

(b) Discipleship in His Last Existence

The future Citta was reborn in fortunate destinations throughout the world-cycle that intervened the appearance of the two Buddhas, and during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn as the son of the Rich Man in the town of Macchikāsaṇḍa, in the Province of Magadha. At the time of his birth, flowers of five hues rained down over the whole town up to knee-deep. His parents said: “Our son has brought his own name. For he has delighted the mind of the whole town by being blessed with the wondrous floral tribute of five colours. Let us call him ‘Citta’.”

When young Citta came of age, he was married and at the death of his father, he succeeded to the office of the Rich Man of Macchikāsaṇḍa. At that time, the Venerable Mahānāma, one of the Group of Five Ascetics, came to Macchikāsaṇḍa. Citta was full of reverential adoration for Venerable Mahānāma for his serenity. He took the alms-bowl of the Venerable, and invited him to his house for offering of alms-food. After the Venerable had finished his meal, Citta took him to his orchard, had a monastery built for him and requested him to reside there as well as to accept daily alms-food from his house. Venerable Mahānāma consented out of compassion, and seeing that the householder was destined to acquire sufficient merit leading to attainment of *maggā-phala*, he taught a discourse to him extensively on the six internal sense-bases and the six external sense-bases, i.e. sense objects. This subject was taught to Citta because he was a person of middling intelligence, *majjhūṃ-puggala*.

As Citta had, in his past existences, cultivated Insight into the impermanence, woefulness (*dukkha*) and unsubstantiality of mind and matter which are conditioned phenomena, his

present efforts in Insight-meditation led him to the enlightenment stage of Never-Returner (*anāgāmin*). (It is not mentioned in the scriptures by which method of meditation he attained *anāgāmi-phala*. However, considering his training, it might be assumed that he attained Path-Knowledge by meditating on the Sense-bases.)

(Incidentally, the difference in the attainments between Citta and Anāthapiṇḍika should be noted here. Anāthapiṇḍika, donor of the Jetavana monastery in Sāvattthi, was a Stream-Enterer who delighted in charity, (*dānā-bhirata*) whereas Citta, donor of the Ambāṭaka monastery in Macchikāsaṇḍa, was a Never-Returner who delighted in charity as well as in the *dhamma, dānā-bhirata, dhamma-bhirata*.)

Householder Citta's Delight in Charity and in The Dhamma

A few instances of Citta's natural delight in charity and in the Dhamma are mentioned here as recorded in the **Citta Saṃyutta**.

The First Isidatta Sutta

At one time, many *bhikkhus* were living in the Ambāṭaka monastery which was donated by Citta the householder, in Macchikāsaṇḍa. One day, Citta went to the monastery and after making obeisance to the *bhikkhu*-elders, he invited them to an offering of food in his home the next day. Next day, when the *bhikkhu*-elders were seated at the prepared seats, Citta made obeisance, sat in a suitable place, and said to the Venerable Thera, the senior-most *bhikkhu* present then: “Venerable Sir, ‘Diversity of Elements’, ‘Diversity of Elements’ (*Dhātu nānattam*), it has been said. To what extent is there the diversity of Elements as taught by the Bhagavā?”

The Venerable Thera knew the answer but he was diffident to give a reply to the question, and so he remained silent. For a third time too, the Venerable kept his silence.

Then the Venerable Isidatta, the junior-most *bhikkhu* among the *bhikkhus* present, thought: “*Bhikkhu*-elder Thera does not answer the question, nor ask another *bhikkhu* to answer. The Sangha, by not answering to Citta's question, makes him appear as harassing. I shall save the situation by answering his question.” So, he went near the Venerable Thera and said: “Venerable Sir, may I be allowed to answer the question by Citta.” And the Venerable Thera gave him permission to do so. Then, the Venerable Isidatta returned to his seat and said to Citta: “Householder, you asked the question, ‘Venerable Thera, ‘Diversity of Elements’, ‘Diversity of Elements’, it has been said. To what extent is there, the Diversity of Elements?”

“Yes, Venerable Sir, that is so,” replied Citta. “Householder, as taught by the Bhagavā there are various Elements, such as Eye-element (*cakkhu-dhātu*), Element of visual object (*rūpa-dhātu*), Eye-consciousness element (*cakkhu-viññāna-dhātu*), Ear-element (*sota-dhātu*), Element of sound (*sadda-dhātu*), Ear-consciousness element (*sota-viññāna-dhātu*); ...p... Mind-element (*mano-dhātu*), Element of phenomena (*dhamma-dhātu*), Mind-consciousness element (*mano-viññāna-dhātu*). Householder, these are the various Elements (*nānatta-dhātu*), as taught by the Bhagavā.”

Citta was satisfied with the answer given by the Venerable Isidatta and personally attended to him at the food offering. When, after finishing the meal, the *bhikkhus* returned to monastery, the Venerable Thera said to the Venerable Isidatta: “Friend Isidatta, you perceived the problem well. I have no such perception. Therefore, friend Isidatta, when similar questions are asked of us, you may do the answering.”

The Second Isidatta Sutta

On another occasion, when Citta the householder was making an offering of food to the Sangha in his residence, before serving the food he put this question to the Venerable Thera: “Is the world permanent or is it impermanent?” The question is characteristic of wrong views, and implies the arising or otherwise of such view. As in the previous case, the Venerable Thera did not answer although he knew it. When he kept his silence for three repeated questionings by Citta, the Venerable Isidatta obtained the elder Thera's permission to answer and replied to him: “When there is the erroneous concept regarding the present

body or the five aggregates, *sakkāya diṭṭhi* (wrong views) arises; when there is no erroneous concept regarding the five aggregates, wrong views do not arise.”

Citta pursued the problem with questions as to how the erroneous concept regarding the present body of five aggregates arises, and how that concept does not arise. The Venerable Isidatta gave analytical answers to the satisfaction of him. (For the complete set of questions and answers the reader may read The Second Isidatta Sutta, 1- Citta Saṃyutta, **Saḷāyatana Saṃyutta.**)

After that a conversation between Citta and the Venerable Isidatta took place as follows:

Citta: “From which place do you come, Venerable Sir?”

Isidatta: “I come from Avanti country.”

Citta: “Venerable Sir, in Avanti country there is a friend of mine, whom I have never met, by the name of Isidatta who had become a *bhikkhu*. Have you met him, Venerable Sir?”

Isidatta: “Yes, I have, householder.”

Citta: “Venerable Sir, where is that *bhikkhu* now?”

The Venerable Isidatta did not give a reply

Citta: “Venerable Sir, are you my friend whom I had never seen?”

Isidatta: “Yes, householder.”

Citta: “Venerable Sir, may the Venerable Isidatta be pleased to stay in Macchikāsaṇḍa. The Ambāṭaka monastery is pleasant to live in. I will see to all the four requisites (robes, alms-food, dwelling, medicines).”

Isidatta: “Householder, you speak well. (You say what is good.)”

(The Venerable Isidatta said so merely to express his appreciation of the donation, but he did not say so with the intention of accepting the donation of any of the four requisites.)

Citta was delighted with the answer given by Venerable Isidatta and personally attended on the Venerable in making offering of alms-food. When the *bhikkhus* returned to the monastery, the Venerable Thera said to Venerable Isidatta in the same words as he did previously (on the occasion of the First Isidatta Sutta.)

Then the Venerable Isidatta considered that after revealing his identity as an unseen friend of Citta, before becoming a *bhikkhu*, it would not be proper for him to stay in the monastery donated by Citta. So after tidying up his living quarters and the monastery, he took his alms-bowl and great robe and left the monastery for good, never to return to the town of Macchikāsaṇḍa.

The Mahakapāṭihāriya Sutta

At one time, many *bhikkhus* were living in the Ambāṭaka monastery, which was donated by Citta the householder, in Macchikāsaṇḍa. Then Citta went to the monastery and after paying respects to the Sangha, he invited them to his farmyard the next day, where his cows were kept. On the following day, the Sangha went to his farmyard and sat in the seats prepared for them. Then the householder personally offered milk-rice to the Sangha.

He was served the milk-rice in a gold vessel by his servants at the same time the Sangha were being served. As he was accompanying the Sangha, after the meal, to the monastery, he gave orders to his servants to make offerings of remaining milk-rice to suitable offerees. Then he accompanied the Sangha to their monastery.

It was scorching hot when the Sangha left the householder’s farmyard. Walking in the hot sun, a rich meal was a rather inconvenient thing for the Sangha. Then the Venerable Mahāka, the junior-most *bhikkhu*, said to the Venerable Thera, the senior-most *bhikkhu*: “Venerable Thera, would a cool breeze in an overcast-sky with slight rain drops be convenient for everyone?” And the Venerable Thera replied: “Friend Mahāka, a cool breeze in an overcast sky with slight rain drops would be convenient for everyone.”

Thereupon, the Venerable Mahāka, by his powers, changed the weather, letting the cool breeze blow in an overcast sky with slight rain drops.

Citta noted this event as a marvellous power possessed by the junior *bhikkhu*. When they arrived at the monastery, the Venerable Mahāka said to the Venerable Thera: “Venerable Thera, is that enough?” And the Venerable Thera replied: “Friend Mahāka, that is enough. Friend Mahāka, that is something done well that deserves reverence.” After this recognition of the Venerable Mahāka’s powers, all the *bhikkhus* returned to their respective dwelling places (within the monastery complex).

Then Citta requested the Venerable Mahāka to display his miraculous powers. The Venerable said: “In that case, householder, spread your cloak at the door-step to my monastery. Put a pile of grass from the bundle of grass on the cloak.” Citta did as was instructed by Venerable Mahāka. Then the Venerable entered the monastery, bolted the door from inside and sent out flames through the keyhole and through the edges of the door. The flames burned up the grass but the cloak remained unburnt. Then Citta picked up his cloak and, awestruck and goose-flesh appeared on his skin, he sat in a suitable place.

Thereafter, Venerable Mahāka came out of the monastery and said to Citta, “Householder, is that enough?” Citta replied: “Venerable Mahāka, that is enough. Venerable Mahāka, that is something accomplished. Venerable Mahāka, that deserves reverence. Venerable Mahāka, may the Venerable Mahāka be pleased to stay in Macchikāsaṇḍa. The Ambāṭaka monastery is pleasant to live in. I will see to the four requisites (robes, alms-food, dwelling, medicines).”

The Venerable Mahāka said: “Householder, you say what is good.”

However, Venerable Mahāka considered that it would not be proper for him to stay at the Ambāṭaka monastery. So after tidying up his living quarters and the monastery, he took his alms-bowl and big robe and left the monastery for good.

[In the above two *suttas*, Citta the householder had great reverence and admiration for the Venerable Isidatta and the Venerable Mahāka in donating his monastic complex to the two *bhikkhus*. However, from the point of view of the *bhikkhus*, the four requisites they had been donated were flawed because they amounted to rewards for their actions; Isidatta for expounding the Dhamma, and Mahāka for displaying miraculous power. Hence, out of regard for the *bhikkhu* rules of conduct, they left the place for good. (The Commentary and the Sub-Commentary are silent on this point.)]

We have chosen these three *suttas*, the two Isidatta Suttas and the Mahākapāṭihāriya Sutta as examples of how Citta the householder cherished the Dhamma. (The reader is earnestly advised to go through the *suttas* in the **Citta Saṃyutta**, **Salāyatana Saṃyutta**.)

A Brief Story of Venerable Sudhamma

One day, the two Chief Disciples, accompanied by a thousand *bhikkhu*-disciples, visited the Ambāṭaka monastery. (At that time, the Venerable Sudhamma was the Abbot of the monastery.) Citta the householder, donor of the monastery, made magnificent preparations to honour the visiting Sangha (without consulting the Venerable Sudhamma). The Venerable Sudhamma took exception to it and remarked: “There is one thing missing in this lavish array of offerings and that is sesame cake.” This was an innuendo to belittle Citta, whose family, in the earlier generation, consisted of a seller of sesame cakes.

Citta made a suitably rude response in vulgar language to the sarcastic remark of the Abbot, who was touched to the quick and took the matter to the Buddha. After listening to the Buddha’s admonition, the Abbot, Venerable Sudhamma, made amends to Citta. Then, staying at the Ambāṭaka monastery, and practicing the Dhamma, the Venerable Sudhamma gained Insight and attained arahatship. (This is as mentioned in the Commentary on the **Āṅguttara Nikāya**. For details refer to the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**, Book One; and **Vinaya Cūlavagga**, 4-Paṭisāraṇiya kamma.)

Citta's Pilgrimage to The Buddha

(The following account is taken from the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**.)

When the Venerable Sudhamma attained arahatship, Citta the householder reflected thus: "I have become a Never-Returner. But my stages of Enlightenment from *sotāpatti-phala* to *anāgāmi-phala* had been attained without even meeting the Buddha. It behoves me to go and meet Him now." He had five hundred carts fully laden with provisions, such as sesame, rice, ghee, molasses, honey, clothing, etc. for the long journey to Sāvatti. He made a public invitation to the populace in Macchikāsaṇḍa that anyone, *bhikkhu*, *bhikkhunī*, male lay disciple or female lay disciple, might, if they wished, join him on a pilgrimage to the Buddha and that he would see to every need of the pilgrims. And, in response to his invitation, there were five hundred *bhikkhus*, five hundred *bhikkhunīs*, five hundred male lay disciples and five hundred female lay disciples who joined him on the pilgrimage.

The two thousand pilgrims who joined Citta plus the one thousand of his entourage, totalling three thousand, were well provided for the thirty-*yojana* journey. However, at every *yojana* of his journey, on the way devas welcomed them with temporary shelter and celestial food, such as gruel, eatables, cooked rice and beverages and every one of the three thousand pilgrims was attended on to his satisfaction.

By travelling a *yojana* a day, meeting with the devas' hospitality at every stop, the pilgrims reached Sāvatti after a month. The provisions carried in his five hundred carts were not used. They even had surfeit of provisions which were offered by the devas and human beings along the way, and which they donated to other persons.

On the day when the pilgrims were due to arrive in Sāvatti, the Buddha said to the Venerable Ānanda: "Ānanda, this evening Citta the householder, accompanied by five hundred lay disciples, will be paying homage to Me." Ānanda asked: "Venerable Sir, are there miracles to happen then?"

"Yes, Ānanda, there will be miracles."

"In what manner will they happen, Venerable Sir?"

"Ānanda, when he comes to me, there will rain a thick floral tribute of five hues that will rise to knee-deep over an area of eight *karisas*¹."

This dialogue between the Buddha and Venerable Ānanda aroused the curiosity of the citizens of Sāvatti. People passed on the exciting news of Citta's arrival, saying: "A person of great past merit by the name of Citta a householder, is coming to town. Miracles are going to happen! He is arriving today! We will not miss the opportunity of seeing such a great person." With presents ready, they awaited on both sides of the road for the visitor and his friends.

When the pilgrim party arrived near the Jetavana monastery, the five hundred *bhikkhus* of the party went first. Citta told the five hundred female lay disciples to stay behind, and follow later and went to the Buddha accompanied by five hundred male lay disciples. (It should be noted that disciples paying homage to the Buddha were not an unruly crowd but well-disciplined; whether sitting or standing, they left a passageway for the Buddha to go to His raised platform, and they would remain motionless and silent on either side of the aisle.)

Citta then approached the aisle between a huge gathering of devotees. Whichever direction the *ariya* disciple, who had been established in the Fruition of the three lower Paths glanced, the people murmured: "That is Citta the householder!" He became a thrilling object in that big gathering. Citta drew close to the Buddha and he was enveloped by the six Buddha-rays. He stroke the Buddha's ankles with great reverence and vigour and then the floral tribute of five colours, described earlier, rained. People cheered enthusiastically loud and long.

Citta spent one whole month in close attendance on the Buddha. During that time, he

1. *karisa*: a measure of land equivalent to 1.75 acres.

made a special request to the Buddha and His Sangha not to go out for alms-food but to accept his offerings at the monastery. All the pilgrims that had accompanied him also were taken care of in every aspect. In his month-long stay at the Jetavana monastery, none of his original provisions were used to feed everyone, for devas and humans made all sorts of gifts to Citta.

At the end of one month, Citta made obeisance to the Buddha and said: “Venerable Sir, I came with the intention of making offerings of my own property to the Bhagavā. I spent one month on the way and another month here in the Jetavana monastery. Still I have had no opportunity to offer my own property for I have been blessed with all sorts of gifts from devas and humans. It would seem that even if I were to stay here a year, I still may not have the chance to make offerings of my own property. It is my wish to deposit all my property I have brought here in this monastery for the benefit of the Sangha. May the Bhagavā be pleased to show me the place to do so.”

The Buddha asked Venerable Ānanda to find a suitable place for Citta to off-load the five-hundred cart-loads of provisions and were then offered to the Sangha. Then Citta returned to Macchikāsaṇḍa with the five hundred empty carts, people and devas, seeing the empty carts, remarked in mild rebuke: “O Citta, had you done such deeds in the past as would lead to your going about with empty cans?” Then they loaded his empty carts to the full with seven kinds of treasures. Citta also received sufficient gifts of all kinds, with which he catered to the needs of the pilgrims till he reached Macchikāsaṇḍa in ease and comfort.

The Venerable Ānanda paid his obeisance to the Buddha and said:

“Venerable Sir, Citta the householder took one month coming to Sāvatti, and spent another month at the Jetavana monastery. During this period, he had made great offerings with gifts received from devas and humans. He had emptied his five hundred carts of all provisions which he had brought, and was returning home with empty carts. However, people and devas who saw the empty carts said in mild rebuke: ‘Citta, you had done such deeds in the past as would lead to your going about with empty carts?’ And they are said to have filled Citta’s five hundred carts with seven kinds of treasures. And Citta is said to get home comfortably, looking after the needs of his companions with gifts received from devas and humans.

“Venerable Sir, may I be allowed to ask a question: Does Citta meet with such abundance of honour and tribute only because he was on a pilgrimage to the Buddha? Would he meet the same kind of honour and tribute if he were to go elsewhere?”

The Buddha said to the Venerable Ānanda: “Ānanda, Citta the householder will receive the same kind of honour and tributes whether he comes to Me or goes elsewhere. This is indeed so, Ānanda, because Citta the householder had been one who had firm conviction about kamma and its consequences, both in the mundane aspect and the supramundane aspect. Further, he had been fully convinced about the supramundane benefits that the Triple Gem are capable of. For a person of such nature, honour and tribute lines his path wherever he goes.”

The Buddha further uttered this verse (translation in prose):

“(Ānanda,) the *ariya* disciple who is endowed with conviction (regarding the mundane and the supramundane aspects) of one’s own actions and morality, and is possessed of following and wealth, is held in reverence (by men and devas) wherever he goes.”

— (Dh, V 303) —

By the end of the discourse many hearers attained Path-Knowledge, such as Stream-Entry, etc.

(c) Citta designated as The Foremost Lay Disciple.

From that time onwards, Citta the householder went about accompanied by five hundred *ariya* lay disciples. On one occasion, when the Buddha was naming distinguished lay disciples according to their merit, He declared, (with reference to the discourses made by

Citta as recorded in the Citta vagga of **Salāyatana saṃyutta**:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who are exponents of the Dhamma, Citta the Householder, is the foremost.”

(The proficiency of Citta in expounding the Dhamma may be gleaned from **Salāyatana vagga Saṃyutta**, 7-Citta saṃyutta, 1-Saṃyojana Saṃyutta, and 5-*Paṭhāna kāmabhū Sutta*).

The Gilānadassana Sutta

(The Gilānadassana Sutta, an example of Householder Citta's discourse given even on his deathbed.)

As an *anāgāmi-ariya* who was the foremost expounder of the Dhamma among lay disciples, Citta the householder gave a discourse even on his deathbed. This story is given in *Gilānadassana Saṃyutta* in *Citta Saṃyutta*.

Once Citta was terminally ill. Then many devas who were guardians of the his premises, guardians of the forest, guardians of certain trees and guardians who had power over herbs and deified trees, (because of huge proportions), assembled before him and said to him: “Householder, now make a wish saying: ‘May I be reborn as the Universal Monarch when I die.’ ” Citta replied to them: “Being a Universal Monarch is impermanent in nature, unstable in nature. It is something that one must leave behind at last.”

His relatives and friends by his bedside thought he was uttering those strange words in a fit of delirium and said to him: “Lord, be careful. Do not talk absent-mindedly.”

Citta asked them: “You say: ‘Lord be careful. Do not talk absent-mindedly.’ With respect to what words of mine do you say so?” And the relatives and friends said: “Lord, you were saying: ‘Being a Universal Monarch is impermanent in nature, unstable in nature. It is something that one must leave behind at last.’ ”

Citta then tell them: “O men, devas who are guardians of my premises, guardians of the forest, guardians of trees, guardians who have power over herbs and deified trees, came and said to me: ‘Householder, now make a wish saying: ‘May I be reborn as the Universal Monarch when I die.’ So I told them: ‘Being a Universal Monarch is impermanent in nature, unstable in nature. It is something ones must leave behind at last.’ I was not saying these words absent mindedly.”

Thereupon Citta's friend and relatives asked him: “Lord, what advantages did these devas see in advising you to wish for rebirth as Universal Monarch?”

Citta replied: “O men, these devas thought that ‘this householder Citta has morality, has clean conduct, if he would wish for it he could easily have his wish fulfilled. One who is righteous can see benefits accruing to the righteous.’ This was the advantage they saw in advising me to wish for rebirth as a Universal Monarch. Thus, I replied to them: “Being a Universal Monarch is impermanent in nature, unstable in nature. It is something one must leave behind at last.’ I was not saying these words absent-mindedly.”

The friends and relatives of Citta then asked him again: “In that case, Lord, give us some admonition.” And Citta gave his last discourse thus:

“In that case, friend and relatives, you should practise with the resolve, ‘We will have perfect confidence in the Buddha, reflecting that:

- (1) The Buddha is called *Arahāṃ* because He is worthy of homage by the greatest of devas, humans and *Brahmās*.
- (2) The Buddha is called *Sammāsambuddha* because He knows all things fundamentally and truly by His own perfect wisdom.
- (3) The Buddha is called *Vijjācaraṇasampaññā* because He is endowed with supreme Knowledge and perfect practice of morality.
- (4) The Buddha is called *Sugata* because He speaks only what is beneficial and true.

- (5) The Buddha is called *Lokavidū* because he knows all the three worlds;
- (6) The Buddha is called *Anuttaropurisa dammasārathi* because He is incomparable in taming those who deserve to be tamed.
- (7) The Buddha is called *Satthādeva manussana* because He is the Teacher of devas and humans.
- (8) The Buddha is called Buddha because He makes known the Four Ariya Truths;
- (9) The Buddha is called *Bhagavā* because He is endowed with the six great qualities of glory.

‘We will have perfect confidence in the Dhamma reflecting that:

- (1) The Teaching of the *Bhagavā*, the Dhamma, is well expounded.
- (2) Its Truths are personally appreciable.
- (3) It is not delayed in its results.
- (4) It can stand investigation.
- (5) It is worthy of being perpetually borne in mind.
- (6) Its Truths can be realized by the *ariyas* individually by their own effort and practice.

‘We will have perfect confidence in the Sangha reflecting that:

- (1) The eight categories of *ariya* disciples of the Bhagavā, the Sangha, are endowed with the noble practice.
 - (2) They are endowed with straightforward uprightness.
 - (3) They are endowed with right conduct.
 - (4) They are endowed with the correctness in practice deserving reverence.
- (Being thus endowed with these four attributes:-)
- (5) The eight categories of *ariya* disciples of the Bhagavā consisting of four pairs are worthy of receiving offerings brought even from afar.
 - (6) They are worthy of receiving offerings specially set aside for guests.
 - (7) They are worthy of receiving offerings made for the sake of acquiring great merit for the hereafter.
 - (8) They are worthy of receiving obeisance.
 - (9) They are the incomparable fertile field for all to sow the seed of merit.

And also you should practice with the resolve: ‘We shall always lay everything we have to be at the disposal of donees who have morality and who conduct themselves well.’ ”

Citta the householder then made his friends and relatives to be established in the routine of paying reverence to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha and in charity. With these last words he expired.

(The scriptures do not specifically say in which realm Citta the householder was reborn, but since he was an *anāgāmin*, he was presumed to be reborn in one of the fifteen Brahmā realms of Fine Material Sphere outside of Non-Material Sphere, most probably in the Pure Abodes, *Suddhā vāsa Brahmā* realm).

4. HATTHAKĀLAVAKA of Uposatha Habit

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Hatthakālavaka was reborn into a worthy family in the City of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, when he was listening to the Buddha’s sermon, he saw a lay disciple being named the foremost among those lay

disciples who were accomplished in the practice of the four ways of kind treatment to others². He emulated that man, and, making an extraordinary offering, he aspired to that distinction. The Buddha prophesied that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) His Last Existence as Prince Ālavaka

The future Hatthakālavaka was reborn in the good destinations for the entire one hundred thousand world-cycles. During the time of Buddha Gotama he was reborn as Prince Ālavaka, son of King Ālavaka, in the city of Ālavī.

(In this connection, the background events beginning with the sporting expedition of King Ālavaka, to the establishment in the Uposatha precepts of Prince Ālavaka, his attainment of *anāgāmi-phala*, and his following of five hundred lay disciples who were established in the *Uposatha* precept, have been described fully in Chapter 33. The reader is advised to refer to the relevant pages therein.)

(c) Hatthakālavaka being named as The Foremost Lay Disciple

One day, Hatthakālavaka, the Uposatha-habituate, accompanied by five hundred lay disciples, visited the Buddha. After making obeisance to Him, he sat in a suitable place. When the Buddha saw the big following of very sedate manners that came with Hatthakālavaka, He said: “Ālavaka you have a big following; what sort of kind treatment do you extend to them?” And Hatthakālavaka replied: “Venerable Sir, (1) I practise charity towards those persons who would be delighted by my act of charity. (2) I use pleasant words to those who would be delighted by pleasant words. (3) I give necessary assistance to those who are in need of such assistance and who would be delighted by my assistance. (4) I treat those as my equals in respect of those who would be delighted by such treatment.

With reference to that conversation between the Buddha and Hatthakālavaka, on one occasion, during the Buddha’s residence at the Jetavana monastery when He was conferring titles to outstanding lay disciples, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who kindly treat their followers in four ways, Hatthakālavaka is the foremost.”

5. MAHĀNĀMA The Sakyan Prince

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Mahānāma was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. One day, while he was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named as the foremost lay disciple in offerings of the most delicious and palatable alms-food, medicines and medicinal articles. He had a strong wish to become such a distinguished lay disciple in future. After making an extraordinary offering, he made known his aspiration to the Buddha who then prophesied that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) His Last Existence as Prince Mahānāma of The Sakyan Clan

One day, the Buddha, after staying in Verañjā for the *vassa* period, made a journey to Kapilavatthu by travelling in stages. Upon arrival, He took up His abode at the Nirodhārāma monastery in Kapilavatthu, together with His many *bhikkhus*.

When Mahānāma, the Sakyan Prince (Elder brother of the Venerable Anuruddhā), learnt of the arrival of the Buddha, he visited Him, made his obeisance, and sat in a suitable place. Then he said to the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, I have been told that the Sangha had had a hard time in gathering alms-food in Verañjā. May I be allowed the privilege of offering daily alms-food to the Sangha for a period of four months, so that I may provide the

2. Four ways of kind treatment to others:

Saṅgaha-Vatthu: Liberality, kindly speech, beneficial actions, impartiality (A. IV, 32: VIII 24).

necessary nourishment (to compensate for the deficiency of nourishing in them during the last three months or more.)” The Buddha signified His assent by remaining silent.

Prince Mahānāma, understanding that the Buddha had accepted his invitation, made offerings of five kinds of very delicious victuals and the four-food concoction (*catu madhu*), which has medicinal effects to the Buddha and His Sangha from the following day onwards. At the end of the four months, he obtained the Buddha's consent to make the same kind of offerings for another four months, at the end of which he obtained permission to continue with his offerings for a further four months, thus totalling twelve months in all. At the end of one year, he sought further approval but the Buddha refused.

[At the end of the year, Prince Mahānāma sought and obtained the approval of the Buddha to let him have the privilege of offering medicinal requisites to the Sangha for life. Yet later, due to circumstances that led to a Vinaya provision in the matter, the Buddha did not extend the period beyond one year. After the Buddha had agreed to let Mahānāma provide medicinal requisites to the Sangha for life, the group of six *bhikkhus* bullied Prince Mahānāma to cause much annoyance. When the Buddha knew thus He rescinded the earlier privilege allowed to the Prince and laid down the rule known as the *Mahānāma sikkhāpada* that no *bhikkhu* may, without further invitation and a standing invitation, accept medicinal requisites from a donor. Breach of the rule entails *pācittiya* offence. (Read **Vinaya Pācittiya** Section for details.)]

It became the routine practise of Prince Mahānāma to offer five kinds of very delicious victuals and the four foods concoction which has medicinal effects to every *bhikkhu* who came to his door. This elaborate style of providing alms-food and medicinal requisite to the Sangha became his hall-mark which was recognised throughout the Southern Continent (Jambūdīpa).

Therefore, on a later occasion, when the Buddha, during his residence at the Jetavana monastery, designated titles to outstanding lay disciples according to their merit, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who are in the habit of making offerings of delicious alms-food and medicinal requisites, Mahānāma, the Sakyan Prince, is the foremost.”

6. UGGA The Householder

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Ugga was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumutara. On one occasion, while he was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, he saw a disciple being named as the foremost among those who made gifts that delighted the donees. He aspired to that distinction, and after making extraordinary offerings, he expressed his wish before the Buddha. The Buddha prophesied that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) His Last Existence as Ugga The Householder

After being reborn in the deva-world or the human world for a hundred thousand world-cycles, the future Ugga was reborn into a rich man's family in this city of Vesālī, during Buddha Gotama's time.

How The Rich Man's Son got The Name 'Ugga'

The future Ugga was not given any name during his childhood. When he came of age, he possessed a majestic physique like an ornamental door-post, or a golden apparel hung for display. His exquisite masculine body and personal attributes became the talk of the town, as such people came to refer to him as ‘Ugga the householder’.

It is noteworthy that Ugga gained Stream Entry Knowledge on his very first meeting with

the Buddha. Later, he came to be established in the three lower *maggas* and three lower *phalas* (i.e. he became an *anāgāmin*).

When Ugga grew old, he resorted to seclusion and this thought occurred to him: “I shall offer to the Bhagavā only those things that I cherish. I have learnt directly from the Bhagavā: ‘That he, who makes gift of what he cherishes, reaps the benefit that he cherishes.’ ” Then his thought extended to the wish: “O that the Bhagavā knew my thought and appeared at my door!”

The Buddha knew the thought of Ugga and at that very moment appeared miraculously at his door, in the company of many *bhikkhus*. Ugga, on learning the Buddha’s arrival, went to welcome Him, paid obeisance to Him with five-fold contact, took the alms-bowl from His hands and invited Him to the prepared seat in his house, at the same time, he offered seats to the accompanying *bhikkhus*. He served the Buddha and the Sangha with various kinds of delicious food, and after the meal was finished, he sat in a suitable place and addressed the Buddha thus:

- (1) “Venerable Sir, I have learnt directly from the Bhagavā that ‘he who makes a gift of what he cherishes, reaps the benefit that he cherishes.’ Venerable Sir, my cake made to resemble the sal flower is delightful. (*p:*) *May the Bhagavā, out of compassion, accept this food.*” And the Buddha, out of compassion for the donor, accepted it.

Further Ugga said:

“Venerable Sir, I have learnt directly from the Bhagavā that ‘he who makes a gift of what he cherishes reaps the benefit that he cherishes.’ Venerable Sir:-

- (2) my specially prepared dish of pork with jujube is delightful ... (**repeat p:**) ...
 (3) my vegetable dish of water convolvulus cooked in oil and water and done in oil gravy is delightful ... (**repeat p:**) ...
 (4) my special rice, carefully discarded of black grains, ... (**repeat p:**) ...
 (5) my fine cloth made in Kāsi Province is delightful ... (**repeat p:**) ...
 (6) Venerable Sir, my dais, big carpet of long-fleece, woollen coverlets with quaint designs, rugs made of black panther's hide, couches with red canopies and with red bolsters at either end are delightful. Venerable Sir, I understand that these luxurious things are not proper for use by the Bhagavā. Venerable Sir, this seat made of the core of sand wood is worth over a lakh of money. May the Bhagavā, out of compassion, accept these pieces of furniture.” The Buddha out of compassion for the donor, accepted them.

(Note here that Ugga the householder is offering the items of furniture after serving the gruel but before serving the square meal. His offerings are made not only to the Buddha but also to the Sangha. Under item (6) above, Ugga said: “I understand that these luxurious things are not proper for use by the Bhagavā.” There are also things that are proper for use by the Buddha. He has caused them to be heaped together and assigned items, which are improper for use by the Buddha, to his store room, and donates only items which are proper. The sandalwood, being very dear and rare, is valued so highly. After the Buddha had accepted it, he had it cut up into small bits and distributed to the *bhikkhus* for use as a powder in preparing eye-lotion.)

Then the Buddha spoke the following verses in appreciation of the donations.

“(Ugga,) one who gives in charity with a delightful heart reaps the benefit of that deed in various delightful ways. One gives away clothing, dwelling place, food and various other things, strongly desirous of merit, to those Noble Ones who are straight in thought, word, and deed (i.e. *arahats*).

“That virtuous one who distinctly knows the *arahats* as the fertile field for sowing seeds of merit and gives up delightful things that are hard to be given, sacrifices them, releases them liberally in a delightful heart, reaps the benefit of that deed in various delightful ways.”

After uttering these stanzas in appreciation of the householder's memorable offerings, the Buddha departed (These statements are based on the Manāpadāyī Sutta, **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Book Two.)

On that occasion, Uggā the householder said to the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, I have heard from the Bhagavā's Teaching that ‘he, who makes a gift of what he cherishes, reaps the benefit that he cherishes.’ Venerable Sir, whatever suitable articles in my possession may be assumed by the Bhagavā as already donated to the Bhagavā and His Sangha.” Thenceforth, he always donated various suitable things to the Buddha and His Sangha.

(c) Uggā The Householder was named as The Foremost Lay Disciple

On account of this, when the Buddha, during His residence at the Jetavana monastery, designating outstanding lay disciples according to their merit, declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who are in the habit of giving delightful things in charity, Uggā the Householder of Vesālī, is the foremost.”

The Destination of Uggā The Householder

Thereafter, on a certain day, Uggā the householder of Vesālī died and was reborn in one of the (five) Pure Abodes of Brahmās. The Buddha was then residing at the Jetavana monastery. At that time, about the middle of the night, Brahmā Uggā, with his resplendent body that flooded the whole of the Jetavana monastic complex, approached the Buddha, made his obeisance to Him, and stood at a suitable place. To that Brahmā Uggā, the Buddha said: “How is it? Is your desire fulfilled?” And Brahmā Uggā replied: “Venerable Sir, my desire is indeed fulfilled.”

Herein, it might be asked: “What did the Buddha mean by the ‘desire’? And what does the Brahmā's reply mean?” The answer is: The Buddha means *arahatta-phala* and the Brahmā's answer is also *arahatta-phala*. For the main desire of Uggā was attainment of *arahatta-phala*.)

Then the Buddha addressed Brahmā Uggā in these two stanzas:

“He who gives away a delightful thing begets a delightful thing. He who gives away the best begets the best. He who gives away what is desirable begets what is desirable. He who gives away what is praise-worthy begets what is praise-worthy.

“He who is in the habit of giving away the best things, things that are desirable, things that are praiseworthy, is reborn as one who lives long and who has a big following.”

7. UGGATA The Householder

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Uggata was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, he was listening to a sermon by the Buddha when he saw a lay disciple being named as the foremost in attending on the Sangha without discrimination. He emulated that man. As such, he made an extraordinary offering to the Buddha and His Sangha and after that, he aspired to the same distinction in front of the Buddha who prophesied that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) His Last Existence as Uggata The Householder

The future Uggata was reborn in fortunate destinations for a hundred thousand world-cycles before being reborn into a rich man's family in Hatthigama, during the time of Buddha Gotama. He was named Uggata. When he came of age, he inherited his father's estate.

At the time when the Buddha, after a tour of the country in the company of many *bhikkhus*, arrived at Hatthigama and was sojourning in the Nāgavana Park, Uggata was then

indulging himself in a drinking spree, in the company of dancing girls, for seven days at the Nāgavana Park too. When he saw the Buddha, he was overwhelmed with shame and when he was before the presence of the Buddha, he became sober suddenly. He made obeisance to the Buddha and sat in a suitable place. Then the Buddha preached to him a discourse, at the end of which, he was established in the three lower *maggas* and *phalas*, (i.e. he became an *anāgāmin*).

From that moment, he released the dancing girls from his service and devoted himself to charity. Devas would come to him at the middle watch of the night and report to him as to the conduct of various *bhikkhus*. They would say: “Householder, such and such *bhikkhu* is endowed with the Three Knowledges; such and such *bhikkhu* is endowed with the six kinds of supernatural powers; such and such *bhikkhu* has morality; such and such *bhikkhu* has no morality, etc.” Uggata disregarded the failings of the *bhikkhus* who lacked in morality as his devotion to the Sangha remained steadfast was on account of the *bhikkhus* of good morality (An example worth following). In making gifts (therefore), he never discriminated between the good and the bad *bhikkhu*, (his devotion being directed to the Sangha as a whole.) When he went before the Buddha, he never mentioned about the bad *bhikkhus* but always extolled the virtues of the good.

(c) Uggata The Householder was named The Foremost Lay Disciple

Therefore, on one occasion, during His residence at the Jetavana monastery, prominent lay disciples were mentioned for their respective merits, the Buddha declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who devotedly attend on the Sangha without discrimination, Uggata the householder of Hatthigāma is the foremost.”

(Incidentally, the householder Uggata's native place, Hatthigama, lay in the Country of the Vajjis.)

Both Householders Uggata and Uggā of Vesālī, have eight marvellous qualities each.

(A brief description of these qualities is given here. For a full account the reader is directed to the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Book Three, Aṭṭhaka Nipāta, Paṭhama Paṇṇasaka, 3-Gahapati Vagga, the first two *suttas*.)

The Eight Marvellous Qualities of Uggā of Vesālī

At one time, when the Buddha was staying at the Kūṭāgārasālā monastery in the Mahāvana Forest, near Vesālī, He said to the *bhikkhus*: “*Bhikkhus*, note that Uggā the householder of Vesālī, has eight marvellous qualities.” He then retired to His private chamber.

Later, a *bhikkhu* went to the house of Uggā and sat at a place prepared for the Sangha (five hundred seats being made available for the Sangha at all times,). Uggā greeted him, paid his respects to the *bhikkhu*, and sat in a suitable place. To Uggā, the *bhikkhu* said: “Householder, the Bhagavā said that you are endowed with eight marvellous qualities. What are these eight qualities?”

Uggā replied: “Venerable Sir, I am not sure which eight qualities the Bhagavā sees in me that He calls marvellous. As a matter of fact, I have eight qualities that are most extraordinary. May your reverence listen to them and consider well.”

“Very well, householder,” the *bhikkhu* said. And Uggā told his story:

- (1) “Venerable Sir, from the moment I cast my eyes on the Buddha, I had explicit faith in Him as the Buddha, with no vacillation. So, Venerable Sir, my confidence in the Buddha at first sight is the first extraordinary thing about me.
- (2) “Venerable Sir, I approached the Buddha with pure conviction. The Bhagavā discoursed to me in a step-by-step exposition on (i) the merits of giving charity, (ii) the

virtue of morality, (iii) the description about the celestial world, the world of devas, (iv) the practice of the Ariya Path leading to *Magga-Phala-Nibbāna*. That made my mind receptive, malleable, free of hindrances, elated and clear. The Bhagava, knowing this, expounded to me the exalted Dhamma, the Four Ariya Truth of Dukkha, the Origin of Dukkha, the Cessation of Dukkha, and the Way leading to the Cessation of Dukkha. Consequently, I gained the Eye of the Dhamma and attained the *anāgāmī-phala*. From the time I became an *anāgāmī ariya*, I took the lifelong vow of the Supramundane Refuge and observed the Five Precepts with the pure life of chastity (*brahmā-cariya*) as one of the routine precepts. (This is the ordinary Five Precepts with abstinence as a vow in lieu of the vow of wrongful sexual conduct.) This is the second extraordinary thing about me.

- (3) “Venerable Sir, I had four teenage wives. When I returned home on the day I became an *anāgāmī ariya*, I called the four wives and said to them: ‘Dear sisters, I have taken the vow of chastity for life. You may continue staying in my house, enjoying my wealth and practising charity, or you may return to your parents’ house, taking sufficient riches with you for a comfortable life. Or, if any one of you wishes to remarry, just tell me who is going to be your new bridegroom. Each of you are free to exercise these options.’ Thereupon, my first wife expressed her wish to remarry and she named the bridegroom. I then let that man come to me, and holding my first wife in my left hand, and the libation jug in my right hand, I offered my wife to that man and sanctified their marriage. In relinquishing my first wife, who was still very young, to another man, I felt nothing in my mind. Venerable Sir, my detachment in giving up my first wife to another man is the third extraordinary thing about me.
- (4) “Venerable Sir, whatever possessions I have in my house, I deem them to be assigned to the virtuous ones with morality. I hold back nothing from the Sangha. It is as though they are already in the possession of the Sangha as a body. Venerable Sir, this liberality towards the Sangha, in considering all my possessions as being assigned to the virtuous *bhikkhus*, is the fourth extraordinary thing about me.
- (5) “Venerable Sir, whenever I attend to a *bhikkhu*, I do so reverently and personally, but never irreverently, Venerable Sir, reverentially attending to *bhikkhus* is the fifth extraordinary thing about me.
- (6) “Venerable Sir, if that *bhikkhu* preaches me a discourse, I listen reverentially, but never irreverently. If that *bhikkhu* does not preach me a discourse, I will preach a discourse to him. Venerable Sir, my listening reverentially to a discourse by a *bhikkhu*, and my preaching a discourse to the *bhikkhu* who does not preach to me is the sixth extraordinary thing about myself.
- (7) “Venerable Sir, devas often come to me, saying: ‘Householder, the Bhagavā expounds the Dhamma which is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, and excellent in the end.’ I would say to those devas: ‘O devas, whether you say so or not, the Bhagavā expounds the Dhamma which is indeed excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, and excellent in the end.’ I do not think the devas’ coming to me to say those words is extraordinary. I do not feel exhilarated by their coming to me and for the experience of conversing with them. Venerable Sir, my indifference to the coming of devas to me and the experience of conversing with them is the seventh extraordinary thing about me.
- (8) “Venerable Sir, I do not see any of the five fetters that tend to rebirth in the lower (i.e. sensuous) realms of existence that have not been discarded in me. (This shows his attainment of *anāgāmī-magga*.) Venerable Sir, my having attained *anāgāmī-magga* is the eighth extraordinary thing about me.

“Venerable Sir, I know I have these eight extraordinary qualities. But I am not sure which eight qualities the Bhagava sees in me that He calls marvellous.”

Thereafter, the *bhikkhu*, having received alms-food from Ugga the householder, departed. He took his meal and then went to the Buddha, made obeisance to Him, and sat in a suitable place. Sitting thus, he related to the Buddha the full details of the conversation that

took place between him and Ugga the householder.

The Buddha said: “Good, good, *bhikkhu*. Anyone who could answer your questions well, should be given these very answers that Ugga the householder did. *Bhikkhu*, I say that Ugga the householder is endowed with those eight extraordinary qualities that are marvellous. *Bhikkhus*, note that Ugga the householder has these very eight marvellous qualities that he told you.”

The Eight Marvellous Qualities of Uggata of Hatthigāma

At one time, when the Buddha was sojourning at Hatthigāma, in the country of the Vajjians, He said to the *bhikkhus*: “*Bhikkhus*, note that Uggata the householder of Hatthigāma has eight marvellous qualities.” After saying this brief statement, the Buddha went into the monastery.

Thereafter, a *bhikkhu* visited Uggata the householder’s residence in the morning and put forwards the same questions as those asked by the previous *bhikkhu* to Ugga of Vesālī. Uggata the householder gave his reply as follows:

- (1) “Venerable Sir, while I was indulging myself in sensuous pleasures in my own Nāgavana Park, I saw the Buddha from a distance. As soon as I cast my eyes on the Buddha, I had explicit faith in Him as the Buddha, and was deeply devoted to him. I became suddenly sober after my drunken bout. Venerable Sir, my explicit faith in and devotion to the Buddha at first sight and my recovering sobriety at that moment is the first extraordinary thing about me.
- (2) “Venerable Sir, I approached the Buddha with a pure conviction. The Bhagava discoursed to me in a (most appropriate) step-by-step exposition on: (1) the merits of giving in charity, (2) the virtue of morality, (3) the description about the world of devas, (4) the practice of the Ariya Path. That made my mind receptive, malleable, free of hindrances, elated and clear. The Bhagavā, knowing this, expounded to me the exalted Dhamma, the Four Ariya Truths of *Dukkha*, the Origin of *Dukkha*, the cessation of *Dukkha*, and the way leading to the cessation of *Dukkha*. Consequently, I gained the Eye of the Dhamma, and attained the *anāgāmi-phala*. From the time I became an *anāgāmi-ariya*, I took the life-long vow of the Supramundane Refuge, together with the observance of the Five Precepts with abstinence (*Brahmacariya*) as one of them. Venerable Sir, my attainment of *anāgāmi-phala* after my first meeting with the Buddha, my subsequent taking up the Supramundane Refuge with the Five Precepts with the vow of abstinence, is the second extraordinary thing about me.
- (3) “Venerable Sir, I had four teenage wives. When I returned home on the day I became an *anāgāmi-ariya*, I called up my four wives and said to them: ‘Dear sisters, I have taken the vow of chastity for life. You may continue staying in my house, enjoying my wealth and practising charity, or you may return to your parents’ house, taking sufficient riches with you for a comfortable life. Or, if anyone of you wishes to remarry, just tell me who is going to be your new bridegroom. Each of you are free to exercise those options.’ Thereupon, my first wife expressed her wish to remarry and she named the bridegroom. I then let that man come up to me, and, holding my first wife in my left hand, and the libation jug in my right hand, I offered my wife to that man and sanctified their marriage. In relinquishing my first wife, who was still very young, to another man, I felt nothing in my mind. Venerable Sir, my detachment in giving up my first wife to another man is the third extraordinary thing about me.
- (4) “Venerable Sir, whatever possessions I have in my house, I consider them to be assigned to the virtuous *bhikkhus*. I hold back nothing from the Sangha. Venerable Sir, this liberality towards the Sangha, in considering all my possessions as being assigned to the virtuous *bhikkhus*, is the fourth extraordinary thing about me.
- (5) “Venerable Sir, whenever I attend to a *bhikkhu*, I do so reverently and personally, but never irreverently. If that *bhikkhu* preaches me a discourse, I listen reverentially, but never irreverently. If that *bhikkhu* does not preach me a discourse, I preach a discourse to him. Venerable Sir, my reverentially attending to *bhikkhus*, reverentially listening to

their discourses, and my preaching a discourse to the *bhikkhu* who does not preach to me is the fifth extraordinary thing about me.

- (6) “Venerable Sir, whenever I invite the Sangha to my residence, devas would come to me and say: ‘Householder such and such *bhikkhu* is emancipated both ways from corporeal body (*rūpa-kāya*) and mental body (*nāma-kāya*), i.e. *Ubhatobhāga Vimutta*; such and such *bhikkhu* has attained emancipation through full knowledge, Insight (*paññā vimutta*); such and such *bhikkhu* is one who has realized Nibbāna through *nāmakāya* (*kāyasakki*); such and such *bhikkhu* has attained to the three higher *magga* and *phala* through Right View (*diṭṭhippatta*); such and such *bhikkhu* is emancipated through faith (*saddhāvimutta*); such and such *bhikkhu* is one who follows faith, *saddhānusārī*; such and such *bhikkhu* is one who pursues Dhamma, *dhammānusārī*; such and such *bhikkhu* has morality, and is virtuous; such and such *bhikkhu* lacks morality and is vile.’ I do not think the devas’ coming to me to say these words is extraordinary. When I attend to the Sangha, it never occurred to me that such and such *bhikkhu* lacks morality, and so I will make only scant offering to him, or that such and such *bhikkhu* is virtuous and so I will make much offering to him. I make offerings both to the virtuous *bhikkhus* and the vile *bhikkhus* in the same (reverential) spirit. Venerable Sir, my indiscriminate offering and attendance on both the virtuous and the vile *bhikkhus* is the sixth extraordinary thing about me.
- (7) “Venerable Sir, devas often come to me, saying: ‘Householder, the Bhagavā expounds the Dhamma which is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, and excellent at the end.’ And I would say to these devas: ‘O devas, whether you say so or not, the Bhagavā expounds the Dhamma which is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, and excellent in the end.’ I do not think that the devas coming to me to say those words is extraordinary. Venerable Sir, my indifference to the coming of devas to me and the experience of conversing with them is the seventh extraordinary thing about to me.
- (8) “Venerable Sir, in the event of my predeceasing the Bhagavā, the Bhagavā’s remarks about me such as: ‘Uggata the householder of Hatthigāma has no fetters in him that tend to rebirth in the sensuous realm’ will not be anything extraordinary. (This shows that he is an *anāgāmi-ariya*.) Venerable Sir, the fact that there is no fetter in me that tend to rebirth in the sensuous realm is the eighth extraordinary thing about me.

“Venerable Sir, I know I have these eight extraordinary qualities. But I am not sure which eight qualities the Bhagavā sees in me that he calls marvellous.”

(Further events are exactly the same as in the previous case. In the **Āṅguttara Nikāya** both the above two householders are called ‘Ugga’. Here we are leaning on the **Etadagga Pāli** in calling the householder of Hatthigāma, Uggata, in contradistinction to Ugga the householder of Vesāli. Since the noble and rare attributes of these two Householders inspire devotion, these notes are somewhat more than summarized statements.)

8. SURAMBAṬṬHA The Householder

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Sūrambaṭṭha the householder was born into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While listening to a sermon by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named by the Buddha as the foremost lay disciple who had firm conviction in the Teaching. He aspired to that distinction, and, after making an extraordinary offering, he expressed his wish that at some future existence his aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) His Last Existence as Sūrambaṭṭha The Householder

The future Sūrambaṭṭha was reborn in the deva or human realms for a hundred thousand world-cycles before being reborn into a rich man’s family of Sāvatti, during the time of

Buddha Gotama. His name was Sūrambaṭṭha. When he came of age, he married and became a regular lay supporter of ascetics who were outside the Buddha's Teaching.

Sūrambaṭṭha The Householder attained Stream-Entry Knowledge

Early one morning, the Buddha, in His routine review of the world for individuals who were ready for Enlightenment, saw the ripeness of the past merit of Sūrambaṭṭha the householder to gain *sotāpatti-magga*. So, He went to Sūrambaṭṭha's house for alms-food. Sūrambaṭṭha thought to himself: "Samana Gotama comes from a royal family and has earned a vast reputation in the world. Perhaps, it is only proper for me to welcome Him." Thinking thus, he went to the Buddha, made obeisance at His feet, took His alms-bowl, and conducted Him to a raised couch which was set aside for noble persons. He made offerings of food and after attending on Him, sat in a suitable place.

The Buddha preached a discourse, which suited the mental framework of Sūrambaṭṭha. At the end of which, he was established in *sotāpatti-phala*. After bestowing Sūrambaṭṭha with Stream-Entry Knowledge, the Buddha returned to the monastery.

Māra tested The Conviction of Sūrambaṭṭha

Then Māra thought: "This Sūrambaṭṭha the householder belongs to my fold (being a follower of the ascetics which are outside the Buddha's Teaching). But the Buddha has visited his house today. Why? Has Sūrambaṭṭha become an *ariya* after hearing the Buddha's discourse? Has he escaped from my domain of sensuality? I must find out." Then, being possessed of powers of impersonating anyone, he assumed the form of the Buddha completed with the thirty-two marks of the great man and in perfect Buddha-style of holding the alms-bowl and the robe. In that deceitful impersonation, he stood at the door of Sūrambaṭṭha the householder.

Sūrambaṭṭha wondered why the Buddha visited a second time, when he was informed by his attendants. "The Buddha never comes without some good reason," he replied, and approached the impersonated Buddha in the belief that he was the real Buddha. After making obeisance to the impersonated Buddha, he stood in a suitable place, and asked: "Venerable Sir, the Bhagavā has just left this house after having a meal. For what purpose does the Bhagavā come again?"

The bogus Buddha(Māra) said: "Lay supporter Sūrambaṭṭha, I made a slip in my discourse to you. I said that all of the aggregates are impermanent, woeful and insubstantial. But the five aggregates are not always of that nature. There are certain of the five aggregates that are permanent, stable and eternal."

The Steadfast Conviction of Sūrambaṭṭha The Householder

Sūrambaṭṭha, a Stream-Enterer, was vexed by that statement. He pondered thus: "This is a statement of most serious import. The Buddha never makes a slip in His speech, for He never utters a word without proper consideration. They say that Māra is the opponent of the Buddha. Surely this must be Māra himself." Thinking correctly thus, he asked bluntly: "You are Māra, are you not?" Māra was shocked and shaken as if struck with an axe because it was a confrontation by an *ariya*. His disguise fell off and he admitted: "Yes, Sūrambaṭṭha, I am Māra."

Sūrambaṭṭha rebuked: "Wicked Māra, even a thousand of your kind will not be able to shake my conviction. Buddha Gotama, in His discourse has said: 'All conditioned things are impermanent.' And the Buddha's discourse has led me to *sotāpatti-magga*. Get out of here!" He said sternly to Māra, flipping his fingers. Māra had no words to cover up his ruse, and vanished immediately.

In the evening, Sūrambaṭṭha went to the Buddha and related the visit of Māra to him and what Māra had said, and how he had dealt him. "Venerable Sir," he said to the Buddha, "in this way has Māra attempted to shake my conviction."

(c) Sūrambaṭṭha is named as The Foremost Lay Disciple

Referring to this incident, the Buddha, during His residence at the Jetavana monastery, on the occasion of naming outstanding lay disciples in accordance with their merits, declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who have unshakeable conviction in My Teaching, Sūrambaṭṭha is the foremost.”

9. JĪVAKA The Physician

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Jivaka was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While listening to a sermon by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named as the foremost among those who had personal devotion to the Buddha. He aspired to that distinction in future time. After making an extraordinary offering, he expressed his wish before the Buddha who then prophesied its fulfilment.

(b) His Last Existence as Jivaka

The future Jivaka was reborn in the deva realm or the human realm for a hundred thousand world-cycles, before being reborn, under strange circumstances, in the city of Rājagaha, during the time of Buddha Gotama. He was conceived in the womb of a courtesan named Sālavatī, the conception being caused by Prince Abhaya.

It was the custom of courtesans to nurture only female children whereas male children were discarded discreetly.

Accordingly, Sālavatī, the courtesan, had her newly-born baby put on an old bamboo tray and thrown into rubbish heap by a trusted servant without being noticed by anyone. The child was observed even from a distance by Prince Abhaya who was on his way to attend on his father King Bimbisāra. He sent his attendants: “O men, what is that thing that is being surrounded by crows?” The men went to the rubbish heap and finding the baby, said: “My Lord, it is a newly-born baby boy!”

“Is he still alive?”

“Yes, my Lord, he is.”

Prince Abhaya had the child taken to his royal residence and taken care. As the Prince's attendants replied to their master: “It is still alive” (‘Jivati’), the child was named Jivaka. And since he was brought up by Prince Abhaya, he was also called ‘Jivaka, the adopted son of the Prince (Abhaya)’.

Young Jivaka, the adopted son of Prince Abhaya, was sent to Taxila for his education at the age of sixteen. He learned Medicine and gained mastery of the subject. He became the King's physician. At one time, he cured King Caṇḍapajjota of a grave illness, for which he was honoured by that King with five hundred cartloads of rice, sixteen thousand ticals of silver, a pair of fine cloth made in the Province of Kāsi, and a thousand pieces of cloth to supplement it.

At that time, the Buddha was staying in the mountain monastery on the side of Gijjhakuta Hill, near Rājagaha. Jivaka, the King's Physician, cured the constipation of the Buddha by administering a mild laxative. Then it occurred to Jivaka: “It were well if all the four requisites of the Bhagavā were my donations,” and accordingly, he invited the Buddha to stay in his Mango Grove as a monastery. After curing the Buddha's illness, he offered the fine Kāsi cloth to the Buddha and the one thousand pieces of cloth that were supplementary to it were offered to the Sangha. (This brief account of Jivaka is based on the Commentary on the **Āṅguttara Nikāya**, Book One, Etadagga Vagga. For a fuller account, the reader is urged to refer to **Vinayo Mahāvagga**, 8-Cīvarakkhandhaka.)

(c) Jivaka is designated The Foremost Lay Disciple

On one occasion, during the Buddha's residence at the Jetavana monastery when He conferred titles to distinguished lay disciples in accordance with their merit, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who have personal devotion, Jivaka, the adopted son of Prince Abhaya, is the foremost.”

10. NAKULAPITU The Householder

(a) His Past Aspiration

The future Nakulapitu was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While he was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named by Him as the foremost among those who were close to the Buddha. He aspired to that title. After making extraordinary offerings, he expressed his wish in front of the Buddha, who then prophesied that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) His Last Existence as Nakulapitu The Householder

The future Nakulapitu was reborn either in the deva realm or the human realm for a hundred thousand world-cycles until, during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn into a rich man's family in Susumāragira in the Province of Bhagga. When he succeeded to the family estate, he and his wife were called by the name of their son Nakula, as ‘the Father of Nakula’, Nakulapitu, and ‘the Mother of Nakula’, Nakulamātu.

The Buddha, on His tour of the country in the company of many *bhikkhus*, arrived at Susumāragira and was sojourning in the Bhesakaḷā Forest. (Susumāragira, ‘the sound of a crocodile’, was the name of the town because, at the time of the founding of the town, a crocodile's sound was heard. The forest was known as Bhesakaḷā because it was the domain of a female demon by the name of Bhesakaḷā.)

Nakulapitu and his wife went to the Bhesakaḷā forest along with other people of the town to visit the Buddha. At the first sight of Buddha, the couple took Him as their own son and prostrating themselves before Him, said together: “O dear son, where have you been over this long time, away from us?”

[Nakulapitu had, in the past five hundred existences, been the father of the Buddha-to-be; for five hundred existences, he had been His paternal uncle (junior to His father); for five hundred existences, he had been His paternal uncle (senior to His father); for five hundred existences, he had been His maternal uncle. Nakulamātu had, for the past five hundred existences, been the mother of the Buddha-to-be; for five hundred existences, she had been His maternal aunt (junior to His mother); for five hundred existences, she had been His maternal aunt (senior to His mother); for five hundred existences, she had been His paternal aunt. These long blood-relations of the past existences had left such a strong sense of affection in the hearts of the Nakulapitu and his wife for the Buddha that they perceived Him as their own son (who had been somehow staying away from them).]

The Buddha allowed the couple to remain at His feet (holding them) for as long as they wished, and waited until such time they were satisfied emotionally in the joy of seeing Him again. Then, when the parents of His past existences had gained a mental state of equanimity, the Buddha, knowing their mental framework, i.e. their inclination, preached them a discourse, at the end of which, they were established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry Knowledge.

On a later occasion, when the Nakulapitu couple were advanced in age, they made another visit to Susumāragira. The old couple invited the Buddha to their house and on the next day offered delicious food of various kinds. When the Buddha had finished His meal, the old couple approached Him, made their obeisance, and sat in a suitable place. Then Nakulapitu said to Him: “Venerable Sir, since in my youth I married my wife, I had never been disloyal to her even in my thoughts, not to speak of being disloyal physically. Venerable Sir, we wish to see each other in the present existence, and we wish to see each other in our future existences.”

Nakulamātu also said likewise to the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, since in my youth I became the wife of Nakulapitu, I had never been disloyal to him, even in my thoughts, not to speak of being disloyal physically. Venerable Sir, we wish to see each other in our present existence, and we wish to see each other in our future existences.” (The Commentary to the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Book One, gives only a brief account. We shall supplement this here.)

Thereupon, the Buddha said to them:

“Lay supporters, if a certain couple wish to see each other in the present existence as well as in the future existences, their wishes will be fulfilled on these four conditions, namely, (1) they should have the same degree of conviction in the Teaching, (2) they should have the same degree of morality; (3) they should have the same degree of giving in charity; (4) they should have the same degree of intelligence.”

Then the Buddha uttered the following stanzas:

- (1) “For that couple, both of whom possess conviction in Teaching, who have a liberal mind towards those who come for help, who have restraint (in thought, word and deed), who use kind words towards each other, who lead a righteous life —
- (2) benefits multiply, and a life of ease and comfort is their lot. Unfriendly people bear malice against such a couple with equal morality (virtue).
- (3) For such a couple with equal morality (virtue) and good conduct who are desirous of sensual objects, living a life according to the Dhamma in the present existence, both of them find delight in this world and rejoice in the deva-world.”

— **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Book One —

(c) The Nakulapitu Couple designated as The Foremost Disciples

The above discourse stemming from the intimate statements made by the Nakulapitu couple is known as the Paṭhama santajīvī Sutta. The discourse reveals the intimate relationship that existed between them and the Buddha in the nature of filial connection. The old couple evidently put great faith in and reliance on the Buddha, whom they considered as their own son. That was why they were disclosing their inner sentiments to the Buddha, without any sense of diffidence.

That was why, while the Buddha was staying in the Jetavana monastery and outstanding lay disciples were designated by Him as foremost in their own merit, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My lay disciples who are close to the Buddha, Nakulapitu, the Householder, is the foremost.”

LIFE STORIES OF FEMALE LAY DISCIPLES

1. SUJĀTĀ, Wife of The Householder of Bārāṇasī

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Sujātā was reborn into the family of a rich man in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, as she was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a female lay disciple being named by the Buddha as the foremost in getting established in the Three Refuges. She aspired to that distinction. After making an extraordinary offering, she expressed her aspiration before the Buddha who prophesied that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) Her Last Existence as Sujātā, Wife of The Householder of Bārāṇasī

The future Sujātā was reborn either in the deva-world or the human world for a hundred thousand world-cycle. Some time before the appearance of the Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of Seniya, in the town of Senā, near the Uruvelā forest. When she came of age, she went to the banyan tree which was near her town and after making an offering to its guardian spirit, she vowed that if she should be married to a bridegroom of equal social status (of the same clan) and if she bore a boy as her first child, she would make offering to the guardian spirit yearly. Her wish was fulfilled.

(Sujātā was married to the son of the Rich Man of Bārāṇasī and her first child was a boy whom was named Yasa. She kept her vow and made annual offerings to the guardian spirit of the banyan tree.)

After making these annual offering at the banyan tree for twenty times or so, on the day the Buddha was to attain Perfect Enlightenment in the year 103 of the Great Era, Sujātā went to make her annual offering to the guardian spirit of the banyan tree. On that occasion, Sujātā's son, Yasa, was already married and was indulging in luxury in the three mansions. This is mentioned because Sujātā had been generally imagined as a young maiden when she offered the specially prepared milk rice to the Buddha.)

On the full moon of Kason (May) in 103 Mahā Era, after six years of self-tormenting practice in search of the Truth, the Buddha attained Perfect Enlightenment. Sujātā rose early that morning to make an early offering at the banyan tree. On that day, the young calves, somehow did not go near their mothers for milk. When the house-maids of Sujātā brought the vessels to draw milk from the cows, the nipples of the cows automatically flowed freely with milk. On seeing the strange phenomenon, Sujātā herself collected the milk, put it in a new cooking vessel, kindled the fire and started cooking the rice milk.

When the milk was being boiled, extra-large bubbles arose in a series and rotated in clockwise direction in the pot and not a drop of milk foam overflowed. The Mahā Brahmā held the white umbrella above the pot; the Four Great Guardian Devas of the World guarded the pot with their royal swords in hand; Sakka attended to the fire which boiled the milk; devas brought various nutrients from the four Island Continents and put them into the pot. In these ways, the celestial beings joined in the effort of Sujātā in preparing the milk-rice.

While Sujātā was preparing the rice-milk, she called her servant Puṇṇā and said: "Good girl, Puṇṇā, I believe the guardian spirit of the banyan tree is in a particularly good mood because I had never seen such strange phenomena happen before in these long years. Now, go quickly and clean the precinct for offering at the banyan tree." "Very well, Madam," the servant girl responded and went to the banyan tree promptly.

The Buddha-to-be sat at the foot of the banyan tree, earlier than the time for collection of his daily alms-food. The servant girl, who went to clean the foot of the banyan tree,

mistook the Bodhisatta as the guardian spirit of the tree and she reported to her mistress with excitement. Sujātā said: “Well, girl, if what you say is true, I will release you from bondage.” Then dressing and decorating herself, Sujātā went to the banyan tree, carrying on her head the milk-rice, which was put into a golden vessel worth one lakh, covered with a golden lid and wrapped with a white piece of cloth and over which, garlands of fragrant flowers were placed so that they hang around the vessel. When she saw the Bodhisatta, whom she presumed to be the guardian spirit of the tree, she was intensely glad and approached him with a series of slight bowing. Then she put down the vessel, took off the lid and offered it to the Bodhisatta, saying: “May your desire come to fulfillment as had mine!” Then she left him.

The Bodhisatta went to the Nerañjarā river, put down the golden vessel of rice-milk on its bank and bathed in the river. Then, coming out of the river, he ate the rice-milk in forty-nine morsel. After which, he placed the empty gold vessel on the Nerañjarā river. It floated against the river current and then sank. He then went to the foot of the Tree of Enlightenment. He attained Perfect Self-Enlightenment and remained there for seven weeks; each week at seven locations at and around the Tree of Enlightenment. At the end of forty-nine days (during which the Buddha dwelled in the attainment of Cessation), He went to Isipatana Migadāvana forest where He set the Wheel of Dhamma rolling by expounding the Dhamma to the Group of Five ascetics. Then He saw the ripeness of the past merit of Yasa, the son of Sujātā, wife of the householder of Bārāṇasī and He waited for him by sitting underneath a tree.

Yasa had grown weary of sensuous pleasure after seeing the unsightly spectacle in his harem (past midnight). “O, how woeful are these sentient beings with their mind and body being oppressed by all sorts of defilements! O, how terribly they are being tormented by defilements!” Yasa murmured and left his home in sheer disgust with life.

On leaving the town, he met the Buddha and after listening to His discourse, he gained penetrative knowledge of the Truth and became established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry Knowledge. (In the Commentary on the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, he gained the three lower *magga* and *phalas*.)

Yasa’s father traced his son’s whereabouts almost behind his heels. He went and asked the Buddha whether his son came that way. The Buddha, by His power, hid Yasa from his father’s vision and preached a discourse to his father. At the end of which, Yasa’s father attained Stream-Entry Knowledge and Yasa, arahatship. Then, the Buddha made Yasa a *bhikkhu* by calling him up: “Come, *bhikkhu*,” and Yasa’s appearance instantly changed into that of a *bhikkhu*, complete with alms-bowl, robes and essential items for *bhikkhu* use. These were all mind-made by the Buddha’s power.

Yasa’s father invited the Buddha to his home the next day for an offering of alms-food. The Buddha went, accompanied by the Venerable Yasa. After the meal, He preached a discourse, at the end of which, the Venerable Yasa’s mother, Sujātā, and his erstwhile wife were established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry Knowledge. On the same day, they were established in the Three Refuges. (This is a brief account of Sujātā and her family. For fuller details, the reader may go through Chapter 12, at two places therein.)

(c) Sujātā was named The Foremost Female Lay Disciple

On one occasion, while the Buddha was naming foremost female lay-disciples, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My female lay-disciples who were the earliest to get established in the Refuges, Sujātā, daughter of Seniya the householder, is the foremost.”

2. VISĀKHĀ, Donor of Pubbārāma Monastery

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Visākhā was reborn into a rich man's family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, when she was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, she saw a female lay disciple being named by Him as the foremost in giving in charity. She aspired to that distinction. After making an extraordinary offering, she expressed her aspiration before the Buddha, who prophesied that it would be fulfilled.

In Her Past Existence as The Youngest Daughter of King Kikī

The future Visākhā was reborn either in the deva-world or the human world for a hundred thousand world-cycles, where five Buddhas are to appear. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, she was reborn as the youngest of the seven daughters of King Kikī, in the Province of Kikī. His seven daughters were: (1) Princess Samaṇi, (2) Princess Samaṅguttā, (3) Princess Bhikkhunī, (4) Princess Bhikhadāyika, (5) Princess Dhammā, (6) Princess Sudhammā and (7) Princess Saṅghadāsi. These seven princesses were reborn during the time of Buddha Gotama as the seven distinguished ladies, viz., (1) Khemā Therī, (2) Uppalavaṇṇā Therī, (3) Paṭācārā Therī, (4) Mahāpajāpati Gotamī Therī, the step mother of the Buddha and (7) Visākhā, donor of the great Pubbārāma Monastery.

(b) Her Last Existence as Visākhā

Princess Saṅghadāsi, the youngest of the seven daughters of King Kikī was reborn in the deva realm or the human realm for the entire interim period between two Buddhas (Kassapa and Gotama). During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was conceived in the womb of Sumana Devī, the Chief Consort of Dhanañcaya the householder, son of Meṇḍaka the householder, in the town of Bhaddiya, in the Province of Aṅga. She was named Visākhā by her parents and kinsmen. When Visākhā was seven years of age, the Buddha arrived in Bhaddiya in the company of many *bhikkhus* in His religious mission in the country. He visited Bhaddiya for the purpose of causing the Enlightenment of Sela, the brahmin, and other persons whose past merit had ripened for Enlightenment.

Five Personages with Great Past Merit

At that time, Meṇḍaka, the father-in-law of Visākhā, was the chief among the five remarkable personages endowed with great past merit, namely, (1) Meṇḍaka the householder, (2) Candapadumā, his wife, (3) Dhanañcaya, the son of Meṇḍaka, (4) Sumana Devī, the wife of Dhanañcaya and (5) Puṇṇa, the servant of Meṇḍaka. (How remarkably endowed with great past merit these five person were, will be described here, condensed from the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**, Book Two, 18-Mala Vagga, 10-Meṇḍaka the householder.)

1. The Miraculous Power of Meṇḍaka The Householder

One day, Meṇḍaka, wishing to know his own power, had his granaries, 1250 in all, emptied. Then, after washing his head, he sat in front of the door of his house and glanced skyward. Suddenly, there rained from the sky heavy showers of top quality red rice which filled his 1250 granaries. Meṇḍaka further wished to know the miraculous powers of the members of his household and asked them to find out themselves.

2. The Miraculous Power of Candapadumā, Wife of Meṇḍaka

Then, Candapadumā, wife of Meṇḍaka, having adorned herself, took a measure of rice in the presence of everybody and had it cooked. She sat at a seat prepared at her front door and after announcing to all that anyone wishing to have cooked rice might go to her, she would ladled out, with her golden ladle, to every caller. Her rice-pot never diminished more than one ladle-mark, even after the whole day's distribution.

How Candapadumā acquired Her Name

In her past existence, during the time of some past Buddha, this remarkable lady had offered alms-food to the Sangha, with her left hand holding the rice vessel and her right

hand holding the spoon, filling the alms-bowl full. As the result of that good deed, in her present existence, her left palm bore the mark of a lotus flower (*adupa*) while her right palm bore the mark of a full moon (*canda*). Further, she had, during the time of some past Buddha, offered filtered water with her hand holding the water-strainer and going about from one *bhikkhu* to another. As the result of that good deed, her right sole bore the mark of a full moon while her left sole bore the mark of a lotus flower. On account of these distinctive marks on her palms and soles, she was named ‘Canda padumā’ by her parents and kinsmen.

3. The Miraculous Power of Dhanañcaya, Son of Meṇḍaka

Dhanañcaya the householder, after washing his hair, sat at his door with one thousand ticals of silver by his side, after making a public proclamation to the effect that anyone wishing to have money, could ask from him. He filled the vessel of every caller with money. After having done so, his money of one thousand ticals remained the same amount.

4. The Miraculous Power of Samana Devī, The Daughter-in-law of Meṇḍaka

Samana Devī adorned herself and sat in the open with a basket of seed grain, after making an announcement that anyone wishing to have seed-grain could ask from her. She distributed the seed-grain to every caller, filling their vessel. After having done so, her basket of seed-grain remained the same amount.

5. The Miraculous Power of Puṇṇa, The Trusted Servant of Meṇḍaka

Puṇṇa, after dressing decently as benefiting his status, yoked a team of oxen, on whose side he made his five-finger imprint of scented unguent and whose horns he decorated with gold, harnessing them to golden chains, and mounting a plough, he started ploughing Meṇḍaka’s field before the spectators. His plough made not just a furrow underneath his plough but made three extra furrows on either side, so that in one operation he accomplished seven times his effort.

Thus the whole populace of the Southern Island Continent obtained all their needs, such as rice, seed-grain, money, etc., from Meṇḍaka’s house. This is a brief description of the five personages with great past merit.

Within the area of Rājagaha, King Bimbisāra’s domain, besides Meṇḍaka, there were four other householders, namely, Jotika, Jaṭila, Puṇṇa and Kāka Vailya. King Bimbisāra had within his domain these five householders with inexhaustible resources. (Of these five, the story of Puṇṇa the householders will be included in the story of Uttarā. The other four will be briefly describes near the end of this book.)

When Meṇḍaka heard the arrival of the Buddha, he said to his grand daughter (daughter of Dhanañcaya): “Grand daughter, what I am going to say is for the auspicious earning of merit for you and as well as for me. Go and welcome the Buddha, who is on His way, ride with your five hundred female attendants in each of your coaches together with five hundred maid servants.”

Visākhā is established in Stream-Entry Knowledge at The Age of Seven

Visākhā gladly obeyed her grandfather and left home in five hundred coaches. Her grandfather might have thought of her riding the coach to the presence of the Buddha, such being his sense of self-importance, but Visākhā was a person of innate wisdom and considered it improper to go to the Buddha’s presence riding in a coach. As such, she dismounted at a reasonable distance from the Buddha, went on foot to Him, made obeisance to Him and sat in a suitable place.

The Buddha preached her a discourse which suit her mental frame of (the seven year old). At the end of the discourse, Visākhā and her five hundred attendants attained Stream-Enlightenment Knowledge and first Fruition.

Meṇḍaka also visited the Buddha, made obeisance to Him and sat in a suitable place. The Buddha preached a discourse to suit the mental frame of Meṇḍaka, at the end of which, he was established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry Knowledge. He invited the Buddha to an

alms-food offering in his house on the next day. On the next day, he made an offering of delicious food to the Buddha and His Sangha. He made the offerings on a lavish scale for fifteen days continuously. The Buddha stayed at Bhaddiya for as long as there were people who deserved to be enlightened.

Visākhā and Family moved to Sāketa

Pasenadi of Kosala, King of Sāvatti, wrote to King Bimbisāra saying that as there was no householder of inexhaustible resources in his Kingdom, he requested him to send one such family to Kosala.

King Bimbisāra held a conference with his ministers, who said: “Great King, we cannot afford to spare any of our householders who are of inexhaustible resources. But, to satisfy the King of Kosalans, let us send the son of one of your (five) such householders.” King Bimbisāra agreed to the proposal. Dhanañcaya, son of Menḍaka, was requested to move to the Kosalan Kingdom.

(Herein, the commentary on the **Dhammapada** states that the Kosalan King and King Bimbisāra were brothers-in-law, in double sense. King Bimbisāra could not fail to satisfy the wish of the Kosalan King. He also could not offend his five famous Householders, and so he requested Dhanañcaya to go and settle in the Kosalan Kingdom. Dhanañcaya agreed and he was sent to the King of the Kosalan.)

After moving his family from Bhaddiya to the Kosalan Kingdom, Dhanañcaya identified a location which had great potentials for human settlement. He asked the Kosalan King as to whose territory that location belonged to. And being told that it lay within the Kosalan Kingdom, he further asked as to how far it was from Sāvatti, the Capital. The King answered: “It is one yojana from here to Sāvatti.” Then Dhanañcaya said to the King: “Great King, Sāvatti is not big enough for my householder to live in. If your Majesty would agree, I would settle in this location so that my big following can live in comfort.” The King consented. And, Dhanañcaya founded a town at that location. Since it was a location of the settler’s choice, it was named “Sāketa”.

In Sāvatti, Puṇṇavaḍḍana, son of Mīgāra the householder, had come of age. His father considered that it was time for his son to get married and he told his kinsmen to look for a bride for his son. The bride should come from a householder’s family. Intelligent and discreet scouts were sent to look for such a bride but none could be found in the City of Sāvatti. The scouts therefore went to Sāketa.

One day, Visākhā went to a lake, which was outside Sāketa, accompanied by five hundred attendant maidens who were of the same age as her, to bathe and frolic in the water. At that time, the scouts from Sāvatti had left Sāketa after without success to look for a suitable lady. They resorted to standing at the town’s gate. Then rain came pouring. Visākhā and her companions had left the town to seek shelter from the rain in a public rest-house. The five hundred maidens ran into the rest-house. None of them caught the eyes of the scouts as promising. But, coming behind these maidens was young Visākhā, who was walking towards the rest-house in her normal pace, disregarding the rain. The scouts suddenly recognized her beauty. They pondered: “As regard personal appearance, there can be no other girl in the world who can equal to her. However, personal beauty is like a fresh ripe pomegranate. Her manner of speech needs to be assessed. We should start a conversation with her.” And so they addressed her in the following way:

“Little daughter, you walk like an elderly lady.”

Visākhā replied: “Fathers, why do you say so?”

“Your companions entered this rest-house by running, fearing to get wet. As for you, you came in your normal steps like an elderly lady. You do not seem to mind your dress being drenched. Supposing, an elephant or a horse were after you, would you take the same leisurely steps?”

“Father, clothing may be bought without difficulty. What does my dress matters? But my

person is important to me, for a girl is like a piece of merchandise. If by running, I were to stumble and break my limb and become physically unsound, where is my worth as a likely bride? That was why I did not run?"

The scouts from Sāvatti agreed among themselves that they had found a suitable bride for their master's son; a girl fair in form as well as fair in speech, with a beautiful voice. They threw the bridal garland above Visākhā, who, understanding what it meant, acquiesced in the act by sitting on the spot. Migāra's scout then put up a screen around the proposed bride. Having been thus ceremonially treated, Visākhā went back to her home accompanied by her maid servants. Migāra's scout went along to the house of her father, Dhanañcaya the householder.

A conversation between Migāra's men and Visākhā's father about the proposed betrothal took place as follows:

Dhanañcaya: O men, what is your native village?

Elders: Householder, we represent Migāra the householder of Sāvatti. Our master has learnt that you have a young daughter who is of marriageable age and he wants her as the bride for his son. We came to request the hand of your daughter

Dhanañcaya: Very well, men, your master is not our equal in wealth. However, he is of equal status by birth. It is a rare thing to meet one's equal, both in status and wealth. Go back and tell your master that his proposal for betrothal is accepted.

Migāra's representatives returned to Sāvatti and reported to him: "O householder, we have obtained the consent of Dhanañcaya the householder of Sāketa, to have his daughter betrothed to Puṇṇavaḍḍana." Migāra was overjoyed to find a bride from such a great family for his son. He sent an urgent message to Dhanañcaya to the effect that he would come and fetch the bride in a few day's time, and would Dhanañcaya made suitable arrangements? Dhanañcaya replied that he would make every arrangement and requested Migāra to do the needful.

The Kosalan King honoured The Betrothal

Migāra the householder went to the Kosalan King and sought permission to go to Sāketa to attend the wedding ceremony of his son, Puṇṇavaḍḍana, a trusted servant of the King, to Visākhā, daughter of Dhanañcaya the householder of Sāketa.

The King said: "Very well, householder, need we go with you?"

"Great King," Migāra said, "how could we expect the presence of such an important personage as yourself?" The King wanted to honour both parties to the betrothal with his presence and said: "So be it, householder, I will go with you." And so the King went to Sāketa together with the householder.

When Dhanañcaya was informed of the arrival of Migāra and the Kosalan King, he greeted the King personally and escorted him to his house. He made careful arrangements to host the King and his army, Migāra and his entourage. Food, lodging, flowers, perfumes and every item of comfort was provided to all, everyone according to their need and status. He attended to these details personally so that every guest had the impression that Dhanañcaya the householder was doing a special favour to them.

Later on, one day, the Kosalan King said to Dhanañcaya through a messenger: "Householder, we are here in too big a crowd. We might be causing a burden to you if we were to stay long. Maybe, you should think of the time for sending the bride to Sāvatti." To which, Dhanañcaya replied through the messenger: "Great King, now is the raining season. Your army will find it difficult to make a journey. Let the provision of every need of your army be my responsibility. I would request your Majesty to return to Sāvatti only when I make the send-off."

From the time of the arrival of Migāra and his party, the whole of Sāketa was in a festive atmosphere. Three months passed in gaiety. The rain-retreat period had ended. It was

October. The great ornamental dress for the bride was still in the goldsmith's hand, nearing completion. Dhanañcaya's executives reported to him that although every item needed in hosting the big gathering from Sāvatti was no problem but they had met with a shortage of fuel for cooking. Dhanañcaya ordered that all the stables for his horses and sheds for his elephants be dismantled for fuel. But these structure lasted only fifteen days as fuel and the matter was conveyed to Dhanañcaya again, who said: "Wood fuel would be hard to get during the raining period. So, open all my textile stores, make strips of rough cloth into ropes, soak them in oil vats and use them as fuel." In this expedient way another fifteen days supply of fuel for cooking was made available, by which time the great ornamental dress for the bride was completed too.

The bride was sent to the bridegroom on the next day, after the great bridal dress was completed. On the day of her departure, Dhanañcaya called his daughter, Visākhā, to his side and gave this admonition:

"Dear daughter, a housewife, who is to serve her husband faithfully in his household, should know these principles and practise them accordingly:

(At that time Mīgāra was listening in the next room.)

"Dear daughter, a daughter-in-law living in the parents-in-law's house:-

- (1) should not take out the fire from the inside of the house;
- (2) should not take the fire from outside into the house;
- (3) should lend only to those who returned what they borrowed;
- (4) should not lend to those who do not return what they borrowed;
- (5) should give to those whether they give you or not;
- (6) sit peacefully;
- (7) eat peacefully;
- (8) sleep peacefully;
- (9) tend to the fire respectfully;
- (10) worship the deities of the house.

(The implications of these ten points have been discussed in Chapter 35: Story of Cūlasubbhaddā.)

On the following day, Dhanañcaya had all his guests assembled together and in the midst of the Kosalan army appointed eight learned householders to be patrons of Visākhā at Sāvatti, with the request that they, as a body, gave hearing and settled any disputes that might arise concerning her daughter. Then, he had the bride garbed in the great bridal dress of gold lace and jewels, worth nine crores. He gave her a hundred and fifty-four cartloads of money for her toiletry, five hundred maid servant, five hundred coaches which were drawn by thoroughbred horses and a variety of useful items in one hundred pieces for each kind. Having bequeathed these things, as his wedding present, in front of the assemblage, he first made a send-off for the Kosalan King and Mīgāra the householder.

When it was time for Visākhā to start her journey, Dhanañcaya called the controller of his cattle yards and gave these instructions: "My men, my daughter will need in her new home milk cows and thoroughbred bulls for harnessing to her carts. Let a herd of cattle that will fill the road to Sāvatti for an area of eight *usabhas* (140 spans) in breadth and three *gāvutas* in length (i.e. 3/4 *yojana*) be let out from the pens. The landmark for three *gāvutas* is from the pens to a certain ravine. When the foremost cattle in the herd reached that ravine, let a drum signal be made so that the pens can be closed in time." And the responsible persons complied faithfully. As soon as the pens were opened, the stoutest milk-cows only came out. But when the pens were closed, strong draught oxens and bulls jumped over the fence and followed Visākhā. This was the result of Visākhā's past merit, (more particularly, during the time of Buddha Kassapa, whenever she made offering of food to the Sangha, she used to persuade the offerees to take various delicacies even after they had taken their fill.)

Visākhā entered Sāvattthi

When Visākhā's carriage arrived at the City of Sāvattthi, she considered whether she should enter the City seated in her coach or stand up, exposing herself to public view. When she remembered the great bridal dress (*mahālatā*) that she was wearing, she thought it wise to expose herself by standing in her carriage so that the greatness of her unique bridal dress would be seen by all. As she did so, every citizen of Sāvattthi, who saw her was excited, saying among themselves: "Here she is! The famous Visākhā! How exquisitely beautiful! And look at that gorgeous bridal dress she wears! How becoming she looks in that wonderful dress!" Thus, Visākhā's entry into her new residence at Mīgāra's house was a flying success.

Right from the moment of her presence in Sāvattthi, the citizens were fresh with the memories of their long stay in Sāketa as guests of honour to Dhanañcaya, who had so lavishly and caringly treated them. So they started sending gifts to Visākhā according to their means. Visākhā distributed the gifts to various other citizens of Sāvattthi, ensuring that all houses received them. In this way, the citizens of Sāvattthi were soaked in charity from her first day there.

On the first night of her arrival at her father-in-law's house, as soon as the first watch of the night had passed, (and it was bedtime) a thoroughbred female ass in Mīgāra's house gave birth to a foal. She had her maid servants hold up the lamps and she attended to the delivery of the foal. She had the mother ass bathed in hot water and then had oil applied onto her body. After seeing through these operations, she went back to her chamber.

Wedding Reception at Mīgāra's House

Mīgāra held a reception for seven days in his house, on the occasion of his son's wedding. Even though the Buddha was staying in the Jetavana monastery, Mīgāra, being a follower of different faiths, disregarded the Buddha for the occasion of his son's wedding, but, instead, he invited a houseful of naked ascetics. He called Visākhā to make obeisance to the 'Arahants'. When Visākhā heard the word 'Arahant', she, being an *ariya* herself, a Stream-Enterer, eagerly went to see the so called 'Arahant'. She was greatly disappointed to see the naked ascetic. "How could these shameless fellows be 'Arahant'?" she made her judgment and wondered why her father-in-law asked her to pay respect to them. "Fie! Fie!" she uttered in disgust and turned away.

The naked ascetics, on their part, were angry at Visākhā's behaviour. "Householder," they said to Mīgāra, "can't you get a better daughter-in-law? Why have you made this detestable woman, a follower of Samaṇa Gotama, a member of your household? Cast away the demon of a woman!" But Mīgāra thought that he could not expel his daughter-in-law on the advice of the naked ascetics, for she came of a high class status. So, he had to palliate his teachers by saying: "Teachers, young people are reckless and say things intentionally or otherwise. Would you kindly keep your patience?"

Mīgāra was touched to The Quick

Being a good daughter-in-law, Visākhā attended on her father-in-law respectfully. She made him sit on a high seat, and served him with milk-rice in which undiluted milk was used. She ladled it out of gold spoon into a vessel and gave it to Mīgāra who relished the meal. At that time, a *bhikkhu*, on his alms-round, stood at Mīgāra's door. Visākhā saw the *bhikkhu* but, knowing her father-in-law as a follower of naked ascetics, she thought it wise not to tell him about the presence of the *bhikkhu* but merely moved herself aside so that the *bhikkhu* would stand in direct view of Mīgāra. Foolish as he was, Mīgāra did see the *bhikkhu* but pretended not to notice him with his face turned down to his meal only.

Visākhā knew that her father-in-law was purposely ignoring the *bhikkhu*, so she went to the *bhikkhu* and said: "Empty-handed, I pay homage to you, Venerable Sir. My father-in-law lives only on old food."

Hearing this, Mīgāra was irritated to wit. When Visākhā derided the naked ascetics, he

could bear it. But now that his daughter-in-law said that he was eating excreta (which he interpreted Visākhā's word "old food"), he could not bear it. He held away his hand from the vessel he was eating from and said angrily to his attendants: "Keep this milk-food! Expel Visākhā from this house. Look, while I am eating this auspicious milk-food in my auspicious house, Visākhā says: 'I am eating human excreta!'" However, the whole of the household staff were Visākhā's servants, and who would take Visākhā by the hand or by the feet and expel her? Far from doing physical violence against her, nobody in the house dared even to offend her by word.

Visākhā asserted Her Right

When Visākhā heard her father-in-law's angry words, she spoke to him cordially and respectfully: "Father, I am not obliged to go away from this house by your command, which is not right and proper. You have not brought me to this house like a water carrier girl. A good daughter, whose parents are still living, does not obey this kind of unlawful command. To see to righteous behaviour on all sides, my father had, on the day of my departure, appointed a panel of eight wise householders, saying: "If there should arise any problem concerning my daughter, you would be pleased to hear the case and settle it." These eight people are my father's trustees in whom my security lies. Would you refer my case to them now?"

How The Problem was resolved

Mīgāra thought Visākhā's words were sensible. He sent for the panel of eight learned householders and laid his complaint, saying: "Gentlemen, this girl Visākhā has not been in this house for a week and she insulted me, who lived in an auspicious house as someone who eats excreta."

Elders: Now, daughter, did you say as the householder has alleged?

Visākhā: Fathers, my father-in-law might like to eat excreta. I never referred to him as an eater of excreta. The fact is that as he was eating milk-rice cooked with undiluted milk, a *bhikkhu* stood at his door for alms-food. My father-in-law ignored the *bhikkhu*. So, I went up to the *bhikkhu* and said: 'Empty handed, I pay homage to you, Venerable Sir. My father-in-law lives only on old food.' By this, I meant to say that my father-in-law does no deed of merit in his present existence but is living only on the fruit of his past merit.

Elders: Householder, in this case, our daughter is not at fault. She has spoken reasonably. Why should you be angry?

Mīgāra: So be it, gentlemen. But his young girl had from the very first night in this house ignored her husband and absented herself from the house.

Elders: Dear daughter, did you absent yourself as alleged?

Visākhā: Fathers, I did not go to any other place but the fact is that I was attending to the birth of a foal by a thoroughbred ass at the stable that night. I considered it my duty to do so. I had my maid servants held the lamps and I supervised the proper delivery of the foal.

Elders: Householder, our daughter had been dutiful and done what even your maid servants could not do. She had done it for your good only. And should you take it as an offence?

Mīgāra: So be it gentlemen. But I wish to complain about her father, Dhanañcaya's admonition to her on the day of her departure from her house. She was told (1) 'not to take out the fire from the inside of the house.' How would it be possible for us not to give the fire when needed by our next door neighbours?

Elders: Dear daughter, were you told by your father as said by the householder?

Visākhā: Fathers, my father did not mean 'fire' in the ordinary sense. What is meant is that the affairs of my parents-in-law and his family should not be divulged to the servants who are outsiders. If I were to do that, I would be causing

unnecessary trouble at home. My father uses the expression, ‘the fire from the inside of the house’ in this sense only.

Mīgāra: So be it, gentlemen. But then her father also said that (2) ‘she should not take the fire from outside into the house.’ How would it be possible for us not to take the fire from another house (i.e. outside our house), in case all the fire had gone out in our home?

Elders: Dear daughter, is that true?

Visākhā: Fathers, my father did not mean ‘fire’ in the ordinary sense. What is meant here is that what the servants say in criticising the family should not be reported to the members of the family. If I were to do so, I would be causing unnecessary trouble at home. My father used the expression, ‘the fire from outside’ in this sense only. Also when my father said:

(3) ‘You should lend only to those who return what they borrow.’ This is not to let those defaulters, who fail to return the things they borrow from me, get the better of me.

(4) ‘You should not lend to those who do not return what they borrow.’ This is not to let the defaulters exploit my goodness.

(5) ‘You should give to those whether they repay you or not.’ This meant to be liberal to the poor relatives or friends who come to see me. I should make gifts to them regardless whether they can repay me or not.

(6) ‘You should sit peacefully.’ means I should show deference to my father-in-law and mother-in-law. When they approach, I should stand up.

(7) ‘You should eat peacefully.’ means I should not eat before my parents-in-law and my husband have eaten. Only when they have had sufficient to eat, then I should eat.

(8) ‘You should sleep peacefully.’ means I should not go to bed before my parents-in-law and my husband have gone to bed. Only after I have tended to their needs and they have retired, then I should go to bed.

(9) ‘You should tend to the fire.’ means I should consider my parents-in-law and my husband as the fire or the dragon that are to be always held in reverence. They should be attended on with respect.

Mīgāra: So be it, gentlemen. But what about her father’s admonition, ‘to worship the deities of the house’?

Elders: Dear daughter, what is it that your father-in-law wants to know?

Visākhā: Father, it is true that my father told me (10) ‘to worship the deities of the house.’ By these words, my father admonished me that when I become a housewife, I should give alms-food to *bhikkhus* who stand at my door for alms. Only after offering alms-food to them, should I eat.

Elders: Householder, you seem to please yourself by ignoring *bhikkhus* who come to you for alms-food.

Mīgāra found no word to retort this sarcastic remark and held down his face.

Visākhā’s Triumph

Then the eight learned householders said to Mīgāra the householder: “Householder, is there any other fault with our daughter?” Mīgāra admitted that there was none. They continued: “Householder, in spite of her innocence, why did you expel her from your home?” Then Visākhā stood up and said: “Fathers, I did not deem it wise to obey to my father-in-law’s rash command in expelling me. For my father had entrusted me to your care and to settle my problem concerning myself. Now that I am cleared of my fault, I am happy to go.”

Visākhā then returned to her private chamber and ordered her male and female servants to prepare coaches and do other things for travel. Thereupon, Mīgāra called the eight-men

panel of trustees and apologised to Visākhā for his fault in their presence: “Dear daughter, I had been reckless. Forgive me.” Visākhā, seeing her opportunity, said to her father-in-law: “Dear father, I really forgive you for what is forgivable. Only that I wish to lay down a condition, which is, I, as an unshakeable devotee of the Buddha, cannot stay away from the Sangha, if only I be allowed to make offering to the Sangha freely, I shall stay here. Otherwise, I leave.”

To which Mīgāra promptly replied: “Dear daughter, you are at liberty to do so.”

Mīgāra The Householder attained Stream-Entry Knowledge

Thereafter, Visākhā invited the Buddha to her house the next day for an offering of food. On the following day, the Buddha went to her house, accompanied by a big number of *bhikkhus*, who filled the house and were given seat. Naked ascetics, on learning the visit of the Buddha to Mīgāra’s house, took a keen interest and sat watching around it.

Visākhā made her food offerings and poured the libation water. After that she sent her assistant to inform her father-in-law that everything was ready to serve the meal to the Buddha and His Sangha, and invited him to attend to the Buddha personally. Mīgāra, who was under instructions by his teachers, the naked ascetics, replied to Visākhā: “Let my daughter herself attend on the Buddha.” Visākhā proceeded to do so, offering the Buddha with various kinds of delicious food and beverages. After that, she informed her father-in-law that the offering of food to the Buddha had finished and she invited him to join in listening a discourse by the Buddha.

Mīgāra’s past merit now began to tell on him, for he thought to himself: “If I were to refuse the invitation it would be very wrong.” He got an inner urge to listen to the Buddha’s discourse, and went to where He was sitting. However, his teachers, the naked ascetics, advised him to be screened off from the Buddha if he were to listen to His discourse. His servants therefore drew a curtain around the place where he was to sit.

The Buddha preached His discourse as if asserting His own power of letting any listeners to hear Him well, however hidden or far away from Him, whether divided by a wall or as distant as the whole extent of a world-system. As if a big mango tree laden with its golden ripe fruit was shaken from its trunk, the Buddha directed His sermon beginning with alms-giving, through morality and the celestial forms of existence, culminating in *pagga hala*.

(Note here that when the Buddha made a discourse, everyone among the audience, whether in front of Him or at His back, whether thousands of world-systems away, or even in the topmost Brahmā realm of Akaniṭṭha, feels that the Buddha is addressing him alone, face to face. It is like one’s relationship with the moon, which rides on the sky in her own course, but which seems to you to be always above your head. This unrivalled power of the Buddha is the result of His fulfilling the Perfections, more particularly, His supreme sacrifices in giving away His head or limbs, His eyes or heart, or His freedom by serving others as a slave, or as in Vessantara’s existence when He gave His young son and daughter to an old Brahmin, or His own wife, Maddī devī.)

— Commentary on the **Dhammapada**, Book 1 —

At the end of the discourse, Mīgāra was established in the fruition of Stream-Entry Knowledge. He lifted the screen and laid prostrate at the Buddha’s feet in five-fold contact, and extolled Visākhā before the Buddha’s presence, with these words: “Dear daughter, from this day on, you are my mother!” Since then Visākhā came to be known as ‘Mīgāra’s mother’. (This is what is mentioned in the Commentary on the **Āṅguttara Nikāya**. In the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**, which follows the reciters of the text, it is mentioned thus: ‘Mīgāra came out of the screen, came to his daughter-in-law, and putting her breast in his mouth, exclaimed: ‘From today on, you are my mother!’ Since then Visākhā came to be known as ‘Mīgāra’s mother’. Later, when a son was born to her, he was called ‘son of Mīgāra, the householder’.)

In this connection, the commentary on the **Āṅguttara Nikāya** gives only a brief account of Visākhā, but for the benefit of the reader, the events connected with her will now be

related based on the Commentary on the **Dhammapada.**)

Mīgāra's Wife also attained Stream-Entry

After recognizing his daughter-in-law as his mother, Mīgāra went to the Buddha and prostrating himself at His feet, holding them adoringly and kissing them with his mouth, said: "Venerable Sir, previously I had not known as to making gifts to what type of person is of great benefit. Now I have come to know it, thanks to my daughter-in-law. Now I am saved from the wretched destinations, the miserable states of a *aya*. The arrival of my daughter-in-law, Visākhā, has brought me my welfare and happiness." Further, he uttered this verse in elation:

"(Venerable Sir,) Today I have come to understand as to making gifts to what type of person is of great benefit. My daughter-in-law, possessor of noble characteristics, has indeed (due to any past merit) come to my house to my benefit."

On the next day also, the good Visākhā invited the Buddha for another offering of food. Then, on the following day, her mother-in-law also became a Stream-Enterer. From that day onwards, Mīgāra's house was an open door for all needs related to the Teaching.

(A Myanmar rhyme translated in prose:)

*"The arrival of noble person at a house,
Opens up the door to the Eightfold Path
For its many residents,
Facilitating their entry to Nibbāna."*

Visākhā was honoured by Her Father-in-law

Then Mīgāra thought to himself: "My daughter-in-law, Visākhā, is my great benefactor. I should repay my debt of gratitude to her. The *pahālatā* bridal gown is too cumbersome for her to wear daily. I shall give her a suitable dress of distinction which may be worn by her by day or by night and in all her bodily postures." So thinking, he had a solid but flexible and easy-to-wear garment worth a hundred thousand ticals of silver, called *Ghanamatṭhaka*, made for Visākhā. When the dress was ready, he invited the Buddha and His Saṅgha to an offering of food. He let his daughter-in-law bathed in sixteen pots of scented water, and put on the special dress in the presence of the Buddha, in which she was to pay homage to the Buddha. The Buddha spoke words in appreciation of the offering and returned to the monastery.

From that time onwards, Visākhā's life was one of meritorious deeds such as giving charity in which she took great delight, and which she could afford to do much as she like. She won wide recognition as the great female lay supporter after she obtained eight special privileges as boon from the Buddha¹. Her story was comparable to that of the moon in the sky. Her reputation as the head of a big family also was noteworthy, for she had ten sons and ten daughters who had, (like herself) ten sons and ten daughters each. These four hundred grand-children had also ten sons and ten daughters each. Thus making a total of eight thousand great grand-children.

The ancient Theras versified this fact thus:

1. The eight privileges as boons:

- (i) lifelong privilege of donating robes to the Saṅgha for use in the raining season,
- (ii) the privilege of offering food to visiting bhikkhus,
- (iii) the privilege of offering food to travelling bhikkhus,
- (iv) the privilege of offering food to sick bhikkhus,
- (v) the privilege of offering food to the bhikkhus who were nursing the sick ones,
- (vi) the privilege of offering medicine to sick bhikkhus,
- (vii) the lifelong privilege of offering gruel (for breakfast),
- (viii) the privilege of offering under lower robes to bhikkhunīs.

(See details in **Vinaya Mahāvagga**)

“For having twenty children, four hundred grand-children and eight thousand great-grand-children, Visākhā is renowned throughout the Southern Island Continent.”

Some Distinctive Qualities of Visākhā

Visākhā lived up to 120 years of age. Not having a single grey hair, she looked always as if the age of a sixteen year old. When she went to the Buddha’s monastery, accompanied by her children, grand-children and great-grand-children, she was undistinguishable from them.

When people saw Visākhā walking, they never felt satisfied with watching her walk. But when she stood, she looked as graceful; when she sat or when she was lying down, people thought her very graceful in that posture.

She had physical might equivalent to five great elephant bulls. On one occasion, the King of Kosala, wishing to test her reputed strength, let loose a great elephant bull in her direction. The beast ran towards her menacingly with its trunk uplifted. (Visākhā’s five hundred companion girls ran away in fear. Some of her five hundred companions hugged her, (as if to safeguard her). This is a Sri Lankā version.) “What’s up?” she asked them. They said: “Maiden, the King wants to test your strength and sent an attacking elephant bull at you!”

Visākhā thought: “What use with running away from this beast? And if I were to handle it squarely, it would be crushed.” So thinking, she gently took the beast’s trunk in her two fingers and turned him off, which sent him reeling. The out lookers cheered Visākhā coolly and then proceeded home.

The Construction of The Pubbārāma Monastery

Visākhā was widely known as the auspicious lady, not only for her perennial beauty, but also for the health and robustness of her children and grand-children for none of them died before the end of their life span. The citizen of Senath would invite Visākhā as the guest-of-honour whenever they held ceremonial offerings. One day, after attending such a function and was proceeding to the Buddha’s monastery, she thought it lacking in modesty if she went before Him, attired in her gorgeous *mahālata* dress. So, at the entrance to the monastery, she entrusted it to her maid servant who was reborn into the world due to Visākhā’s past great deed, for she had to be, like Visākhā, as strong as the equivalent of five great elephants bulls.

(She left the great gown with her to be kept with her until she came back from the Buddha’s presence after hearing a discourse.)

Leaving the *mahālata* dress with her maid-servant and putting on the *Ghanamaṭṭhaka* dress instead, Visākhā went before the Buddha and listened to a discourse. After the discourse, she made obeisance to Him and left the monastery. The maid-servant left the *mahālata* dress at the place where she was listening to the Buddha’s discourse and forgotten to collect it when she left. It was Venerable Ānanda’s routine duty to collect things left through forgetfulness of visitors to the Buddha’s monastery. On that day, when he found Visākhā’s *mahālata* dress, he reported it to the Buddha who asked him to store it away in a suitable place. The Venerable Ānanda picked it up and hung it at one end of the flight of stairs.

Visākhā then went around the various places in the Jetavana monastery together with Suppiya², a well-known female lay-disciple, to find out the needs of the guest *bhikkhus*, the

2. Suppiyā the female lay disciple was the wife of Supiyā the Householder of Bārāṇasī. This couple were highly devoted to the Triple Gem. They were regular supporters of the Saṅgha with regard to the four bhikkhu requisites. The female disciple Suppiyā once sacrificed her own flesh from the thigh to cook a soup for a sick bhikkhus. Due to her intense devotion to the Buddha, the spot, where her flesh was cut, was miraculously restored without leaving a scar. Read **Vinaya Mahāvagga**.

sick *bhikkhus*, and *bhikkhus* who were on a journey. It was usual for junior *bhikkhus* and novices who needed ghee or honey or oil to bring containers to be filled by the two visiting ladies on such rounds.

After she had visited the sick *bhikkhus*, the junior *bhikkhus* and *sāmaṇeras* and attended to their needs, she left the Jetavana monastery by another gate. Before leaving the monastery compound, Visākhā asked her maid-servant to bring the *mahālata* dress for her to wear. Then only the maid remembered about it and said: “My lady, I have forgotten to pick it up.”

“Then, go and fetch it,” instructed Visākhā. “But,” she continued, “in case the Venerable Ānanda were to have moved it to another place himself, say to him that the dress is to be considered as donated to him.” She said this because she knew that the Venerable Ānanda always kept in his custody all articles left by forgetful visitors of all the four classes to the Jetavana monastery.

When the Venerable Ānanda saw Visākhā’s maid-servant, he asked her why she returned. And being told of the *mahālata* dress, the Venerable Ānanda said to her: “I have hung it at one end of the stairway. Go and get it.” Then she said: “Venerable Sir, my lady has instructed me that if the dress had been held in the hand of your reverence, she would not take it back because she would deem it already donated to you.” The maid went back to Visākhā and reported the matter to her.

Then, Visākhā said to her: “My girl, I consider it donated to the Venerable Ānanda. I have no desire to wear it after the Venerable had handled it. However, keeping it in his custody would be troublesome to him. I will donate something that is proper for the Sangha to use. Go and get it.” And the maid did as she was bidden. Visākhā sent for the goldsmith and let them appraise the value of the *mahālata* dress. The goldsmith said: “This dress worths nine crores in material value plus a hundred thousand in workmanship.” Visākhā let the *mahālata* dress being displayed on an elephant and put it for public sale.

But there was no one who could afford to buy a dress worth a fortune. Moreover, there were no women who could withstand the sheer weight of that bejewelled great gown. As a matter of fact, there were only three women on earth who could afford and wear this kind of dress. They were:

- (1) Visākhā.
- (2) Mallikā (i.e. a native of Malla province) wife of Bandula the Commander-in-Chief.
- (3) the daughter of the King of Bārāṇasī.

Since there was no buyer of the great dress, Visākhā herself bought it at the appraised price (of nine crores and a hundred thousand). She put the money in a cart and took it to the Jetavana monastery where, after making obeisance to the Buddha, she said to Him: “Venerable Sir, the Venerable Ānanda, in keeping my *mahālata* dress in his custody, had handled it. From that time onwards, it is not proper for me to wear it. Therefore, I have sold it out for the benefit of the Sangha and in such a way the Sangha might properly put it to use. Since there was no one who could buy it, I have now bought it at its sales value of nine crores and a hundred thousand. In which way, out of the four requisites should this money be utilised?” The Buddha said: “It would be fitting if you build a monastery for the Sangha near the eastern gate of this city (Sāvatti).” Visākhā was very glad to hear this. She bought a piece of land for the site of the monastery for the price of nine crores. The building was to cost her another nine crores. Construction soon began.

Venerable Moggallāna supervised The Construction of The Monastery

One morning, the Buddha reviewed the world for beings deserving of Enlightenment and he saw Bhaddiya, the son of the householder of Bhaddiya, who had had his former existence in the deva realm. So, after His meal in the house of Anāthapiṇḍika, the Buddha went in the direction of the northern gate of Sāvatti.

(It may be noted that the Buddha usually received offering of alms-food at Visākhā’s house. After which, He would go through the city’s southern gate to Jetavana monastery as His residence. If, He received His alms-food from

Anāthapiṇḍika, He would go through the city's eastern gate to the Pubbārāma monastery as His residence. When He left the city by the northern gate, people understood that He was taking a journey.)

When Visākhā heard the news of the Buddha taking the northern gate, she went to see Him and said: “Venerable Sir, are you making a journey?” The Buddha replied: “Yes, Visākhā, it is so.” Visākhā said: “Venerable Sir, I have sacrificed such big fortune (of nine crores) to build a monastery for your use. Would you wait till the building is complete?” “Visākhā, my present trip cannot be postponed.” Then, Visākhā understood that the Buddha had in mind some prospective disciple whose past merit having ripened, was due for *pagga hala*, and said: “Venerable Sir, in that case, would you leave behind some *bhikkhus* who would supervise the construction?” Thereupon, the Buddha said: “Visākhā, take the alms-bowl of the *bhikkhu* of your choice.”

Visākhā had a natural liking for the Venerable Ānanda. However, she thought that the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna, with his great powers, would be a real help in the expeditious completion of her monastery. So, she took the alms-bowl of the Venerable Moggallāna, who glanced towards the Buddha. The Buddha said to the Venerable: “Moggallāna you and your followers of five hundred *bhikkhu* will stay behind.” And so the Venerable Moggallāna became the *bhikkhu* to supervise Visākhā's monastery construction.

By the great power of the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna, big distances as much as fifty or sixty *yojanas* were made every day by the people who collected building materials. In carrying them too, they could do it without great hardship. No mishaps such as broken axles in the carts ever occurred. Soon, the two-storey seven-tier monastery was completed on a clear and level site of eight *karisas* wide. The seven-tier monastery had five hundred chambers on the ground floor and five hundred chambers on the first floor. Around the main building, she added, for better perspective and practical usefulness, five hundred meditation cubicles, five hundred smaller tiered monastic dwellings and five hundred stairways.

The Donation Ceremony that lasts for Four Months

The Buddha returned from His tour after nine months. By that time, the construction of the Pubbārāma monastery had been completed, thanks to the supervision of the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna. Visākhā had a broad gold plate, about the size that might contain sixty water pots, fashioned for the pinnacle of the monastery. When she heard that the Buddha was returning to the Jevatana monastery, she invited Him to stay in her new monastery, known as the Pubbārāma (the eastern) monastery, together with His Sangha, because she wanted to hold ceremonies marking the donation of the monastery. She said: “Venerable Sir, I would request the Bhagavā to stay in this monastery for the four raining months.” The Buddha having acceded to her request, she made great offerings of food to the Buddha and His Sangha. Then, a female friend of Visākhā went to her and requested a favour: “Friend Visākhā, I would like to donate a piece of floor cover worth a hundred thousand ticals to your monastery. Kindly show me where I should put it.” Visākhā replied: “Very well, friend, look for the place yourself, for if I were to say: ‘There is no place for your floor cover, you might misunderstand me.’ ” Her friend went about the great monastery, inspecting very part of it, at both the two storeys, but could not find a spot which was not already covered with flooring material of the same quality or better than the one she had brought. She was greatly disappointed and wept in a corner.

The Venerable Ānanda saw her weeping and asked her the reason. She told him her story. The Venerable Ānanda then consoled her: “Do not worry, I will show you the spot where you may spread your flooring material,” and he pointed to her an uncovered spot at the end of the stairway which was the place for the Sangha to wash their feet. She was told that all the *bhikkhus* would step over that flooring before the monastery, after washing their feet and that would be a really meritorious thing for her as the donor. (That was the only spot which Visākhā's attention missed.)

Offerings of The Four Bhikkhu Requisites to The Sangha

For four raining months, Visākhā made offerings of the four *bhikkhu* requisites to the Buddha and His Sangha. On the full moon of Tazaungmon (i.e. November) she donated robe material of superior quality. The lowest quality received by a newly admitted *bhikkhu* was worth one thousand. All the *bhikkhus* also received the four-foods concoction, *catu padhu*, to fill their alms-bowl full. The four months long offerings that marked her donation of the Pubbārāma monastery cost her nine crores.

Thus, the site costing nine crores, the building, nine crores, and the ceremonial offering, nine crores, made a total of twenty-seven crores which Visākhā incurred in her donation towards the Pubbārāma monastery, a sum of money which very few women did on such a scale, and more remarkable for her since she lived in the house of a non-believer.

Exultation of Visākhā on Her Good Deed

On the evening of the end of the four month long ceremony, Visākhā amidst her big company of offerings was very happy in her thought that her lifelong ambition had been fulfilled. In sheer exultation, she sang the following five stanzas in a wonderfully melodious voice while going round the big monastery:

- (1) “Ah! My cherished ambition with the thought: ‘When would I (having made my earnest wish and acquiring merit over a hundred thousand world-cycles) be able to build a monastery of fine cement concrete structure that would delight every visitor, (*bhikkhu* and layman alike)? It is fulfilled now!
- (2) “Ah! My cherished ambition with the thought: ‘When would I be able to donate monastic living place for the Sangha, complete with couch, reclining chair, cushion, pillow, etc.?’ This thought that had occupied my mind, setting Nibbāna as my goal, since the time of Buddha Padumuttara. It is fulfilled now!
- (3) “Ah! My cherished ambition with the thought: ‘When would I be able to make offerings of food to the Sangha, (the merit whereof accomplishing long life, personal charm (beauty), happiness, strength and intelligence), comprising the seven types of food offering, such as food offering by casting lots, etc.; rice cooked in meat, etc.?’ This thought that had occupied my mind, setting Nibbāna as my goal, since the time of Buddha Padumuttara. It is fulfilled now!
- (4) “Ah! My cherished ambition with the thought: ‘When would I be able to donate robes to the Sangha, that is robes made of costly Kāsi cloth, cloth made from cotton fibre, etc.?’ This thought that had occupied my mind, setting Nibbāna as my goal, since the time of Buddha Padumuttara. It is fulfilled now!
- (5) “Ah! My cherished ambition with the thought: ‘When would I be able to donate to the Sangha the physician’s formula as medicine, that is, the four-food concoction comprising ghee, honey, sesame oil and molasses?’ This thought that had occupied my mind, setting Nibbāna as my goal, since the time of Buddha Padumuttara. It is fulfilled now!”

— Commentary on the **Dhammapada** —

Visākhā was named The Foremost

In the morning, Visākhā’s house was aflame with the colour of the saffron robes of *bhikkhus* coming and going freely, and the atmosphere was vibrating with the movement of *bhikkhus* whose robes filled the air with the odour of the dye-stuff. As in the house of Anāthapiṇḍika, Visākhā’s house had meals cooked for offering to *bhikkhus* of varying needs, namely, the travelling ones, the sick ones, the visiting ones.

In the morning, Visākhā offered food to these *bhikkhus*. In the afternoon, she would go to the Buddha’s monastery with her maids, carrying medicinal properties, such as ghee, butter-milk, honey and molasses, and also eight kinds of beverages made from Eugenia, mango, the Indian butter fruit, the *Uraria lagopoides*, the madhuka drink, two kinds of banana, and nectar of the lotus and offered them according to the needs of the *bhikkhus*.

Then she would listen to a sermon by the Buddha before returning home. (This is a typical day for Visākhā, replete with meritorious actions.)

Therefore, on one occasion, the Buddha was naming foremost female lay-disciple according to their merit, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My female lay disciples who delight in charity, Visākhā is the foremost.”

3 & 4. KHUJJUTTARĀ and SĀMĀVATĪ

(a) Their Past Aspirations

The future Khujjuttarā and the future Sāmāvati were reborn into the families of rich men in the city of Hāmsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. As they went to the Buddha’s monastery to listen to a sermon given by the Buddha, the future Khujjuttarā saw a female lay disciple being named by Him as the foremost among female lay disciples in learning. She had a strong desire to become one herself. After making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, she expressed her aspiration to Him, who predicted the fulfilment of her aspiration.

The future Sāmāvati saw a female lay disciple being named by the Buddha as the foremost in abiding in universal goodwill. She had a strong desire to be so designated by a Buddha in future time. After making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, she expressed her aspiration to that designation to Him, who predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

These two ladies spent their whole lives in deeds of merit. At the end of their respective life span, they were reborn in the deva-world. After being reborn in the either the deva-world or human world for a hundred world-cycles, the present world-system with five Buddhas arrived.

During the time of Buddha Gotama, in the city of Kosambī, Ghosaka the householder and his wife made a routine alms-give of one thousand ticals everyday. (For details of this illustrious couple, read Chapter 27).

(b) Khujjuttarā and Sāmāvati in Their Existence

It was during the time in which the Ghosaka couple was practising their routine charity that the future Khujjuttarā passed away from her deva existence and was conceived in the womb of the governess in the house of Ghosaka. She was humpback at birth and was called Khujjuttarā. (As to her destiny of being born a humpback and a slave in spite of her great past merit, we shall discuss later.)

Sāmāvati The Daughter of The Householder

About that time, the future Sāmāvati passed away for her deva existence and was reborn as the daughter of Bhaddhavatiya the householder in Bhaddiya, in the province of Bhaddiya. She was named as Sāmā by her parents.

At one time, the town of Bhaddhiya suffered from famine and the people left the town for other towns for their own survival. Bhaddiya the householder said to his wife: “Dear wife, we cannot know when this famine will end. We too must leave this place. Our friend Ghosaka the householder of Kosambī will recognise us if he sees us. Let us go to him.” He told his wife about going to Ghosaka but the two Householders had known each other by their reputations only and had never met. They decided to go, leaving behind their servants. The three members of the family (father, mother and daughter) went in the direction of Kosambī, travelling by stages. After going through much hardship on the way, they at last reached Kosambī and stayed in a public rest house which was outside the city.

Sāmāvati’s Woes

Ghosaka the householder was making his daily alms-giving to all the needy who called at

his door. Destitute travellers and mendicants thronged to his house every day. Bhaddhavatiya the householder and his family were looking haggard after a hard journey. They decided they should not present themselves before Ghosaka in the present unsightly state but should rest and recoup themselves first. So, they remained at the rest-house while their daughter Sāmā was sent to the alms-giving station of Ghosaka to beg for food.

Sāmāvati, as a daughter of a householder, was reluctant to jostle through her way in the unruly crowds of alms-seekers. As she stood apart in a hesitant manner, her dignified demeanour was noticed by the superintendent of alms distribution. He thought to himself: “While everyone else is making loud noise and trying to reach out ahead of others like in a fisherman’s fish distribution place, this young maiden is keeping back. She must be of some worthy family. And she has a fine personality.” And so he addressed Sāmāvati: “Dear girl, why don’t you step up and beg?” She replied: “Dear father, how could a decent girl like me elbow through in such a jammed packed crowd?”

“How many persons are there in your family (group)?”

“There are three, father.”

The man doled out three food packages to her.

Sāmāvati gave the food to her parents. Her father who had not eaten for some time, ate it greedily and died of overeating on that every day. On the next day, Sāmāvati went to the food distribution point and asked for only two food packages. Her mother who was not used to poor food as this and who also was bereaved for the loss of her husband was taken ill that evening and died after midnight. Then, on the next day, Sāmāvati went and asked for only one food package.

The superintendent asked her: “Dear girl, on the first day, you asked the food package for three persons; on the second day, you asked only for two and now on the third day, you are asking for only one. Why is this?” Sāmāvati told him about the death of her father on the first day, her mother on second day, after midnight and that she alone survived.

“Where do you come from?” the man inquired. Sāmāvati told him how her family had fled famine in Bhaddhiya and the consequent information. “In that case,” the superintendent said, “you should be deemed as a daughter of Ghosaka the householder. I have no daughter of my own. So you will henceforth be my daughter.”

Sāmāvati, the adopted daughter of the superintendent of the alms-distribution place, asked her adopted father: “Father why is there such a din at the place?”

“When there is such a huge crowd, there has to be a big noise,” he replied.

“But, father, I have an idea!”

“Then, say it.”

“Father, let there be a barbed wire fencing around the place, keep only one entrance; let the people go in, receive their alms, and go out on the other end, the only exit.”

The father took her advice and in following her instruction, the distribution centre had then become as quiet and dignified as a lotus pond.

Sāmāvati was adopted by Ghosaka The Householder

Soon after that Ghosaka noted the silence that prevailed in the alms distribution place which was usually full of noise and asked his superintendent:

“Are you not giving alms today?”

“Yes, I do, Master.”

“But why is it so silent at the centre which used to be so much of a din?”

“Ah! that is true, indeed, Master. I have a wise daughter, I have been able to maintain quiet at the place on the advice of my daughter.”

“But, I never knew you had a daughter. Where have you got one?”

The superintendent had to confess the truth. He related to his master the circumstances under which Sāmāvati became his adopted daughter. Thereupon, Ghosaka said to him: “O

man, why did you do that? You are doing a very improper thing indeed. You have kept me in the dark about this girl who is my daughter in this circumstance. Bring her to my house immediately.” The superintendent had to obey his master’s order. From then onwards, Sāmāvātī became the adopted daughter of Ghosaka who cherished her as his own daughter and found for her five hundred companions, who were of her own age and from worthy families.

Sāmāvātī became Queen of King Udena

One day when King Udena of Kosambī went round the city, he happened to see Sāmāvātī and her five hundred maid companions, romping (in the garden) and fell in love with her. On inquiring her parentage, he was told that she was the daughter of Ghosaka the householder. The King enquired whether she was married or not, and learning that she was not married, he sent his royal messengers to Ghosaka to ask for the hand of Sāmāvātī for marriage to him. Ghosaka thought to himself: “Sāmāvātī is our only daughter. We cannot put her life at risk in the King’s court which is full of intriguing women.” So he bluntly refused the King’s request. The King was furious and ordered that Ghosaka and his wife be evicted from their house which was to be sealed off.

When Sāmāvātī and her playmates returned and met her parents sitting miserably outside the house, she asked them what had happened. On hearing the story, she said to them: “Dear parents, why did you not tell the King’s men that your daughter would go and live at the palace on the condition that her five hundred maid-companions were allowed to remain with her there? Now, dear parents, give your reply to the King as I suggest.” Her parents said to her: “Very well, daughter, we did not know how you would take it (the King’s proposal).”

King Udena was greatly pleased to hear the message from Ghosaka. He said: “Let all the maid-companions come and stay with Sāmāvātī, even if they number a thousand!” Afterwards, on an auspicious day, at the auspicious hour when the planets were favourable, Sāmāvātī, together with her five hundred maid-companion, were conveyed to the palace of King Udena. The King appointed all the five hundred maids as ladies-in-waiting to his wife Sāmāvātī when he made her Queen with ceremonial anointing, and put her in a golden terraced mansion of her own, with full state of a Queen.

About this time, Ghosaka and his two householder friends, Kukkuta and Pāvārika of Kosambī, learning the news of the appearance of the Buddha and His residence at Sāvattī, went to Him. After listening to a discourse by the Buddha, they were established in Stream-Entry Knowledge. Later, they returned to Kosambī after making great offering to the Buddha and His Sangha for fifteen days. They obtained the assurance from the Buddha that He would visit Kosambī when they would invite Him later. They built a monastery each and on completion of which, they sent messages to the Buddha, inviting Him to visit Kosambī. Hence, the Buddha began His journey to Kosambī but seeing the ripeness of past merit in a brahmin couple by the name of Māgaṇḍiya, He made a detour to Kammāsadamma, a market town in the Province of Kuru, where He caused the Māgaṇḍiyas to comprehend the Ariya Truth and then proceeded to Kosambī.

Travelling by stages, He reached Kosambī and accepted the gift of three monasteries which were donated by three (Ariya) householders. When He entered the town on an alms collecting round, He and His procession of *bhikkhus* were reviled by a gang of drunken men who were instigated by Queen Māgaṇḍiya, who held a grudge against the Buddha. The Venerable Ānanda suggested to the Buddha that they leave the town which appeared so inhospitable. Instead, the Buddha gave a discourse to the Venerable Ānanda on the importance of taming oneself, which was recorded in Attadaṇṭa vatthu in the **Dhammapada** verses 320, 321 & 322. The Buddha stayed on for some time in Kosambī in the three monasteries in towns.

(For details of this episode, read Chapter 27.)

Khujjuttarā attained Stream-Entry

The three householders of Kosambī attended on the Buddha and His Sangha in turns, making big offerings for a month. Then they extended the privileges of honouring the Buddha and His Sangha, in making great offerings, to other people of Kosambī by organizing them into localities or association.

One day, the Buddha and His company of large number of *bhikkhus* were at the house of a florist, to receive his offerings. At that time, Khujjuttarā, the personal attendant to Queen Sāmāvati, went to buy flowers, which was her routine duty. The florist said to her: “Ah, dear Uttarā, I have no time to serve you this morning. I am busy attending on the Buddha and His Sangha. Will you lend a hand in our food offering? This good deed of yours will lead to your emancipation from bondage.” Khujjuttarā ate her portion of food given by the florist and joined him and his people in serving food to the Buddha. She learnt by heart the Buddha’s discourse, which was preached to those who came near Him. At the end of the discourse, she was established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry.

Sāmāvati and Her Five Hundred Companions attained Stream-Entry Knowledge

Khujjuttarā, in her daily purchase of flowers for Queen Sāmāvati, usually bought only four ticals worth of flowers and pocketed four ticals out of the Queen’s daily allowance of eight ticals for flowers. But on the day she became an *ariya* (as Stream-Enterer), Khujjuttarā had no mind to steal the money entrusted to her, and bought eight ticals worth of flowers, which now filled her basket. Queen Sāmāvati, seeing an unusually large quantity of flowers in Khujjuttarā’s basket, asked her: “Why dear Uttarā, you have such a big basket of flowers today, unlike the previous days! Did the King increase my allowance for flowers?”

Khujjuttarā, as an *ariya*, was now incapable of telling lies, and so confessed her previous misconduct. The Queen asked her: “Why, then, have you brought such a big quantity of flowers today?” And Khujjuttarā replied: “Because I do not steal the money today. I cannot do so because I have realized Nibbāna. I have comprehended the Deathlessness, after hearing the Buddha’s discourse.”

Thereupon, Queen Sāmāvati and her five hundred ladies-in-waiting spread out their hands and asked Khujjuttarā: “Dear Uttarā, give us a share of that Deathless Nibbāna!”

“Dear friends, Nibbāna is not something that can be apportioned to others. I will re-echo the words of the Buddha. If you are endowed with past merit you may gain Nibbāna, the Deathless, on hearing them.”

“Dear Uttarā, do go ahead!”

“But, I have to remain seated on a higher level than your seats before I start making the discourse.”

Queen Sāmāvati arranged a higher seat for Khujjuttarā and listened to the latter’s discourse, sitting at a lower level. Khujjuttarā, exercising the Analytical Knowledge pertaining to an *ariya*, still teaching herself for arahatship (i.e. *sekkha*), gave a discourse to Sāmāvati and her five hundred ladies-in-waiting. At the end of which, all of them were established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry. From that time onwards, Khujjuttarā was relieved of her all-round service duties and was given the task of going to the Buddha’s monastery to hear His sermon and, in turn, to teach Queen Sāmāvati and her ladies-in-waiting what she had learnt from the Buddha. In this way, Queen Sāmāvati and her company of ladies-in-waiting were given regular discourses in the palace by Khujjuttarā.

Khujjuttarā’s Past Merit and Demerit

Why was Khujjuttarā reborn into a slave family? It was due to her past evil deed. She had, during the time of Buddha Kassapa, made a female novice assist her in odd jobs (i.e. running errands for her). On account of that misdeed, she was reborn into a slave family for five hundred existences in succession. Why was she born with a hump-back? When she was a lady at the court of the King of Bārāṇasī before the advent of Buddha Gotama, she saw a Paccekabuddha with a hump-back who went to the palace to collect alms-food. Then she mimicked the Paccekabuddha in the presence of other court ladies. For that evil deed, she was born hump-back in the present existence which was her last existence.

What merit did she earn in the past to be endowed with inmate wisdom in her last existence? When she was a lady at the court of the King of Bārāṇasī before the advent of the Buddha, she saw eight Paccekabuddha carrying alms-bowls which were filled with milk-rice and were piping hot. To relieve the heat on the hands of these revered ones, she removed eight gold bangles which she was wearing and offered them for use as buffers underneath the alms-bowls. That thoughtful deed was the merit she earned.

Queen Māgaṇḍī intrigued against Queen Sāmāvātī

Although Queen Sāmāvātī and her five hundred ladies-in-waiting had become *ariyas*, they never had the opportunity of meeting the Buddha because King Udena was a non-believer. Since they were Stream-Enterers, they had a great longing to see the Buddha in person. All they could hope for was to get a glimpse of the Buddha whenever He was passing through the city. As there were no sufficient trellis windows to peep through, the ladies bore holes in the walls of their sleeping quarters, through which they peeped to gain precious glimpses of the Buddha.

One day, as Queen Māgaṇḍī was strolling outside when she noticed the small holes on the walls of the ladies-in-waiting of Queen Sāmāvātī and asked the maidens what the holes were for. They did not know that Queen Māgaṇḍī was holding a grudge against the Buddha and honestly divulged their secret arrangement that had enabled them to watch the Buddha passing by and to honour Him by standing in their own rooms and peeping through the small holes on the wall. Queen Māgaṇḍī thought to herself, grinning, thus: “Now my time has come to avenge Samaṇa Gotama. These girls followers of Gotama will also have their deserts!”

Then, when Māgaṇḍī was alone with King Udena, she said to him: “Great King, Queen Sāmāvātī and her ladies-in-waiting have given their hearts to someone else besides you. They are plotting against your life in a few days. They have no affection for you. They have such great interest in Samaṇa Gotama that they peep at him whenever He goes in the city. They have made holes in the wall of their rooms to get a view of Samaṇa Gotama. The King did not believe her at first but Māgaṇḍī repeated her story another time, yet the King still did not believe her. For the third time, she repeated it, and when the King refused to believe her, she suggested that the King go to the private quarters of the ladies-in-waiting and inquired. The King did as she had suggested and saw small holes. He asked the ladies-in-waiting about the holes and they honestly and truly told him the purpose of holes. The King was not angry with them but merely ordered that the holes be closed. He let a trellis windows fixed on the upstairs of the ladies’ quarters. (This was the first malicious report on the part of Queen Māgaṇḍī).

Queen Māgaṇḍī then hatched another plot. She said to the King: “Great King, let us put to the test the loyalty of Sāmāvātī and company towards you. Send them eight living hens and ask them to cook a meal with them for Your Majesty. “ The King did as Māgaṇḍī advised. Queen Sāmāvātī, being an *ariya* disciple of the Buddha, was above killing and so replied to the King that it would not be proper to kill the hens.

But Māgaṇḍī was crafty enough. She said to the King: “Great King, say to Sāmāvātī to cook a meal with the hens for Samana Gotama.” The King did as he was told. This time, Māgaṇḍī had the hens killed, on the way before they reached Queen Sāmāvātī, who, on receiving the lifeless hens, had no suspicions about them in her simple mind. She had them cooked and send the cooked dish to the Buddha. Queen Māgaṇḍī then pointed the fact of Sāmāvātī’s behaviour to the King, saying: “Now, do you see where Sāmāvātī’s interest lies?” However, the King did not take offence against his beloved Sāmāvātī. (This was the second malicious plot on the part of Queen Māgaṇḍī.)

The Third Malicious Plot of Queen Māgaṇḍī

King Udena had three queens, viz., (1) Queen Sāmāvātī, (2) Queen Vāsuladattā, daughter of King Caṇḍapaccota of Ujjeni and (3) Queen Māgaṇḍī. Each Queen had five hundred ladies-in-waiting. The King spent seven days with each of his three queens in turn, in their respective palatial mansions. Queen Māgaṇḍī kept a small cobra by her side in a bamboo

container which she stealthily transferred into the King's harp and sealed the small hole in it, when the King visited her. The King always carried his harp wherever he went. He was so fond of it because its music could cast a spell on elephants which would become attracted to it player, the King.

When the King was about to go to Queen Sāmāvātī, Queen Māgaṇḍī said to him (as if she had real concern for the King's safety): "Great King, Sāmāvātī is a follower of Samaṇa Gotama. She does not value your life as much as a blade of grass. She is always intent on doing harm to you. So, please beware."

After the King had spent seven days with Queen Sāmāvātī, he went to stay with Queen Māgaṇḍī for another seven days. She said to him: "How was it, Great King, did Sāmāvātī find no opportunity to harm you?" Then, taking the harp from the King's hand, and shaking it, she exclaimed: "Why? There's some living thing moving about inside the harp!" And after stealthily opened the small hole in the harp, she exclaimed: "O! death unto me! There is a snake in the harp!" She dropped the harp and ran away from it. The snake's coming out from the harp was enough to arouse the King's anger. Like a bamboo forest on fire, the King was hissing with fury. "Go and bring Sāmāvātī and all her ladies-in-waiting!" he shouted. The King's men obeyed promptly.

(A Maxim:)

If you control yourself, retaining righteousness and maintaining a loving heart, when someone get angry with you, how could you be the worse for it?

Queen Sāmāvātī knew that the King was angry with them. She advised her ladies-in-waiting to diffuse loving-kindness towards the King for the whole day. When they were brought before the King, Sāmāvātī and her ladies-in-waiting were made to line up facing the King who stood with bow and poisoned arrow. They remained diffusing loving-kindness towards the King, who found himself unable to shoot and at the same time unable to put down the bow and arrow. Perspiration flowed properly from his body which was trembling. His mouth was discharging saliva. He resembled a man who had suddenly lost his faculties.

Queen Sāmāvātī said to him: "Great King, are you feeling exhausted?"

The King replied: "My dear Queen, I do feel exhausted. Be my support."

"Very well, O King," she said. "direct your arrow towards the ground."

The King did as he was told. Then Sāmāvātī wished: "May the arrow be released." And the poisoned arrow were into the ground.

At that moment, King Udena went and dipped himself in water and in his wet cloths and hair, he fell at Sāmāvātī's feet, saying: "Forgive me, my dear Queen. I had foolishly acted under the instigation of Māgaṇḍī."

"I forgive you, O King," said Sāmāvātī.

"Very well, O Queen, you are full of forgiveness towards me. From now on, you are free to make offerings to the Buddha. Do make offerings and do go to the Buddha's monastery in the afternoons and attend His sermons. From now on you shall be well protected."

Sāmāvātī, seizing the opportunity, made this request: "If so, Great King, would you ask the Buddha to arrange for a *bhikkhu* to come to the palace and teach us the Good Doctrine every day?" King Udena went to the Buddha and made the request, whereupon the Buddha assigned Venerable Ānanda the task. From that time, Sāmāvātī and her ladies-in-waiting invited Venerable Ānanda to the palace and made daily food offerings, after which, they learnt the Doctrine from him.

(The Venerable Ānanda had in one of his past existences offered a needle and a small piece of robe material of a palm's width to a Paccekabuddha. For that good deed, in his present existence, he was endowed with innate wisdom, and also received gifts of robe material on five hundred occasions.)

Sāmāvati and Her Ladies-in-waiting were burnt to Death

Māgaṇḍī was at her wit's end in her attempts to estrange King Udena and Sāmāvati. She became desperate and made a desperate attempt. She persuaded the King to go on a picnic in the park. She detailed her uncle to commit arson at the palace during the absence of the King. Queen Sāmāvati and her ladies-in-waiting were to be ordered to remain indoors, using the King's authority. Then their mansion was to be burnt. Queen Māgaṇḍī's uncle, the foolish brahmin, executed the plot successfully.

As their past evil deed had now fructified, Sāmāvati and her five hundred ladies-in-waiting could not dwell in the attainment of their Fruition of Stream-Entry on that fateful day and lost their lives in the flames, like lumps of bran in a storehouse. The guards, at Queen Sāmāvati's mansion reported the calamity to the King.

The King made discreet inquiries into the prime mover in this horrible case of arson, and knew that it was none other than Māgaṇḍī. However, he did not reveal his true intention. Instead, he sent for Queen Māgaṇḍī and said to her: "Dear Māgaṇḍī, you have done for me what I ought to have done by myself. You have done away with Sāmāvati who had made various attempts on my life. I adore you for this act. I am going to reward you amply. Now, call your kinsmen."

Queen Māgaṇḍī was delighted to hear the King's words. She gathered all her relatives and also her friends, whom were as if they were her relatives. When all of Māgaṇḍī's associates were gathered, the King had deep pits dug in the palace ground, where all the culprits were put with only their heads showing above the ground. Their heads were then severed and then iron plough shares were driven across their broken skulls. As for Queen Māgaṇḍī, her body was cut into pieces and cooked in oil.

The Past Evil Deeds of Sāmāvati and Her Ladies-in-waiting

The death of Sāmāvati and her ladies-in-waiting by being burnt alive had its root in their past evil deeds. In one of their existences before the advent of Buddha Gotama, the five hundred maidens were standing on the river bank at the Gaṅgā after having a long frolicking bath. As they were shivering with cold, they saw a small thatched hut nearby, which was the dwelling of a Paccekabuddha. They rashly burnt it for warming themselves without first seeing whether there was any occupant inside or not.

At that time, the Paccekabuddha was dwelling in the attainment of Cessation. Only when the little hut was reduced to ashes that they found, to their horror, the sitting Paccekabuddha in a motionless state. Although in setting fire to the hut, they had no intention to kill the Paccekabuddha, the thought of killing him now entered their frightened mind because they recognized him as the Paccekabuddha who went to the King's palace for daily alms-food. To avoid the King's wrath, they must burnt the revered one and leave no trace of him. So, by way of cremation, they gathered more fuel and set fire to the sitting Paccekabuddha. This act being done with intention to kill, constituted a grave misdeed, carrying grave consequence.

(When the fuel which the maidens put to the fire had exhausted, the Paccekabuddha rose from dwelling in the attainment of Cessation, cleaned His robes of ashes and rising into the air, went away, even as they (maidens) were watching in great wonder. They suffered in *niraya* for that evil deed, and as a remaining resultant thereof, they were burnt alive.)

(c) Designating the Foremost Female Lay Disciple

After the utter destruction of Queen Sāmāvati and her five hundred ladies-in-waiting, there arose words of praise among the four types of assembly, viz. (1) the assembly of *bhikkhus*, (2) that of *bhikkhunīs*, (3) that of male lay disciples and (4) that of female lay disciples, such that:

"Khujjutarā was learned and although a woman, she could expound the Doctrine that resulted in five hundred ladies of the court attaining Stream-Entry."

“Sāmāvātī was accomplished in the practice of dwelling in universal goodwill that she was able to avert the arrow of King Udena through her diffusion of goodwill towards the King.”

Later on, when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery and was naming female lay disciples, He declared, in respect of Khujjutarā:

“*Bhikkhu*, among My female lay-disciples who are learned, Khujjutarā is the foremost.”

(Khujjutarā earned the distinction because she was given by Queen Sāmāvātī and her ladies-in-waiting, after their attaining Stream-Entry, the task of learning further about the Buddha’s Doctrine by listening from Him, His sermons daily. This privilege of hers made her so immersed in the Doctrine that she learnt the Three Piṭakas by heart. This was why the Buddha named her the “foremost in learning.”

As a *sekka*, an ariya still learning by herself for arahatship, Khujjutarā was endowed with the Four Analytical Knowledges pertaining to a *sekka* which enabled her to bring Enlightenment to Sāmāvātī and her ladies-in-waiting. While the Buddha was staying in Kosambī, Khujjutarā went to the Buddha daily and listened to the sermons. On returning to the palace, she repeated what she had learnt to Sāmāvātī and her ladies-in-waiting. She would begin her discourses to them with these words: “Indeed had the Bhagavā said thus; I have heard the *arahat* say thus.” The 112 discourses she made to the ladies have been put on record by the elders at the Council as “the Buddha’s words,” under the title of **Itivuttaka**. (See Commentary on the **Itivuttaka**.)

On that occasion, the Buddha said in respect of Sāmāvātī thus:

“*Bhikkhu*, among My female lay-disciples who dwell in the *jhāna* of universal goodwill, Sāmāvātī is the foremost.”

5. UTTARĀ NANDAMĀTĀ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Uttarā Nandamātā was reborn into a rich family in the city of Hamsāvātī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. As she was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a female lay disciple being named as the foremost among those who dwelt in *jhāna*. She had a strong desire for that distinction in some future existences. After making a great offering, she expressed her aspiration to the Buddha who predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

(b) Her Last Existence as Uttarā, Daughter of Puṇṇasīha The Householder

The future Uttarā, after passing away from that existence, was reborn either in the deva realm or the human realm for a hundred thousand world-cycles. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of Puṇṇasīha and his wife Uttara, who were household servants to Sumana the householder in Rājagaha.

Puṇṇasīha’s Ascendancy

It was a festive occasion in Rājagaha on account of the auspicious day, according to the planets. Sumana the householder of Rājagaha called to Puṇṇasīha and said: “O man, Puṇṇa, attending the festivities on this auspicious day and keeping the Uposatha precepts are actually matters that should not concern poor folks (like you). Yet, I am going to give you an allowance for this festive day, and you may either go and enjoy yourself at the festival or do your ploughing as usual. Just let me know whichever you choose.”

Puṇṇasīha replied: “Master, let me first consult this matter with my wife.”

At home, Puṇṇasīha told his wife Uttara about what his master had said to him. She said

to him: “Dear husband, the householder is our master. Whatever the master says to you is to be taken as justified. But I think you ought not to miss a day’s work for him.”

And Puṇṇasiha, agreeing with his wife’s suggestion, yoked his oxen and went to the field to do the ploughing.

It so happened that on that great day for Puṇṇasiha, the Venerable Sāriputta, after rising from his absorption in the attainment of Cessation, reviewed the world as to who deserved his blessing. He saw the ripening of Puṇṇasiha’s past merit as sufficing condition for Enlightenment³ and taking his alms-bowl and great robe at the time for alms-round, he went to the place where Puṇṇasiha was ploughing. He stood at a short distance where he could be seen by Puṇṇasiha, who, on seeing him, stopped ploughing and went near him and made his obeisance with fivefold contact. The Venerable Sāriputta, wishing to do good to the poor man, looked at him and asked him where some good water might be available. Puṇṇasiha thought that the Venerable wanted to wash his face, and so he made a tooth-brush out of a creeper nearby and gave it to him. While the Venerable was brushing his teeth, Puṇṇasiha took the alms-bowl and water-strainer and fetched a bowl full of fresh clear water, which was properly strained.

After washing his face, Venerable Sāriputta went on his way to collect alms-food. Then, it occurred to Puṇṇasiha thus: “The Venerable had never come this way before. He came today probably to bring benefit to me. Oh, if my wife had brought my meal, how good it would be to offer it to the Venerable!”

Puṇṇasiha’s wife remembered that it was an auspicious day according to the planets. She had cooked a meal early in the morning with the ration which she received and carried it to her husband. On the way, she saw Venerable Sāriputta and thought to herself: “On the previous days, I did not have anything to offer to the Venerable although I saw him, or when I had something to offer I did not meet him. Today, I have both the gift and the donee at hand. I will cook another meal for my husband and offer this meal to the Venerable now.” Thinking thus, she put her cooked rice into the Venerable Sāriputta’s alms-bowl and made her wish, saying: “May we be free from this life of poverty.” The Venerable responded: “May your wish be fulfilled,” showing appreciation and returned to the monastery.

(Herein, it may be noted that in performing a deed of merit there arise many impulsion thought processes of great merit, each consisting of seven meritorious ‘impulsions’ or sub-moments of the thought process. If conditions are favourable, the first of these seven impulsions brings immediate result even in the very present existence.

Four present conditions must be there for such immediate resultant, namely, (a) the donee is an *arahat* or at least a Never-Returner, (b) the gift is something righteously obtained, (c) the donor has a strong will or volition in making the gift, i.e. his intention is intense before the act, during the act, and he feels glad for it after the act, (d) the donee has just arisen from dwelling in the attainment of Cessation. And above all, there must be sufficient past merit in the donor. In the case of Puṇṇasiha and his wife, all the required present and past conditions co-existed. His past merit to make him a rich man was ripe, so, on that very day, he reaped a harvest of solid lumps of gold from the field he was ploughing. This elevated him to the status of the Rich Man as conferred by the King.)

Puṇṇasiha’s wife returned to her home (without proceeding to her husband) and cooked

3. ‘Sufficing condition for Enlightenment’:

For gaining *magga-phala*, one must be endowed with past merit, for present favourable conditions by themselves cannot lead to one’s Enlightenment. Likewise, an action that brings its result in the very present existence also need the support of sufficing past merit to fructify. Therefore, being a virtuous person with the right reasoning, the fortunate present conditions need sufficing past merit for one to gain Enlightenment. (Sub-Commentary)

another meal for her husband, and brought it to him. Fearing that her husband might be angry, (and more so because his anger would nullify the good consequence of her good act), she began with some palliative words, saying: “Dear husband, I would request that you restrain yourself from anger for today.”

“Why?” asked her husband (wondering).

“Dear husband, I met the Venerable Sāriputta on my way and offered him your meal; I had to go home and cook another meal for you. That is why I am rather late today.”

Clods of Earth turn into Lumps of Gold

Puṇṇasīha said to her: “Dear wife, you have done the most pleasing thing. I myself had offered tooth-brush and fresh water for washing his face early this morning. So, for this day, every need of the Venerable has been supplied by us!” The couple was elated about their good deeds.

Puṇṇasīha then had had his meal. After that he took a nap with his head on his wife’s lap. On waking up, he saw all around him, where he had ploughed, a sea of yellow objects somewhat like the yellow flowers of the sponge gourd profusely scattered about. Surprised, he asked to his wife: “Dear wife, what are those things?” Directing his finger to those yellow objects (which were clods of earth): “Everywhere I had turned, the earth look like gold!” His wife said: “Dear husband, perhaps you are having a hallucination after your hard work.” But Puṇṇasīha insisted: “Look, look there yourself!” And she looked and exclaimed: “Dear husband, what you said is true. Those things do look like gold!”

Puṇṇasīha stood up and picking up a clod of the yellow earth, struck it against the shaft of his plough. It was a soft lump of gold and stuck to the shaft like a lump of molasses. He called and said to his wife, showing a sample of gold: “Dear wife, other people have to wait three or four months to reap what they sowed. For us, our meritorious deed, sown on the fertile soil, that is, the Venerable Sāriputta, had now brought us this harvest. Throughout this field of about one karisa (1 3/4 acres) there is not a piece of earth the size of a myrobalan fruit which has not turned into gold.”

“What should we do about this?” his wife asked.

“Dear wife,” Puṇṇasīha replied, “we cannot hide this amount of gold.” So saying, he picked up clods of earth, filled the vessel, which was used to carry his meal, with lumps of gold. He went to the palace and showed it to the King.

King: Where did you get these gold?

Puṇṇasīha: Great King, the field I ploughed today has been turned into clods of gold. May the King send his men to confiscate them.

King: What is your name?

Puṇṇasīha: Great King, my name is Puṇṇa.

Then the King ordered his men to yoke carts and go and collect the gold from Puṇṇasīha’s field.

The Family of Puṇṇasīha became A Rich Man Family and also attained Stream-Entry

The King’s men collected the clods of gold, saying: “This is what the great past merit of the King has brought into being.” The gold clods instantly changed back into clods of earth! Not a piece of gold was collected by them. They reported the matter to the King. King Bimbisāra told them: “In that case, O men, say: ‘This is what Puñña’s great past merit has brought into being,’ when you pick up those clod.” The men went back, said the words as instructed by the King when collecting the gold and were successfully in obtaining the gold.

The clods of gold, taken in many cartloads, were piled on the main square of the palace. It heaped to the height of that of a Palmyra tree. The King summoned merchants and asked: “Whose house in the city holds a pile of gold as big as this?” The merchants answered: “Great King, there is no house that holds this much gold.” The King further asked: “What should we do with Puṇṇa, who is the owner of this gold?” The merchant

unanimously replied: “Great King, that Puṇṇa should be given the title of Royal Treasurer.” The King agreed. And so Puṇṇasiha became the Royal Treasurer. All the gold gathered was handed over to him. On that same day, Puṇṇasiha’s inauguration as Royal Treasurer was held in high ceremonial state.

Puṇṇasiha, now the Royal Treasurer, held a grand celebration on that auspicious acquisition of the royal title for seven days, when the Buddha and His Sangha were honoured with magnificent offerings. On the seventh day, after hearing the Buddha’s sermon in appreciation of his great charity, all the members of his family, i.e. Puṇṇasiha, his wife Uttara and their daughter Uttarā, were established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry.

This is the story of Puṇṇasiha, one of the five great rich men within the dominion of King Bimbisāra who had inexhaustible resources.

The Union of the Puṇṇasiha’s Family with The Sumana Family, who were Non-believers

Sumana the householder of Rājagaha, on learning that Puṇṇasiha had a grown-up daughter, sent messengers to ask for the hand of his daughter in marriage to his son. Puṇṇasiha gave a flat refusal. Sumana was furious. “That fellow who had been dependent on me now disdains me because he has become a great man,” he thought, conceited as he was of his own wealth. He sent this view of his to Puṇṇasiha through messengers. Puṇṇasiha was not to be outdone. He explained to Sumana’s messengers: “Your master is being arrogant. Even though what he says is a fact, he should remember that a man should not be expected to always remain poor because he was born poor. Now, I am wealthy enough to buy householders like Sumana as my slaves. But, I do not say this in derogation of his lineage. I still honour him as a worthy householder. My point is, my daughter is a Stream-Enterer, an *ariya* in the Buddha’s Teaching. She spends one tical every day on flowers in her offerings to the Triple Gem. I cannot send my daughter to the house of a non-believer like Sumana.”

When Sumana learnt the adamant stand taken by Puṇṇasiha, he changed his tone. He sent words to Puṇṇasiha, saying: “I do not wish to break old ties of friendship. I will see to it that my daughter-in-law gets flower worth of two ticals everyday.” Puṇṇasiha, being a man who knew the value of gratitude, agreed to Sumana’s proposition and sent his daughter in marriage to Sumana’s son.

Uttarā’s Great Faith in Religious Practice

One day, Uttarā said to her husband: “Dear husband, in my parents’ house I observe *uposatha* precept eight days every month. If you may agree, I would do that here too.” Although she made her proposition in gentle words, her husband bluntly refused it. She had to put up with the refusal meekly. At the beginning of the rains-retreat period, she sought his permission again to keep the *uposatha* during the three-month period. Again she received the blunt refusal.

When two and a half month had gone by and only fifteen days were left of the *vassa* (rain-retreat) period, Uttarā asked her parents to send her fifteen thousand ticals of money, letting them know that in the confines of wedlock, she had not had a day to observe the *uposatha*. She did not say how and why the money was needed. Her parents did not bother to ask why she needed the money but sent her the sum she asked, first.

Uttarā then sent for Sirimā, a courtesan in Rājagaha (who was the sister of Jivaka the physician) and said to her: “Dear Sirimā, as I intend to keep the *uposatha* for fifteen days, I would request you to attend on my husband during these days for a fee of fifteen thousand ticals.” Sirimā accepted her offer. Uttarā’s husband was only too happy about this arrangement and allowed her to keep the *uposatha* for fifteen days.

Having obtained her husband’s permission, Uttarā went about her meritorious deeds freely. She prepared food offerings for the Buddha early in the morning, assisted by her servants. After making offerings to the Buddha, and when the Buddha returned to the monastery, she kept the *uposatha* and would stay upstairs alone, reflecting on her moral precepts. Fifteen days passed peacefully. On the morning of the first waning of the last

month of the three-month period, the day on which her observance of the *uposatha* was to end, she was preparing gruel and other items of food for offering to the Buddha. She was busy with the job since early morning.

(Moral: Such is the nature of sensual objects that, through their continued enjoyment, one tends to forget that they belong to another, and is tempted into thinking that they are one's own.)

At that time, the householder's son, having fun with Sirimā on the upper storey of the mansion, drew aside the lace curtain of the window and looked down into the inside of the house. At the same time, Uttarā happened to look up into the window and her eyes met those her husband. The husband smiled with the thought: "This Uttarā is looking like a being from *niraya*. How odd of her to deny herself the luxury of her status and toil herself unnecessarily (in the kitchen) mingling with the servants." Uttarā also smiled with the thought: "This son of the householder, being forgetful, thinks that this life of ease and comfort is lasting."

Sirimā, who saw the couple smiled at each other, became furious with jealousy. "This slave, Uttarā, is flirting with my husband even in my presence," she thought to herself (for she had now an illusion that she and the householder's son were real husband and wife). She ran down the stairs, fuming. Uttarā understood that Sirimā had, after half a month of dominion of the house, considered it her own. So, she entered into the *jhāna* of universal goodwill and stood sedately. Sirimā, rushing through the servants, took hold of a ladle, filled it with boiling oil from a pot which was cooking over the fire, and suddenly poured it over Uttarā's head. But, since Uttarā was dwelling in the *jhāna* of goodwill, and her whole body being diffused with loving-kindness, she did not feel the heat of the oil which flowed over her body like water onto a lotus leaf.

At that moment, Uttarā's servant accosted Sirimā with abusive words, saying: "You slave woman, you are a mere hireling of our Mistress. Yet after staying in this house for just fifteen days you try to rival our Mistress." These words awakened Sirimā to her true position. She realized she had gone too far. She went to Uttarā, fell on her feet, and apologised to her, saying: "Dear Madam, I had been reckless in my behaviour. Do forgive me!" Uttarā replied: "Dear Sirimā, I cannot accept your apology now. I have my father in the Buddha. You must first obtain forgiveness from my father, the Buddha, before I can forgive you."

Just then, the Buddha and His company of *bhikkhus* arrived and sat in the seats prepared for them. Sirimā approached the Buddha and prostrating herself at His feet, said: "Venerable Sir, I have done some wrong against Uttarā. I apologised to her for it and she says that I must first obtain forgiveness from the Bhavagā before she would forgive me. May the Bhavagā forgive me." The Buddha said: "Sirimā, I forgive you." Then she went to Uttarā and made obeisance to her as a token of her apology.

The Buddha, in His discourse in appreciation of the food offering, uttered the following verse:

"Conquer the angry one by loving-kindness;
Conquer the wicked one by goodness;
Conquer the stingy one by generosity;
Conquer the liar by speaking the truth."

— **Dhammapada**, verse 223 —

At the end of the discourse, Sirimā was established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry. After the attainment of ariyahood, she invited the Buddha to her residence the next morning and she made great offerings to the Buddha and His Sangha.

Thus goes the story of Uttarā the householder's daughter, who also was known as Nanda's mother after she gave birth to a son by the name of Nanda.

(c) Uttarā as The Foremost Female Lay Disciple

On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery naming distinguished female lay-disciples, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My female lay-disciple who dwell in *jhāna*, Uttarā, the mother of Nanda, is the foremost.”

6. PRINCESS SUPPAVĀSA The Koliyan

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Suppavāsā was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While she was listening to a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a certain female lay disciple being named by Him as the foremost in offering superior articles. She thus had a strong desire to become such a disciple in the future. After making extraordinary offerings, she aspired to that distinction in front of the Buddha, who predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled in her future existence.

(b) As Princess Suppavāsā, The Koliyan, in Her Last Existence

The future Suppavāsā, after being reborn in either deva realm or human realm for a hundred thousand world-cycles, was reborn as a princess of the Sakyan clan, in the city of Koliya. She was named Suppavāsā. When she was of marriageable age, she was given in marriage to a Sakyan prince. As the housewife in the household of the prince, she had the occasion to listen to a discourse by the Buddha which resulted in her attaining Stream-Entry. Later, she gave birth to a son, named Sivali. (Details of the episode of the birth of Sivali has been described in Chapter 43: Sivali Mahāthera.)

(c) Princess Suppavāsā as The Foremost Female Lay Disciple

At one time, Princess Suppavāsā, the mother of the Venerable Sivali, offered choicest food to the Buddha and His Sangha. After finishing the meal the Buddha preached a discourse in appreciation of the special offering, He said:

“My female lay disciple Suppavāsā, in making this food offering, has in effect made five kinds of offering, namely, life, good appearance, happiness, strength and intelligence. Offering of life leads to longevity, either in the deva realm or in the human realm. Offering of good appearance, happiness, strength and intelligence leads to the blessing of good appearance, happiness, strength and intelligence (respectively) either in the deva realm or in the human realm.” This was the occasion that became the ground for the Buddha’s naming of foremost female lay disciple on Suppavāsā.

On another occasion, when the Buddha was residing in the Jetavana monastery in Sāvattthi, and was naming distinguished female lay disciple, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My female lay disciple who make gifts of the choicest quality, Suppavāsā, the Koliyan Princess, is the foremost.”

7. SUPPIYĀ

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Suppiyā was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, while listening to a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a certain female lay disciple being named as the foremost in looking after a sick *bhikkhu* in an exceptional way. She had a strong desire to become such a disciple in her future existence. After making a great offering, she made her wish in front of the Buddha who predicted that her wish would be fulfilled in her future existence.

(b) As Suppiyā in Her Last Existence

After faring for a hundred thousand world-cycles in the deva realm or the human realm, she was reborn into the family of a rich householder in the city of Bārāṇasī, during the time of Buddha Gotama. She was named Suppiyā. When she was of marriageable age she

became the wife of a son of a householder.

It was then that the Buddha visited Bārāṇasī in the company of many *bhikkhus* and was staying in the monastery at Isipatana Migadāvana. Suppiyā, the householder's wife, visited the Buddha and after listening to His discourse on her first visit, she was established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry.

Suppiyā's Astounding Zeal in Giving

One day, after listening to the Buddha's sermon, Suppiyā made a round of the monastic dwelling at Migadāvana to see to the needs of their residents. She came across a wan, enfeebled *bhikkhu* who had taken some purgative. She asked him what sort of food or medicine would do him good. He replied: "Lay female supporter, meat soup would do me good." Suppiyā said: "So be it, Venerable Sir, I will send some meat soup to you," and she left after making obeisance to the *bhikkhu*. On the next day, she sent her servant to buy some meat in the bazaar, hoping to get some meat for sales to unspecified buyers. The servant could not find such meat and reported to her.

Suppiyā thought to herself: "I have promised to the sick *bhikkhu* to send meat soup. If I do not make good my word, he would feel ill at ease because he is not likely to get meat soup from anywhere else. So, I must see that he gets the meat soup somehow." She went into her bedroom and cut a piece of flesh from her thigh, which she gave to her housemaid to cook some soup using the usual ingredient (such as chilli, onion and other condiments) and said: "Take this soup to the sick *bhikkhu* and offer it to him. If he asks about me, tell him that I am taken ill." The housemaid did as she was told.

The Buddha learned about the matter. On the next morning, at the time of making the daily alms-collecting, He went to Suppiyā's house (being invited by her husband) in the company of many *bhikkhus*. After having seated at the special seat prepared for Him, the Buddha asked the householder: "Where is Suppiyā?"

"She is unwell, Venerable Sir," answered the householder.

"Let her come to Me, even though she is unwell."

"She is unable to walk, Venerable Sir."

"Then carry her."

The householder went and carried his wife, Suppiyā, when, to her surprise, at the instant she looked at the Buddha, her big wound on her thigh suddenly disappeared and was restored to its normal flesh with body hair. Thereupon, the householder and his wife, Suppiyā, exclaimed: "Marvellous it is! Astounding it is! Friend, great is the power of the Bhagavā. At the very instant of seeing the Bhagavā, such a deep wound is restored to natural flesh!" Feeling elated, they served the Buddha and His Sangha with choicest food, specially prepared for offering.

After finishing the meal and preaching a discourse to the donor, the Buddha returned to the monastery. Then, at the congregation of *bhikkhus*, the Buddha asked:

"*Bhikkhus*, who asked for meat from Suppiyā the householder's wife?"

"I did, Venerable Sir," answered the sick *bhikkhu*.

"Did she send the meal (i.e. meat soup)? Did you enjoy it?"

"Yes, Venerable Sir, I did."

"Did you ask what meat it is?"

"No, Venerable Sir, I did not."

The Buddha reprimanded the *bhikkhu* showing many reasons and laid this rule of conduct for *bhikkhus*:

"*Bhikkhus*, lay supporters, who have conviction in the Triple Gem, even give up their own flesh to the Sangha. *Bhikkhus*, human flesh should not be consumed. Any *bhikkhu* who consumes human flesh is liable to a breach of the Thullasaya Rule. *Bhikkhus*, it is improper for a *bhikkhu* to

consume meat without inquiring about it. He who does so without inquiring about it incurs a breach of the Dukkaṭa rule.”

(For details, refer to **Vinaya Mahāvagga**.)

Thus took place the event leading to Suppiyā earning the title of foremost female lay-disciple.

(c) Suppiyā as The Foremost Female Lay Disciple

On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing in the Jetavana monastery naming distinguished female lay disciples, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My female lay disciples who look after the sick *bhikkhus*, Suppiyā is the foremost.”

8. KĀTIYĀNI

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Kātiyāni was born into a rich man’s family in the city of Hamsāvati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She saw a certain female lay disciple being named as the foremost in unshakable conviction in the Teaching. She emulated that female lay disciple. After making extraordinary offerings, she aspired to that recognition in front of the Buddha, who predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled in her future existence.

(b) Her Last Existence as Kātiyāni The Householder

The future Kātiyāni, for a hundred thousand world-cycle was reborn either in the deva realm or human realm, before she was reborn into the family of a householder in the town of Kuraraghara, during the time of Buddha Gotama. She was name Kātiyāni by her parents. When she came of age, she became a close friend of Kālī the householder’s wife who was the mother of the Venerable Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa (refer to the Chapter 43: Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa Mahāthera).

The Unshakable Conviction of Kātiyāni

On one occasion, the Venerable Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa, on his return from the Buddha’s monastery, was requested by his mother to reproduce the Buddha’s words for her benefit. In compliance, he delivered a discourse in the community hall for Dhamma lectures at the Town Square. As he was starting his discourse from the raised platform, with his mother as the chief listener, Kātiyāni the householder, in the company of her friend Kālī, arrived and was reverentially listening to the discourse among the audience.

At that time a band of five hundred robbers who had dug a tunnel from the outskirts of the town to the house of Kātiyāni according to their secret markings made in the day, had reached the house. Their leader did not join them but was making personal inquiries into the activities of the townsfolk. He stood behind Kātiyāni in the assembly where the Venerable Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa was preaching a discourse on the Dhamma.

Kātiyāni said to her female assistance: “Go, girl, get some oil from my house for the lamps. Let us light up the lamps at this meeting hall. (According to the Sinhalese version: “We shall share the merit of our friend Kālī in this way.”) The servant went to the house but on noticing the robbers who were lurking in the tunnel, she was scared and returned to the assembly hall without bringing the oil. She reported the matter to her mistress, saying: “Madam, there is a tunnel dug in our compound by robbers!” The robber chief heard the girl’s urgent report to Kātiyāni and thought to himself: “If Kātiyāni were to go home in response to her maid’s report, I will cut her head immediately. If, on the other hand, she were to keep on listening to the discourse with attention, I will return her all the property which my men would have looted from her house.”

Kātiyāni said to her maid (in whispers): “Hush! The robbers will take only what they find in the house. I am listening to the Dhamma which is hard to be heard. Don’t disturb and

spoil it!” When the robber chief heard Kāṭiyāni’s words he pondered: “What a devout lady she is! If I were to take the property looted from the house of such a meritorious lady, we would be devoured alive by the great earth.” He hurried to Kāṭiyāni’s residence, ordered his followers to return everything they had looted and went back with them to the assembly hall to listen to the discourse, taking their seats at the end of the audience.

Kāṭiyāni was established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry at the end of the discourse by the Venerable Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa. When dawn came, the robber chief went to Kāṭiyāni and prostrating at her feet, said: “Dear Madame, kindly forgive us for our fault.” Kāṭiyāni asked: “What wrong have you done to me?” The robber chief admitted all their plot to her. “I forgive you all,” she said.

“Madam, your forgiveness does not exonerate us yet. As a matter of fact, we would request that your son, the Venerable Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa, admit all the five hundred of us into the Order as novices.” Kāṭiyāni took the gang to the Venerable Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa, and herself bore all the responsibilities regarding the four requisites for them. They were admitted into the order as novices by the Venerable Soṇa Kutikaṇṇa. They strove to gain the Path-Knowledge and ultimately became *arahats*.

This is the story of Kāṭiyāni the householder whose conviction in the Triple Gem was unshakable.

(c) Kāṭiyāni as The Foremost Female Lay Disciple

On a later occasion, during the Buddha’s residence at the Jetavana monastery, when He was naming distinguished female lay disciples according to their respective merits, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My female lay disciples who have unshakable conviction in the Teaching, Kāṭiyāni is the foremost.”

9. NAKULAMĀTU

The story of Nakulamātu is already been told, when dealing with the story of Nakulapitu. (Refer to Chapter 54: Nakulapitu the Householder.) Here we need only pay our attention mainly on Nakulamātu.

Nakulapitu and Nakulamātu were of the same aspiration in the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When the future Nakulapitu was a lay disciple, he witnessed a lay disciple being designated as the foremost among lay disciples who were close to the Buddha. He made great offering and aspired to that designation. Likewise, when the future Nakulamātu witnessed a female lay disciple being designated as the foremost among female lay-disciple who were close to the Buddha, she made great offerings and aspired to that title. (Since both stories are identical, the Commentary does not give a separate account of Nakulamātu.)

Nakulamātu, like Nakulapitu, was declared by the Buddha:

“*Bhikkhus*, among the female lay disciples who are close to Me, Nakulamātu is the foremost.”

10. KĀLĪ, The Female Disciple of Kararaghara

(a) Her Past Aspiration

The future Kālī was reborn into the family of a Rich Man in the city of Hamsāvathī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While listening to a sermon by the Buddha, she saw a female lay disciple being named by Him as the foremost in devotion to the Buddhas, even before meeting the Buddha. She strongly aspired to be such a person in her future existence. After making great offerings to the Buddha, she made her aspiration in front of Him. The Buddha predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled in her future life.

(b) Her Last Existence as Kālī, Daughter of A Householder

The future Kālī, after being reborn in either the deva realm or human realm for a hundred thousand world-cycles, was reborn as a daughter of a householder in Rājagaha, during the time of Buddha Gotama. She was named Kālī by her parents.

When she came of marriageable age, she was given in marriage to a son of a householder of Kuraraghara, which was a market town in Avanti Province (Southern India) and had to go and live with her parent-in-law in that town. After a time, she became pregnant from her wedlock.

When her pregnancy advanced, Kālī considered it unwise to have the child born at a place away from her own parents' home, and thus she went back to Rājagaha. Then, on one night (the full moon of Āsālhā (July), 103 Great Era, the day the Dhammacakka Sutta was taught), at midnight, she happened to overhear the devas, Sātāgira and Hemavata, discussing the salutary effects of the Triple Gems above her mansion, in mid-air. She was instilled with devotion for the Buddha so much so that even without having met Him, she was established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry. (For details, refer to Chapter 10.)

Kālī was the first among the females who attained *sotāpatti-magga* and became an *ariya* disciple so that she was the eldest among the Buddha's female disciples. That very night, she gave birth to a child (the future Venerable Sona Kutikaṇṇa) and after staying at her parents' house for as long as she liked, she returned to Kuraraghara.

(c) Kālī The Foremost Female Lay Disciple

On one occasion, when the Buddha sat in glory at the congregation of *bhikkhus*, in the Jetavana monastery and naming distinguished female lay disciples, He declared:

“*Bhikkhus*, among My female lay disciples who are devoted to Me, even without having met Me, Kālī of Kuraraghara is the foremost.”

LIFE STORIES OF RICH MEN WITH INEXHAUSTIBLE RESOURCES

(Supplementary Notes.)

1. JOTIKA The Rich Householder

His Past Existence as A Sugar Cane Planter

In times past, (prior to the time of Buddha Vipassī who appeared ninety-one world-cycles previous to the present world-cycle) there lived in the city of Bārāṇasī two rich brothers who were sugar cane planters and who had a number of workers in the plantation. One day, the younger brother went to the plantation and cut up two stems of cane, one for himself and the other for his brother. He carefully wrapped the ends with leaves so as to contain the juice.

(In those times, sugar-cane did not need to be crushed for its juice but by merely cutting up the stem and hanging it up on one end to let the juice flow down freely.)

On his way home, he met a Paccekabuddha who had just arisen from dwelling in the attainment of Cessation and who, on reviewing the world, saw the younger of the two brothers as the person deserving His blessing since he was in a position to make a meritorious gift. Accordingly, He stood in front of the sugar-cane planter, after having left His Gandmādāna abode by travelling through the air carrying His alms-bowl and great robe. The householder was delighted to see the Paccekabuddha and had great devotion to Him. He asked the revered One to wait a moment on his shawl which he placed carefully on a high spot. Then he requested Him to tilt the alms-bowl to receive the sugar-cane juice which he released by unwrapping the stem of the cane. The juice from one stem filled the alms-bowl.

The Paccekabuddha drank the sugar-cane juice. The householder, having enjoyed much satisfaction in his gift of the juice to the Paccekabuddha, now thought of making a second gift of the cane which he had carried for his elder brother. "I might pay its price to him, or if he refuses payment, perhaps I will share the merit with him," he thought to himself. He said to the Paccekabuddha: "Venerable Sir, kindly tilt the alms-bowl to receive the juice from another cane." He filled the alms-bowl with the juice by unwrapping the second cane. (Herein, the younger brother was carrying the cane for his elder brother who did not know about it. By using it as he liked (i.e. by giving it to the Paccekabuddha), it never occurred to him that his elder brother might cut another stem for himself. Such was his honest, simple nature.)

The Paccekabuddha, having taken the juice from the first cane, reserved that from the second one for His other fellow Paccekabuddha. As He remained still seated, the younger brother knew that the Paccekabuddha was not going to take another drink. He made obeisance to Him and said: "Venerable Sir, for this offering of sugar cane juice, may I enjoy sensual pleasure in the deva-world and the human world and ultimately realize the Dhamma that you have realized." The Paccekabuddha said: "May your wish be fulfilled." After saying words of appreciation for the offering in two stanzas beginning with these words, He rose into air in the presence of the householder and returned to the Gandamādāna Mountain where He offered the sugar-cane juice to the five hundred Paccekabuddhas. He willed that this good deed be seen by the donor.

After witnessing the miraculous power of the Paccekabuddha, the younger brother went to his elder brother who asked him where he had been. He told him that he had been inspecting the plantation. The elder brother said: "What use of your going on inspection (since you do not even bother to bring some sample.)" The younger brother replied: "Yes, brother, I did bring a cane for you but I met a Paccekabuddha on my way home and offered one cane, that is, the juice from it, to the Paccekabuddha. After that I had an urge to make a further offering with the other cane, which was meant for you. I thought that I would pay you the cost of it, or else I would share the merit with you and made another

offering of the juice out of the other cane to the Paccekabuddha. Now, brother, what do you say, would you take the cost of the cane meant for you, or would you share the merit?"

"What did the Paccekabuddha do with your offering?"

"He drank the first offering on the spot, and brought back the second one, which He offered to the five hundred Paccekabuddhas at the Gandamādāna Monastery where He returned by His psychic power."

The elder brother was thrilled to hear the meritorious deed of his younger brother. He said: "May my good deed, through my brother, results in the realization of the Dhamma which the Paccekabuddha had realized." And thus while the younger brother aspired to glorious existence in the deva-world and the human world, and then the realization of Nibbāna, the elder brother aspired to *arahatta-phala* straight away. These were the past aspirations of the two brothers.

Another Round of Existence as Householder Brothers.

The two brothers lived to the full life span of the times. After passing away from that existence they were reborn in the deva realm during the interim period of innumerable years, i.e. an infinite world-cycle between the time of Buddha Phussa and that of Buddha Vipassī. While they were still living in the deva realm, Buddha Vipassī appeared in the world. They passed away from that deva existence and were reborn as two brothers in the family of a householder in Bandumatī. The elder brother was reborn as the elder one and the younger as the younger again. The elder brother was named Sena, the younger, Aparājita, by their parents.

When they came of age, they succeeded to their family estate. As they were managing the family affairs, there arose a clangour of noises throughout the city of Bandumatī such as: "O virtuous persons, the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha have appeared in the world, like the sun and the moon! Give in charity! Perform deeds of merit! Today is the eighth day of the month, an *uposatha* day. Today is the fourteenth day of the month, an *uposatha* day. Today is the fifteen day of the month, an *uposatha* day. Keep the *uposatha* precepts. Listen to the expositions on the Dhamma." These exhortations were ringing through the city on the appropriate days. They were made by devout disciples of the Buddha. And the people would piously respond. In the morning, they would make alms-giving and in the afternoon they would go to the Buddha's monastery to listen His sermons. Sena joined the devotees in going to the Buddha's monastery to listen to His sermon. He sat at the end of the audience.

Buddha Vipassī knew the devout tendency of Sena the householder and taught a discourse in the (usual) graduated levels beginning from the merit in giving, the merit in morality, and so on. At the end of that discourse, Sena was so enthusiastic about taking up a religious life that he requested the Buddha to admit him into the Order, The Buddha said to him: "Lay supporter, are there relatives whose permission you need to obtain?"

"Yes, Venerable Sir, I have," replied Sena.

"If so, first get their permission."

Then, Sena went to his younger brother Aparājita and said: "Younger brother, you become the sole successor to our family estate from now."

"But what are you going to do?" Aparājita queried.

"I am going to become a *bhikkhu* under the Buddha."

"Dear brother, since the death of our mother, I have regarded you as my mother; since the death of our father, I have regarded you as my father. Our family estate is a vast one. You can do meritorious deeds living in the house. Do not go away (as a *bhikkhu*)."

"I have heard the Buddha's sermon. It is not possible to practice the Doctrine as a householder, I must be a *bhikkhu* now. Stay back, dear brother," Sena did not allow any further protestations and, leaving behind Aparājita, he went to Buddha Vipassī and was admitted into the Order, first as a novice, and later as a full-fledged *bhikkhu*. With

diligence in the *bhikkhu* practice, he soon attained arahatship.

Donation of A Private Chamber for Buddha Vipassī

Aparājita the householder celebrated his elder brother's going forth into bhikkhuhood with big offerings to the Buddha and His Sangha for seven days. Then making obeisance to his elder brother, he said: "Venerable Sir, you have renounced the world for the sake of liberation from the repeated existence. As for me, I have not been able to break the bonds of sense pleasures. Advise me as to what sort of meritorious deed should be performed in a big way."

"Good, good, you wise man," said the Venerable, "Build a private chamber for the Buddha."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," responded Aparājita.

He procured various kinds of choicest timber, from which he made posts for the building and seven kinds of precious metals were used to embellish each post for building. The roofing also was embellished with the seven kinds of precious metals.

Portico to The Buddha's Private Chamber donated by Aparājita, Junior

During the construction of the private chamber for the Buddha, Aparājita, Junior, nephew of Aparājita the householder, asked his uncle to allow him to participate in the construction so as to have a share of merit. Uncle Aparājita refused, saying that he could not share the merit with anyone.

Aparājita Junior, being repeatedly refused by his uncle to participate in the construction of the brick monastery, built a separate portico in front of the main building. That Aparājita, Junior, was reborn as Meṇḍaka the householder during the time of Buddha Gotama. (This story will be told fully later.)

The Grandeur of The Buddha's Private Chamber and The Landscape Gardening around It

Special features of the brick monastery for use as the Buddha's private chamber included three big windows ornately finished with seven precious stones. Directly against each of them, Aparājita the householder dug three square lotus ponds of concrete beds which were filled with scented waters, and planted with five kinds of lotus. The idea being to let the fragrant pollen from the lotus flowers to be constantly wafted through the air towards the Buddha.

The pinnacles were plated with gold sheets and its peak was finished in coral. Its roofing was of emerald glass tiles. The pinnacle had the appearance of a dancing peacock with its feathers in full display. The compound of the monastery was filled with seven precious stones to a thickness of knee-deep, some wrought as ornaments, some in their natural state.

Donating The Monastery to The Buddha

When the brick monastery was completed in all its grandeur, Aparājita the householder said to his elder brother, the Venerable Sena: "Venerable Sir, the brick monastery is finished. I would like to see it occupied by the Buddha as his private chamber. That would, I understand, bring me much merit." The Venerable Sena informed the Buddha about the wish of his younger brother.

Buddha Vipassī rose from His seat, went to the newly built monastery, and seeing the whole compound filled with precious stones up to knee-deep, stood at the entrance. Aparājita the householder invited the Buddha to enter the monastic compound but the Buddha did not move and remained standing at the entrance. Thrice, the householder requested the Buddha to go in, but to no avail. On the third time the Buddha glanced at the Venerable Sena. The Venerable Sena knew from that glance the Buddha's wish. So he said to his younger brother: "Go to the Buddha and say to the Buddha: 'Venerable Sir, these precious stones will be solely my responsibility. May the Bhagavā reside here without bothering about them.'" Hence, Aparājita the householder went to the Buddha, made obeisance to him, in fivefold contact, and said: "Venerable Sir, just as men would leave the shade of the tree unconcernedly, or ferry across a river without thinking about the ferry-

boat they have used, so also, may the Bhagavā enter and stay in the monastery unconcerned about these precious stones.”

(The Buddha refused to enter the monastic compound because of the precious stones. The Buddha's monastery was open door to all visitors, coming in the mornings as well as in the afternoon. The Buddha could not keep watch and ward over the precious stones. Hence the Buddha considered: “If visitors take them away and the Householder Aparājita might put the blame on me for the loss he would be incurring grave consequences leading to the four miserable states (*apāya*), These considerations made the Buddha refuse to enter.)

When Aparājita made it clear that precious stones should not bother the Buddha for they were the sole responsibility of the donor (Aparājita) only, the Buddha agreed and entered the monastery. The donor placed some watchmen at the monastic compound with the words: “O men, if visitors were to collect these precious stones inside pockets or baskets, or sacks, you must prevent them from doing so but, if they were to grab them in their hands only, let them do so.”

Aparājita let every household in the city know that he had strewn about precious jewels up to knee-deep inside the monastic compound of the Buddha's Private Chamber, and invited all and sundry who had listened to the Buddha's sermon to take them. The poor were expected to take two fist-full while the rich should take only one fistful. The householder's idea was to give incentive to those who had no natural inclination to go to the Buddha's monastery and attend the sermons and thus help them towards emancipation. He had also the good will to extend his gift to the naturally inclined devotees.

The people abided by the donor's stipulation about the gifts at the Buddha's monastery: The poor enjoying two fistfuls of the treasures, the rich only one fistful. When the precious stones were exhausted, a second round up to knee-deep, were strewn about. And when the second was exhausted, the third round followed.

An important event then occurred. Aparājita had a strong idea: he wanted visitors to the Buddha to take delight in watching the golden rays emitted by the Buddha, side by side with the glow emitted by a ruby of priceless quality, of the size of a bitter cucumber which he had placed at the Buddha's feet. The people enjoyed the wondrous sight of the two kinds of rays as desired by the householder.

The Ruby is stolen by A Brahmin amidst Everyone Present

One day, a brahmin, who was a non-believer in the Buddha, went before the Buddha with the intention of stealing the ruby. From the time he went close to the Buddha, past the audience, Aparājita had an inkling of the brahmin's evil intent. “O, how good it would be if this brahmin would not snatch away my ruby!” he thought to himself.

The brahmin pretended to make obeisance to the Buddha, stretching out his hands towards the Buddha's feet and suddenly snatched the ruby, hid it in the fold of his lower garment, and left. Aparājita the donor of the great monastery, could not stand the brazenness of the brahmin. When the Buddha had ended His discourse, he approached Him and said: “Venerable Sir, I had strewn the monastic compound with precious stones up to knee-depth for three times, and had no grudge against those people who took them away. In fact, I was pleased with my own gift-making. But today I had forebodings about the brahmin's visit to the Bhagavā and had wished that he would not steal the ruby. My foreboding have been proved correct. I cannot keep my mind calm and clear.”

Aparājita's Aspiration as suggested by The Buddha

Buddha Vipassī said to Aparājita: “Lay Supporter, it is possible for one to prevent pilferage of one's property, is it not?” Catching the meaning of the Buddha's broad hint, the householder made obeisance to the Buddha and made his aspiration in these terms:

“Venerable Sir, from today onwards, let no one, be they a hundred kings or robbers, be able to rob me, or in any way dispossess me of any of my property, be it as trifling as a strand of thread. Let no fire burn my property. Let no flood wash

away my property.”

And the Buddha said: “May all your wishes be fulfilled.” Aparājita held great celebrations to mark the donation of the grand monastery. For nine whole months he offered food to 6.8 million *bhikkhus* at the monastery. On the day of libation, he donated a set of three robes to each of the *bhikkhus*. The junior-most *bhikkhu* received, on that occasion, the robe-material worth a hundred thousand.

His Last Existence as Jotika The Householder

When Aparājita passed away afterlife time of meritorious deeds, he was reborn as a deva. And for ninety-one world-cycles he was never reborn in the four miserable states. During the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn in the family of a rich householder. After nine and a half months of conception in his mother's womb, on the day he was born, all weaponry in Rājagaha blazed like flames, and all jewellery worn on the person of the citizens gleamed like the glow of the sun, so that the whole city was glowing.

The householder, who was the father of the boy, went to see the King. King Bimbisāra asked him:

“Householder, today all weaponry are blazing and the whole city is glowing. Do you know what has caused this.”

“Yes, I do, Great King,” replied the householder.

“What is it?”

“A new Royal servant of your Majesty was born in my house. It is due to the great past merit of my infant son that this strange phenomenon has happened.”

“How is it, householder? Is your son going to become a robber?”

“No, Great King, he will not become a robber. He is endowed with vast past merit.”

“In that case, bring him up with care. Let him have a thousand ticals of money for his nursing.”

From then onwards, the King gave a thousand ticals every day towards the boy's upkeep. On the day of the boy's naming, he was given the name ‘Jotika (the Luminous Boy)’, signifying the glow that marked his birth.

Sakka's Creation of Jotika's House

When Jotika came of age, his parents cleared a site for building a house for him, At that moment, Sakka's crystal seat warmed up by way of signalling some event that called for his attention. He reviewed the world and saw that people were marking out a site for building a house for Jotika. Sakka thought to himself: “This man Jotika is no ordinary man who has to live in a house built by human hands. I must see to his proper residence,” and he descended to the human world in the guise of a carpenter. He asked the men at the site: “O men, what is this all about?”

“We are pegging out the house to be built for Jotika's residence.”

“Then, make way O men, Jotika is not the kind of man who has to live in a house built by human hands.”

So saying, he intently looked at a stretch of land that was sixteen *karisas* wide. (One *karisa* = 1 3/4 acre.)

- (1) The land became flat and smooth like a piece of meditation device for meditating on the Earth Element.
- (2) Then, Sakka, looking intently at the chosen site, willed in his mind: “Let there arise, opening up the earth, a seven-tiered mansion finished with seven kinds of precious stones,” and instantly a seven-tiered mansion complete with seven kinds of precious stones arose opening up the earth.
- (3) Next, Sakka, looking intently at the mansion, willed in his mind: “Let there appear seven walls finished with seven kinds of precious stones around the mansion,” and instantly the seven walls appeared around the mansion.

- (4) Next, Sakka, looking intently at the walls, willed in his mind: “Let there appear wishing trees inside each of the seven walls,” and instantly there appeared wishing trees inside each of the seven walls
- (5) Next, Sakka, looking intently at the mansion, willed in his mind: “Let there appear four gold jars full of precious stones at each of the four corners of the mansion,” and his wish materialized. (In this connection, Jotika's four treasure jars are different from the treasure jars that usually appeared for Bodhisattas, in that in the latter case, the four jars were of various sizes at their mouths varying from one *yojana* in diameter, three *gāvutas* (i.e. $3/4$ *yojana*), two *gāvutas* (i.e. $1/2$ *yojana*), and one *gāvuta* (i.e. $1/4$ *yojana*); they had their bottoms reaching down to the base of the great earth. In the former case, the size of the mouths of the jars is not mentioned in the old Commentaries, but they contained jewels about the size of Palmyra fruits whose faces were cut off.)
- (6) At the four corners of the great mansion, four sugar cane plants of solid gold appeared, each with a stem the thickness of a Palmyra tree. The leaves of the trees were emerald. These trees bore witness to Jotika's immense past merit.

The seven entrances to the seven walls were guarded by seven *yakkha* generals with their armies, namely, (i) at the first gate, Yāma Koḷī was in charge with one thousand *yakkhas* under him; (ii) at the second gate, Uppala was in charge with two thousand *yakkhas* under him; (iii) at the third gate, Vajira was in charge with three thousand *yakkhas* under him, (iv) at the fourth gate, Vajrabāhu was in charge with four thousand *yakkhas* under him; (v) at the fifth gate, Kasakanda was in charge with five thousand *yakkhas* under him; (vi) at the sixth gate, Katattha was in charge with six thousand *yakkhas* under him and (vii) at the seventh gate, Disāmukha was in charge with seven thousand *yakkhas* under him.

King Bimbisāra makes Jotika Royal Treasurer

When King Bimbisāra heard the news of the Jotika phenomenon comprising the arising through the earth of the bejewelled seven-storied mansion, the seven walls and its great gates, and the appearance of the four great gold jars, etc. he made him the Royal Treasurer, with all the paraphernalia of the office such as, the white Umbrella, etc. sent to him. From that time, Jotika was widely known as the Royal Treasurer.

Devas send Sakulakāyī of The Northern Island Continent as A Bride for Jotika

The lady who had been Jotika's partner in doing meritorious deeds in the past now happened to be reborn in the Northern Island Continent. The devas took the lady, named Sakulakāyī, from her native Island Continent and installed her at Jotika's seven-stories mansion. She brought with her a small measure of rice and three crystals with heat potential in them. This quantity of rice and the three stones provided all the cooked food throughout their lives. The small vessel that contained original rice could contain any quantity of fresh rice, even as much as a hundred cart-loads of them could be poured into it!

When the rice was to be cooked, it was put into a cooking pot and placed on the three crystals, which served as a fireplace and which glowed with heat until the rice became properly cooked and then the glow faded out. When curries and other dishes were cooked, the three crystals worked on the same purpose. Thus the Jotika couple never had the use of fire for cooking. For lighting as well, they never used fire because they had emerald and rubies that glowed and gave sufficient light.

The great opulence of Jotika became well-known throughout the whole of the Southern Island Continent and people thronged to his mansion to admire it. Some came from afar using carts and other vehicles. Jotika entertained them to the special quality rice that grew only in the Northern Island Continent which was cooked on the three crystals. He also asked his visitors to take away whatever they fancied at the Wishing Trees. Further, he would ask them to take away gold, silver and jewels from the gold jar whose mouth was one quarter of a *yojana* wide. All visitors from the Southern Island Continent enjoyed Jotika munificence. It is especially remarkable that the gold jar never deplete even for an inch but always remained full to its brim. This wonderful phenomenon was the result of

Jotika's munificence in his past life as Aparājita (during the time of Buddha Vipassī) when he let the visitors to the Buddha's monastery to take away seven types of precious metals and precious stones strewn about the precincts of the monastery at knee-depth repeatedly for three times.

King Bimbisāra visited Jotika's Mansion

King Bimbisāra wanted to go and see Jotika's mansion but, during the earlier period, when there were many visitors making their visits and enjoying the munificence of Jotika, the King did not go there. Only when most people had been there and there were only a few visitors, the King gave word to Jotika's father that he would pay a visit to Jotika's mansion. The householder told his son about the King's intention, and Jotika said the King would be welcome. King Bimbisāra went to Jotika's mansion with a big retinue. When he met a maid-servant who was a sweeper and refuse-thrower (scavenger) at the first entrance, she extended her hand to the King as a welcoming gesture, but the King mistook her to be the wife of the Treasurer Jotika and out of shyness did not hold her hand. At the later entrances too, although the maid-servants extended their hands to the King, the King did not hold their hands for the same reason. (Thus it is to be seen that at Jotika's residence even maid-servants had the appearance of the wives of the Treasurer.)

Jotika welcomed the King and after saluting him, followed him. The King dared not step on the emerald flooring which seemed to him like a deep chasm. He had doubts about Jotika's loyalty, for he thought that his Treasurer was plotting against him by digging a great pit. Jotika had to prove his innocence by saying: "Great King, this is no pit. Let me go ahead and would your Majesty come after me?" Then only the King found that everything was well. He inspected the mansion, from the emerald flooring upwards at the great mansion.

(Prince Ajātasattu's nefarious thoughts: At that time, the princeling Ajātasattu was by his father's side, holding to his hand. It occurred to young Ajātasattu thus: "How foolish my father is! For he lets his subject enjoy greater style of life than himself. The man of inferior caste is living in a bejewelled mansion while the king himself lives in a palace built of timber. If I were king, I would never, for a day, allow this rich man to live in this mansion.")

Even while the King was inspecting the grandeur of the upper stories, his meal time arrived. He said to Jotika: "Treasurer, we shall have our morning meal here." Jotika replied: "I know Great King, I have made arrangements for it."

Then King Bimbisāra took a bath with sixteen potfulls of scented water. He sat on the seat usually used by Jotika. He was offered some water to wash his hands. Then a bowl of thick milk-rice was placed before him in a golden bowl, which was worth a hundred thousand ticals. The King thought it to be a course of his meal and prepared to take it. Jotika said to him: "Great King, this is not for eating. It is placed here to warm the rice that is to come." The attendants of Jotika brought the rice cooked from the special rice from the Northern Island Continent in another golden bowl, which was worth a hundred thousand ticals. They put the rice bowl above the bowl of milk-rice which provided constant steamy heat to the rice, thereby making it palatable throughout the meal.

The King relished the delicious rice brought from the Northern Island Continent so much so that he did not know when to stop eating. Jotika said to him after saluting him: "Great King, that should be enough. If you eat more you will not be able to digest it." The King said: "Are you making much of your rice?" Jotika replied: "Not at all, Great King. For I am feeding the same rice to all members of your retinue. I only fear disrepute."

"What kind of disrepute?"

"If due to much eating of this food, which is especially nutritious, Your Majesty would feel lethargic on the next day, then people might say that I had fed you with this food and that I might have drugged you in the food."

"In that case, clear the table. Give me the drinking water."

After the King had finished his meal, all the members his retinue were fed with the same

rice.

Sakulakāyī attended on The King

Then, a friendly exchange of pleasantries took place between the host and his King, whereupon the latter inquired after the wife of the host.

“Don't you have a wife in your household?”

“Yes, Your Majesty, there is my wife.”

“Where is she now?”

“She is sitting in our private chamber. She does not come out because she does not know that Your Majesty has come.” (This was a fact.)

Jotika thought it only proper that his wife should come and meet the King and went to his wife, saying: “The King is paying us a visit. Ought you not see him?”

Sakulakāyī in her reclining posture in their private chamber, replied: “My Lord, what sort of person is a king?”

“The King is the person who rules over us.” Sakulakāyī was not pleased to learn that and did not want to hide her displeasure. So she said: “We had done meritorious deeds in the past in a wrong way. That is why we are being ruled over by someone. Our volition in the past in doing good deeds was not genuine so that although we are wealthy we are born as subjects to someone. Our gifts must have been made without conviction about the law of action and its resultant. Our present state of being subjects of some ruler is the result of our practice of charity in a sham conviction. But now, what is expected of me?”

Said Jotika: “Bring the palm-leaf fan and fan the King.”

Sakulakāyī obediently did as she was told. As she sat fanning the King, the odour that wafted from the King's head-dress hurt her eyes and tears flowed from them. The King, seeing her tears, said to Jotika: “Treasurer, womenfolk are short of wisdom. She is weeping probably because she thinks the King was going to confiscate your property. Tell your wife that I have no design on your property. Let her mind be set at ease.”

Jotika made A Gift of A Big Ruby to The King

Jotika said to the King: “Great King, my wife is not weeping.”

“But, why, then do those tears flow from her eyes?”

“Great King, the odour coming from your Majesty's head-dress hurts her eyes, and so the tears come out. She has a most delicate constitution. She has never used fire in her everyday existence. She gets heat and light from crystals and gems. As for Your Majesty, you are used to the light of oil lamps, I presume.”

“That's true, Treasurer.”

“In that case, Great King, from now on, may Your Majesty live by the light of a ruby.” And he presented the King with a priceless gem, the size of a bitter cucumber. King Bimbisāra studies Jotika's mansion closely and, uttering his sincere comment: “Great indeed is Jotika's wealth,” and he departed.

Jotika's Emotional Religious Awakening and Arahātship

Later on, Prince Ajātasattu, under the evil influence of Devadatta, imprisoned his own father, King Bimbisāra, and made him unable to walk inside his cell by cutting open his soles and exposing the wounds to burning charcoals, and starved him to death. This, he did to usurp the throne. No sooner had he ascended the throne, he took his big army to confiscate Jotika's mansion by force. But, as his army got in front of the jewelled wall, the reflection of his own forces on the wall looked as if the guards of Jotika were about to attack him, and he dared not go near the wall.

Jotika was observing the *uposatha* that day. He had finished his meal early in the morning and gone to the Buddha's monastery where he listened to the Buddha's sermon. Thus, while Ajātasattu was burning with greed, Jotika was enjoying the serenity of the

Buddha's company.

Moral:

“Just as foolish ones, ruffians blinded by inordinate greed, fret and fume and torment themselves, the wise one, cherishing the Dhamma, find mental happiness and physical ease.”

When King Ajātasattu's army approached the first wall of Jotika's mansion, Yamakoḷī, the guardian deva of the gate raised a fierce alarm: “Now, where will you escape?” and routed the King's army which fled in confusion in every direction. Ajātasattu ran towards the Buddha's monastery in a haphazard manner.

When Jotika saw the King, he rose and went to him and asked: “Great King, what's up?” The King said furiously: “You detailed your men to fight me while you come here and pretend to be attending to the Buddha's sermon. How is that?”

“Great King, did you go to my place to confiscate it by force?” inquired Jotika.

“Yes, I did,” said the King angrily.

Jotika coolly said to him: “Great King, (not to speak of yourself alone) a thousand monarchs will find it impossible to take my place by force without my consent.”

“Are you going to be the king?” He felt greatly insulted by Jotika's remarks.

But Jotika replied coolly: “No, no, Great King. No one can take any of my property, not even a strand of thread, without my consent. And that includes kings.”

“I am the King. I can take whatever you possess whether you consent or not.”

“In that case, Great King, here are twenty rings around my fingers. I do not give them to you. Now, try and take them.”

Ajātasattu was a man of great physical prowess. He could leap up, while sitting, to a height of eighteen cubits and while standing, up to a height of eighty cubits. He attempted to remove the rings from Jotika's fingers but was unable even to get one. His kingly dignity was thus gravely impaired. Jotika now said to him: “Great King, if you would spread out your dress, I will show you.” And he straightened his fingers towards the King's dress, which was spread in front of him, and all the twenty rings readily dropped onto it. He said: “Great King, you have seen for yourself that Your Majesty cannot confiscate my property against my wish.” He was greatly edified by the encounter with the King. An emotional awakening arose in him and he said to the King: “May Your Majesty allow me to become a *bhikkhu*.”

The King thought that if he renounced his home life and become a *bhikkhu*, his great mansion would easily fall to his hand; so he allowed the request promptly. Jotika was admitted into the Order at the feet of the Buddha. Not long afterwards, with due diligence, he became an *arahat* and became known as Thera Jotika. At the instant of his attaining arahatship, all his great mansion and other items of wealth suddenly disappeared. His wife Sakulakāyī was sent back by the deva to her native place, the Northern Island Continent.

One day, some *bhikkhus* asked the Venerable Jotika: “Friend, do you have attachment to the great mansion and Sakulakāyī?” The Venerable replied: “No, friend, I do not have any attachment.” The *bhikkhus* went to the Buddha and said: “Venerable Sir, Bhikkhu Jotika falsely claims arahatship.”

Then, the Buddha said: “*Bhikkhus*, it is true that there is no attachment to the great mansion and his wife in the mental state of Bhikkhu Jotika, an *arahat*.” Further the Buddha spoke this verse:

“He, who in this world has given up craving (that arises at the six sense doors) and has renounced the home-life to become a *bhikkhu*, who has exhausted craving for existence, and made an end of all forms of existence, him I call a *brāhmana* (one who has rid himself of all evil).”

By the end of this discourse a large multitude of people attained Path-Knowledge at the various levels.

2. MEṄDAKA The Householder

His Past Aspiration

The future Meṅḍaka was a nephew of Aparājita the householder, who lived in the days of Buddha Vipassī, ninety-one world-cycles previous to the present world-cycle. His name also was Aparājita. His uncle Aparājita started construction of a brick monastery as a private chamber for the Buddha. Then, Aparājita, Junior, went to his Uncle Aparājita and asked that he be allowed as co-builder of the monastery. The uncle would not accept the idea, for he did not want to share the merit with anyone. Aparājita, Junior, then thought of building a portico in front of his uncle's main building. He put up the portico with timber. The post for the building were each finished in silver, in gold, in rubies, and in the seven kinds of precious stones. Likewise, the beams, rafters, roof-trusses, purlim, trellis-work, door-leaves and roofing tiles were finished in gold and silver and precious stones. He planned the portico to be used by the Buddha.

On the top of the portico were pinnacles made with gold sheet roofing and coral. (1) The centre portico was occupied by an assembly hall with a raised platform for the Buddha which had a floor frame and legs of solid gold. (2) The base of the legs were sculpted in the form of golden goats. (3) The leg-rest had, at its base, a pair of golden goats. (4) And there were also six golden goats placed around the assembly hall. (5) The flooring for the seating of the orator was woven with cotton thread at the base, golden thread in the middle, and finished with beads of pearl. (6) The back of the orator's seat was of solid sandalwood.

When the construction of the portico and all the appointments in it were finished to the satisfaction of the donor (Aparājita, Junior) a four month long ceremony, marking the donation was held, where the Buddha and 6.8 million *bhikkhus* were offered with alms-food. On the last day, sets of three robes were donated to the Sangha. The junior-most *bhikkhu* received robes worth a hundred thousand ticals. (The Sinhalese version says a thousand ticals.)

In His Past Existence as The Rich Man of Bārāṇasī.

Having performed those meritorious deeds during the time of Buddha Vipassī, the future Meṅḍaka was reborn in the present world-cycle as a rich man's son in Bārāṇasī. He succeeded to his father's estate as the 'Rich Man of Inexhaustible Resources'. One day, as he was going before the King at his audience, he discoursed astronomical readings with the King's Chief Counsellor. He asked the Purohita:

"How is it, Teacher, have you been studying the planets (recently)?"

"Of course, I have, what other pursuit do I have than a constant study of the planets?"

"If so, what do the planets presage about the general populace?"

"Some catastrophes is going to happen."

"What sort of catastrophes?"

"There will be famine."

"When is it going to happen?"

"Three years hence."

The 'Rich Man of Inexhaustible Resources' then expanded his cultivation. He invested all his wealth in rice grains which he stored in 1250 storehouses. The excess of his collection of rice were put in big jars, and then the excess were buried in the ground. The last portion of the excess were mixed with mud which was plastered onto the walls of his house. (A remarkably prudent way of forestalling famine).

When the famine broke out (as predicted by the Purohita), the Rich Man's household subsisted for some time on the hoarded grains of rice. When the granaries and the storage in big jars were exhausted, the Rich Man was perforce to send away his servants to go into the forest at the end of the mountains and find things to eat for their survival until such

time as things became normal, in which case, they might or might not choose to come back to him as they wished. They wailed and after seven days depending on their master, were obliged to leave.

There was only one servant, named Puṇṇa, who personally attended on the members of the Rich Man's family, comprising the Rich Man and his wife, their son, and their daughter-in-law. The five members of the household next subsisted on the rice grains which were buried in the ground. When that store was used up, they scraped off the mud plastered in the walls of the house, salvaged the few grains from it and managed to survive. But, the famine raged on. At last, the only source of seed grain was extracted from the base of the walls where the mud plaster held a few precious grains. The mud yield half measure of rice grain, which, when the husks were pounded off, a quarter measure of eatable grains was obtained. Being afraid of robbers who might loot whatever eatable available at their house, the family prudently hid the last meagre store of the grains in the ground, carefully shut up in a small pot.

One day, the Rich Man who had come home from attending on the King said to his wife: "Dear wife, I feel hungry. Is there anything to eat?" The wife did not say: "No," but answered: "My lord, we have a quarter measure of rice grain, (the last we have)."

"Where it it?"

"I have hidden it in the ground for fear of thieves."

"If so, cook that little rice."

"My lord, if I were to cook it into rice it would provide us a meal. If I were to make gruel, it would provide us with two meals. What shall I do with it?"

"Dear wife, this is our only and last source of food. Let us eat to the full and face death. Cook it into rice."

The Rich Man's wife obediently cooked the rice, and making five portions of the cooked rice, placed one in front of her husband. At that moment, a Paccekabuddha, who had just risen from dwelling in the attainment of Cessation at the Gandamādāna mountain, reviewed the world with His divine power of sight and saw that the Southern Island Continent was reeling under a grave and prolonged famine.

(An *arahat*, or a Paccekabuddha in this case, does not feel hunger during the (seven-day) dwelling in the attainment of Cessation. On rising from that state, the pang of hunger is felt inside the stomach. So the Paccekabuddha reviews the world, as is the natural thing, for a prospect of getting alms-food. A donor of some gift to a Paccekabuddha at that time (on that day) is usually rewarded by his or her own merit. If he were to wish for the post of Commander-in-Chief, he would get it.)

The Paccekabuddha knew that the Rich Man of Bārāṇasī had a quarter measure of rice grain which had been cooked to provide a meal for five persons. He also knew that the five persons in the rich man's household had sufficient conviction in the law of *kamma* to offer him the cooked rice. So he took His alms-bowl and great robe and stood at the Rich Man's door.

The Rich Man was intensely glad to see the Paccekabuddha who had come to his door for alms-food. He thought to himself: "In the past I had failed to make offering to alms-seekers, as the result of which I am falling under this catastrophe. If I were to eat my portion of rice I would live for one day. If I were to offer it to this Venerable One, it would lead to my welfare for millions of world-cycles." Thinking thus, he had the rice-vessel in front of him withdrawn, and, approaching the Paccekabuddha, and making obeisance to Him with fivefold contact, he invited Him to the house. After showing Him the seat, he washed the Paccekabuddha's feet, and wiped off the water. Then, letting the Paccekabuddha sit on a raised platform with golden legs; he put his rice into the Paccekabuddha's alms-bowl.

The Paccekabuddha closed the lid of His alms-bowl when the donor's vessel was left with half of its contents. But the donor said: "Venerable Sir, this rice is just one-fifth of a quarter measure of rice grain and can serve as only one meal for a person. It cannot be

divided into two for two persons. Do not consider my welfare for this present world but consider my welfare in the hereafter. I wish to offer the whole lot to your reverence.” Then he aspired thus: “Venerable Sir, may I never, in my faring in *samsāra*, meet with famine like this. From now on, may I be the provider of food and seed grains to all the population of the Southern Island Continent. May I be free from manual labour to earn my bread. May I have 1250 store-houses for storing rice grain, in which superior red rice grains falling from the sky, get filled up the moment I look up skyward as I sit there with my head washed.

“In all my future existences, may I have my present wife as my wife, my present son as my son, my present daughter-in-law as my daughter-in-law, and my present servant as my servant.”

The Deep Conviction of The Other Members of The Householder

The wife of the rich man thought to herself: “I cannot eat when my husband starves,” and offered her share of the rice to the Paccekabuddha. She made her wish thus: “Venerable Sir, may I never, in my faring in *samsāra*, meet with starvation. May I have a vessel of cooked rice which never gets depleted however much is taken from it by the populace of the Southern Island Continent, while I sit distributing the rice. In all my future existences, may I have my present husband as my husband, my present son as my son, and my present daughter-in-law as my daughter-in-law, and my present servant as my servant.”

The Rich Man's son also offered his share of the rice to the Paccekabuddha, and made his wish: “May I never, in my faring in *samsāra*, meet with starvation. May I have a bag of silver coins containing a thousand pieces out of which I may distribute the silver to everyone in the Southern Island Continent, and may the bag remain as full as ever. In all my future existences, may my present parents be my parents, may my wife be my wife, and may our present servant be our servant.”

The Rich Man's daughter-in-law also offered her share of the rice to the Paccekabuddha and made her wish thus: “May I never, in my faring in *samsāra*, meet with starvation. May I have a basket of rice grain, out of which I may distribute the rice to all the populace of the Southern Island Continent, and may that basket never get depleted. In all my future existences, may my present parents-in-law be my parents-in-law, may my present husband be my husband, and may our present servant be our servant.”

The servant Puṇṇa also offered his share of the rice to the Paccekabuddha and made his wish thus:

“May I never, in my faring in *samsāra*, meet with starvation. In all my future existences, may all the present members of my master's family be my master. When I plough a field, may there appear three extra furrows on the left and three extra furrows on the right of the main furrow in the middle, thereby accomplishing my work sevenfold, making a seed bed for sowing four baskets of seed grains.”

(Puṇṇa could have wished for and become Commander-in-Chief if he so aspired to it. However, his personal ties with the Rich Man's family were so strong that he wished that in all his future existences his present masters be his masters.)

When the five donors had made their respective wishes the Paccekabuddha said:

“May your wishes be fulfilled quickly. May all your aspirations come to full realisation like the full moon.

“May your wishes be fulfilled in every respect. May all your aspirations come to full realisation like the wish-giving gem.”

Having expressed His appreciation of the offerings, He made a wish that His donors, for enhancement of their convictions, see Him and His further actions, then He rose into the air and to the Gandamādāna mountain, and shared the alms-food He had collected with the five hundred Paccekabuddhas. The rice that was meant for the consumption of five persons were offered and satisfied the five hundred Paccekabuddhas, thanks to the supernatural powers of the original offerer. This was witnessed by the five donors whose devotion

increased by leaps and bounds.

The Result was experienced The Same Day

The remarkable thing now happened. At noon, the Rich Man's wife washed her cooking pot and put the lid on it. The Rich Man who was under the pang of hunger dozed off. When he woke up in the evening, he said to his wife: "Dear wife, I am starving. See if you could scrape out some bits of cooked rice from the pot." The wife was certain that not a tiny bit of cooked rice clung to the pot which she had washed clean. But she did not say so; instead, she thought of opening the lid of the pot first before reporting to her husband.

As soon as she removed the lid of the rice pot, she found the rice pot was filled with finely cooked rice, like a cluster of jasmine buds, that filled the pot to its brim and even causing the lid to rise. With joyous astonishment she breathlessly reported the strange phenomenon to her husband: "Look, my Lord, I had washed the rice pot clean and covered its lid. But now it is brimful with cooked rice, like a cluster of jasmine buds. Meritorious deeds are indeed worthwhile doing! Alms-giving is indeed worthwhile doing! Now, my lord, get up and eat it in joy."

The Rich Man's wife first served the rice to her husband and her son. When they had finished eating, she and her daughter-in-law ate it. Then she gave it to their servant Puṇṇa. The rice pot did not get decreased any further than the first spoonful taken out. On that very day, all the granaries and jars were filled with rice grain again. The Rich Man announced to all the citizens of Bārāṇasī that his house had sufficient rice grain and cooked rice for anyone to come and take them. And the people came and took them joyfully. The populace of the Southern Island Continent were saved from famine on account of the Rich Man.

His Last Existence as Meṇḍaka The Rich Man

After passing away from that existence, he was reborn in the deva realm. From then onwards, he fared in the deva-world or the human world until the time of Buddha Gotama when he was born into the family of a rich man in Bhaddiya. He married the daughter of another rich man.

How The Name Meṇḍaka was given to Him

As the result of his having donated statues of golden goats to Buddha Vipassī, the rich man's compound behind the house, about eight *karisas* in area, was tightly occupied by solid gold statues of the goat which rose up from the ground. The mouths of the statues of the goat were adorned with small cotton balls the size of marbles in five colours. By removing these ornamental stoppers at the mouth, one could take out from the goat any article one wished, such as clothes or gold or silver, etc. A single goat statue could yield all the needs of the whole population of the Southern Island Continent such as ghee, oil, honey, molasses, clothing, gold, silver, etc. As possessor of these miraculous goat statues, the rich man came to be called Meṇḍaka, "Owner of the Golden Goat".

Their son was the son in their previous existence (That son was Dhanañcaya who became the father of Visākhā). Their daughter-in-law was the daughter-in-law in their previous existence. (The wife of Meṇḍaka was named Candapadumā, the daughter-in-law, wife of Dhanañcaya, was named Sumanadevī, their servant was named Puṇṇa.)

(Reference may be made to the Chapter on the lives of Female Lay Disciples, on Visākhā, concerning the details about the Meṇḍaka's household up to the point where Meṇḍaka gained Stream-Entry.)

It is important to note here that Meṇḍaka the Rich Man, after attaining Stream-Entry, consequent to his listening a discourse by the Buddha, told the Buddha how he had been dissuaded by the ascetics of other faiths from visiting Him, and how they denigrated Him. Thereupon the Buddha said:

"Rich Man, it is the nature of people not to see their own faults but to fabricate other peoples faults and spread them about like a winnower winnowing chaff."

Further, the Buddha spoke this verse:

“(Householder), it is easy to see the faults of others, but difficult to see one’s own. Like the winnowing chaff in the wind, one spreads the faults of others but hides his own faults like a crafty Fowler covers himself.”

— **Dhammapada**, verse 252 —

By the end of this discourse a large multitude of people gained Enlightenment at the various levels.

3. JAṬILA The Rich Man

His Past Aspiration

The future Jail was a goldsmith during the time of Buddha Kassapa. After the passing away of the Buddha, when a shrine to store the relics of the Buddha was being built, an *arahat*, who went to supervise the construction asked the workers: “O men, why is the northern entrance not completed?” And the men replied: “Venerable sir, there is a lack of gold to complete it.”

“I will go to the town to find donors of gold. Meantime, you will do your work sincerely.” The *arahat* then went about the town and called for donors of gold, making them realize that their contributions were needed to complete the northern entrance to the big shrine they were building.

When he visited the house of the goldsmith, it so happened that the man was having a quarrel with his wife. The *arahat* said to the goldsmith: “Lay supporter, the big shrine that you have undertaken to build cannot be completed at its northern entrance due to a shortage of gold. So it would be well if you could contribute some gold.” The goldsmith who was angry with his wife said to the *arahat*: “Go and throw away your Buddha (image) into the water!” Thereupon his wife scolded him: “You have done a great wrong. If you are angry, you should have abused me, or beaten me as you please. Why do you vilify the Buddhas of the past, the future and the present?”

The goldsmith suddenly saw his mistake and emotional awakening having arisen in him, he apologised to the *arahat*: “Venerable Sir, pardon me my fault.” The *arahat* said: “You have not wronged me in any way. You have wronged the Buddha. So you ought to make restitution in front of the Buddha.”

“How should I do it, Venerable Sir?”

“Make three flower vessels of gold, enshrine them in the relic chamber of the great shrine, wet your clothes and your hair, and atone for your mistake.”

“Very well, Venerable Sir,” the goldsmith said and he started to make the gold flowers. He called his eldest son and said to him: “Come, son, I have vilified the Buddha, for which I am going to make restitution by making three bunches of gold flowers which are to be enshrined in the relic chamber of the great shrine. I would ask you to be a partner in this good work.” The eldest son replied: “I did not ask you to vilify the Buddha. You did it on your own accord. So you go alone.” The goldsmith then called his middle son and asked for his co-operation, who gave the same reply as the eldest brother. The goldsmith called his youngest son and sought his help. The youngest son said: “Whatever business is there to be discharged by you, it is my duty to help.” And so he helped his father in making the gold flowers.

The goldsmith made three gold flower vessels, about half a cubit high, put gold flowers in them, and enshrined them in the relic chamber of the great shrine. Then (as advised by the *arahat*.) he wetted his clothes and hair, and atoned for his grave blunder. (This is how the future Jail performed a meritorious deed.)

His Last Existence as Jail, The Rich Man

For his improper remarks concerning the Buddha, the goldsmith was sent adrift in the river for seven existences. As his last existence, during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn to the daughter of a rich man in Bārāṇasī under strange circumstances. The rich

man's daughter was extremely beautiful when she was about fifteen or sixteen years old. Her parents put her on the seventh floor of their house with a governess. They lived there alone in the private chamber. One day, as the girl was looking out through the window, a person with super-normal power (*vijjādhara*), travelling in the air happened to see her. He was deeply enamoured of her and came in through the window. The two fell in love with each other.

She became pregnant by the man. Her governess asked her how she became pregnant. She confided in her about her secret affair but forbade her to tell it to anyone. The governess dared not disclose the secret to anyone. On the tenth month of pregnancy, the child, a boy, was born. The young mother had the baby put inside an earthen pot, had its lid covered, and placing garlands and bunches of flowers over it, she detailed the governess to carry it on her head and sent it adrift in the river Gaṅgā. If anybody were to inquire about her action, the governess was to say that she was making a sacrificial offering for her mistress. This scheme was carried out successfully.

At that time, two ladies, who were bathing downstream, noticed the earthen pot floating down. One of them said: "That pot belongs to me!" The other said: "The contents of that pot belong to me!" So, they took the pot from the water, placed it on dry ground and opened it. On finding a baby in it, the first lady, who said the pot belonged to her, claimed the child as hers. The second lady, who said the contents of the pot belonged to her, also claimed the child as hers. They brought the dispute to the court of justice which was at a loss to give a judgment. They referred it to the King who decided that the child belonged to the second lady.

The lady who won the claim over the child was a female lay supporter who was a close attendant of the Venerable Mahākaccāyana. She brought up the child with the intention of sending him to the Venerable, to be admitted as a novice. Since the child at birth was not bathed, his hair was tangled with dried dirty matter from his mother's womb and on that account, he was given the name Jaṭila (knotted hair).

When Jaṭila was a toddler, Venerable Mahākaccāyana went to the lady's house for alms-food. She offered alms-food to the Venerable, who saw the boy and asked her: "Female lay supporter, does this boy belong to you?" And she replied: "Yes, Venerable Sir. I intend to send him to your reverence to be admitted into the order. May your reverence admit him as a novice."

The Venerable Mahākaccāyana said: "Very well," and took the boy with him. He reviewed the fortunes of the boy and saw by his supernormal knowledge that the boy had great past merit and was destined to enjoy a high status in life. And considering his tender age, he thought that the boy was too young for admission into the order and his faculties were not mature enough. So he took the boy to the house of a lay supporter in Taxila.

The lay supporter of Taxila, after making obeisance to the Venerable Mahākaccāyana, asked him: "Venerable Sir, does this boy belong to you?" And the Venerable answered: "Yes, lay supporter. He will become a *bhikkhu*. But he is still too young. Let him stay under your care." The lay supporter said: "Very well, Venerable Sir," and he adopted the boy as his son.

The lay supporter of Taxila was a merchant. It so happened that he had a considerable quantity of merchandise, which he found no buyers for twelve years. One day, as he was going on a journey, he entrusted these unsold merchandise to the boy, to be sold at certain prices.

Jaṭila sold The Unsold Twelve Years Old Merchandise in A Single Day

On the day when Jaṭila was in charge of the shop, the guardian spirits of the town exercised their power over the townsfolk, directing them to Jaṭila's shop for whatever needs they had, even as trifling as condiments. He was able to sell the unsalable twelve years old merchandise in a single day. When the merchant returned home and saw none of his unsalable goods, he asked the boy: "Son, have you destroyed all those goods?" Jaṭila replied: "No, I did not destroy them. I have sold them at the prices you stated. Here are the

accounts, and here is the money.” His adoptive father was highly pleased. “This boy has the making of a successful man. He is an invaluable asset of a man,” thus reflected the merchant. Accordingly, he married his grown up daughter to Jaṭiḷa. Then, he had a big house built for the couple. When the construction of the house was completed, he presented it to the couple for their residence.

Jaṭiḷa, Lord of the Golden Hill

When Jaṭiḷa took occupancy of his house, as soon as he put his foot at the threshold of the house, a golden hill eighty cubits high suddenly appeared through the earth at the back of the house. On learning the news of Jaṭiḷa's immense fortune, the King conferred him the Royal Treasurer, sending him the white umbrella and the paraphernalia of Treasurer's office. From then onwards, Jaṭiḷa was known as Jaṭiḷa, the Treasurer.

Jaṭiḷa made Inquiries about The Existence of His Peers in The Southern Island Continent

Jaṭiḷa had three sons. When they had grown up to adulthood, he had a desire to become a *bhikkhu*. But he also had the duty to the King as Treasurer. If there were to exist in the Southern Island Continent another Rich Man who was equal in wealth to him, he might be released by the King so that he could join the order. Otherwise, he had no chance to become a *bhikkhu*. So, he had a gold brick, a gold goad and a pair of gold slippers made, which he entrusted to his men, saying: “My men, go around the Southern Island Continent taking these articles with you and enquire about the existence or otherwise of a rich man whose wealth is equal to mine.”

Jaṭiḷa's men went around the country and reached the town of Bhaddiya where they met Meṇḍaka the rich man who asked them: “O men, what is your business in touring this place?”

“We are touring the country to find something,” said Jaṭiḷa's men. Meṇḍaka, seeing the gold brick, the gold goad and the pair of gold slippers which the visitors were carrying with them, rightly surmised that the men were making enquires about the wealth of the country. So he said to them: “O men, go and see at the back of my house.”

Jaṭiḷa's men saw at the back of Meṇḍaka's house an area of about fourteen acres (8 *karisas*) packed with golden goat statues of the sizes of a bull or a horse or an elephant. Having inspected all those gold statues, they came out of Meṇḍaka's compound. “Have you found the things you were looking for?” asked Meṇḍaka, and they said to him: “Yes, Rich Man, we have.” “Then you may go,” said Meṇḍaka.

Jaṭiḷa's men returned to their home town and reported to their master about the immense wealth of Meṇḍaka of Bhaddiya. “Rich Man, what is your wealth when compared to Medaka's?” they said to Jaṭiḷa and they gave the details of what they had seen at the backyard of Meṇḍaka's house. Jaṭiḷa was happy about the discovery. “We have found one type of rich man. Perhaps another type also exists,” he thought to himself This time he entrusted his men with a piece of velvet, which was worth a hundred thousand ticals, and sent them around in search of another type of rich man.

The men went to Rājagaha and stationed themselves at a place not far from Jotika's great mansion. They collected some firewood and were making a fire when they were asked by the people what they were going to do with the fire. They answered: “We have a valuable piece of velvet cloth for sale. We find no one who can afford the price. We are returning to our hometown. This piece of velvet cloth would attract robbers on the way. So we are going to destroy it by burning it.” This was, of course, said as a pretence to probe the mettle of the people,

Jotika noticed the men and enquired what was afoot. On being told about the men's tall story, he called them up and asked: “How much is your cloth worth?” They answered: “Rich man, it is worth a hundred thousand.” Jotika ordered his men to pay the price of a hundred thousand to the sellers and said to them: “O men, give it to my maid-servant who is scavenging at my gate,” entrusting the cloth to them.

The scavenger came to Jotika murmuring (in the presence of Jaṭiḷa's men): “O Rich Man,

how is it? If I am at fault, you could chastise me by beating. But sending such a coarse piece of cloth to me is too much. How could I use it on my person?” Jotika said to her: “My dear girl, I did not send it for wearing. I meant it to be used as your foot rug. You could fold it up under your bed and when you go to bed you could use it for wiping your feet after washing them in scented water, couldn't you?”

“That I could do,” said the maid servant.

Jatila's men reported back their experiences in Rājagaha and told their master: “O Rich man, what is your wealth when compared to that of Jotika?” They said thus to Jaṭila, and they described the marvellous grandeur of Jotika's mansion, his vast wealth, and his maid-servants remarks about the velvet piece.

Jaṭila tested The Past Merits of His Three Sons

Jaṭila was overjoyed to learn about the presence, in the country, of two great Rich Men. “Now I shall get the King's permission to enter the Order,” he thought and went to see the King about it.

(Herein, the Commentary does not specify the name of the King. However, in the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**, in the story of Visākhā, it has been said: “It is important to remember that within the domain of King Bimbisāra, there were five Rich men of inexhaustible resources, namely, Jotika, Jaṭila, Meṇḍaka, Puṇṇaka and Kāḷavaḷiya.” Hence the King here should be understood to mean Bimbisāra.)

The King said to Jaṭila: “Very well, Rich Man, you may go forth into bhikkhuhood.” Jaṭila went home, called his three sons, and handing over a pick-axe with a gold handle and diamond bit, said to them: “Sons, go and get me a lump of gold from the golden hill behind our house.” The eldest son took the pick-axe and struck at the golden hill. He felt he was striking at granite. Jaṭila then took the pick-axe from him and gave it to the middle son to try at it; and he met with the same experience.

When the third son was given the pick-axe to do the job, he found the golden hill as if it were mound of soft clay. Gold came off it in layers and lumps at his easy strokes. Jatila said to his youngest son: “That will do, son.” Then he said the two elder sons: “Sons, this golden hill does not appear on account of your past merit. It is the result of the past merit of myself and your youngest brother. Therefore, be united with your youngest brother and enjoy the wealth peacefully together.”

(Herein, we should remember the past existence of Jaṭila as the goldsmith. At that existence, he had angrily said to an *arahat*: “Go and throw away your Buddha (image) into the water!” For that verbal misconduct, he was sent adrift in the river at birth for seven successive existences. At his last existence also he met the with the same fate.

When the goldsmith was making golden flowers to offer to the Buddha at the shrine, which was built in honour of the deceased Buddha Kassapa, to atone for his verbal misconduct, only his youngest son joined in the effort. As the result of their good deed, the father, Jaṭila and his youngest son alone had the benefit of the golden hill that appeared.)

After admonishing his sons, Jaṭila the Rich Man went to the Buddha and entered bhikkhuhood. With due diligence in *bhikkhu* practice, he attained arahatship in two or three days.

Later on, the Buddha went on the alms-round with five hundred *bhikkhus* and arrived at the house of Jaṭila's three sons. The sons made food offerings to the Buddha and His Sangha for fifteen days.

At the congregation of *bhikkhus* in the assembly hall, *bhikkhus* asked Bhikkhu Jaṭila: “Friend Jaṭila, do you still have attachment today to the golden hill of eighty cubits in height and your three sons?”

Bhikkhu Jaṭila, an *arahat*, replied: “Friend, I have no attachment to the golden hill and my three sons.”

The *bhikkhus* said: “This Bhikkhu Jaṭila claims arahatship falsely.” When the Buddha heard the accusations of these *bhikkhus*, He said: “*Bhikkhus* there is no attachment whatever in the mental state of Bhikkhu Jaṭila to that golden hill and his sons.” Further, the Buddha spoke this verse:

“He, who in the world has given up craving (that arises at the six sense-doors) and has renounced the home life to become a *bhikkhu*, who has exhausted craving for existence, and made an end of all forms of existence, him I call a *brāhmaṇa* (one who has rid himself of all evil.)” — **Dhammapada**, V-4 16.

By the end of discourse many persons attained Path-Knowledge such as *sotāpatti-phala*. (This account is extracted from the Commentary on the **Dhammapada**, Book Two.)

4. KĀḶAVALĪYA The Rich Man

A brief account of Kāḷavaḷiya, the Rich Man, is found in Commentary on the **Uparipañāsa** which is reproduced here.

During the time of Buddha Gotama, there lived in Rājagaha a poor man by the name of Kāḷavaḷiya. One day, his wife had cooked a meal of sour gruel mixed with some edible leaves, (for rice was not within their means). On that day, the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, rising from dwelling in the attainment of Cessation, reviewed the world, contemplating on whom he should bring his blessing. He saw Kāḷavaḷiya in his supernormal vision and went to his door for alms-food.

Kāḷavaḷiya's wife took the alms-bowl of Venerable Mahā Kassapa and emptied her cooking pot into it. She offered her poor meal of sour gruel mixed with edible leaves to the Venerable, without keeping back anything for themselves - an offering at one's own sacrifice (*niravasesa dāna*). The Venerable Mahā Kassapa went back to the monastery and offered the gruel to the Buddha. The Buddha accepted just a portion of it, with which to satisfy himself and gave the remainder to the five hundred *bhikkhus* who had enough to eat for that meal. Kāḷavaḷiya happened to be at the Buddha's monastery to beg for the gruel.

The Venerable Mahā Kassapa asked the Buddha as to the benefit that would result to Kāḷavaḷiya on account of the brave deed of sacrificing the food completely. And the Buddha said: “Seven days hence Kāḷavaḷiya will get the white umbrella of the Treasurer's office, i.e. he will be made a Royal Treasurer by the King.” Kāḷavaḷiya heard these words of the Buddha and hastened home to tell his wife about it.

At that time, King Bimbisāra was on his inspection round and he saw a criminal tied on a stake outside the city. The man impudently said to the King in a loud voice: “Great King, I would request that a meal, which was prepared for Your Majesty, be sent to me.” The King replied: “Ah, yes, I would.” When dinner was being brought to the King, he remembered his promise to the criminal on the stake and ordered the officials concerned to find someone who would send his dinner to the criminal on the stake outside the city.

The outside of the city of Rājagaha was infested with demons so that very few people dared to go out of the city by night. The officials went around the city announcing that a thousand ticals would be awarded on the spot to anyone who would take the King's meal to a criminal on the stake outside the city. No one came out at the first round of announcement (with the beating of the gong); and the second round also was fruitless. But at the third round, Kāḷavaḷiya's wife accepted the offer of a thousand ticals.

She was brought before the King as the person undertaking the King's mission. She disguised herself as a man and wielded five kinds of weapons. As she fearlessly went out of the city carrying the King's meal, she was accosted by the Dīghatāla, guardian spirit of a palm tree who said: “Stop there, stop! You are now my food.” But Kāḷavaḷiya's wife was not afraid and said: “I am not your food. I am the King's messenger.”

“Where are you going?”

“I am going to the criminal on the stake.”

“Could you convey a message for me?”

“Yes, I could.”

“If so, cry aloud all along your way this message: ‘Kālī, daughter of Sumaṇa, the chief of celestial devas, wife of Dīghatāla, has given birth to a son!’ There are seven pots full of gold at the root of this Palmyra tree. Take them as your fee.”

The brave woman went her way crying aloud the message: “Kālī, daughter of Sumaṇa, the chief of celestial devas, wife of Dīghatāla, has given birth to a son!” Sumaṇa, the chief of celestial devas heard her cry while presiding over a meeting of celestial devas and said to his assistants: “There is a human being bringing happy tiding. Bring him here.” And so she was brought before Sumana who thanked her and said: “There are pots full of gold underneath the shade (at noon) of the big tree. I give them all to you.”

She went to the criminal on the stake, who had to be fed with her hand. After taking his meal, when his mouth was wiped clean by the woman, he felt the feminine touch and bit her knotted hair so as not to let her go. The woman being courageous, had presence of mind, she cut the hair-knot with her sword and freed herself.

She reported to the King that she had fulfilled her task. “What proof can you show that you have actually fed that man?” asked the King. “My hair-knot in the mouth of that villain should be sufficient proof. But I have further proof too,” replied Kāḷavaḷiya's wife and related her meeting with Dīghatāla and Sumaṇa. The King ordered the pots of gold described by her to be dug up. All were found. Kāḷavaḷiya couple became very rich at once. “Is there anyone as wealthy as Kāḷavaḷiya?” inquired the King. The ministers said: “There is none, great King.” So the King appointed him as Treasurer of Sāvatti and gave him all the paraphernalia, seal and title of office.

Here ends The Great Chronicle of the Buddhas.

Dated: the 13th waxing day of the 1st Wazo, 1331 M.E. (1969 A.D)

Completed at 11:00 am

U Vicittasārābhivamsa
Dhammanāda Monastery Mingun Hill

EPILOGUE

EPILOGUE

Nine Pāli stanzas and their Myanmar translations:

- (1 & 2) On Saturday, the thirteenth waxing day of the first Wazo, 1331 Myanmar Era, the 2513th year of the Sāsana, the month when the Alexandrian laurel *Calaphyllum* blooms forth in the forest and the traditional festival of admitting new entrants into the Order is being held throughout the land, at eleven a.m.
- (3) This work entitled 'The Great Chronicle of Buddhas', the tome that came into being under the sponsorship of the State Sāsana Council as a sequel to the Sixth Buddhist Council, portraying the life story of the Buddhas (and especially), that of Buddha Gotama from the fulfilling of the Perfections to the day-to-day events relating to Him, was completed for the edification of the followers of the Buddha who uphold righteousness - a most auspicious achievement indeed.
- (4) The Buddha, the Conqueror of the Five Māras or Evils, endowed with great diligence, who occupied Himself by day and by night with the five functions of the Buddha, lived for forty-five *vassa* (years) during which He ferried the multitudes of deva and humans across to the yonder shores of Nibbāna by means of the ship of the Eightfold Ariya Path.
- (5) To the Buddha, the Conqueror of the five Māras, I, acclaimed as the great, distinguished Thera who has memorized the Three Piṭakas, who, thanks to past merit, has been fortunate enough to live a life devoted to Buddhistic studies since his novicehood, pay homage behumbling myself in body, speech and mind, with this tome entitled 'The Great Chronicle of The Buddhas', arranged in forty-five chapters in respectful memory of the forty-five years of the Buddha's Noble mission, an exegetical work embodying erudite judgements on readings in the Text and the Commentaries.
- (6) As the result of this work of great merit done by me with diligence, knowledge and conviction, may all sentient beings benefit from it: may they clearly understand (through learning, reflecting and cultivation) the Dhamma, the Good Doctrine expounded by the Supreme Lord of Righteousness for the welfare of the multitudes, for their happiness pertaining to the human world and the deva-world, and the Peace of Nibbāna.
- (7) May the multitudes, by following the Middle Way (of eight constituents) which is purified by shunning the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification, which brings happiness by clearing away the hindrances to Path-Knowledge and its Fruition, realize with facility (through the ten stages of Insight), the supreme Peace of Nibbāna that liberates one from craving for all forms of existence, that is free from all sorrow (caused by five kinds of loss) and grief (that gnaws at the hearts of worldlings).
- (8) May the Buddha's Teaching (that consists of learning, training and penetration) last for five thousand years, shining forth like the sun, overriding the corroding influence of sophists or captious contenders. May all beings in all the human world, the deva-world and the Brahmā-world have firm conviction in, and deep respect for the Dhamma expounded by the Buddha. May the Rain God, benefactor of the human world, bless the earth with his bounteous showers at the proper time (i.e. at night, for fields of poor fertility once in five days, for fields of medium fertility once in ten days, and for fields of good fertility once in fifteen days).
- (9) May the rulers of the country give protection to the people like the good kings of yore. May they work for the welfare of the people just as they would for their own children, on the example of those benevolent rulers who extended their loving care to their subjects by upholding the ten principles of rulership,

The Venerable Buddhaghosa, the famous Commentator, in his Epilogue to the **Aṭṭhasālinī** (an exegesis on the **Abhidhamma**) and the **Pañcapakaraṇa** made his wish in four stanzas beginning with: “*Yam pattham kusalam tassa.*” We have adopted them here, respectfully endorsing his sentiments therein. (Stanzas 6 to 9 above).

In doing so, we are also endorsing the view of the Sub-Commentator, the Venerable Saṅgharakkhitamahāsāmi, author of the *Sāratthavilāsinī*, wherein it has been said: “For one who does not work for the benefit of others, no real benefit accrues to him. That is true. And true indeed it is a statement fit to be proclaimed with one's right arm raised.”

Such being the words of the wise, may all right-minded persons make a point of directing their efforts towards the good of others and thereby do good to themselves as well.

Here comes the completion of “The Great Chronicle Of Buddhas”.

May I be endowed with the three knowledges (*vijjā*).

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

On The Great Chronicle of Buddhas

Foreword

The word, “*anudīpanī*” is purely Pāli, “*anu*” meaning “further” and “*dīpanī*”, “explanation”; hence “further explanation” of what is not explicit in the original writing is called “*anudīpanī*”. After the Venerable Ledi Sayadaw had written an exegetical work, *Paramatthadīpanī* on the *Abhidhammatthasangaha*, he composed another work, entitled, “**Anudīpanī**”, to explain again what is vague in the *Paramatthadīpanī*.

Similarly, an expository work under the title of “**Anudīpanī**”, on some words or passages of the Great Chronicle which deserve elaboration or explication, is written here separately as a supplement. Had the expositions been included in the original work, readers would find the textual expressions and their meanings confusing. This would be a distraction for readers. Therefore, it is deemed necessary to compile comprehensive notes on important points and topics in the Text as a supplement (*anudīpanī*), for the benefit of serious students of the Great Chronicle.

It is hoped that, by going through the *anudīpanī*, difficult subjects in the Chronicle would become more easily understandable and profound meanings of some usages would become clearer. Therefore, it is suggested that after reading the Chronicle, readers should study the *Anudīpanī* with greater interest. May they understand easily the deep and important meaning, which might otherwise remain unrevealed or overlooked.

Chapter I - III Anudīpanī on words and phrases

Definition of Pāramī

The set of ten virtues including *dāna* (alms-giving), *sīla* (morality), etc. is called *Pāramī* (Perfection).

A Bodhisatta (future Buddha), being endowed with these ten virtues, such as *dāna*, *sīla*, etc. is known as a *Parama* or Extraordinary Personality. On this basis, therefore, the etymology of *Pāramī* is: *Paramānam bhāvo* (state of Extraordinary Personalities), which is derived from two things: the knowledge of those who see and know them as such and the saying of those who see and know them that they really are. An alternative etymology is *Paramanam kamman* (work of Extraordinary Personalities); hence their course of conduct, consisting of *dāna*, *sīla*, etc. is called *Pāramī*.

The order of the ten Perfections should be known by the following verse:

*Dānam sīlañ ca nekkhammam
paññā vīriyena pañcamam
khanṭī saccam adhiṭṭhānam
mett' upekkhā ti te dasa.*

Alms-giving, Morality, Renunciation,
Wisdom, Energy as the fifth.
Forbearance, Truthfulness, Resolution,
Loving-kindness and Equanimity;
all these make ten (Perfections).

[Each perfection is of three categories, namely, **Pāramī** (Ordinary Perfection), **Upa-Pāramī** (Higher Perfection) and **Paramattha-Pāramī** (Highest Perfection). For instance, *dāna* is of three categories: (1) **Dāna-pāramī** (Ordinary Perfection of Alms-giving), (2) **Dāna upa-pāramī** (Higher Perfection of Alms-giving) and **Dāna paramattha-pāramī**

(Highest Perfection of Alms-giving). Likewise for the *Sīla* and each of the remaining virtues.] Thus there are thirty kinds of Perfection in its detailed enumeration.

Difference between Pāramī, Upa-pāramī and Paramattha-pāramī

With regard to these three categories, (1) properties, such as one's own gold, silver, etc. and family members, such as one's own children and wife, (2) limbs, big and small, such as one's own hands, legs, etc. and (3) one's own life, should be noted first. Then referring to *dāna*, (1) Gift of properties is *Dāna-pāramī*, (2) Gift of limbs, big and small, is *Dāna-upa-pāramī* and (3) Gift of life is *Dāna-paramattha-pāramī*.

Similarly, (1) observance of morality at the sacrifice of properties, (2) observance of morality at the sacrifice of limbs, big and small and (3) observance of morality at the sacrifice of life, are to be understood as *Sīla-pāramī*, *Sīla-upa-pāramī* and *Sīla-paramattha-pāramī* respectively. Likewise, for the remaining eight perfection, the same way of classification should be applied.

Different views held by different commentators may be looked up in the exposition of the word, “*ko vibhago*” in the Pakiṇṇaka Kathā of the **Cariyā Piṭaka Commentary**.

Adhimuttimarāṇa

Voluntary passing away by self-determination is called “**Adhimuttimarāṇa**”. It is the kind of death that takes place as soon as one resolves: “May death come unto me”. Such a death could happen only to future Buddhas and not to others.

Sometimes a future Buddha is reborn in a deva or a Brahmā-world where the span of life is extremely long. He is aware of the fact that, living in a celestial world, he has no chance whatsoever to fulfil and cultivate Perfections, Sacrifices and Practices and, therefore, he feels such a lengthy life in that celestial abode is boredom. Then, after entering his mansion, he shuts his eyes and no sooner has he resolved: “May my life-faculty ceases to be”, then he experiences the impact of death and passes away from that divine realm. His resolution materialises partly because he has little attachment to his body, as he has particularly conditioned the continuity of his body by attaining higher knowledge and partly because his resolution based on overwhelming compassion for beings is intense and pure.

As he has control of his mind, so has he control of his deeds. Accordingly, when he dies such voluntary death, he is reborn in the human world as a prince, a brahmin, etc. so that he can fulfil any Perfections he wishes to. That is why, though our future Buddha Gotama had lived in many existence in the Brahmā abode without losing his attainment of *jhāna*, he existed only for a short time in that Brahmā-world as he died voluntarily. He passed away from the Brahmā existence into the human existence and build up elements of Perfections.

Kappa or Aeon

What is called *Kambhā* in Myanmar is *Kappa* in Pāli. Therefore, it is said in the text of the Buddhavaṃsa: “*kappe ca satasahassee, caturo ca asankhiye*” etc.

The duration of a *kappa* cannot be calculated by the number of years. It is known only by inference. Suppose there is a big granary which is one *yojana* each in length, breadth and height and which is full of tiny mustard seeds. You throw out just one seed each century. When all the mustard seeds have been thrown out, the period called *kappa* have not come to an end yet. (From this, it is to be inferred that the word *kappa* in Pāli or the word *kambhā* in Myanmar is an extremely long time. But, nowadays, the word *kambhā* exactly means such a period is forgotten, and the word is used in the sense of the mass of the earth as in the expression *kambā-mye-pyin* (earth surface), *kambā-mye-lone* (the globe), etc.

Divisions of kappa

It should therefore be noted that *kambhā* and *kappa* are the same. The *kappa* is of six divisions: (1) **Mahā-kappa**, (2) **Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa**, (3) **Antara-kappa**, (4) **Āyu-kappa**, (5) **Hāyana-kappa** and (6) **Vaddhana-kappa**.

One **Mahā-kappa** is made up of four **Asaṅkhyeyya-kappas**, namely, (a) the *kappa* in the

process of dissolution (**Samvatta-kappa**), (b) the *kappa* in the state of dissolution (**Samvattatthāyi-kappa**). (c) the *kappa* in the process of evolution (**Vivatta-kappa**) and (d) the *kappa* in the state of evolution (**Vivattatthāyi-kappa**). That is to say, these four **Asaṅkhyeyya-kappas** called **Samvatta Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa**, **Samvattatthāyi Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa**, **Vivatta Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa** and **Vivattatthāyi Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa** make one **Mahā-kappa**.

Of these four **Asaṅkhyeyya-kappas**, the **Samvatta-kappa** is the period beginning from the falling of the great rain, which heralds the dissolution of *kappa* till the extinction of flames, if the *kappa* is to be dissolved by fire; or till the receding of floods, if the *kappa* is to be dissolved by water; or till the cessation of storms, if the *kappa* is to be dissolved by the air element.

The **Samvattatthāyi-kappa** is the period beginning from the moment of dissolution of the world by fire, water or the air element till the falling of the great rain which heralds the evolution of a new world.

The **Vivatta-kappa** is the period beginning from the falling of the great rain which heralds the evolution of the new world till the appearance of the sun, the moon, and the stars and planets.

The **Vivattatthāyi-kappa** is the period beginning from the appearance of the sun, the moon and the stars and planets to the falling of the great rain which heralds the dissolution of the world.

Thus there are two kinds of *kappa*-dissolving rain: The first kind is the great rain which falls in any *kappa* when it is nearing its dissolution either by fire, or by water, or by the air element. First, there is a great downpour of rain all over the universe which is to be dissolved. Then, taking advantage of the rain, people start cultivation. When plants, which are big enough for cattle to feed on, appear, the rain ceases completely. It is rain which heralds the dissolution of a *kappa*.

The second kind is also a great downpour but it falls when a *kappa* is to be dissolved by water. It is not an ordinary rain-fall, but a very unusual one, for it has the power to smash even a rocky mountain into smithereens.

(An elaborate description of the dissolution of a *kappa* by fire, water or the air element is given in the chapter on the Pubbenivāsānussati Abhiññā of the Visuddhimagga translation.) The above-mentioned four **Asaṅkhyeyya-kappas** are of the same duration, which cannot be reckoned in terms of years. That is why they are known as **Asaṅkhyeyya-kappas** (Aeons of Incalculable Length).

These four **Asaṅkhyeyya-kappas** constitute one **Mahā-kappa** (Great Aeon). The Myanmar word 'kambhā' is (sometimes) used in the sense of the Pāli **Mahā-kappa**. The Myanmar language has no separate word for **Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa**, but it adopts **Asaṅkhyeyya-kap** as a derivative from Pāli.

Antara-kappa, etc

At the beginning of the *Vivattatthāyi Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa* (i.e. the beginning of the world) people live for incalculable (*asaṅkhyeyya*) years. As time goes on, they are overcome by such mental defilement as *lobha* (greed), *dosa* (anger), etc. and consequently their life span gradually decreases until it becomes only ten years. Such a period of decrease is called **Hāyana-kappa** in Pāli or *hsuk-kap* or *chuk-kap* (aeon of decrease) in Myanmar.

On the contrary, owing to the occurrence and uplift of such wholesome principles as sublime states of mind, namely, *mettā* (loving-kindness), etc. the life span of generations of their descendents doubles up gradually until it becomes incalculable years. Such a period of increase in life span from ten years to incalculable years is called **Vaddhanap-kappa** in Pāli or *tat-kap* (aeon of increase) in Myanmar. (For further details of these two periods of increase and decrease in the human life span, refer to Cakkavatti Sutta of the Pāthika Vagga in the **Dīgha Nikāya**.)

Thus, the life span of human beings goes up and down between ten years and incalculable

as they develop meritoriousness or are overcome by their demeritoriousness. A pair of life span, an increasing one and a decreasing one is called an **Antara-kappa**.

Three Kinds of Antara-kappa

At the beginning of the world, when people's life span declines from incalculable years to ten years, a change of *kappa* takes place. If the decline is due to the particularly overpowering state of greed, then there occurs scarcity of food and all evil persons perish during the last seven days of *kappa*. Such a round of time is called **Dubbhikkhantara-kappa** or the aeon of famine.

If the decline is due to the particularly overpowering state of bewilderment, then there occurs an epidemic of diseases and all evil persons perish during the last seven days of the *kappa*. Such a round of time is called **Rogantara-kappa** or the aeon of diseases.

If the decline of life span is due to the particularly overpowering state of hatred, then there occur killings of one another with arms and all evil persons perish during the last seven days of the *kappa*. Such a round of time is called **Satthantara-kappa** or the aeon of weapons.

(According to the **Visuddhi-magga Mahatika**, however, the *Rogantara-kappa* is brought about by the particularly overpowering state of greed, the *Satthantara-kappa* by the particularly overpowering state of hatred and the *Dubbhikkhantara-kappa* by the particularly overpowering state of bewilderment; then evil persons perish.)

The naming of each pair of life spans — one increasing and the other decreasing as *Antara-kappa* may be explained thus: before all is dissolved either by fire, water or the air element at the end of *Vivaṭṭatthāyi-Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa* and whenever the life span becomes ten years, all evil persons are perished with famine, diseases or weapons. In accordance with this statement, here it refers to the intermediate period of decrease between one period of total destruction and another.

After the calamity that befalls during the final seven days of each *Antara-kappa*, the name *Rogantara-kappa*, *Satthantara-kappa* or *Dubbhikkhantara-kappa* is given to the period of misfortune which befalls before the ten years life span (not in the whole world but) in a limited region such as a town or a village. If there appears an epidemic of diseases, we say there is *Rogantara-kappa* in that region; if there is an outbreak of war, we say there is *Satthantara-kappa* in that region; if there occurs starvation, we say there is *Dubbhikkhantara-kappa* in that region. Such a saying is just figurative because the regional incident is similar to the cosmic. When in prayers, one mentions "three *kappas*" from which one wishes to be free, one usually refers to these three great disasters.

At the completion of 64 *Antara-kappas* (each *Antara-kappa* consisting of a pair of increasing and decreasing aeons), a *Vivaṭṭatthāyi Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa* comes to an end. Since there are no living beings (in human and celestial realms) during the *Samvaṭṭa Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*, *Samvaṭṭatthāyi Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa* and *Vivaṭṭatthāyi Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*, these *kappas* are not reckoned in terms of *Antara-kappa*, which consists of a set of increasing and decreasing aeons. But it should be noted that each of these *Asaṅkhyeyya-kappas*, lasting as long as 64 *Antara-kappas*, are of the same duration as a *Vivaṭṭatthāyi Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*.

Āyu kappa

Āyu-kappa means a period which is reckoned in accordance with the span of life (**āyu**) of that period. If the life span is one hundred, a century is an *Āyu-kappa*; if it is one thousand, a millennium is an *Āyu-kappa*.

When the Buddha said: "Ānanda, I have developed the four *Iddhipadas* (bases of psychic power). If I so desire, I can live either a whole *kappa* or a little more than a *kappa*," the *kappa* therein should be taken as an *Āyu-kappa*, which is the duration of life of people living in that period. It is explained in the *Aṭṭhaka Nipāta* of the **Āṅguttara Commentary** that the Buddha made such a declaration meaning to say that He could live one hundred years on a little more if He so desired.

Mahāśiva Thera, however, said: “The *Āyu-kappa* here is to be taken as the *Mahā-kappa* called **Bhaddaka**.” (He said so because he held that the kamma, that causes rebirth in the final existence of a Buddha, has the power of prolonging His life span for incalculable years and because it is mentioned in the Pāli Texts that *Āyupālakaphalasamāpatti*, the fruition-attainment that conditions and controls the life-sustaining mental process called **Āyusankhara**, can ward off all its dangers.) But the Thera’s view is not accepted by commentators.

The Sanghabhedakkakkhandhaka of the **Vinaya Cūlavagga** states: “He who causes a schism of the Sangha is reborn in Niraya, realms of continuous suffering, and suffers there for a whole *kappa*.” “That *kappa* is the life span of Avīci, the lowest realm of continuous suffering,” explains the Commentary. The life span of Avīci inmates is equal to one eightieth of a *Mahā-kappa*, according to the Terasakaṇḍa-Tika, a voluminous Sub-Commentary on the Vinaya. In the same work, it is particularly mentioned that one eightieth of that duration should be reckoned as an *Antara-kappa* (of Avīci inmates). It, therefore, follows that one *Mahā-kappa* is made up of 80 *Antara-kappas* according to the reckoning of Avīci inmates.

It may be clarified that, as mentioned above, one *Mahā-kappa* has four *Asaṅkhyeyya-kappas*, and one *Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa* has 64 *Antara-kappa*. Therefore, one *Mahā-kappa* is equivalent to 256 *Antara-kappa* by human calculations.

If 256 is divided by 80, the remainder is $3(1/5)$ or 3.2. Therefore, $3(1/5)$ *Antara-kappa* of human beings make one *Antara-kappa* Avīci inmates. (In Avīci there is no evolving and dissolving *kappas* as in the human world. Since it is the place that knows suffering at all times, the end of each dissolving *kappa* is not marked with the three periods of misfortune. One eightieth of a *Mahā-kappa* which is the life span of Avīci inmates is their *Antara-kappa*. Therefore by one *Antara-kappa* of Avīci is meant $3(1/5)$ *Antara-kappa* human beings.)

In this way, it may be assumed that one *Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa* is equal to 64 *Antara-kappas* of human beings and 20 *Antara-kappas* of Avīci inmates. Therefore, when some Pāli Text (such as the Visuddhi-magga Mahā-Tika, the Abhidhammattha-vibhāvanī Tika, etc.) say that one *Asaṅkhyeyya-kappa* contains either 64 or 20 *Antara-kappas*, the figures do not contradict each other. The difference between the numbers (64 and 20) lies only in the manner of calculation. It should be noted that the two are of the same length of time.

A particularly noteworthy thing is a statement in the Sammohavinodanī, the Commentary on the Abhidhamma Vibhanga. In the exposition Nāna-vibhaṅga, it is said: “Only Sanghabhedaka-kamma (the act of causing schism in the Sangha) results in suffering a whole *kappa*. Should a man, owing to his such act, be reborn in Avīci at the beginning or in the middle of the *kappa*, he would gain release only when the *kappa* dissolves. If he were reborn in that realm of suffering today and if the *kappa* dissolves tomorrow, he should then suffer just one day and would be free tomorrow. (But) there is no such possibility.”

On account of this statement, there are some who opine that “The Sanghabhedaka-kamma leads to Niraya for the whole aeon (in the sense of *Mahā-kappa*); he who commits this kamma gains freedom only when the *kappa* dissolves. As a matter of fact, the expression “*kappaṭṭhitiyo*” (lasting for the whole *kappa*) is explained in the Vibhaṅga Commentary only in a general manner; it does not emphatically mention the word *Maha-kappaṭṭhitiyo* (lasting for the whole *Mahā-kappa*). The expression *kappaṭṭhitiyo* is based on a verse in the Vinaya Cūlavagga which reads to the effect that “having destroyed the unity of the Sangha, one suffers in Niraya for the whole *kappa*.” Therefore, the *kappa* here should be taken only as *Āyu-kappa* but not *Mahā-kappa*. In the 13th chapter of the **Kathvatthu Commentary**, it is said in dealing with *kappa* that the verse has been composed with reference to *Āyu-kappa* (of Avīci inmates) which is only one eightieth of *Mahā-kappa*.

Divisions of Mahā-kappa

Mahā-kappa is divided into two classes: (1) **Suñña-kappa** or Empty Aeon and (2) **Asuñña-**

kappa or Non-empty Aeon.

Of these two, the aeon in which Buddhas do not appear is *Suñña-kappa* or Empty Aeon; it means the aeon which is void of a Buddha.

The aeon in which Buddhas appear is *Asuñña-kappa* or Non-empty aeon; it means the aeon which is not void of a Buddha.

Though Buddhas do not appear in an Empty Aeon, that there can be appearance of Private Buddhas and Universal Monarchs, may be inferred from the Upāli Thera Sutta in the first Vagga of the **Apādāna**.

In the Upāli Thera Sutta and its Commentary, it is said two aeons prior to this one, Prince Khattiya, son of King Aujasa, on his departure from a park, committed an offence against Paccekabuddha Devīla. No text mentions the appearance of a Buddha in that aeon. In the Commentary on the Bhaddaji Thera Sutta of the **Apādāna**, too, it is stated that the Thera had given alms-food to five hundred Paccekabuddhas in a *Suñña-kappa*. It is clear from these texts that Paccekabuddhas appear in *Suñña-kappa*. Again the Kusumāsaniya Thera Sutta of the **Apādāna** mentions that “future Kusumāsaniya was reborn as Universal Monarch Varadassī in the aeon that immediately followed.” The Tīṇasanthara Thera Sutta of the same work also says that “future Tīṇasanthara Thera was reborn as Universal Monarch Migasammata in the second aeon prior to the present one” suggesting that there is the possibility of the appearance of Universal Monarchs in any empty aeon.

The Non-Empty Aeon in which Buddhas appear is divided into five classes:

- (a) the aeon in which a single Buddha appears is known as **Sāra-kappa**,
- (b) the aeon in which two Buddhas appear is known as **Maṇḍa-kappa**,
- (c) the aeon in which three Buddhas appear is known as **Vara-kappa**,
- (d) the aeon in which four Buddhas appear is known as **Sāramaṇḍa-kappa**, and
- (e) the aeon in which five Buddhas appear is known as **Bhaddha-kappa**.

The aeon that witnessed the existence of Sumedha, as mentioned in the Chapter on Sumedha the brahmin, is *Sāramaṇḍa-kappa* because there appear four Buddhas in that aeon. The city of Amaravatī came into existence after the appearance of three Buddhas, namely, Taṅkaṅkara, Medhaṅkara, and Saranaṅkara, and before the appearance of Dīpaṅkarā.

The Name Amaravatī

Amarā means “God” (immortal being) and *vattī* means “possession”; hence, the great city which gods possess.

It is stated in the Bhesajjakkhandhaka of the **Vinaya Mahāvagga** and other places that, as soon as the Brahmins Sunidha and Vassakāra planned to found the city of Pāṭaliputta, gods arrived first and distributed among themselves plots of land. These plots of land occupied by gods of great power became residences of princes, ministers and wealthy persons of high rank; these plots of land occupied by gods of medium power became residences of people of medium rank and these plots of land occupied by gods of little power became residences of people of low rank.

From this statement it may be supposed that gods arrived in hosts to take up residences for themselves and occupied them where a great royal city was to be established. Amaravatī was so named to denote the presence of gods who marked out their own locations in the city and protected them for their habitation.

The Pāli word ‘*vattī*’ signifies possession in abundance. In this world, those who have just little wealth are not called wealthy men but those who possess wealth much more than others are called so. Therefore, the name Amaravatī indicates that, as it was a great royal residential city, it was occupied and protected by a large number of highly powerful gods.

Ten Sounds

The Buddhavaṃsa enumerates only six sounds, not all ten. The Mahāparinibbāna Sutta of the Mahāvagga of the **Dīgha Nikāya** and the **Buddhavaṃsa Commentary** enumerates all ten. (This is followed by a comprehensive and critical survey of the ten sounds (*dasasadda*),

which come differently in different texts, namely, the **Buddhavaṃsa**, the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta of the **Dīgha Nikāya**, **Buddhavaṃsa Commentary**, the Myanmar and Sri Lankan versions of the **Jātaka Commentary**, and the **Mūla-Tikā**, for the benefit of Pāli scholars. We have left them out from our translation.)

Chapter IV. The Renunciation of Sumedha

The Five Defects of A Walkway

- (1) A walkway that is rough and rugged hurts the feet of one who walks on it; blisters appear. Consequently, meditation cannot be practised with full mental concentration. On the other hand, comfort and ease provided by a soft and even-surfaced walkway is helpful to complete practice of meditation. Roughness and ruggedness therefore is the first defect of a walkway.
- (2) If there is a tree inside or in the middle or by the side of a walkway, one who walks without due care on that walkway can get hurt on the forehead or on the head by hitting himself against the tree. The presence of a tree is therefore the second defect of a walkway.
- (3) If a walkway is covered by shrubs and bushes, one who walks on it in the dark can tread on reptiles, etc. and kill them (although unintentionally). The presence of shrubs and bushes, therefore, is the third defect of a walkway.
- (4) In making a walkway, it is important that it has three lanes. The middle and main one is straight and of 60 cubits in length and one and a half cubit in breadth. On either side of it are two smaller lanes, each a cubit wide. Should the middle lane be too narrow, say, only a cubit or half a cubit, there is the possibilities of hurting one's legs or hands through an accident. Being too narrow, therefore, is the fourth defect of a walkway.
- (5) Walking on a walkway which is too wide, one may get distracted; one's mind is not composed then. Being too wide, therefore, is the fifth defect of a walkway.

(Here follows the explanation of the Pāli word '*pañcadosa*' as contained in the **Buddhavaṃsa Commentary**. This is left out from our translation.)

The Eight Comforts of A Recluse

The eight comforts of a recluse (*samaṇasukha*), mentioned here are described as the eight blessings of a recluse (*samaṇabhadra*) in the Sonaka Jātaka of the **Satthi Nipāta**. The following is the Jātaka story in brief:

Once upon a time, the Bodhisatta was reborn as Arindama, son of King Magadha of Rājagaha. On the same day was born Sonaka, son of the King's chief adviser.

The two boys were brought up together and when they came of age, they went to Taxila to study. After finishing their education, they left Taxila together and went on a long tour to acquire a wider and practical knowledge of various arts and crafts and local customs. In due course, they arrived at the royal garden of the King of Bārāṇasī and entered the city the following day.

On that very day, the festival of Veda recitations known as Brāhmaṇavācaka was to be held and milk-rice was prepared and seats were arranged for the occasion. On entering the city, Prince Arindama and his friend were invited into a house and given seats. Seeing that the seat for the prince was covered with a white cloth while that for him was covered with red cloth, Sonaka knew from that omen that "Today, my friend Arindama will become King of Bārāṇasī and I will be appointed general."

After the meal, the two friends went back to the royal garden. It was the seventh day after the King's demise, and ministers were looking for a person who was worthy of kingship by sending the state chariot in search of him. The chariot left the city, made its way to the garden and stopped at the entrance. At that moment, Prince Arindama was lying asleep on an auspicious stone couch with his head covered and Sonaka was sitting near him. As soon as Sonaka heard the sound of music, he thought to himself: "The state chariot has come for Arindama. Today, he will become King and give me the post of his

Commander-in-Chief. I do not really want to have such a position. When Arindama leaves the garden, I will renounce the world to become an ascetic,” and he went to a corner and hid himself.

The chief adviser and ministers of Bārāṇasī anointed Prince Arindama, King, even on the very stone couch and with great ceremonial pomp and grandeur took him into the city. Thus Prince Arindama became King of Bārāṇasī. Lost in the sudden turn of events and attended upon by a large numbers of courtiers and retinue, he totally forgot his friend Sonaka.

When King Arindama had left for the city, Sonaka appeared from his hiding place and sat on the stone couch. At that time, he saw a dry leaf of *sāla* (shores robusta) falling right in front of him and he contemplated: “Like this *sāla* leaf, my body will certainly decay and oppressed by old age, I will definitely die and fall to the ground.” With his religious emotion thus aroused, he at once engaged himself in Vipassanā meditation, and, at the very sitting, there arose in him the enlightenment of a Paccekabuddha, and he became a Paccekabuddha himself. His lay appearance vanished and he assumed a new appearance of an ascetic. Making an utterance of joy: “Now I have no more rebirth!” he went to the cave of Nandamūlaka.

Prince Arindama, on the other hand, remained intoxicated with kingly pleasures. Only after some forty years, he suddenly remembered his childhood friend. Then, he yearned to see him and wondering where he would be staying then. But, receiving no news or clues about his friend’s whereabouts, he uttered repeatedly the following verse:

“Whom shall I give a hundred coins for hearing and bringing me good news about Sonaka? Whom shall I give a thousand coins for seeing Sonaka in person and telling me how to meet him? Who, whether young or old, would come and inform me of my friend Sonaka, my playmate with whom I had played in the dust?”

People heard the song and everybody sang the same, believing it to be his favourite.

After 50 years, a number of children had been born to the King, the eldest one being Dīghāvu. At that time, Paccekabuddha Soṇaka thought to himself thus: “King Arindama is wanting to see me. I will go to him and shower upon him the gift of thought-provoking sermons on the disadvantages of sensuality and the advantages of renunciation so that he would incline to lead an ascetic life.” Accordingly, He by His psychic power, appeared in the royal gardens. Having heard a boy singing repeatedly the aforementioned song of King Arindama while chopping wood, the Paccekabuddha taught him a verse in response to the King’s.

The boy went to the King and recited the responding song, which gave the clue of his friend’s whereabouts. Then, the King marched in military procession to the garden and paid respect to the Paccekabuddha. But, being a man of worldly pleasures, the King looked down upon Him and said: “What a destitute you are, living a wretched lonely life as this.” The Paccekabuddha rejected the King’s censure by replying: “Never is he a destitute who enjoys the bliss of the Dhamma! Only he who dissociates himself from the Dhamma and practises what is not righteous is a destitute! Besides, he is evil himself and forms a refuge for other evil person.”

Then he informed the Paccekabuddha that his name was Arindama and that he was known by all as a King of Bārāṇasī, and asked if the holy man was living a happy life.

Then the Paccekabuddha uttered the eight verses in praise of the eight blessings of a recluse (*samanabhadra*):

- (1) Great King, a recluse, who has gone forth from a household life to a homeless state and who is free of the worries of wealth, feels happy at all places and at all times (not only in your gardens and at this moment). Great King, such a recluse does not have to keep grain in stores or in jars (unlike lay people who do the hoarding and whose greed grows for a long time). A recluse lives on food prepared in donor’s homes and obtained by going on alms-round; he partakes of such food with due contemplation. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from non-hoarding of wealth and grain.)

- (2) [There are two kinds of blameworthy food (*savajapinda*). As mentioned in the Vinaya, the first kind is the food obtained by one of the improper means, such as by healing the sick and so on, or by one of the five wrong manners of livelihood. The other blameworthy kind is food taken without due contemplation although the food may have been properly obtained.]

Great King, a noble recluse duly contemplates while eating the food that has been obtained blamelessly. He who has thus blamelessly eaten his blameless food is not oppressed by any form of sensuality. Freedom from oppression by sensuality is the second blessing of a recluse who has neither wants nor worries. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from seeking and taking of blameless food.)

- (3) (The food that has been sought properly and eaten with due contemplation by a worldling may be called “peaceful food” (*nibbutapinda*), that is to say, the food that does not incite craving. In reality, however, only an arahat’s food is “peaceful” i.e. it does not incite craving.)

Great King, a noble recluse takes peaceful food only. He is thus not oppressed by any form of sensuality. Freedom from oppression by sensuality is the third blessing of a recluse who has no wants nor worries. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from taking peacefully food only.)

- (4) Great King, a noble recluse, who goes on alms-round in towns or villages without attachment to donors of requisites, does not adhere to greed and hatred. (Clinging wrongly to sense object in the manner of a thorn is called *dosasaṅga*, faulty adherence.) Freedom from such clinging is the fourth blessing of a recluse who has no wants nor worries. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from non-attachment to male or female donor and from non-association with them.)
- (5) Great King, a recluse, who has extra requisites which are not used by him, entrust them to a donor for security. Later on when he hears such (and such) a donor’s house has been gutted by fire, he is greatly distressed and has no peace of mind. On the other hand, another recluse has only those requisites that are on his body or that he carries along with him, just like the wings of a bird that go with it wherever it flies. He suffers no loss when a town or a village is destroyed by fire. Immunity from loss of requisites through fire is the fifth blessing of a recluse. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from not being victimised by fire.)
- (6) Great King, when a town or a village is plundered by robbers, a recluse, who like Me wears or carries along his requisites, loses nothing (while others who have extra requisites suffer loss through plundering by robbers and know no peace of mind). Freedom from the trouble of looking after one’s possessions is the sixth blessing of a recluse. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from feeling secure against robbers.)
- (7) Great King, a recluse, who has only the eight requisites as his possession, moves freely without being stopped, interrogated or arrested on the road where robbers waylay or security officers patrol. This is the seventh blessing of a recluse. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from harmless travelling on the road where robbers or security men are waiting.)
- (8) Great King, a recluse, who has only the eight requisites as his possession, can go wherever he likes without taking a long look back (at his old place). Such possibility of moving is the eighth blessing of a recluse who has no possessions. (By this is explained the comfort that comes from freely going about without yearning for his old place.)

King Arindama interrupted Paccekabuddha Soṅaka’s sermon on the blessings of a recluse and asked: “Though you are speaking in praise of the blessings of a recluse, I cannot appreciate them as I am always in pursuit of pleasures. Sensual pleasures, both human and divine, I cherish. In what way can I gain human and divine existence?” Paccekabuddha Soṅaka replied that those who relish sensuality are destined to be reborn in unhappy

abodes, and only those who abandon it are not destined to be reborn there. By way of an illustration, He told the story of a crow that joyously rode on a dead elephant floating into the ocean and lost its life. Paccekabuddha then spoke of the blemishes of sensual pleasures and departed, travelling through space.

Being immensely moved by religious emotion as a result of the Paccekabuddha's exhortation, King Arindama handed over kingship to his son Dighavu and left for the Himalayas. After becoming a recluse, living on fruit and cultivating and developing *jhāna* through meditation on the four sublime modes of living (*Brahmavihāra-mettā*, *karuṇā*, *muditā* and *upekkhā*) he was reborn in the Brahmā realm.

The Nine Disadvantages of A Layman's Dress

They are:

- (1) Costliness of the garment.
- (2) Availability only through connection with its maker.
- (3) Getting soiled easily when used.
- (4) Getting worn out and tattered easily owing to frequent washing and dyeing.
- (5) Difficult in seeking a replacement for the old one.
- (6) Being unsuitable for a recluse.
- (7) Having to guard against loss through theft.
- (8) Appearing to be ostentatious when put on.
- (9) When taken along without being worn, it is burdensome and makes one appear to be avaricious.

The Twelve Advantages of The Fibre-robe

They are:

- (1) Being inexpensive but of fine quality.
- (2) Possibility of making it by oneself.
- (3) Not getting easily soiled when used and being easily cleaned.
- (4) Easily discarded, when worn out without a need for stitching and mending.
- (5) Having no difficulty in seeking a replacement for the old one.
- (6) Being suitable for a recluse.
- (7) Not having to guard against loss through theft.
- (8) Not appearing to be ostentatious when put on.
- (9) Not burdensome when taken along or put on.
- (10) Forming no attachment to the robe as a requisite for the user.
- (11) Made just by beating the bark from a tree; thus it is righteously and faultlessly gained.
- (12) Not being worthy of regret over its loss or destruction.

The Fibre-robe

The fibre-robe means the robe made of fibre, which is obtained from a kind of grass and fastened together. (This is described in the Aṭṭhasālīnī.)

According to the **Hsutaunggan Pyo**, fastening the fibres together itself is not the complete making of such garment. It must be beaten so as to make it soft and smooth. That is why it is called "beaten fibre" in Myanmar.

The "fibre-robe" has the name *vākacīra*, *vakkala*, and *tirīṭaka* in Pāli.

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

Vākacīra literally means “a robe made of grass”, and, therefore, it should actually be translated “grass-robe”. But traditional teachers translate the word as “fibre-robe”.

The remaining two names, *vakkala* and *tirītaka*, refer to a robe made of fibres that come from the bark of a tree. Though the word *vakka* of *vakkala* means “bark of a tree”, it does not denote pure, thick, outer crust of the bark, but the inner layers made up of fibres covering the wood-core. It should be noted that, because such fibres are taken off, fastened and beaten for softness and smoothness, the robe made thus is called fibre-robe. Though *vākacīra* has the meaning of “grass-robe”, the process of making the robe out of fibres taken off from trees is more common than that of making it out of grass and the name “fibre-robe” is better known than “grass-robess”. That is why the word “fibre-robe” is adopted in the **Hsutaunggan Pyo**.

The Wooden Tripod

The wooden tripod (*tidanda* or *tayosūlī*) is a requisite of a hermit. It is a stand with three legs, on which is placed a water jug or pot.

The Water Jug and The Yoke

The water jug (*kuṇḍikā*) is another requisite of a hermit. *Khārikāja* meaning a yoke, is taken by traditional teachers as a combination of *khāri* and *kāja*, both meaning the same: a pole which is curved. According to some, *Khāri* means a hermit’s set of requisites, which consists of a flint, a needle, a fan, etc. Taking these interpretations together, *khārikāja* may be taken as the pole on which are hung various requisites of a hermit.

The Hide of A Black Antelope (Ajīnacamma)

The hide of a black antelope, complete with hoofs, called *ajīnacamma* is also one of the requisites of a hermit, which may be elaborated somewhat as follows:

The Pāli *ajīnacamma* has been unanimously translated “the hide of a black antelope” by ancient scholars. It is generally thought, therefore, that a beast which is black all over its body is called a “black antelope”. In the **Amarakosa Abhidhāna** (section 17 v, 47) the word, “*Ajīna*” is explained as “hide” synonymous with *camma*. This explanation of the *Amarakosa* is worthy of note.

In the **Atthasālinī** and other commentaries, there is an expression meaning “the hide, complete with hoofs, of a black antelope, which was like a bed of *punnāga* flowers”. The phrase “complete with hoofs” (*sakhuram*) indicates that it is the hide of a hoofed animal. When it is said to be “like a bed of *punnāga* flowers”, we have to decide whether the likeness to a bed of *punnāga* flowers refers to its colour or to its softness. That the *punnāga* flowers is not particularly softer than other flowers is known to many. Therefore, it should be decided that the likeness refers to its colour. This suggests then that the hide could not be that of a black antelope.

Though *ajīna* is translated “black leopard” by scholars of old, that it actually means an animal’s coat and is synonymous with *camma* is evident from such statement as “*ajīnamhi haññate dīpi*,” (“a leopard is killed for its coat,”) in the Janaka and Suvāṇṇasāma Jātakas. The Commentary on the Janaka also explains *ajīna* to be a synonym of *camma* by saying “*ajīnamhīti cammatthaya cammkaraṇā* — for its coat mean for obtaining its hide”). There are only two words, *dīpi* and *saddūla*, in Pāli meaning leopard. *Ajīna* is not found in that sense.

The Buddhavaṃsa Text also says, “*kese muñcitvā’ham tattha vākacīraṇ ca cammakam*”. When Sumedha lay prostrate before Buddha Dīpaṅkarā, offering himself as a bridge, he loosened his hair-knot and spread his fibre-robe and the animal hide on the bog. The Pāli word used here is *camma* which is the same as *ajīnacamma* discussed above.

All these point to the fact that *ajīnacamma* is not the coat of a beast with claws like a tiger, a leopard or a cat and the adjectival phrase “complete with hoofs” shows that it is the coat of an animal with hoofs like that of cattle or horses. The coat has the colour of a bed of *punnāga* flowers as mentioned in the **Atthasālinī**. It is also very soft to the touch.

Such animals like **enī** are found in the neighbourhood of the Himalayas. Because its coat is smooth and very beautiful and not easily available, people treasure it as a symbol of auspiciousness.

When Bodhisatta Siddhattha was born, the Cātumahārājika devas of the four quarters, received him from the hands of the saintly Brahmās of the Suddhāvāsa abode with a coat of this particular animal, i.e. the coat having a soft fur and commonly regarded to be auspicious. This is mentioned in the introduction of the **Jātaka Commentary** and in the **Buddhavaṃsa Commentary** as well.

(The author then acknowledges that all that has been discussed regarding the translation of *ajinacamma* as the hide of a black antelope is the view of the great scholar U Lin, the previous compiler of The Great Chronicle of Buddhas.)

Matted Hair (Jaṭā) and Round Head-dress made of Hair (Jatāmaṇḍala)

The difference between the matted hair and the round head-dress made of hair should be understood. The matted hair is something that is a part of the hermit. In order to save the trouble of keeping it well groomed, the hermit knotted his hair firmly and tightly. This is what is meant by “matted hair”.

One of the requisites created and left in the hut by Visukamma as mentioned in the **Aṭṭhasālīnī** is the round head-dress made of hair called *jatāmaṇḍala*. This is a thing separate from the hermit’s person. It is not a part of him. From the sentence: “He put the head-dress on his topknot and fastened it with an ivory hairpin”, it is clear that the head-dress is a thing separate from Sumedha’s hair-knot. It evolved into a hermit’s head-dress of later times and protects the hair from dust and litter.

(The author here mentions the opinions of the Monyway Zetawun Sayadaw and Mahāsilavaṃsa who stated that the “matted hair” and “head-dress” are the same thing. But the author concludes his discussion by quoting the **Catudhammasāra (Kogan) Pyo, Magadha Abhidhāna**, and certain Jātaka stories which say that they are two different things. By quoting the **Catudhammasāra Pyo** and the **Maghadeva Laṅka**, the author finally says that just as a snare is used to catch a bird, so also the matted hair in the form of a snare is worn by a hermit to catch the great bird of “the Eightfold Noble Path” as soon as it alights in the forest that is “his mind”.

Eight Kinds of Hermits

(The author first explains the derivation of the Myanmar word (hermit) from Pāli and Sanskrit.)

The word “hermit” refers to those who are outside the Buddha’s Teaching. Nevertheless, they should be regarded as holy persons of the time.

The commentary on the Ambattha Sutta of the **Sīlakkhandā Vagga** enumerates eight kinds of hermits as follow:

- (1) **Saputtabhariya**. A hermit who piles up wealth and lives a house-holder’s life. (Here the author mentions Keṇiya of the Buddha’s lifetime as an example.)
- (2) **Uṇḍhācariya**. A hermit who does not pile up wealth and who does not live a householder’s life, but who collects unhusked grain from lay people at threshing grounds and cook his own food.
- (3) **Anaggipakkika**. A hermit who collects husked grain from lay men in villages and cooks his own food. He thinks husking grain by pounding is not worthy of one who lives a hermit’s life.
- (4) **Asāmapāka**. A hermit who enters a village and collects cooked rice. He thinks cooking is not worthy of one who lives a hermit’s life.
- (5) **Ayamuttḥika (Asmamuttḥika)**. A hermit who takes off the bark of a tree for food by means of a metal or stone implement. He thinks to collect food each day is wearisome.
- (6) **Dantavakkalika**. A hermit who takes off the bark of a tree with his teeth for food. He thinks to carry metal or stone implements is wearisome.

- (7) **Pavattaphalabhojana**. A hermit who lives on the fruits that fall by throwing stone or a stick at them. He thinks to remove the bark is wearisome.
- (8) **Pandupalāsika**. A hermit who lives only on leaves, flowers and fruits that fall naturally from trees.

The **Paṇḍupalāsika** are divided into three types:

- (1) **Ukkatṭha-ṇḍupalāsika**, he who remains seated without arising and who lives on leaves, flowers and fruits that fall within his reach.
- (2) **Majjhurī-ṇḍupalāsika**, he who moves from tree to tree and subsists only on leaves, flowers and fruits that fall from a single tree.
- (3) **Mudurī-ṇḍupalāsika**, he who moves from tree to tree in search of leaves, flowers and fruits that fall naturally from trees, to maintain himself.

This is the enumeration of the eight kinds of hermits as given in the commentary on the Ambaṭṭha Sutta.

In addition, the author gives a somewhat different enumeration that is mentioned in the commentary on the Hirī Sutta of the **Sutta Nipāta**:

- (1) **Saputtabhariya**. A hermit who leads a householder's life earning his living by farming, trading, etc., like Keṇiya and others.
- (2) **Uṇchācarika**. A hermit who, living near a city gate and teaching children of Khattiya and brahmin families, accepts only grain and crops but not gold and silver.
- (3) **Sampattakālīka**. A hermit who lives only on food that is obtained at the meal time.
- (4) **Anaggipakka**. A hermit who lives only on uncooked fruits and vegetables.
- (5) **Ayamuttḥika**. A hermit who wanders from place to place with metal or stone implements in hand to remove the bark from trees for food whenever he feels hungry and who observes precepts, and cultivating meditation on the four sublime illimitables.
- (6) **Dantalūyyaka**. A hermit who wanders from place to place without metal or stone implements in hand and who removes the bark from trees with his teeth whenever he feels hungry and who observes precepts and cultivating meditation on the four sublime illimitables.
- (7) **Pavattaphalika**. A hermit who lives depending upon a natural pond or a forest and who, going nowhere else, subsists on the lotus stems and stalks from the pond or on the fruits and flowers from the forest grove or even on the bark of trees (when other kinds of sustenance are not available) and who observes precepts and cultivating meditation on the four sublime illimitables.
- (8) **Vaṇṭamuttika**. A hermit who subsists on leaves that fall naturally and observes precepts and cultivating meditation on the four sublime illimitables.

In these two lists of eight kinds of hermits, each type is nobler than the preceding type.

Again in these lists, excepting the first type, namely, Saputtabhariya, all are holy persons, observing precepts and cultivating meditation on the four sublime illimitables.

Sumedha came under the fourth category (of the list given in the **Sīlakkhandha Commentary**), namely, Asamapaka, for one day, i.e. a hermit who collects and lives only on cooked food; for the following days, he remained as a hermit of the eighth type, namely, Paṇḍupalāsika, one who lives only on leaves, flowers and fruits that fall naturally from trees. According to the list given in the **Sutta Nipāta Commentary**, he came under the eight category, namely, Vaṇṭamuttika, i.e. a hermit who subsists only on leaves that fall naturally from trees and who observes precepts and cultivating meditation on the four sublime illimitables.

Three Kinds of Persons addressed as “Shin¹” in Myanmar

The Pāli “**pabbajjā**” has been translated “going forth as a recluse” by teachers of old.

1. A respectful religious title, more or less equivalent to Pāli Sāmi.

That is to say “giving up a worldly life”, which is of three kinds:

- (1) **Isi-pabbajjā**, giving up of worldly life and becoming an *isi* (hermit).
- (2) **Samana-pabbajjā**, giving up of worldly life and becoming a *samaṇa* (monk).
- (3) **Sāmaṇera-pabbajjā**, giving up of worldly life and becoming a *sāmaṇera* (novice).

Accordingly, there are three kinds of persons worthy of veneration and addressed as “shin” in Myanmar. They are *isi* (hermit), *samaṇa* (monk) and *sāmaṇera* (novices).

The Eight Disadvantage of A Leaf-hut

- (1) The hut requires the dweller to make efforts to acquire timber and other materials for its construction.
- (2) It requires the dweller to take constant care and to provide maintenance or reconstruction when the grass roof and mud of the walls decay and fall into ruins.
- (3) It requires the dweller to make room at any time for a visiting senior elder, who is entitled to suitable accommodation, so that he fails to get concentration of mind.
- (4) Being sheltered from sun and rain under its cover, the dweller tends to become soft and feeble.
- (5) With a roof and surrounding walls to provide privacy, it serves the dweller as a hiding place for committing blameworthy, evil deeds.
- (6) It creates attachment for the dweller, who then thinks: “It is my dwelling place.”
- (7) Settling down in it makes the dweller appear to be living a householder’s life with family.
- (8) It requires the dweller to deal with nuisance created by domestic pests, such as fleas, bugs, lizards, etc.

These are the disadvantages of a leaf-hut which Sumedha discerned and which prompted him to abandon the hut.

The Ten Advantages of The Foot of A Tree

- (1) The foot of a tree does not require the dweller to acquire building materials because it is already a dwelling place provided by nature.
- (2) It does not require the dweller to take constant care and to provide maintenance.
- (3) It does not require the dweller to make room for visiting senior elders.
- (4) It does not provide privacy nor serves the dweller as a hiding place for committing evil deeds.
- (5) Its dweller is free from stiffness of limbs unlike those dwelling in the open space who suffers from such a discomfort.
- (6) The dweller does not have to take possession of it as his own property.
- (7) The dweller is able to abandon it without an attachment saying: “It is my dwelling place.”
- (8) The dweller does not have to request others to vacate the place for purpose of cleaning.
- (9) It makes a pleasant place for the dweller.
- (10) Since the dweller can easily finds similar dwelling places wherever he goes, he does not cling to it as “my dwelling place”.

(Then the author quotes the Hsutaunggan Pyo which gives the same list of disadvantages in verse.)

Chapter V. The Prophecy

As has been said, Sumedha reflected: “What is the use of selfishly escaping the cycle of births alone,” and this is mentioned in the **Buddhavaṃsa Text**: “*Kim me ekena tinnena*”.

Quoting this Pāli sentence people are fond of saying with a tinge of contempt: “One

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should not be selfish in this world. A selfish one is a person who seeks only his good. One who seeks only his welfare is a useless person.”

But, if one continues to read the same sentence, one would come across “*purisena thamadassina*”, implying, “in spite of the fact that I am a superior person, fully aware of my prowess of wisdom, faith and energy”, which explicitly qualifies the foregoing sentence. All this indicates that only those who, despite their ability, are selfish and not willing to work for others should be blamed. And those, who have no such ability but who say: “I will work for others” and are not true to their words, should be despised, for they do not know the limits of their own capability.

As a matter of fact, those, who have no ability to work for others, should look after their own interest. That is why it is taught in the *atta-vagga*, the twentieth chapter of the **Dhammapada**:

*Attadattham paratthena bahunā’ pi na hāpaye
attadattham abhiññāya sadatthapasuto siyā.*

Let him not sacrifice his own interest
by willing to work much for others.
Knowing full well his own limited ability
he should work for his own welfare.

This teaching of the **Dhammapada** means: “He, who is incompetent to work for others but speaks as though he were competent, cannot do good for other, nor can he do for himself; thus he suffers a double loss. Therefore, he, who is incompetent to work for others, should seek his own good and work only for himself. He, who knows the true extent of his own capability and works only for himself (should not be blamed as a selfish person but), should be spoken of as a good person who works within the limits of his capability. On the contrary, he, who is qualified like Sumedha to render service to others, runs only after his own interest, ignoring others’ should truly be censure as a purely selfish person.

In short, let him work for others, if he is competent. If not, let him look after himself so that he may not miss his interest. He, who seeks his own interest but pretends to be working for others’ welfare, is surely a dishonest, cunning, evil person.”

Nerañjarā

Nerañjarā, as the name of a river, is derived from *nelajala*, ‘*nela*’ meaning ‘faultless’ and ‘*jala*’, ‘water’; hence ‘the river with pure clean water’.

Another derivation is from ‘*nīlajala*’, ‘*nīla*’ meaning ‘blue’ and ‘*jala*’, ‘water’. ‘Blue water’ signifies ‘clear water’. Hence, ‘the river with clear blue water’.

Yet another derivation is from ‘*nari jarā*’ meaning a kind of musical instrument which produces the sound similar to that of the flowing waters in a stream.

Notes on Prophecy

Under the heading, the author discusses not only the Myanmar word for prophecy but also other Myanmar words or phrases. The word prophecy in Myanmar language, is commonly held to be derived from the so called Pāli word ‘*byādita*’. But there is no such word as ‘*byādita*’ in Pāli. It appears to have been formed by ancient scholars in imitation of the Pāli words, ‘*byākaraṇa*’ or ‘*byākata*’, says the author.

With reference to the phrases ‘stepping out with his right foot’ and ‘honouring him with eight handfuls of flowers’, the author has the following to say:

‘Stepping out with his right foot’ is the translation of the Pāli phrase *dakkhiṇam pādama uddhari*. Buddha Dīpaṅkarā departed not only stepping out with his right foot first but also keeping Sumedha on his right. This mode of departure from the presence of an honourable person is a very ancient Indian custom of showing high esteem.

“Honouring him with eight handfuls of flowers” in Pāli is *aṭṭahi pupphamuṭṭhi pujetvā* which occurs in the **Jātaka Commentary** and the **Buddhavaṃsa Commentary**. Over this phrase there has been a controversy whether a living Buddha should pay respect to a Bodhisatta who would become a Buddha only many aeons later. Even if one argues that Buddha Dīpaṅkarā was paying homage not to the person of Sumedha the Hermit but only to the *Sabbhāññuta-ñāṇa* (Supreme Wisdom), that he would attain, this argument also is unacceptable as it is inappropriate that the present possessor of Omniscience should pay respect to the Omniscience yet to be attained by a Bodhisatta.

The whole controversy rests on the translation of the word *pūjetvā* which is connected with *pūjā*. The **Khuddaka-pāṭha Commentary** explains that *pūjā* means *sakkāra* (treating well), *mānana* (holding in esteem) and *vandanā* (salutation, homage, or obeisance). The author gives his view that in honouring Hermit Sumedha with eight handfuls of flowers, the Buddha was not saluting or paying homage or obeisance (*vandanā*), but He was merely giving good treatment (*sakkāra*) to Sumedha and showing the high esteem (*mānana*) in which He held him.

The text mentions the prophetic phenomenon which took place on the day the planet Visākhā conjoined with the full moon. That day is reckoned in the Myanmar Calendar as full-moon day of Kason (April-May). The day is regarded usually to be auspicious being the full-moon day of the first month of the year.

All the previous Buddhas received their prophecies of becoming a Buddha on the full-moon day of Kason. So when Sumedha received the prophecy on the same auspicious day, devas and Brahmas were quite positive in their proclamation that Sumedha would definitely become a Buddha.

The author further mentions that, the full-moon day of Kason is not only the day on which the prophecy was received but also the day on which Bodhisattas took their last birth in the human world; it is also the day on which they attained Perfect Self-Enlightenment and the day on which they passed away into Nibbāna.

The full-moon of Kason is so auspicious in the traditional customs of Myanmar that kings of the past have had themselves anointed and crowned on this particular day.

Devas proclaimed 32 Prophetic Phenomena

These thirty-two prophetic phenomena occurred on the day Sumedha received the Prophecy. These phenomena were different from those that took place on the days of Buddha’s Conception, Birth, Enlightenment and Teaching the First Sermon. They will be dealt with in the chapter on Gotama Buddhavaṃsa.

Notes on Prophetic Phenomena

‘Prophetic phenomena’ is the rendering into English of the Pāli word *nimitta*, ‘*nimit*’ in Myanmar which means a phenomenon foretelling a good or evil event that is likely to take place.

The author then gives a mine of information on the Myanmar synonyms, quoting various sources from Myanmar literature. We have left them out from our translation.

End of Anudīpanī on the Prophecy.

Chapter VI. On Pāramitā

(a) The Perfection of Generosity or Generous Offering (Dāna-Pāramī)

With regard to the Perfection of Generosity, it is clearly stated in the Pāli Canon concerning the Chronicle of Buddhas that the Bodhisatta Sumedha admonished himself to start forth with the practice of Perfection of Generosity since the Bodhisattas of the past had done so. It is clearly seen, therefore, that amongst the Ten Perfections, Perfection of giving of offering or generosity demands the highest priority for fulfilment.

But, in the Sangāthā Vagga of the **Saṃyutta Nikāya**, we find the verse, “*Sīle patitṭhāya naro sapañño*” in which the Buddha explains that when a person of mature wisdom,

born with three root-conditions², well established in morality, ardently develops concentration and insight wisdom, he can unravel the tangled network of craving. Here, the Buddha mentions only the three trainings, viz. Morality (*sīla*), Concentration (*samādhi*) and Insight Wisdom (*paññā*); there is not even a hint about the practice of Generosity.

Furthermore, as the **Visuddhi-magga** (The Path of Purification) Commentary which is the expository treatise on the single verse of Sagāthāvagga Saṃyutta quoted above does not touch upon the subject of Generosity and as the Noble Path of Eight Constituents which leads to Nibbāna includes the paths concerning morality, concentration and wisdom only, and there is no path including generosity, some people misconstrue that generosity is not regarded by the Buddha as essential, that it is not conducive to attainment of Nibbāna, that it generates more rebirths in the cycle of existence and as such generosity should not be cultivated.

The well-known Minister of King Mindon, U Hlaing of Yaw, went so far as to write in his book, 'The Taste of Liberation' (**Vimuttirasa**) that the Buddha taught generosity only for the sake of very ordinary people such as the rich man's son, Siṅgāla.

There are many Buddhists who are offended by such observation as 'generosity should not be cultivated' and who are indignant at Yaw minister's writing that 'the Buddha taught generosity only for the sake of very ordinary people'. But mere dislike of such views and indignation with them serves no purposes. What is more important and helpful to oneself is to understand correctly what the Buddha means by His Teaching.

Concerning the aforesaid verse of the Sagāthāvagga Saṃyutta, what one should understand as the true meaning of the Buddha's discourse is as follows: This discourse was taught by the Buddha for the benefit of those superior persons who are capable of striving hard for complete eradication of defilements, for the attainment of arahatship in the present life, with no more rebirth. If such a superior person actually strives hard for the attainment of arahatship in this very life and if, as a consequence of his strenuous efforts, he becomes an arahat, there is no need for him to set up a new life. Generosity is an act which generates new life, new pleasures; for the person who will break the circle of the existence in this very life, there will be no more rebirths. Since there will be no new life for him to reap the benefits of generosity, acts of giving by him are unnecessary. That is why the Buddha, for the benefit of superior persons, dwells in this discourse of the Saṃyutta mainly on morality, concentration and insight wisdom which are more important than generosity for the purpose of eradication of the defilements. The Buddha does not say at all that generosity should not be cultivated.

Generosity has the quality of making the mind and heart pliable. When someone makes a generous offer of some gift, the very act of giving serves as a decisive support³ to make the mind more pliable and ready for observance of precepts, for cultivation of concentration and for development of insight wisdom through practice of Vipassanā meditation. It is within the experience of every Buddhist, that a feeling of awkwardness and embarrassment arises in him whenever he visits, without an offering, monasteries or temples for the purpose of keeping precepts, of listening to Dhamma talks or for the practice of meditation. Therefore, it was customary for the noble disciples like Visākhā to bring an offering, such as rice, sweets or fruits in the morning and beverages and medicinal preparations in the evening, whenever she visited the Buddha.

Everyone, who does not become an *arahat* in this life, will go through more rounds in the cycle of existence. In doing so, it will be difficult for them to attain favourable states of existence without practising generosity in the present life. Even if they happen to gain a good rebirth, they will find themselves lacking in material possessions, without which they cannot do meritorious deeds. (In such a case, it may be argued that they could devote themselves to the practice of morality, concentration and insight wisdom. But this is easier

2. Three root-conditions (*Tihetu-patisandhika*) - a being whose consciousness of the moment of rebirth is accompanied by three root-conditions of greedlessness, hatelessness, undeludedness.

3. *Upaṇissaya-Paccaya*: life immediate support.

said than done. Indeed, it is only with the support of the beneficial results of past acts of generosity that the three training of morality, concentration and insight wisdom can be cultivated successfully.) Therefore, it is most important for those who still have to go on this long journey of *samsāra* (the cycle of existence), to cultivate generosity. Only when one is equipped with 'provisions for the long journey', namely, generosity, then only one can reach good destination; and while there, possessing material wealth as the fruits of generosity of past lives, one can devote oneself to the pursuit of whatever meritorious deeds one wishes to.

Among the travellers in the round of this cycle of *samsāra*, Bodhisattas are the greatest individuals. Among receiving a definite prophecy from a Buddha of his gaining Buddhahood, a Bodhisatta continues to fulfil the Perfections for the attainment of Omniscience (*sabbāññuta-ñāṇa*) for four incalculable world-cycles plus a hundred thousand aeons. A Paccekabuddha, i.e. a non-teaching Buddha, had to fulfil His Perfections for two incalculable world-cycles plus a hundred thousand aeons; an *agga-sāvaka*, a Chief Disciple of a Buddha, for one incalculable world-cycle plus a hundred thousand aeons; and a *mahā-sāvaka*, one of the Leading Disciples, for one hundred thousand world-cycles. Therefore, for Bodhisattas, who are great travellers on the long journey of *samsāra*, Perfection of Generosity is of primary importance and as such, a place of prominence is given to steadfast fulfilment of the Perfection of Generosity in the Pāli Text concerning the Chronicle of the Buddhas.

Thus, as the discourse in the Saṃyutta Pāli, mentioned above, was addressed to individuals who are ripe for attainment of arahatship, those, who have not yet fulfilled the Perfections, should not say that Perfection of Generosity is not essential.

Those are some who ask if it is possible to attain Nibbāna by practising only generosity. It may be replied that, practising only one Perfection by itself, neither generosity, nor morality, nor meditation will result in attainment of Nibbāna. For practising generosity alone implies that it is not accompanied by morality nor by meditation. Similarly, practising meditation alone means that it is practised without the support of morality and generosity. When not restrained by morality, one is liable to indulge in evil acts. If such a person of evil habits attempts to practise meditation, his efforts will be futile like a good seed which, when put on red-hot iron, does not produce a sprout but turns to ashes. Thus, it should be noted that it is improper to speak of 'practising generosity alone.'

In the chapter on generosity in the Chronicle of the Buddhas, it is clearly stated that alms should be given irrespective of the recipient's status, whether high, medium or low. In view of such a firm statement, it is neither desirable nor necessary to pick and choose the recipient when one makes an offering.

But in the Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta of the **Uparipañāsa, Majjhima Nikāya**, the Buddha taught seven kinds of gifts to be made to Sangha, the Community of Bhikkhus, and fourteen kinds of gift to be made to individual recipients. It is pointed out with regard to fourteen kinds of gifts made to individual recipients, the merit gained increases according to the recipient going up from the lowliest animals to the highest beings; the most meritorious gift is, of course, that made to the Community of Bhikkhus.

Again in the Ankura Peta story of **Peta Vatthu**, we find the story of two devas. When the Buddha taught the Abhidhamma while being seated on the Sakka's throne in the abode of Tāvātimsa, two devas, Indaka and Ankura, went to listen to the discourse. Whenever powerful devas arrived, Ankura had to make way for them and move back until he was ten *yojanas* away from the Buddha.

But Indaka remained in his seat; he did not have to move. The reason is as follows: At the time when the life span was ten thousand years, Ankura was a human being and was very rich. Throughout that life he made offerings of meals to large numbers of ordinary people, cooking the meals on fireplaces which stretched for twelve *yojanas*. Because of the merit gained, he had taken rebirth as a deva. Indaka, however became a deva because he had offered a spoonful of rice to Arahāt Anuruddha.

Although the offering Indaka had made was just a spoonful of rice, the recipient was an

arahaṭ and the merit he thus acquired was great and noble. Thus, as an equal of the powerful devas, he did not have to make way for them. On the other hand, although Ankura had made large amounts of gifts over a very long period of time, the recipients were worldlings and consequently the beneficial result that accrued was not a high order. And he had to move back every time a powerful deva arrived. Therefore, we find in the Pāli text the exhortation: ‘*Viceyya danam databbam yattha dinnam mahapphalam*’ which means ‘When an offering is to be made, one who can bring the greatest benefit should be chosen as the recipient.’

There seems to be a contradiction between the Pāli Text of the Chronicle of the Buddhas and the discourses, such as the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta*, etc., of other Pāli Texts. The seeming contradiction is easily resolved when one remembers that the discourses such as the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta* are meant for ordinary people or devas, whereas the discussions in the Chronicle of Buddhas are directed exclusively to the Bodhisattas whose goal is attainment of Omniscience (*sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*), or the Buddha-Wisdom. This Wisdom is only one kind and not to be classified into low, medium or great order wisdom. A Bodhisatta has only to give away whatever he has to offer to whoever comes along to receive them, irrespective of his status whether high, medium or low. He does not have to consider thus: “This recipient is of low status, by making an offering to him, I shall gain only a low order of Omniscience. This recipient is only of medium status, by making offer to him, I shall gain Omniscience merely of medium order.” Therefore, giving of alms to whoever comes along to receive them without any discrimination is the habitual practice of Bodhisatta who are bent on attainment of *sabbaññuta-ñāṇa* (Omniscience). On the other hand, the aim of ordinary worldlings, devas or humans, in practising generosity is to gain worldly comforts of their liking, and as such, it is natural that they would choose the best recipient for their alms.

It may be concluded, therefore, that there is no contradiction between the texts in the Chronicles of the Buddhas, which are intended for the great Bodhisattas and the discourse such as *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta* which are meant for ordinary people and devas.

Meaning of Pāramī

The possible meanings of the word ‘*pāramī*’ have been variously explained in the **Cariyā-Ṭīṭaka Commentary**. Just to let the reader have an idea:

Pāramī is the combination for “*parama*” and “*ī*”. *Parama* means ‘most excellent’, which is used here in the sense of future Buddhas who are the most excellent ones.

Or *pāramī* derives from the root, ‘*para*’ with the suffix ‘*ma*’. The root, ‘**para**’ means ‘to fulfil’ or ‘to protect’. Because they fulfil and protect such virtues as *dāna* (alms-giving), etc., future Buddhas are called **parama**.

Or *para*, a prefix, is attached to the root, ‘**mava**’, meaning ‘to bind’. Because future Buddhas behave as though they bind on and attract other beings to them by means of special virtues, they are called **parama**.

Or *paramī*, a prefix is attached to the root, ‘**maja**’ meaning, ‘to be pure; *paramī* means ‘more’. Because future Buddhas are free of mental impurities and far purer than others, they are called **parama**.

Or *paramī*, a prefix, is attached to the root, ‘**maya**’ meaning ‘to go’; ‘*paramī*’ means ‘superior’. Because future Buddhas go to the superior state of *Nibbāna* in a special manner, they are called **parama**.

Or *paramī*, a prefix, is attached to the root, ‘**mu**’ meaning ‘to determine’. Because future Buddhas determine their next existence as they do in the case of the present, they are called **parama**. (What this means to say is that as future Buddhas are able to ascertain precisely what should be done to make the present existence pleasant and faultless, so are they able to do with regard to their next existence. That is, they have the ability to improve their existences.)

Or *paramī*, a prefix, is attached to the root, ‘**mi**’ meaning ‘to put in’; *paramī* means

'more'. Because future Buddhas 'put in' more and more such virtues as *sīla* (morality), etc., in their mental process, they are called **parama**.

Or *param* means 'different from' or 'opposed to'; the root is '**mi**' meaning 'to crush'. Because future Buddhas crush all their enemies, which in the form of impurities, are different from and opposed to all virtues, they are called **parama**.

Or *pāra*, a noun, is attached to the root, '**maja**' meaning 'to purify'; *pāra* means 'the other shore'. Here *saṃsāra* is to be taken as 'this shore' and Nibbāna 'the other shore'. Because future Buddhas purify themselves as well as others on the other shore of Nibbāna, they are called **pāramī**.

Or *pāra*, a noun, is attached to the root '**mava**' meaning 'to bind' or 'to put together'. Because future Buddhas bind or put beings together in Nibbāna, they are called **pāramī**.

Or the root is *maya*, meaning 'to go'. Because future Buddhas go to the other shore of Nibbāna, they are called **pāramī**.

Or the root is *mu*, meaning 'to understand'. Because future Buddhas fully understand the other shore of Nibbāna as it really is, they are called **pāramī**.

Or the root is *mi* meaning 'to put in'. Because future Buddhas put in and convey being to the other shore of Nibbāna, they are called **pāramī**.

Or the root is *mi*, meaning 'to crush'. Because future Buddhas crush and eradicate in Nibbāna the impurities which are enemies of being, they are called **pāramī**.

(These are the various meanings presented in accordance with *sabhavanirutti* (natural etymology). They are not random attempts.)

Paramānaṃ ayaṃ paramī: **Pāramī** means property in the form of practices of future Buddhas; (or) *paramānaṃ kammaṃ paramī*; **paramī** means duties of future Buddhas; *Paramissa bhāvo pāramitā paramissa kammaṃ pāramitā*: duties that bring about knowledge that such a person is a future Buddha.

All this means: A series of duties such as *dāna* and others to be fulfilled by future Buddhas is called **paramī** (or **pāramitā**).

In the **Jinālaṅkāra Sub-commentary**, it is said: "*Pāraṃ nibbānaṃ ayaṃ ti gacchanti etāhi ti pāramiyo, nibbānasādhakā hi dānacetanādayo dhammā paramī ti vuccanti*," meaning to say that "*Dāna cetanā* or the volition of alms-giving, etc. which forms the way to Nibbāna, the other side of *saṃsāra*, should be called *paramī*."

In the **Cariyāpitaka Commentary**, it is said: *taṇhāmānadiṭṭhī anupahatā karuṇā upāyakosalla-pariggahita dānādayo gunā pāramiyo*, **Pāramī** is constituted by virtues, such as *dāna*, etc. that are to be grasped by means of compassion and cleverness. Compassion is shown towards beings who are not spoiled (overwhelmed) by craving, pride and wrong view. Cleverness means wisdom in seeking ways and means. *Dāna*, etc. (that are to be guided by compassion and wisdom) are to be named *pāramī*. (This explanation is made with special reference to *pāramī* of Sambuddhas.)

Perfections

The Ten Perfections are:

- (1) Generosity (*dāna*, translated sometimes as charity, liberality or just alms-giving)
- (2) Morality or Virtue (*sīla*)
- (3) Renunciation (*nekkhamma*)
- (4) Wisdom (*paññā*)
- (5) Energy (*vīriya*)
- (6) Forbearance or Patience (*khantī*)
- (7) Truthfulness (*sacca*)
- (8) Determination or Resolution (*adhitthāna*)

(9) Loving-kindness (*mettā*)

(10) Equanimity (*upekkhā*)

(The full meaning of these Perfections will become clear in the following passages.) Concerning these Perfections, it has been mentioned in the Chapter: The Rare Appearance of a Buddha, that there are four kinds of cultivation of mind. One of these cultivations deals with the fact that from the time Bodhisattas receive definite assurance from a Buddha about their Buddhahood till the last rebirth when they actually become a completely Self-Enlightened Buddha, there is no period in this very long interval in which they do not practise for fulfilment of the Ten Pāramīs (Perfections) at the very least, they do not fail to fulfil the Perfection of Generosity. It fills us with devotional inspiration to reflect on these noble practices pursued by the Bodhisattas.

The Characteristics, Functions, Manifestations and Proximate Causes of The Perfections

A person practising Vipassanā Meditation must come to know the nature of *nāma* and *rūpa* by means of their characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes. Then only will he come to possess a clear view of them. Similarly, it is only when one knows the characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause of the Perfections then one will have a clear understanding of them. Therefore, we find in the Commentary to the Cariya Piṭaka a separate chapter on the characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause of the Perfections.

A feature common to all the Ten Perfections is that they have the characteristic of serving the interest of others. Their function is (a) providing assistance to others (*kicca-rasa*); (b) being endowed with steadfastness (prosperity, success), fulfilment (*samāpattirasa*). Their manifestation is (a) the recurring phenomenon of the quest for the welfare and benefits of being; or (b) the recurring phenomenon of appearing in the mind (of Bodhisatta) that it is useful means of bringing about Buddhahood. Their proximate cause is (a) great compassion or (b) great compassion and skilfulness as to means and ways.

It is necessary to provide a few explanations on the above definitions. Characteristic (*lakḥaṇa*) has two aspects: (i) **Samannasabhāva**, the ordinary feature of each thing, i.e. the feature applicable to others also and (ii) **Visesasabhāva**, the peculiar feature which is not applicable to others. For example, amongst the material qualities, the Earth-element of the Four Great Elements has two characteristics, namely, impermanence and hardness. Of these, the characteristic of impermanence is a feature applicable to other elements and is thus an ordinary feature only, whereas, the characteristic of hardness is the unique feature of the Earth-element only, is not shared by others and is thus its special feature.

Function (*rasa*) has also two aspects to it: (i) **Kiccarasa**, function that which is to be performed; (ii) **Sampattirasa**, fulfilment, attainment. For example, when meritoriousness arises, it does so after counteracting or obliterating demeritoriousness. Thus, it is said that the function of meritoriousness is the counteracting of demeritoriousness. The final fulfilment of a meritorious act is production of beneficial results; thus the function of meritoriousness is the attainment of beneficial results.

Whenever a person ponders deeply on certain mind-objects, what usually appears in his mind relates to the nature of the mind-object under consideration; relates to its function; relates to its cause; relates to its effect. The manifestations which thus appear in his mind concerning the mind-object he is thinking about is called its manifestation. For example, when a person starts to investigate ‘what is meritoriousness?’, it would appear in his mind, ‘meritoriousness is of the nature of purity’ regarding its nature; ‘meritoriousness is that which counteracts or obliterates demeritoriousness’ regarding its function; ‘meritoriousness is possible only when one associates with the good and virtuous’ regarding its cause; ‘meritoriousness is that which enables production of desirable results’ regarding its fruition.

The immediate, and the most powerful contributory factor for its arising is called the proximate cause. For example, of many factors which cause the arising of meritoriousness, proper attitude of mind is the immediate and the most powerful contributory factor for its arising and is therefore termed its proximate cause, **Padatthāna**, in the Texts.

Some Notable Features concerning *Dāna* (Generosity, Charity)

The essential thing to know concerning the word ‘*Dāna-pāramī*’ (the Perfection of Generosity) is that anything which is given away or any act of giving is *Dāna* (charity or generosity). There are two kinds of giving:

- (1) Giving as an act of merit (**puññavisayadāna**).
- (2) Giving in conformity with worldly practices (**lokavisayadāna**).

Acts of giving out of pure faith are acts of merit (**puññavisayadāna**) and only such givings constitute the Perfection of Generosity.

But gifts given in pursuit of love or out of anger, fear, or foolishness etc. and even giving punishment, giving a sentence of death are worldly giving. They do not form part of Perfection of Generosity.

Dāna (Generosity) and *Pariccāga* (Abandonment)

In connection with giving which would amount to an act of merit, it is helpful to understand the differences and similarities between what is termed *Dāna*, translated as ‘Generosity’, and what is termed as *Pariccāga*, translated as abandonment, renunciation through charity.

In the Mahāhamsa Jātaka of **Asītinipāta**, it is given an enumeration of the ten duties of a king, viz. generosity, morality, abandonment, uprightness, gentleness, self-control, freedom from anger, mercy, forbearance and absence of obstruction. We see therein that generosity and abandonment are listed separately.

According to the **Jātaka Commentary**, there are ten objects which may be offered as alms: food, drink, transportation (including umbrellas, slippers or shoes, which are for travelling), flowers, perfumed powder, scented unguent or ointment, bed, dwelling places, and facilities for lighting. The volition that prompts the giving of these alms constitutes generosity (*dāna*). The volition that accompanies the giving away of any other objects of alms is to be regarded as abandonment (*pariccāga*). Thus the differentiation here rests on the different kinds of the objects of alms.

But the Sub-commentary of the Jātaka, quoting the views of many teachers, says that ‘giving of offerings with the prospect of enjoying good results in future lives is *dāna*; giving rewards to servants and service personnel, etc. in order to reap the benefits in the present life is *pariccāga*.’

A story that gives another illustration of the difference between generosity and abandonment is described in the Commentary to the Cariyāpitaka Pāli Text and in the Commentary to Terasanipata Jātaka. Briefly, Bodhisatta was once a learned brahmin by the name of Akitti. When his parents passed away, he was left with a vast accumulation of wealth. Deeply stirred by religious emotion, he reflected thus: “My parents and ancestors who have accumulated this great wealth have abandoned them and left, as for me, I shall gather only the substance of this accumulation and depart.” Then having obtained permission from the King, he had a drum beaten all over the country to proclaim the great charity he was going to make. For seven days, he personally gave away his riches but there still remained more.

He saw no point in presiding himself over the ceremony of distribution of his wealth, so leaving the doors of his mansion, treasure houses and granaries wide open, so that whoever wished might go and helped themselves to whatever they liked, and he renounced the worldly life and went away.

It may be said that in the above story, distribution of wealth personally by the Bodhisatta during the first seven days is an act of generosity (*dāna*), whereas abandoning of the remaining wealth after seven day’s personal distribution is an act of abandonment (*pariccāga*). The reason for such distinction is that, for an offering to be an act of generosity (*dāna*) four conditions must be fulfilled: (1) a donor, (2) objects to offer, (3) a recipient actually present to receive and (4) the volition to give. The wise man, Akitti’s distribution of wealth during the first seven days fulfils all these conditions. Hence, it is an

act of generosity (*dāna*). After seven days had passed, he went away leaving his wealth before any recipient went near or arrived to actually receive the gifts. Hence, it is said that such offering should be regarded as abandonment.

In every day practice which is not an act of merit, when we give something to some one, we just say we ‘give’; the Pāli word is ‘*deti*’. But when we part with our property with the thought let ‘whoever wants it take it; if no one wants it, then let it be’ it is not giving away but discarding or abandoning; in Pāli, it is not ‘*dāna*’, but ‘*cāga*’.

In short, when we hand over possession of our property to another person, it is said to be given away or an act of charity. When we relinquish the wish to possess the property which is one’s own, it is termed abandoning or discarding (as one would cast aside anything which is of no more use).

Another method of differentiation is: giving to noble persons is *dāna*; giving to persons of lower status is *pariccāga*. Thus, when a king, in performance of the ten duties of a king, makes an offering to noble *bhikkhus*, brahmins, etc. it would be generosity (*dāna*); when he offers alms to lowly beggars, it would be *pariccāga*.

In this way, it should be noted how generosity (*dāna*) is taught distinctly from abandonment (*pariccāga*).

When Dāna and Pariccāga are similar

Although *dāna* and *pariccāga* are treated separately as in the list of the ten duties of a king, shown above, in ultimate truth, the two terms cannot be different from each other. When there is *dāna*, there could be *pariccāga*; when there is *pariccāga*, there could be *dāna*. The reason is that when an offering is made to a recipient, whether he is near or far, it is an act of generosity (*dāna*). When the sense of ownership is banished from the mind (at the time of giving), this relinquishment is *pariccāga*. Thus, whenever someone makes a gift, it is always preceded by the thought: “I will not make use of it any more” which implies abandonment. Therefore, with acts of merit, there is *pariccāga* always accompanying generosity.

In the Chronicles of Buddhas of the Pāli Canon also, in dealing with the Ten Perfections, the Buddha mentions only the Perfection of Generosity, not the ‘Perfection of Abandonment (*cāga*)’, because (as explained above) abandonment is included in an act of generosity. As the Text of the Chronicle of Buddhas deals only with the ultimate truth (without considering the conventional usages), it mentions that making an offering to any recipients, whether of high, medium or low status, is generosity (*dāna*). It is irrelevant to say that it is *dāna* when offering is made to a noble person and *pariccāga* when the recipient is of low status.

Similarly, in the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** and other Pāli Texts, we find the enumeration of the seven niches of a noble person as follow: faith, morality, knowledge, liberality (*cāga*), wisdom, moral shame (at doing evil) and moral dread (for doing evil). There is only *cāga* in the list; there is no mention of *dāna* here, because it is understood that generosity is included in liberality (*cāga*).

These are examples where *dāna* and *cāga* are mentioned without any distinction, with identical meaning.

Where ‘Dāna’ is termed ‘Pariccāga’

Although any act of giving may generally be described as Perfection of Generosity, great offerings (of extraordinary nature) are described in the Text as Great Abandonings (**Mahāpariccāga**). The Great Abandonings which consist of five kinds of relinquishing of possession are listed differently in different Commentaries.

Commentaries on the **Sīlakkhandā**, **Mūlapaṇṇāsa** and **Aṅguttara** (in explaining the meaning of the word ‘**Tathāgata**’) list the Great Abandonings are follows:

- (i) Relinquishing of the limbs.

- (ii) Relinquishing of the eyes.
- (iii) Relinquishing of wealth.
- (iv) Relinquishing of kingdom.
- (v) Relinquishing of wife and children.

The Commentary to the **Mūlapaññāsa** (in the exposition on the Cūḷasihanāda Sutta) gives another list:

- (i) Relinquishing of the limbs.
- (ii) Relinquishing of wife and children.
- (iii) Relinquishing of kingdom.
- (iv) Relinquishing of one's body (life).
- (v) Relinquishing of eyes.

The Sub-commentary to the **Visuddhimagga** gives the list:

- (i) Relinquishing of one's body (life).
- (ii) Relinquishing of the eyes.
- (iii) Relinquishing of wealth.
- (iv) Relinquishing of kingdom.
- (v) Relinquishing of wife and children.

The Sub-commentary to the Mahāvagga of the **Dīgha Nikāya** (in exposition on the Mahāpadana Sutta) gives the list:

- (i) Relinquishing of the limbs.
- (ii) Relinquishing of the eyes.
- (iii) Relinquishing of one's body (life).
- (iv) Relinquishing of one's kingdom.
- (v) Relinquishing of one's wife and children.

The Commentary to the **Itivuttaka** (in its exposition of the first sutta of the Dūkanipāta, Dutiyavagga) gives the list:

- (i) Relinquishing of the limbs.
- (ii) Relinquishing of one's body (life).
- (iii) Relinquishing of wealth.
- (iv) Relinquishing of wife and children.
- (v) Relinquishing of kingdom.

The Commentary to the **Buddhavaṃsa** gives the list:

- (i) Relinquishing of the limbs.
- (ii) Relinquishing of one's life.
- (iii) Relinquishing of wealth.
- (iv) Relinquishing of kingdom.
- (v) Relinquishing of wife and children.

The Commentary to the **Vessantara Jātaka** gives the list:

- (i) Relinquishing of wealth.
- (ii) Relinquishing of the limbs.

- (iii) Relinquishing of children.
- (iv) Relinquishing of wife.
- (v) Relinquishing of one's life.

The same list is found in the Sub-commentary to the **Jinālaṅkāra** but arrange in a different order.

Although each of the above lists is made up of slightly different items, it should be noted that the essentials are the same in all of them, namely, external objects and one's own body. Under external objects, we find material things apart from one's own body, viz. relinquishing of wealth; relinquishing of wife and children, very dear to oneself; relinquishing of kingdom, a most important treasure of one's own. With regard to the relinquishing of one's own body, it falls under two modes: one that does not endanger life, that is relinquishing of the limbs (*angapariccāga*) and the other endangers life, that is relinquishing of the eyes (*nayanapariccāga*), or relinquishing of life (*jivitapariccāga*) and relinquishing of one's own body (*attapariccāga*). Here, it is explained giving one's own eyes or giving one's own body involves the risk of losing one's life, so these are considered to be essentially the same as giving one's life.

The great ceremony of offering performed by King Vessantara when he gave away seven kinds of objects, one hundred each in number, is described by the Commentary as *Mahādāna* and not *Mahāpariccāga*. But one can argue that this great offering can be considered as one of the Five Great Abandonings, namely, great relinquishing of wealth.

Miscellaneous Notes on Different Aspect of Dāna

For the edification of those aspirants who ardently strive for attainment of perfect Self-Enlightenment of a Buddha, or for Self-Enlightenment of a Paccekabuddha, or for the Enlightenment of a disciple of a Buddha, we provide herewith miscellaneous notes on different aspects of Generosity, which forms a part of the conditions for obtaining Enlightenment. These notes are given in the form of answers to the following questions:

- (i) What things are called **Dāna**?
- (ii) Why are they called **Dāna**?
- (iii) What are the characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes of **Dāna**?
- (iv) How many types of **Dāna** are there?
- (v) What are the elements that strengthen the beneficial results of **Dāna**?
- (vi) What are the elements that weaken the beneficial results of **Dāna**?

(This form of treatment will be adhered to when dealing with other Perfections too.)

1. WHAT THINGS ARE CALLED DĀNA?

In brief, it should be answered that 'the volition to give a suitable thing' is called **Dāna**. The meaning will become clearer in the following passages.

2. WHY ARE THEY CALLED DĀNA?

The volition is called **Dāna** because it is responsible for an act of generosity to take place. There can be no generosity without the volition to give; an act of generosity is possible only when there is the volition to give.

In this connection, by volition is meant:

- (i) the volition that arises at the time of donation. It is called '*muñca-cetanā*', 'relinquishing' volition, '*munca*' meaning relinquishing. It is only this volition, which accompanies the act of relinquishing, that forms the true element of generosity.
- (ii) The volition that arises in anticipation before one makes the donation is called

'*pubba-cetana*'. This type of volition can also be considered as *Dāna*, provided that the object to be given is at hand at the time the intention, "I shall make an offering of this object", occurs. Without the object to be given being actually in one's possession, cherishing the thought of giving may be called '*pubba-cetana*' but cannot qualify as *Dāna*: it can only be a benevolent thought of ordinary merit.

How volition comes to be taken as synonymous with *Dāna* is based on the grammatical definition of *Dīyati anenāti dānam*, that which prompts giving is generosity (*dāna*). (Volition, here, is definitely the determining cause of giving).

Things to be given are also called *Dāna* from the grammatical definition of **Dīyatiti dānam** which means objects which could be offered as alms.

Following these grammatical definitions, Text of the Canons mention two kinds of *dāna*, namely, volitional *dāna* and material *dāna*. In this connection, questions have been asked why objects to be offered are called *dāna*, since only volition is capable of producing results and material object is not. It is true that only volition is productive of results because volition is a mental action but, as explained above, volition can be called *dāna* only if it arises when there exist suitable things to be given. Therefore, material object for giving is also an important contributory factor for an act of giving to qualify as generosity (*dāna*).

For example, we say 'rice is cooked because of the firewood'. Actually, it is the fire that cooks the rice. But there can be no fire without firewood. So fire burns because of firewood and rice is cooked because of fire. Thus, taking into consideration, these connected phenomena, it is not incorrect to say 'rice is well cooked because of good firewood'. Similarly, we can rightly say 'beneficial result is obtained because of objects of offering'.

Because things to be given away feature importantly in acts of generosity, the Canonical Text mention different types of *Dāna*, depending on different objects to be offered. Thus, in expositions on the Vinaya, we find four kinds of *dāna*, since the Buddha allows four kinds of requisites to the Sangha, the offerings made to the Sangha are naturally listed under these four kinds. Hence, this classification in the Vinaya expositions of four types of *dāna*, which is primarily based upon different kinds of object of offering.

According to the classification in the exposition on the Abhidhamma, everything in the world comes under six categories, which correspond to the six sense objects, there are six kinds of *dāna* depending upon whether it is a gift of visible object, of sound, of smell, of taste, of touch or of mind-object or dhamma. Here also, although there is no direct mention of six kinds of *dāna* in the Abhidhamma Teachings, if gifts were to be made of each of the sense objects, there would be six kinds of offering; hence this classification in the Abhidhamma expositions of six types of *dāna*.

In the Suttanta classification, there are ten kinds of *dāna*, namely, offering of various kinds of food, of drink, of transportation, of flowers, of perfumed powder, of scented unguent or ointment, of bed, of dwelling places and of facilities of lighting. Here again, the actual teaching in the Suttas relates only to the ten classes of objects which may be offered as alms. But when these ten objects are offered as alms, there would be then ten kinds of offering; hence this classification in the Suttanta expositions of ten types of *dāna*.

Maintaining that the Buddha teaches only these ten objects of offering, one should not consider that these are the only gifts to be given and that other gifts are not allowable. One should understand that the Buddha merely mentions the ten things most commonly offered as alms in practice; or as any material thing can be classified as belonging to one or the other of the ten types of gifts, one should take it that by these ten objects are covered also any object which is in daily use by the noble recipient.

From what has been said above, it should be well noted how a material object is an important contributory factor (for the arising) of volitional generosity. It will be seen that the various types of generosity which will be described henceforth include many that relate to objects of offering.

As a resume of this chapter, it should be remembered that volition is *dāna* because it

prompts giving; the material thing is *dāna* because it is suitable thing to give.

3. WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS, FUNCTIONS, MANIFESTATION AND PROXIMATE CAUSES OF DĀNA

- (a) *Dāna* has the characteristic of abandoning (*lakkhaṇa*).
- (b) Its function (*kiicca-rasa*) is destruction of attachment to objects of offering; or it has the property of faultlessness (*sampatti-rasa*).
- (c) Its manifestation is absence of attachment i.e. a sense of freedom from attachment that appears in the mind of the donor, or knowing that *dāna* is conducive to good destination and wealth, i.e. on thinking of the effects of giving, the donor senses that his act of generosity will result in attainment of rebirth in the human or deva-world and attainment of great wealth.
- (d) The proximate cause of giving is having objects of offering in one's possession. Without having anything to give, there can be no act of charity, only imagining that one gives. Thus objects to be offered are the proximate cause of *Dāna*.

4. HOW MANY TYPES OF DĀNA ARE THERE

The subject to be dealt with under this topic is quite vast as it entails considerable exercise of mental alertness and intelligence to study them.

Types of Dāna in Groups of Twos

1. Āmisa/Dhamma Dāna

Offering of material things (*Āmisa-dāna*) and the gift of the Teaching (*Dhamma-dāna*).

(a) Offering of material things, such as alms-rice, etc., is known as *Āmisa-dāna*. It is also called *Paccaya dāna* (when the things offered are the requisites of *bhikkhus*).

Teaching the Buddha Dhamma in the form of talks, lectures, etc. is giving the gift of Dhamma. The Buddha said that this is the noblest of all types of *dāna*. (This classification of *dāna* into two types is made according to the objects of offering.)

In relation to this division of types of *dāna*, it is necessary to look into the question of what type of *dāna* accrues to one who erects pagodas and statues of Buddha.

There are some who maintain that although erecting of pagodas and statues of Buddha involves relinquishing of large amount of wealth, it cannot be an act of generosity (*dāna*), because they say, for an act of giving to become *dāna*, three conditions must be fulfilled: (1) there must be a recipient, (2) there must be an object for offering and (3) there must be a donor. In erecting pagodas and statues of Buddha, there is obviously the donor, but who receives his gift, they asked. In the absence of anyone to receive the gift, how can it be an act of generosity (*dāna*).

From their point of view, the pagodas and Buddha statues are not objects to be given as an act of *dāna* but rather, they serve as aids to recollection of the attributes of the Buddha. A builder of pagodas and Buddha statues has no particular receiver in mind to give them away. He builds them to help produce vivid visualization of the Buddha in the mind of the devotees so as to enable them to practise the Recollection of the Virtues of the Buddha. It should, therefore, be considered, they maintain, that erecting pagodas and Buddha statues is related to the Buddhānussati Meditation, cultivation of the Recollection of the Virtues of the Buddha, and is not act of generosity.

There are, again, some people who maintain that as the person, who builds pagodas and installs Buddha statues, undertakes these works in order to honour, to make homage to the most Homage-Worthy Buddha, his act must be considered as an act of honouring the Buddha (*apacāyana*), one of the ten qualities contributing to merit (*puñṇakiriya-vatthu*). They further say that since this kind of merit, namely, honouring those who are worthy of honour, is a practice of morality (*cāritta-sīla*), it should come under (observance of) *sīla* and not under (cultivation of) Buddhānussati Meditation.

But neither the merit of Buddhānussati Meditation nor the merit of honouring

(*apacāyana*) involves relinquishing of objects of offering; whereas building a pagoda and installing Buddha statues require an expenditure of a large sum of money. Hence, these works of merit must be considered to come under *Dāna*.

Here the question may be asked: 'If it comes under *dāna*, will it be an act of *dāna* when there is no recipient for it?' According to the Texts, whether an offering should be regarded as an act of *dāna* may be decided by an analysis of its features, viz. characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause. We have already provided above what these four features are, for a true act of *dāna*. Now applying this test to the present problems, we find the characteristic of abandoning, since the person, who builds the pagoda and installs the Buddha statues, relinquishes a large sum of money; as for function, there is destruction of attachment to the objects of offering by the donor; as its manifestation, the donor senses that his act of generosity will result in attainment of rebirth in the human or deva-world and attainment of great wealth; and finally, as the proximate cause, there is the object to be offered. Thus, all the four features necessary for an offering to be truly an act of *dāna* are present here and we may, therefore, conclude that building a pagoda and installing Buddha statues is a true act of generosity.

As to the question of who receives the gift, it will not be wrong to say that all the devas and human beings, who worship at the pagodas and Buddha statues in memory of the virtues of the Buddha, are the recipients of the *dāna*. At the same time, as they serve as objects of worship for the devas and human beings in their recollection of the virtues of the Buddha, they also form the objects of offering. All the various material things in the world are utilized in different ways depending on their nature; food materials are utilized for consumption; clothing materials are utilized for wearing; material for religious devotion and adoration are utilized as objects of veneration.

If wells and tanks are dug near public highways, the general public could use them for drinking water, washing, etc. The donor would have no particular recipient in mind when he dug the wells and tanks. When, as he intended, the wayfarers, passing by the road, make use of his gifts, no one could say that his gift is not an act of *dāna*; even if he did not finalize it with a libation ceremony. (See below).

Now to wind up the discussion, it is quite proper to say that builder of a pagoda with Buddha statues is a donor, the pagoda and Buddha statues are objects of *dāna*, and devas and human beings who pay homage to them in adoration are the recipients of the *dāna*.

An additional question may be asked: "Is it really proper to refer to pagodas and Buddha statues as objects of *dāna*; may it not be sacrilegious to classify them as such?" Just as bookcases and shelves are used in the monasteries for holding Canonical Texts which are looked up as sacred (Dhamma-cetiya), so also pagodas and Buddha statues form storehouses for keeping sacred relics and objects of veneration. So it may be answered that it is quite appropriate to designate them as objects of generosity (*dāna*).

Whether A Libation Ceremony is Essential for An Offering to qualify as An act of Generosity

The point to consider here is what constitutes an act of *dāna* when it is not finalised with a libation ceremony. Actually there is no mention of this requirement in the Texts. The practice is, however, or long standing tradition.

In the Commentary on Chapter: Cīvarakkhandhaka of the **Vinaya Mahāvagga**, we find the following reference to this tradition of libation ceremony. "There was a split among the *bhikkhus* of a monastery prior to the time of offering of robes after the Buddhist *Vassa*. When the time arrived, lay devotees came and offered robes, piled up in a heap, to one group of *bhikkhus*. The devotees then went to the other group of *bhikkhus* and performed the ceremony of libation, saying: "We offer to the other group of *bhikkhus*." As to how the robes should be distributed among the Sangha, the **Great Commentary** says that if it was a region where the ceremony of libation is of no importance, the robes belonged to the group (of *bhikkhus*) which had been directly offered the robes. The group which received only 'the libation' had no claim to the robes. But if it was in a region where the libation ceremony is of importance, the group which received only 'the libation' had a claim to the

robes because the ceremony of libation was performed with them; the other group to which the robes were offered directly had also a claim on them since they had the robes already in their possession. Therefore, the two groups must divide the robes equally among themselves. This method of distribution is a practice followed by tradition in regions on the other side of the Ocean.”

“Regions on the other side of the Ocean,” from Sri Lanka implies “the Jambudīpa”, i.e. India. Therefore, it should be noted that the ceremony of libation is a practice traditionally followed by the people of India.

Considering that there are regions where they set a great store by ceremony of libation and there are regions where they set no great store by the ceremony of libation, it cannot be said that an offering constitutes an act of generosity only when it is finalised by a ceremony of libation. The ceremony is important only for those who follow the tradition of libation; it is clear that no significance is attached to it by those who do not follow the tradition. It should be noted, therefore, that a libation ceremony is not a primary factor for the successful completion of an act of generosity.

(b) With respect to the gift of the Teaching (*dhamma-dāna*), there are, nowadays, people who are unable to teach the Dhamma, but who, bent on making a gift of the Teaching, spend money on books, palm-leaf scripts, etc. (of Canonical Texts) and make a gift of them. Although such a donation of books is not truly a gift of the Teaching, since a reader will be benefitted by reading in the books, practices and instructions which will lead one to Nibbāna, the donor may be regarded as one who makes a gift of the Teaching.

It is like the case of one who has no medicine to give to a sick person, but only a prescription for a cure of the illness. When the medicine is prepared as prescribed and taken, the illness is removed. Although the person does not actually administer any medicine, because of his effective prescription, he is entitled to be regarded as one who has brought about the cure of illness. Likewise, the donor of books on Dhamma who personally cannot teach the Dhamma enables the readers of his books to attain knowledge of the Dhamma and thus is entitled to be called the donor of the gift of Dhamma.

Now, to conclude this section, the pair of gifts mentioned above, namely, **Amisa-dāna** and **Dhamma-dāna** may also be called **Amisa-pūjā**, honouring with material things and **Dhamma-pūjā**, honouring with the Teaching; the terms means the same thing.

The word ‘*Pūjā*’ means ‘honouring’ and is generally used when a younger person makes an offering to an older person or a person of higher status. Depending on this general usage, some people have stated that *dāna* should be divided into ‘*pūjā-dāna*’ and ‘*anuggaha-dāna*’; ‘*pūjā-dāna*’, honouring with an offering when the gift is made by a younger person or a person of lower status to an older person or person of higher status; and ‘*anuggaha-dāna*’ offering to render assistance out of kindness when a gift is given by an older person or a person of higher status to one who is younger or of lower status.

But as we have seen before in the Chapter on ‘Prediction’, the word ‘**Pūjā**’ can be used for both the high or the low and the word ‘**Anuggaha**’ is likewise applicable to both cases. It is true that generally, ‘*anuggaha*’ is used when the giving is made by the high to the low or by the old to the young. But we must, however, remember the usages of ‘*amisānuggaha*’ and ‘*dhammānuggaha*’ to describe the assistance rendered and support given, for the progress and development of the Buddha’s Teaching. Here the word ‘**anuggaha**’ is employed even though the gift is being made to the highest and the noblest Teaching of the Buddha. Thus, it should be noted that the division into *pūjā-dāna* and *anuggaha-dāna* is not an absolute division into two aspects of *dāna*, but rather a classification following common usage.

2. Ajjhattika/Bāhira Dāna

Offering of one’s own person (**Ajjhattika-dāna**) and offering of external properties (**Bāhira-dāna**).

Offerings of one’s own person means giving away of one’s own life and limbs. Offerings

of external properties include giving of all the external material possessions of the donor.

Even in this modern time, we read sometimes in the newspapers of offerings of one's own limbs at the pagoda or of 'honouring with the gift' of burning oneself after wrapping the whole body with cloth and pouring oil on it. Some comments have been made on such kinds of *dāna* involving one's limbs. According to them, such offerings of one's life and limbs are deeds to be performed only by great Bodhisattas and are not the concern of ordinary persons. They doubt if such offerings made by ordinary persons produce any merit at all.

Now to consider whether such views are justified or not. It is not as if a Bodhisatta can suddenly make his appearance in this world. Only after gradually fulfilling the required perfections to the best of his ability, an individual grows in maturity and develops himself stage by stage to become a Bodhisatta. Ancient poets have written thus: Only by gradual venture, one ensures continuous improvement in rebirths to come. Therefore, we should not hastily condemn those who make offerings of parts of their body or the whole of their body. If a person, through unflinching volition and faith, very courageously makes an offering of his own body, even to the extent of abandoning his life, he is actually worthy of praise as a donor of the gift of one's own person, **Ajjhattika-dāna**.

3. Vatthu/Abhaya Dāna

Offering of property (**Vatthu-dāna**) and granting of safety (**Abhaya-dāna**).

Vatthu-dāna is concerned with offering of material things. **Abhaya-dāna** means granting of safety or security with respect to life or property. This is usually an exercise of mercy by kings.

4. Vattanissita/Vivattanissita Dāna

Vattanissita-dāna is offering made in the hope of future worldly wealthy and pleasures, which means suffering in the cycle of existence. **Vivattanissita-dāna** is concerned with offering made in aspiration for Nibbāna which is free of the suffering of rebirth.

5. Sāvajja/Anavajja Dāna

Dāna tainted with fault (**Sāvajja-dāna**) and **dāna** untainted with fault (**Anavajja-dāna**).

Offering of meals with meat obtained from killing of animals is an example of *dāna* tainted with fault. Offering of meals which does not involve killing of animals is *dāna* untainted with fault. The first type is an act of generosity accompanied by demeritoriousness and the second type is *dāna* unaccompanied by demeritoriousness.

We see the case of some fishermen, who, having accumulated wealth from fishing, decided to give up the business thinking: "I shall abandon this demeritorious fishing work and adopt a pure mode of livelihood." Engaging in other occupations, they find their prosperity declining and, therefore, had to revert to their old vocation, and their wealth grew. This is an example of *dāna* tainted with fault (**Sāvajja-dāna**) done in previous lives coming to fruition in the present life. Since that act of *dāna* was associated with the act of killing, at the time of its fruition too, success is achieved only when associated with act of killing (fishing). When not associated with an act of killing, the previous *dāna* tainted with fault cannot come to fruition and his wealth declines.

6. Sāhatthika/Anattika Dāna

Offering made with one's own hand (**Sāhatthika-dāna**) and offering made by agents on one's behalf or made by other under one's instruction (**Anattika-dāna**).

(That **Sāhatthika-dāna** brings more beneficial results than the **Anattika-dāna** can be read in the Pāyāsi Sutta of Mahā Vagga, Dīgha Nikāya, of the Pāli Canon).

7. Sakkacca/Asakkacca Dāna

Offering made with proper and careful preparation (**Sakkacca-dāna**) and offering made without proper and careful preparation (**Asakkacca-dāna**).

As an example, offering of flowers may be cited. Having gathered flowers from trees, a donor creates garlands of festoon with them, and arranges them to look as beautiful and as pleasant as possible, and makes his offering of flowers, then it is a *sakkacca-dāna*, offering made with proper and careful preparations. Without such careful preparations, when flowers are presented as they have been gathered from trees, thinking that the mere gift of the flowers is sufficient in itself, then it is *asakkacca-dāna*, offering made without proper and careful preparations.

Some ancient writers have translated ‘*sakkacca-dāna*’ and ‘*asakkacca-dāna*’ into Myanmar to mean ‘offering made with due respect’ and ‘offering made without due respect’. This rendering has, as often as not, misled the modern readers to think that it means paying due respect or without paying due respect to the receiver of the offering. Actually, ‘paying due respect’ here means simply ‘making careful preparations’ for the offering.

8. Nānasampayutta/Naṇavippayutta Dāna

Offering associated with wisdom (**Nānasampayutta-dāna**) and offering unassociated with wisdom (**Naṇavippayutta-dāna**).

Offering made with clear comprehension of volitional acts and the results they produce is said to be an offering associated with wisdom. When an offering is made without such comprehension and awareness, by just following examples of others making donation, it is *naṇavippayutta-dāna*. It must be mentioned that just awareness of cause and its ensuing effect, while an offering is being made, is sufficient to make it an offering which is associated with wisdom. In this connection, an explanation is necessary with respect to some exhortations which run like this: ‘Whenever an offering is made, it should be accompanied by Insight Knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*), in this manner, I, the donor of the gift, am *anicca*, of impermanent nature; and the recipient of the gift is also *anicca*, of impermanent nature. The impermanent I am offering the impermanent gift to the impermanent recipient. Thus, you should contemplate whenever you make an offering of gifts.’

This exhortation is made only to encourage the practice of developing Insight Knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*). It should not be misunderstood that an act of generosity is not one associated with wisdom, if the donor does not practise contemplation as exhorted.

As a matter of fact, whoever wants to develop real *vipassanā-ñāṇa* should first of all discard the notion of I, he, man, woman, i.e. the illusion of I, the illusion of Self, to discern that they are merely material aggregates and mental aggregates. Then one has to go on contemplating so as to realise that these aggregates of mind and matter are of the nature impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and insubstantiality. Without differentiation into aggregates of mind and matter, if one were to contemplate on conventional concepts of ‘I am *anicca*; the object of offering is *anicca*; the recipient is *anicca*’, no real insight Knowledge would be possible.

9. Sasaṅkhārika/Asaṅkhārika Dāna

Offering made hesitatingly and only after being urged is *Sasaṅkhārika-dāna* and offering made spontaneously without being urged is *Asaṅkhārika-dāna*.

Here urging means prompting or entreating earnestly someone to give when he is hesitating or reluctant to do so. Such offering is made only with prompting. But, a simple request should not be taken as urging. For example, a person, who has not made any decision whether he will or he will not make a donation, is requested to make some alms contribution and he gives willingly without any hesitation. This is a spontaneous gift in response to a simple request. Such is an *asaṅkhārika-dāna* (one without prompting), and should not be called a *sasaṅkhārika-dāna* (just because it is made after a request). Another

person is similarly approached and similarly requested to make a contribution but he is reluctant at first and refuses to do so. But when the request is repeated with a prompting “Do make a gift, don’t flinch” and he makes a contribution. His *dāna* is made as consequence of urging is of *sasaṅkhārika-dāna* type (one with prompting). Even in the case where no one has made an approach to request for *dāna*, if one first thinks of making an offering, and then shrinks away from the idea, but after much self persuasion, self-inducement, finally makes the gift, his *dāna* is *sasaṅkhārika* type too.

10. Somanassa/Upekkhā Dāna

Offering made while one is in a joyful mood with a happy frame of mind is **Somanassa-dāna**. Offering made with a balanced state of mind, neither joyous nor sorrowful but equipoise is **Upekkhā-dāna**.

(When the act of giving is accompanied by pleasure, it is **Somanassa-dāna**; when it is accompanied by equanimity, it is **Upekkhā-dāna**.)

11. Dhammiya/Adhammiya Dāna

Offering of property earned in accordance with Dhamma by just means is **Dhammiya-dāna**. Offering of property earned by immoral means, such as stealing, robbing, is **Adhammiya-dāna**.

Although earning of property by immoral means is not in accord with dhamma, offering as alms of such property is nevertheless an act of merit, but the good results accruing from this type of *dāna* cannot be great as those obtained from the first type, the *dhammiya-dāna*. A comparison can be made of these two different results with types of plant that will grow from a good seed and from a bad seed.

12. Dāsa/Bhujissa Dāna

Offering made with hopes of gaining worldly pleasures is Enslaving *dāna* (**Dāsa-dāna**), the offering that will enslave one. Being a slave to craving for sense-pleasures, one makes this kind of *dāna* to serve one’s Master, the Craving to fulfil its wishes. Offering made with aspiration for attainment of the Path and Fruition, the Nibbāna, is *dāna* for freedom, **Bhujissa-dāna** (offering made in revolt against the dictate of the Master, the Craving).

Sentient beings in the endless round of existences desire to enjoy the delightful pleasures of the senses (visible objects, sounds, smells, tastes, touch). This desire to revel in the so called pleasures of the senses is called Craving. Every moment of their existence is devoted to satisfying that Craving; fulfilling the needs of that Craving, they have become its servants. Continuous striving, day and night throughout their life for wealth is nothing but fulfilment of the wishes of the Craving which demands the best of food, the best of clothing and the most luxurious way of living.

Not content with being a slave to Craving in the present life, working to fulfil its every need, we make acts of *dāna* to ensure luxurious living in future. This type of offering accompanied by a strong wish for enjoyment of worldly pleasures continuously for lives to come, is definitely an enslaving *dāna* (*dāsa-dāna*).

This type of *dāna* in fulfilment of the wishes of Craving and which ensures servitude to Craving throughout the endless round of existence is performed, thinking it to be the best, before one encounters the Teachings of the Buddha. But once we are fortunate enough to hear the Buddha Dhamma, we come to understand how powerful this Craving is, how insatiable it is, how much we have to suffer for fulfilling the wishes of this Craving. Then resolving, “I will no longer be a servant of this terrible Craving, I will no longer fulfil its wishes, I will rebel against it, I will go against it and in order to uproot, to eradicate this evil Craving, one makes offerings with aspiration for attainment of the Path and Fruition, the Nibbāna. This *dāna* is called *dāna* made for freedom, **Bhujissa-dāna** (offering made in revolt against the dictates of the Master, Craving).

13. Thāvāra/Athāvāra Dāna

Offering of things of permanent, immovable nature, such as pagodas, temples,

monasteries, rest houses and digging wells, tanks, etc., is **Thāvāra-dāna**. Offering of things of movable nature meant for temporary use, such as food, robes, etc. movable gifts, is **Athāvāra-dāna**.

14. Saparivāra/Aparivāra Dāna

Offering made with accompaniment of supplementary material that usually go along with such an offering is **Saparivāra-dāna**. For example, in offering robes as main item of gifts, when it is accompanied by suitable and proper accessories and requisites, it is a *saparivāra-dāna*; when there are no other objects of offering besides the main item of robes, it is a gift without accompanying thing, **Aparivāra-dāna**. The same differentiation applies to offerings made with other forms of gifts.

The special characteristic marks on the body of Bodhisattas, who have large retinue attending upon them, are the benefits that result from *saparivāra* type of *dāna*.

15. Nibaddha/Anibaddha Dāna

Offering made constantly or regularly such as offering of alms-food to the Sangha everyday is Constant *dāna*, (**Nibaddha-dāna**). Offering made not constantly, not on a regular basis but only occasionally when one is able to so, is occasional offering (**Anibaddha-dāna**).

16. Paramattha/Aparamattha Dāna

Tarnished offering (**Paramattha-dāna**). Untarnished offering (**Aparamattha-dāna**).

Offering which is tarnished by craving and wrong view is **Paramattha-dāna**. Offering which is not corrupted by craving and wrong view is **Aparamattha-dāna**.

According to Abhidhamma, one is corrupted when led astray by wrong view alone; but wrong view always co-exists with craving. When wrong view corrupts and leads one astray, craving is also involved. Therefore, both craving and wrong view are mentioned above. And this is how craving and wrong view bring about corruption. Having made an offering, if one expresses an ardent, wholesome wish: “May I attain speedily the Path and Fruition (Nibbāna) as a result of this act of merit”, the offering becomes one of Vivatthanissita type (see type 4 above), and it could serve as a strong sufficing condition for attainment of the Path and Fruition (Nibbāna). But instead of making such a wholesome wish for Nibbāna, when one, corrupted and led astray by craving and wrong view, aspires a result of this act of merit: “May I become a distinguished deva such as Sakka, the King of Tāvātimsa abode, or just a deva of the durable divine realms, his *dāna* cannot serve as a sufficing condition for attainment of Nibbāna and is classed as mere *paramattha-dāna*, the *dāna* which is bereft of the sufficing condition for attainment of Nibbāna, being tarnished by craving and wrong view. The *dāna* which is not tarnished by craving and wrong view but is made with the sole purpose of attaining Nibbāna is classed as *aparamattha-dāna*.

Much charity can also be practised outside the Teaching of the Buddha; but *dāna* of *paramattha* type is only possible then. It is only within the Teaching of the Buddha that *dāna* of *aparamattha* type can be practised. So while we are blessed with the rare opportunity of meeting with the Teachings of the Buddha, we should strive our utmost to ensure that our offering are the *aparamattha* type.

17. Ucchiṭṭha/Anucchiṭṭha Dāna

Offering made with what is leftover, what is inferior, wretched is **Ucchiṭṭha-dāna**. Offering made with what is not leftover, what is not inferior, wretch is **Anucchiṭṭha-dāna**.

Suppose, while preparations are being made for a meal, a donee appears and one donates some of the food that has been prepared before one has eaten it; it is considered to be ‘the highest gift’ (*agga-dāna*) and it is also an *anucchiṭṭha-dāna* since the offering is not the

leftover of a meal. If the donee arrives while one is eating the meal, but before eating is finished, and one makes an offering of the food taken from the meal one is eating, that is also considered to be an *anucchiṭṭha-dāna*; it can even be said to be a noble gift. When the offering is made of the food leftover after one has finished eating, it is a gift of the leftover, an *ucchiṭṭha-dāna*; a wretched, inferior one. It should be noted, however, that the humble offering made by one who has nothing else to give but the leftover meal could well be called an *anucchiṭṭha-dāna*. It is only when such an offer is made by one who can well afford to make a better gift that his gift is regarded as a wretched, inferior one, *ucchiṭṭha-dāna*.

18. Sajjiva/Accaya Dāna

Offering made while one is still alive is **Sajjiva-dāna**. Offering which is meant to become effective after one's death: "I give such of my property to such and such a person. Let him take possession of them after my death and make use of them as he wishes" is **Accaya-dāna**.

A *bhikkhu* (Buddhist monk) is not permitted to make an *accaya* type of *dāna*, i.e. he cannot leave his properties as gifts for others after death. Even if he should do so, it does not constitute an act of *dāna*; the would-be recipient also has no right of possession to them. If a *bhikkhu* gives from his properties to another *bhikkhu* while he still living, the receiver is entitled to what is given to him; or while the *bhikkhu* is still alive, some *bhikkhu*, who is on intimate terms (*viśāśagaha*) with him, can take it and come to possess it; or if he owns something jointly (*dviśantaka*) with another *bhikkhu*, when he dies the surviving *bhikkhu* becomes the sole owner. Unless these conditions are fulfilled, namely, giving his property during his lifetime, taking possession of it by reason of intimacy while he is still alive, or possessing it through dual ownership, the *bhikkhu's* property becomes the property of the Sangha, the Order of Bhikkhus, when he dies. Therefore, if a *bhikkhu* makes an *accaya-dāna*, saying: "I give such of my property to such and such a person when I die. Let him take possession of them", it amounts to giving a property which by then belongs to the Order of Bhikkhus. His giving does not form an act of *dāna* and the would-be recipient is also not entitled to it's ownership. it is only amongst the laymen that such kind of gift, *accaya-dāna*, is possible and legal.

19. Puggalika/Saṅghika Dāna

Offering made to one or two separate individual persons is **Puggalika-dāna**. Offering made to the whole Order of Bhikkhus (the Sangha), is **Saṅghika-dāna**.

Sangha means group, assemblage or community; here, the whole community of the *ariya* disciples of the Buddha is meant. In making an offering intended for the Sangha, the donor must have in his mind not the individual *ariya* disciples that constitute the Order, but the community of the *ariya* disciples as a whole. Then only his offering will be of the *saṅghika* type.

Dakkhināvibhanga Sutta (of **Majjhima Nikāya** Pāli Canon) give an enumeration of the 14 kinds of gifts to individuals (*puggalika-dāna*) and 7 kinds of gifts to the Sangha (*saṅghika-dāna*). It is useful to know them.

14 Kinds of Gift to Individuals

- (1) Offering made to a Buddha.
- (2) Offering made to a Paccekabuddha, a non-teaching Buddha.
- (3) Offering made to an *arahat* or to one who has attained the *arahatta-phala* stage.
- (4) Offering made to one who is striving to realise *arahatta-phala* or one who has attained the *arahatta-magga* stage.
- (5) Offering made to an *anāgāmin* or to one who has attained the *anāgāmī-phala* stage.
- (6) Offering made to one who is striving to realise *anāgāmī-phala* or one who has

attained the *anāgāmi-magga* stage.

- (7) Offering made to a *sakadāgāmin* or to one who has attained the *sakadāgāmi-phala* stage.
- (8) Offering made to one who is striving to realise *sakadāgāmi-phala* or one who has attained *sakadāgāmi-magga* stage.
- (9) Offering made to a *sotāpanna* or to one who has attained the *sotāpatti* stage.
- (10) Offering made to one who is striving to realise *sotāpatti-phala* or one who has attained *sotāpatti-magga*.
- (11) Offering made to recluses (outside the Teaching of the Buddha or when the Teaching is not in existence) who are accomplished in *jhāna* or Supernormal Power attainment.
- (12) Offering made to ordinary lay person who possesses morality.
- (13) Offering made to ordinary lay person who is devoid of morality.
- (14) Offering made to an animal.

Of these 14 kinds of offering made to individuals, giving one full meal to an animal will bring wholesome results of long life, good looks, physical wellbeing, strength, and intelligence for one hundred lives. Then in an ascending order, giving one full meal to a lay person of poor morality will bring these wholesome results for one thousand lives; to lay person of good morality at a time when the Buddha's Teaching is not in existence and he has no opportunity to take refuge in the Triple Gem, for a hundred thousand lives; to recluses and ascetics accomplished in *jhāna* attainment, for ten billion lives; to lay men and novitiates (during a period when the Teachings of Buddhas are extant) who take refuge in the Triple Gem, and up to the Noble person who has attained the *sotāpatti-magga*, for an innumerable period (*asaṅkhyeyya*) of lives; and to persons of higher attainment up to the Buddha, for countless periods of lives. (According to the Commentary, even one who only takes refuge in the Triple Gem may be considered as a person who is practising for realisation of *sotāpatti-phala*).

There is no mention of *bhikkhus* of loose morality in the above list of 14 kinds of recipient of offerings made to individuals. The Buddha's enumeration of offering made to a person devoid of morality concerns only the period when the Buddha's Teaching is not in existence. For these reasons, there is a tendency to consider that offerings made to *bhikkhus* of impure morality while the Buddha's Teaching are still not in existence are blameworthy. But one should remember that anyone, who has become a Buddhist, at the very least, takes refuge in the Triple Gem; and the Commentary says that whoever takes refuge in the Triple Gem is a person who is practising for realisation of *sotāpatti-phala*. Furthermore, when an offering made to an ordinary lay person, who is devoid of morality (while the Teaching of Buddha is not in existence), could be of much benefit, there is no doubt that offerings made to an ordinary lay person devoid of morality while the Teaching of the Buddha is still existing could be beneficial too.

Again, the **Milinda-Pañha** Text, Nāgasena Thera explains that an immoral *bhikkhu* is superior to an immoral lay person in ten respects, such as reverence shown to the Buddha, reverence shown to the Dhamma, reverence shown to the Sangha, etc. Thus, according to the **Milinda Pañha**, an immoral *bhikkhu* is superior to an immoral lay person; and since he is listed by the Commentary as one who is practising for realisation of *sotāpatti-phala*, one should not say that it is blameworthy and fruitless to make an offering to a *bhikkhu* who is devoid of morality.

There is yet another point of view in connection with this matter. At a time when there is no Teaching of the Buddha, immoral *bhikkhus* cannot cause any harm to the Teaching; but when the Teaching is in existence, they can bring harm to it. For that reason, no offering should be made to *bhikkhus* who is devoid of morality during the period when there is the Buddha's Teaching. But that view is shown by the Buddha to be untenable.

At the conclusion of the discourse on seven kinds of offering to the Sangha (*saṅghika-dāna*)(see below), the Buddha explains to Ānanda:

“Ānanda, in times to come, there will appear vile *bhikkhus*, devoid of morality, who are *bhikkhus* only in name, who will wear their robes round their necks. With the intention of giving up the Sangha, offerings will be made to these immoral *bhikkhus*. Even when offered in this manner, a *saṅghika-dāna*, an offering meant for the whole Sangha, I declare, will bring innumerable, inestimable benefits.”

There is still another point to take into consideration. Of the Four Purities of Generosity (*Dakkhiṇā Visuddhi*), the first Purity is: Even if the donee is of impure morality, when the donor is moral, the offering is pure by reason of purity of the donor. For these reasons also, one should not say that an immoral *bhikkhu* is not a donee, and that no benefit will accrue by making an offering to him.

It should be well noted, therefore, it is blameworthy only when we make an offering with bad intentions of approving and encouraging an immoral *bhikkhu* in his evil practices; without taking into considerations his habits, if one makes the offering with a pure mind, thinking only ‘one should give if someone comes for a donation’, it is quite blameless.

Seven Kinds of Gifts to The Sangha (Saṅghika-dāna)

- (1) Offering made to the community of both *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* led by the Buddha, while He is still living.
- (2) Offering made to the community of both *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* after the Parinibbāna of the Buddha.
- (3) Offering made to the community of *bhikkhus* only.
- (4) Offering made to the community of *bhikkhunīs* only.
- (5) Offering made (with the whole Sangha in mind) to a group of *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* as nominated by the Order. Such an offering is made when the donor could not afford to give offerings to all the *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* and requests the Order to nominate a certain number (he could afford to give) of *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* to receive the offerings. The Sangha nominates the required number of *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* and the donor makes the offerings to that group of *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* (with the whole Sangha in mind).
- (6) Offering made to a group of *bhikkhus* only (with the whole Sangha in mind) after requesting the Sangha to nominate the number he could afford to give.
- (7) Offering made (with the whole of Sangha in mind) to a group of *bhikkhunīs* only after requesting the Sangha to nominate the number he could afford to give.

Of these seven kinds of *saṅghika-dāna*, it may be asked, if it is possible to make an offering of the first kind, namely, an offering made to the community of both *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* led by the Buddha, after the Parinibbāna of the Buddha. The answer is “Yes, it is possible” and the offer should be made in this manner: after placing a statue of the Buddha containing relics in front of the community of both *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* who have gathered for the ceremony, the offering should be made, saying: “I make this offering to the community of both *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* led by the Buddha”.

Having done an offering of the first kind, the question arises as to what happens to the objects of offering which was intended for the Buddha. Just as the property of the father customarily goes to the son, so too should the offerings intended for the Buddha go to the *bhikkhu* who does devotional duties to the Buddha or to the community of *bhikkhus*. Especially, if the objects offered include such materials as oil, ghee, etc. which should be utilized in offering of lights by oil lamps to the Buddha; pieces of cloth included in the offering should be made into banners and streamers to be offered in worship.

During the Buddha's lifetime, people were generally not disposed to form attachment to, or concerning themselves with individual personalities; they had their mind bent on the Order of *Bhikkhus* as a whole, and thus were able to make much offering of the noble *saṅghika-dāna* kind. Consequently, the needs of the members of the Order were mostly met by the distributions made by the Order; they had little need to rely on lay man and lay

woman donors and, therefore, had little attachment to them as ‘the donors of my monastery, the donors of my robes, etc.’ Thus, the *bhikkhu* could be free of bonds of attachments.

Brief Story of The Householder Ugga

Those desirous of making offerings of pure *Saṅghika-dāna* type should emulate the example set by the householder Ugga. The story of the householder Ugga is found in the second discourse of the Gahapati Vagga, Aṭṭhakanipāta of **Aṅguttara Nikāya** Pāli Canon.

At one time when the Buddha was residing at Elephant Village in the country of Vajjī, He addressed the *bhikkhus*, saying: “*Bhikkhus*, you should regard the householder Ugga of Elephant Village as a person endowed with eight wonderful attributes.” Stating thus briefly, without giving any elaboration, He went inside the monastery.

Then a *bhikkhu* went in the morning to the house of the householder and said to him: “Householder, the Bhagavā has said that you are a person endowed with eight wonderful attributes. What are these eight wonderful attributes which the Bhagavā said you are endowed with?”

“Venerable Sir, I am not exactly sure what specific eight wonderful attributes the Buddha said I am endowed with, but, please listen with proper attention to an account of the eight wonderful attributes which I actually possess.” Then he gave the following full description of the eight wonderful attributes as follows:

- (1) The first time I saw the Buddha was when I was drinking and enjoying myself in the forest of Ironwood flowers. As soon as I saw the Buddha coming in the distance, I became sober and devotional piety and faith in the virtues of the Buddha rose in me. This is the first wonder.
- (2) At that very first meeting with the Buddha, I took refuge in the Buddha and listened to His discourse. As a result, I became a *sotāpanna* (a ‘Stream-winner’), and established in the observance of *Brahmacariya-pañcama-sīla*. This is the second wonder.

(*Brahmacariya-pañcama-sīla* is similar to the five precepts habitually observed by lay people except that, instead of the precept, ‘I abstain from sexual misconduct’, it has the precept, ‘I abstain from any form of sexual intercourse’. With the usual formula of the five precepts, and one abstains from sexual intercourse with anyone other than one’s own wife; but the *Brahmacariya-pañcama-sīla* requires total abstinence of sex, not even with one’s own wife.)

- (3) I had four wives, as soon as I arrived back home, I said to them: ‘I have vowed to observe the precept of total abstinence. Whoever wishes to remain living in this house may do so enjoying my wealth as you like and doing meritorious deeds with it; whoever wants to go back to her parents home is also free to do so; and whoever wants to get married to another man may just tell me to whom I should give you.’ The eldest of my four wives expressed her wish to be married to a certain person whom she named. I sent for the man and holding my eldest wife with my left hand and a jug of water in my right hand, I gave away my wife to the man. In making this gift of my wife to the man, I remained completely unmoved, unaffected. This is the third wonder.
- (4) I have resolved to use all my wealth jointly with people of good moral character. This is the fourth wonder.
- (5) I always approach a *bhikkhu* with all due respect, never without reverence; if the *bhikkhu* gives me a talk on Dhamma, I listen to his discourse with respect only, never without reverence; if the *bhikkhu* does not give me a talk on Dhamma, I give him a discourse. This is the fifth wonder.
- (6) Whenever I invite the Sangha to my house to make some offerings, devas would come ahead of them and inform me: ‘Householder, such and such *bhikkhus* are

enlightened, noble persons (*ariyas*); such and such *bhikkhus* are ordinary persons of morality; such and such *bhikkhus* are devoid of morality.’ That the devas come and give me this prior information about the *bhikkhus* is nothing surprising to me; the wonder is that when I make offering of meals or material things to the Sangha such thoughts as ‘I will offer much to this individual because he is an enlightened noble person, of good morality; or I will offer little to this individual since he is of poor morality’ would never occur to me. As a matter of fact, without differentiation as to who is noble, who is moral or who is immoral, I make my offerings impartially to each and everyone. This is the sixth wonder.

- (7) Venerable sir, devas come and tell me that the doctrine of the Buddha is well-taught, it has the merit of being well-taught. This news conveyed to me by the devas is nothing surprising to me. The wonder is that, on such occasions, I reply to the devas: ‘Devas, whether you tell me so or not, verily, the doctrine of the Buddha is well-taught.’ (He believes that the doctrine of the Buddha is well-taught, not because the devas tell him, but because he himself knows it to be so). Although I hold such communications with devas, I feel no pride in that the devas come to me and that I have conversations with them. This is the seventh wonder.
- (8) There is nothing surprising too, if I should pass away before the Bhagavā did and He would foretell: ‘The householder Ugga has completely destroyed the lower Five Fetters which lead to rebirth in the lower sensuous realms; he is an *anāgāmin*. Even before the Buddha’s prediction, I have become an *anāgāmin* and I have already known this. This is the eighth wonder.

Of these eight wonders described by the householder Ugga. the sixth is concerned with making impartial offerings to the noble, the moral or the immoral alike. It is necessary to know how one can be impartially minded in such circumstances. The impartial attitude can be understood to be brought about in this manner, ‘As I have made the invitation with intention to give to the Sangha, the whole Order, when I make the offering to a noble one, I will not recognise him as such; I will not consider that I am making the offering to a noble one; I will keep in mind only that I am making my offering to the Sangha, the noble disciples of the Buddha as a whole. And when I make the offering to an immoral person, I will not recognise him as such; I will not consider that I am making the offering to an immoral person; I will keep in mind only that I am making an offering to the Sangha, the noble disciples of the Buddha, as a whole. In this manner, impartiality may be maintained.’

Emulating the example set by the householder Ugga. when making an offering one should ignore the status of the recipient, keep aside personal feelings towards him, and strive to keep firmly in mind only on the Order of Bhikkhus as a whole, so that his *dāna* may be of the noble *saṅghika-dāna* type. As taught explicitly by the Buddha in the Dakkhinā-Vibhaṅga Sutta mentioned above, when an offering is of *saṅghika* type, that is with the whole community of *bhikkhus* in mind when making it, it could bring innumerable, inestimable benefits to the donor, even if the recipient is an immoral person devoid of virtues.

An offering is of *saṅghika-dāna* type when it is made with full reverence to the Sangha; but it is not always easy to do so. Suppose a person decides to make a *saṅghika* type of offering, having made the necessary preparations, he goes to a monastery and addresses the *bhikkhus*: “Reverend Sirs, I wish to make a *saṅghika* type of offering; may you designate someone from amongst the Sangha as its representative’. Should the *bhikkhus* nominate a novice whose turn it is to represent the Sangha, the donor is likely to be displeased; should they choose an elderly *thera* of long standing to represent them, he is likely to be overwhelmed with intense delight, exulting: “I have an elderly *thera* of long standing as my donee.” Such generosity, affected by the personality of the donee, cannot be a perfect *saṅghika* type of offering.

Only if one can accept the representative nominated by turn by the Sangha without any misgiving and without concerning oneself about whether the recipient is a novice or a *bhikkhu*, a young *bhikkhu* or an elderly *bhikkhu*, an ignorant *bhikkhu* or a learned *bhikkhu*, and makes one’s offering, thinking only: “I make my offering to the Sangha.” with full

reverence to the Sangha, one makes a truly *saṅghika-dāna*.

Story concerning A Donor of A Monastery

This incident happened on the other side of the ocean, i.e. in India. A rich householder, who had already donated a monastery, intended to make an offering to the Sangha. After making necessary preparations, he went to the Order of Bhikkhus and addressed them: “Venerable Sirs, may you designate someone to receive my offering for the Sangha?” It happened that it was the turn of an immoral *bhikkhu* to represent the Sangha for alms. Although the man knew well that the designated *bhikkhu* was immoral, he treated him with full respect: the seat for the *bhikkhu* was prepared as for a ceremonious occasion, decorated with a canopy overhead, and scented with flowers and perfumes. He washed the feet of the *bhikkhu* and anointed them with oil very reverentially as if he were attending upon the person of the Buddha Himself. He then made his offering to the *bhikkhu* paying full homage to the Sangha.

That afternoon, the immoral *bhikkhu* went back to his house and standing at the doorway asked for a hoe, which he needed to make some repairs in the monastery. The donor of the monastery did not even bother to get up from his seat, he simply pushed the hoe towards the *bhikkhu* with his feet. The members of his family then asked him: “Respected Sir, this morning you had heaped upon this *bhikkhu* so much veneration; now you have shown him not even a small part of that deference. Why is this difference between the morning and the afternoon in your attitude towards the *bhikkhu*?” The man replied: “My dear ones, the respect I was showing this morning was towards the Sangha not to this immoral *bhikkhu*.”

Some Considerations about Puggalika-dāna and Saṅghika-dāna

There are some people who maintain that if some person should approach one for alms and if one knew beforehand that the person was of bad morality, one should not make any offering to that person; if one should do so, it would be like watering a poisonous plant.

But it could not be said that every act of offering made knowingly to immoral persons is blameworthy. It is the volition of the giver that must be taken into account here. If the donor should approve of the bad habits of the recipient and give with a view to give him support and encouragement for continuance of his immoral practices, then only his gift would be like watering a poisonous plant. If the donor does not approve of the bad habits to the recipient and has no mind to encourage him to continue with his bad practices, but emulating the example of the monastery donor described above, if he makes his gift in such a way that it becomes a true *saṅghika-dāna*, then no blame can be attached to such an offering.

Again there are some who maintain that whether the recipient is of good moral character or bad moral character is no concern of the donors; it only concerns the recipient. Therefore, remaining indifferent to the character of the recipient, whether good or bad, the donor should bear in mind: “This is a noble person, an *ariya* (or an *arahat*).” They maintain that this act of offering is blameless and as fruitful as making an offering to an *arahat*. This point of view is also untenable.

Disciples of other teachers, who are not in a position to know whether a person is an *ariya* or an *arahat*, wrongly believe their teachers to be Noble Ones, *arahats*. This sort of belief, called ‘*Micchādhimokkha*’, making the wrong decision or conclusion, is demeritorious. Surely it would be demeritorious and would be making a wrong decision if one were to bear in mind ‘these are noble, *arahats*’ when one knew full well that they were not. It is not proper, therefore, to hold such views.

When faced with such recipients in making one's offering, the proper attitude to bear in mind should be “Bodhisattas, in fulfilment of Perfection of Generosity, make their offering without discriminating between persons of high, medium or low status of development. I will also emulate the examples of the Bodhisattas and make my offerings to whoever comes for them, without discrimination.” In this way, one would not be giving support and

encouragement to the practice of bad habits and would not be “making wrong decisions or conclusions about the recipient’s” development; the act of offering would thus be free from blame or fault.

Controversies and difficulties arise only in the case of offerings made to individuals, *puggalika-dāna*, because there exist various kind of individuals, good or bad. In the case of offerings made to the Sangha, *saṅghika-dāna*, there exists only one kind of Sangha, not two i.e. good and bad. (Here the noble disciples of the Buddha, the *ariyas*, are meant). There is no distinction amongst the Ariya Sangha as high, medium or low status of development, as they are all equally noble. Therefore, as explained above, whenever a donee appears before one, without taking into consideration his character, one should make the offering with the thought: “I make my offering to the disciples of the Buddha, the noble community of *bhikkhus*.” Then this offering is of *saṅghika-dāna* type and the recipient is the Sangha; the person who appears before him to receive the offering is merely the representative of the Sangha. However low that person may be in his morals, the true recipient of the offering is the noble Sangha and therefore this is truly a noble gift.

Some people consider that it is very difficult to put into actual practice the advice to ignore the personal character of the immoral recipient, who has appeared before one, and to make one's offering with the mind directed not to him but to the noble Sangha, regarding him only as a representative of the Sangha. The difficulty arises only because of lack of habitual practice in such matters. In making reverential vows to the images and statues of the Buddha, regarding them as the Buddha's representatives, one is so accustomed to the practice of projecting one's mind from the images or statues to the person of the living Buddha, that, no one says it is difficult. Just as the householder Ugga during the Buddha's time and the monastery donor of Jambu Dīpa had habituated themselves to make offerings to an immoral *bhikkhu* as a representative of the Buddha, so also Buddhists of modern times should discipline their mind to become accustomed to such an attitude.

Four Kinds of Offerings to The Sangha as described in The Vinaya Piṭaka

The Vinaya Piṭaka, the Book of Discipline for members of the Order gives a description of the four categories of offerings made intentionally for the Sangha. But these four categories of *saṅghika-dāna* do not concern the lay donor; only the seven types of *saṅghika-dāna* mentioned above concern them. The Vinaya distinctions are made for the Order only so that they would know how to distribute the offerings amongst themselves. The four categories are: -

(a) **Sammukhībhūta Saṅghika**. Offerings to be distributed amongst the Sangha who are actually present at the time and place. Suppose an offering of robes is made at a certain place in towns or villages where some *bhikkhus* have gathered together, and the offering is made to the noble Sangha as a whole by the donor saying: “I give to the Sangha.” It will be difficult to reach all the noble Sanghas in the town or the village concerned. The distribution is, therefore, to be made amongst the Sangha present at the place at the time. Hence it is called ‘**Sammukhībhūta Saṅghika**’ (*Sammukhībhūta* - present at the time and place; *Saṅghika* - belonging to the Sangha.)

(b) **Ārāmaṭṭha Saṅghika**. Offerings to be distributed amongst the Sangha residing in the whole compound of the monastery. Suppose a donor comes into the compound of a monastery and makes an offering of robes to a *bhikkhu* or *bhikkhus* whom he meets, saying: “I give to the Sangha.” As the offering is made within the compound of the monastery, it belongs to all the Sangha residing in that whole compound of the monastery, not just to the *bhikkhus* who are in the vicinity. Hence it is called ‘**Ārāmaṭṭha Saṅghika**’ (*Ārāmaṭṭha* - residing in the compound; *Saṅghika* - belonging to the Sangha.)

(c) **Gatagata Saṅghika**. Offerings which belong to the Sangha of whichever place they (have gone to) have been taken to. Suppose a donor comes to a monastery where a solitary *bhikkhu* resides and makes an offering of one hundred robes, saying: “I give to the Sangha.” If the residing *bhikkhu* is well-versed in the Disciplinary rules, he can take possession of all the offerings for himself by simply remarking: “At the present moment, in this monastery, I am the sole Sangha; all these one hundred robes, therefore, belong to

me and I take possession of them.” He has the right (according to the Vinaya rules) to do so; he cannot be faulted for monopolising the offering made to the Sangha. If the *bhikkhu* is not proficient in Vinaya rules, he would not know what to do. And without resolving, determining: “I am the sole owner. I take possession of them,” and suppose he left for another place taking the robes with him, and the *bhikkhus* he met there should ask him how he came by the robes. Suppose, on learning how he had come by them, these *bhikkhus* claimed their share of the robes, saying: “We also have the claim on them,” and consequently all the robes were divided equally with them. Then this sharing of the robes is deemed to be a good one. But suppose, without sharing the robes, he should continue on his way and encounter other *bhikkhus*, these *bhikkhus* would also be entitled to receive their share of the robes. In this way, wherever the *bhikkhu* would go, taking the robes with him, the *bhikkhus* of those places would be entitled to the robes. Hence it is called ‘**Gatagata Saṅghika**’ (*Gatagata* - wherever one has gone; *Saṅghika* - belonging to the Sangha.)

(d) **Catuddisā Saṅghika**. Offerings which belong to all *bhikkhus* who come from the four directions. Such offerings include gifts which are weighty and important, which are to be treated with deference, for example, monasteries. They are not to be apportioned but for use by Sangha coming from all directions. Hence it is called ‘**Catuddisa Saṅghika**’ (*Catuddissā* - from four directions; *Saṅghika* - belonging to the Sangha.)

Not being mindful of the fact that these four categories are mentioned in the Vinaya rules to provide measures for distinction of ownership and distribution of the offerings made to the Sangha, some (*bhikkhus*) make use of these Vinaya provisions when lay people make offerings. To give an illustration, suppose a donor, actuated by pious devotion to a certain *bhikkhu*, builds a monastery, though not intending for him, but for the whole Sangha. For the libation ceremony, he invited ten *bhikkhus* including the *bhikkhu* to whom he has so much devotion. After recitation of the Parittas⁴, when the time comes for actual announcement of the offer, the *bhikkhu* wants to be offered the monastery as a *puggalika-dāna*; offering made to a particular individual because he feels that living in a monastery meant for the whole Sangha entails so much liabilities and responsibilities. But the donor prefers to make it a *saṅghika-dāna* because, he believes, such *dāna* is superior and of much merit. The congregation resolves the disagreement between the donor and his preceptor by asking the donor to make the offering saying: “I give this monastery to the Sangha who is present here now” (*Sammukhībhūta Sangha*). Then nine *bhikkhus* of the congregation, saying to the remaining one: “We relinquish all our right of possession of the monastery to your reverence,” hand over the new monastery to him and leave.

In this manner, such procedures are liable to be followed, believing that by so doing the donor's wish for a *saṅghika-dāna* is fulfilled and the recipient who prefers individual ownership is also happy since the nine co-owners have relinquished their right of possession of the monastery making him the sole owner.

But, in reality, such a procedure is not proper and should not be followed. The gift of a monastery is a weighty, important one; the ten *bhikkhus* to whom the monastery has been offered cannot make any kind of apportionment of the offering between them; and the donor's gift amounts to be only a gift to the ten *bhikkhus* present on the occasion only and not to the Sangha as a whole.

20. Kāla/Akāla Dāna

Offerings to be made on specific occasions (**Kāla-dāna**); offerings which may be made at any time (**Akāla-dāna**).

Offering of Kaṭhina robes at the end of the Buddhist *vassa* for the duration of one month, offering of robes at the beginning of the Buddhist *vassa*, offering of dietary food to the sick, offering of food to visiting *bhikkhus*, offering of food to *bhikkhus*, who is setting out on a journey, are gifts made at a specific time for a specific purpose and are called timely

4. *Parittas*: lit. protection; it is a Buddhist custom to recite certain *suttas* such as Maṅgala, Ratana, Metta, etc. to ward off evil influences.

gifts, *kāla-dāna*; all other gifts made as one wishes without reference to any particular time are called *akala-dāna*.

Kāla-dāna is of greater merit than the **akāla** type because the offering is made to meet the specific needs at a specific time. The *kāla* type of *dāna*, at the time of its fruition, brings specific good results at the time they are needed. For example, if the donor wishes for something special to eat, his wish is immediately fulfilled; likewise if he wishes to have some special clothes to wear, he will receive them. These are examples of special merit that accrues from offerings made at specific times to meet specific needs.

21. Paccakkha/ Apaccakkha Dāna

Offerings made in the presence of the donor, (**paccakkha-dāna**). Offerings made in the absence of the donor, (**apaccakkha-dāna**).

The Pāli word, '**paccakkha**' is made up of '*pati*' and '*akkha*'. '**Pati**' means towards; '*akkha*' means five senses, viz. eye, ear, nose, tongue, body. Although '*paccakkha*' is generally "before the eye", its complete meaning should be "perceptible to the senses". Thus *paccakkha-dāna* has wider scope, not just the kind of offering which can be seen by the donor but also those which can be perceived by his other senses, i.e. by sound, by smell, by taste and by touch. In this connection, it should be noted that offerings made in the presence of the donor, *paccakkha-dāna*, is not exactly the same as *sāhatthika-dāna*, that made with one's own hands. Offerings made in one's presence at one's instance but not actually with one's own hands are of the *anattika-dāna* type, offerings made at one's request or command.

22. Sadisa/Asadisa Dāna

Offerings which can be matched by someone else (**Sadisa-dāna**). Offerings which cannot be matched by anyone, unrivalled alms-giving, (**Asadisa-dāna**.)

When offerings are made in a spirit of competition, donors make efforts to excel their rivals in the scale and magnificence of charity. In such competitions, the offerings that prove to be incomparable, inimitable is called unrivalled alms-giving, *asadisa-dāna*.

According to the **Dhammapada Commentary**, as explained in the story of Unrivalled alms-giving in the Loka-vagga, only one donor appeared during the time of each Buddha to make an unrivalled offering. The story runs as follows:

At one time, the Buddha, after going on a long journey followed by five hundred *arahats*, arrived back at the Jetavana monastery. King Pasenadi of Kosala honoured the Buddha and His five hundred disciples by inviting them to the palace and offering them alms on a magnificent scale. The King invited also the people of Sāvatti to his ceremony of offering so that they could watch and rejoice in his meritorious deed. The next day, the people of Sāvatti, rivalling the King, organized the resources of the whole city and gave offerings which surpassed those of the King, to the Buddha and His disciples. They invited the King to their ceremony to observe their deed and rejoice in it.

Catching on the spirit of competition, the King accepted the challenge of the citizens by conducting a more magnificent ceremony of offering the following day. The citizens in turn organized again another grand ceremony of offering to outdo the efforts of the King. In this manner, the keen contest between the King and his citizens went on until either side had made six offerings. (The contest still remained indecisive.)

As the seventh round came along, the royal donor was feeling despondent: "It will be very difficult to surpass the efforts of the citizens in this seventh round; and life would not be worth living, if I, the sovereign ruler of the land, were to lose to the people over whom I rule, in this round." (To console him), his Queen, Mallikā, thought out a plan by which the King could make a truly majestic offering which the people would find impossible to match. She had a grand pavilion built, in which, five hundred great disciples of the Buddha, the *arahats*, were to sit in the pavilion with five hundred princesses fanning them and spraying perfumes and scented water in the pavilion. At the back of the five hundred *arahats*, there would be five hundred elephants, kneeling down and holding a white

umbrella over each of the great *arahats*.

As the arrangements were being made according to the above plan, they found one tame elephant short of five hundred; so they had a wild, unruly elephant, which was notorious for its savagery, placed at the back of the Venerable Angulimala and made it hold a white umbrella like other elephants. People were amazed to find this savage beast taking part in the ceremony and holding an umbrella over the head of the Venerable Angulimala in a docile manner.

After the meal had been offered to the congregation, the King declared: "I made an offering of all the things in this, pavilion, allowable things as well as unallowable things. On this declaration, the people had to admit defeat in the contest, because they had no princesses, no white umbrellas, no elephants.

Thus the donor of the unrivalled *dāna* at the time of 'the Supreme Being of the three Worlds, the Buddha Gotama', was King Pasenadi of Kosala. It should be noted that each of the other Buddhas also had a donor who presented him with an incomparable, unrivalled *dāna*.

Type of *Dāna* in Groups of Threes

(1) *Dāna* can also be divided into three categories, namely, Inferior (**Hīna**), Medium (**Majjhima**), and Superior (**Paṇīta**). The degree of benevolence of an act is dependent upon the strength of intention (*chanda*), the conscious state (*citta*), energy (*vīriya*), and investigative knowledge (*vimamsā*) involved in the act. When these four constituent elements are weak, the *dāna* is said to be of inferior type; when they are of medial standard the *dāna* is regarded as of medium type; when all are strong, the *dāna* is considered to be of the superior order.

(2) When the act of *dāna* is motivated by desire for fame and acclaim, it is of inferior type; when the goal of *dāna* is for attainment of happy life as a human being or a deva, it is of medium type; if the gift is made in reverence to the *ariyas* or Bodhisattas for their exemplary habits of offering, it is an excellent gift of superior order.

(In the various discourses of the Pāli Texts are mentioned parks and monasteries which were given the names of the individual donors, for example, Jetavana, the garden of Prince Jāti; Anāthāpiṇḍikārāma, the monastery donated by the rich man Anāthapiṇḍika; Ghositārāma, the monastery donated by the rich man Ghosita. This system of nomenclature was adopted by the First Council Elders with the intention of encouraging others to follow the examples and thus acquire merit. So, donors today, when making such gifts, inscribe their names on marble or stone. In doing so, they should keep under control, by exercise of mindfulness, any desire for fame, bearing in mind that they make the gift in order to set an example to those who wish to acquire merit.)

(3) When the donor aspires for happy life as a human or celestial being, his gift is of inferior type; when the aspiration is for attainment of enlightenment as a disciple (*sāvakabodhi-ñāṇa*), or as a silent Buddha (*paccekabuddha-ñāṇa*), the gift is a medium one; when one aspires for Perfect Self-Enlightenment (*sammāsambodhi-ñāṇa* or *sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*), one's gift is of superior order.

(By Bodhi or Enlightenment is meant knowledge of one of the four Paths. The sages of past had advised that, in order for the gift to serve as a means of escape from the round of rebirths (*vivattaṇissita*), one should never make a gift in a haphazard or casual manner, one should seriously (positively) aspire for one of the three forms of Enlightenment while making an offering.)

(4) Again, gifts may be of three types, viz. **Dāna-dāsa**, gift fit for a servant; **Dāna-sahāya**, gifts fit for a friend, and **Dāna-sāmi**, gifts fit for a master.

Just as in everyday life, one uses materials of good quality while offering the servants inferior quality, so also if one makes a gift of materials which are poorer in quality than those enjoyed by oneself, the gift is of inferior type (*dāna-dāsa*), fit for a servant. Just as

in everyday life, one offers one's friends things which one uses and enjoys, so also if one makes a gift of materials which are of the same quality as used by oneself, then the gift is said to be of medium type (*dāna-sahāya*). Just as in everyday life, one makes present of gifts to one's superior of things better in quality than those enjoyed by oneself, so also if one gives *dāna* of superior quality materials, then the gift is said to be of superior order (*dāna-sāmi*).

(5) There are three types of **Dhamma-dāna** (the division being based on the meaning of the word '*Dhamma*' for each type). In the first type of **Dhamma-dāna**, '*dhamma*' is the one associated with the **Āmisa dhamma-dāna**, mentioned above under *dāna* categories by Twos. Therein, it was stated that **Āmisa dhamma-dāna** is the gift of palm-leaf scriptures or books of the Scriptures. In this classification, the '*dhamma*' is the scriptures themselves, the *Pariyatti Dhamma*, that was taught by the Buddha and recorded on palm leaves or books as texts. The *dhamma-dāna*, therefore, means, here, teaching the Scriptures or giving the knowledge of the Buddha's Teachings to others. The *Pariyatti* is the gift-object, the material that is given; the listener is the recipient and one who teaches or expounds the *dhamma* is the donor.

(In the second type of *dhamma-dāna*, the '*dhamma*' refers to the '*dhamma*' included in the Abhidhamma classification of *dānas* into six classes, namely, **rūpa-dāna**, **sadda-dāna**, **gandha-dāna**, **rasa-dāna**, **phoṭṭhabba-dāna** and **dhamma-dāna**. The *dhamma* in this particular case is explained as all that forms the object of the mind or mental objects.) The mental objects are: (1) the five sense organs (*pasāda rūpas*); (2) the sixteen subtle forms (*sukhuma rūpas*); (3) the 89 states of consciousness (*citta*); (4) 52 mental factors (*cetasikas*); (5) Nibbāna and (6) Concepts (*paññatti*). Whereas in **Pariyatti dhamma**, the '*dhamma*' means 'noble'; here it has the sense of 'the truth concerning the real nature of things'.

Dhamma-dāna of this type is made through rendering assistance to those afflicted with (organic) disabilities, for example, weak eye-sight, trouble in hearing, etc. Helping others to improve their eye-sight is *cakkhu (dhamma) dāna*; helping them to improve their hearing is *sota (dhamma) dāna*, etc. The most distinctive *dāna* of this type is *jīvita-dāna*, the promotion of longevity of others. In a similar manner, the remaining *dānas* of the type, namely, *gandha*, *rasa*, *phoṭṭhabba* and *dhamma* may be understood.

In the third type of **dhamma-dāna**, the '*dhamma*' refers to the *Dhamma* of the Triple Gem, namely, the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. As in the second type of *dhamma-dāna*, the *Dhamma* here means the Scriptures or the Teaching of the Buddha. Whereas in the second type the '*dhamma*' is a gift-object for offering, while the listener is the recipient. In this third type, the *Dhamma*, which is a part of the trinity of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, itself forms the recipient to which offerings are to be made. When the Buddha and the Sangha become recipients, the associated *Dhamma* also becomes a recipient of offerings.

To give an illustration: The Buddha was residing in the Jetavana monastery in Savatthi. At that time, a rich householder who had faith in the Teaching, thought to himself thus: "I have had opportunities to honour the Buddha and His Sangha constantly with offerings of food, robes, etc. But I have never honoured the Dhamma by making offerings to it. It is time now that I should do so." With this thought, he approached the Buddha and asked Him how to do about it.

The Buddha replied: "If you wish to honour the Dhamma, you should give food, robes etc. to the *bhikkhu* who is well cultivated in the Dhamma, but with the clear intention of honouring the Dhamma which he has realized."

When the householder asked Him which *bhikkhu* would be appropriate to receive such an offering, the Buddha told him to ask the Sangha. The Sangha directed him to give his offerings to the Venerable Ānanda. So he invited the Venerable Ānanda and made a generous offering of food, robes, etc. to him, keeping in mind that he was honouring the Dhamma which the Venerable Ānanda had realized. This story is described in the introduction to the *Bhikkhāparampara Jātaka*, the thirteenth *Jātaka* of the **Pakinnaka Nipāta**.

According to the story, the householder is the donor; food, robes, etc. are material objects

of offering, and the body of the Dhamma which lies embedded in the person of the Venerable Ānanda is the recipient of the gift.

This householder was not the only one who made such offerings at the time of the Buddha, keeping in mind the Dhamma as the recipient of offering. The Text clearly mentions that the great ruler, Siri Dhammāsoka (Asoka), with much pious reverence for the Dhamma built monasteries, 84,000 in all, one in honour of each of the 84,000 groups of Dhamma (Dhammakkhanda) which form the complete Teaching of the Buddha.

(Note of Caution) Many have heard of this great *dāna* of Asoka and have desired to imitate him in such giving. But it is important to follow his example in a proper manner. The real motive of the great King Asoka was not merely giving of monasteries, but the paying of respect to the groups of Dhamma individually. Building of monasteries serves only to provide him with materials for offering. Later generations of donors, who wish to follow the example of Siri Dhammāsoka, should understand that they build monasteries not just as objects for offering, not with the intention of acquiring the fame of being a monastery donor, but with the sole aim of paying homage to the Dhamma.

The significance of these *dhamma-dānas* may be appreciated when one remembers the importance of the Teaching (the Dhamma). The great Commentator, the Venerable Mahā Buddhaghosa concluded his work **Atthasālinī**, the **Commentary** to the **Dhammasaṅgaṇī**, the first book of the **Abhidhamma**, with the wish “May the true Dhamma endure long. May all beings show reverence to the Dhamma. — *Ciram tiṭṭhatu saddhammo, dhamme honu sagāravā, sabbepe sattā.*” He made this wish because he was fully aware of the important role of the Dhamma. He realised that as long as the Dhamma endures, the Teachings of the Buddha cannot decline and everyone who honours the Dhamma will show reverence to the Teachings and follow them. And the Buddha had said: “Only those who see the Dhamma, see me.” And nearing the end of His life, the Buddha had said that “The Dhamma will be your teacher after I am gone. — *So vo mamaccayena satthā.*”

Therefore, one should strive to cultivate this third type of **Dhamma-dāna** which plays such an important role.

(6) Another three types of *dāna* are classified as **Dukkara-dāna**, gift which is difficult to be given; **Mahā-dāna**, awe inspiring gift of great magnificence; and **Sāmañña-dāna**, common forms of gifts, which are neither too difficult to make, nor too magnificent.

An example of the first type, **Dukkara-dāna**, may be found in the story of *dāna* given by Dārubaṇḍaka Tissa. This story is given in the commentary to the 28th vagga of Ekadhammajhāna, Ekakanipata of the **Āṅguttara Nikāya**.

The Story of The *Dāna* given by Dārubaṇḍaka

There was a poor man who lived in Mahāgāma of Sri Lanka, and who earned his living by selling firewood. His name was Tissa, but because his livelihood was selling firewood, he was known as Darubaṇḍaka Tissa (Tissa who has only firewood as property).

One day he had a talk with his wife: “Our life is so humble, wretched, lowly, although the Buddha had taught the benefits of **nibaddha-dāna**, the observance of the duty of regular giving, we cannot afford to cultivate the practice. But we could do one thing; we could start giving alms-food regularly, twice a month, and when we could afford more, we will try for the higher offering of food by tickets⁵ (*salākabhatta*).” His wife was agreeable to his proposal and they started giving whatever they could afford as alms-food the next morning.

That was a very prosperous time for the *bhikkhus* who were receiving plenty of good food. Certain young *bhikkhus* and *sāmañeras* accepted the poor alms-food offered by the Darubaṇḍaka’s family, but threw it away in their presence. The housewife reported to her husband: “They threw away our alms-food,” but she never had an unpleasant thought over

5. According to I.B.Horner (Book of the Discipline), food tickets were issued at times when food was scarce. But the story of Dārubaṇḍaka suggests that the same is adopted also when food is abundant as a higher form of *dāna*.

the incident.

Then Darubhaṇḍaka had a discussion with his wife: “We are so poor, we cannot offer alms-food that would please the Noble Ones. What should we do to satisfy them.” “Those who have children are not poor,” said his wife in order to give him solace and encouragement and advised him to hire out the services of their daughter to a household, and with the money so acquired, to buy a milch cow. Darubhaṇḍaka accepted his wife’s advice. He obtained twelve pieces of money with which he bought a cow. Because of the purity of their wholesome volition, the cow yielded large quantities of milk.

The milk, they got in the evening, was made into cheese and butter. The milk, they got in the morning, was used by the wife in the preparation of milk porridge, which together with the cheese and butter, they offered to the Sangha. In this manner, they were able to make offerings of alms-food which was well accepted by the Sangha. From that time onwards the *salākabhatta* of Darubhaṇḍaka was available only to the Noble Ones of high attainments.

One day, Darubhaṇḍaka said to his wife: “Thanks to our daughter, we are saved from humiliation. We have reached a position in which the Noble Ones accepted our alms-food with great satisfaction. Now, do not miss out on the regular duty of offering alms-food during my absence. I shall find some kind of employment and I shall come back after redeeming our daughter from her bondage.” Then he went to work for six months in a sugar mill where he managed to save twelve pieces of money, with which, to redeem his daughter.

Setting out for home early one morning, he saw ahead of him the Venerable Tissa on his way to worship at the Pagoda at Mahāgāma. This *bhikkhu* was one who cultivated the austere practice of *piṇḍindāpāta*, that is, he partakes only alms food, which is offered to him when going on alms round. Dārubhaṇḍaka walked fast to catch up with the *bhikkhu* and strolled along with him, listening to his talk of the Dhamma. Approaching a village, Darubhaṇḍaka saw a man coming out with a packet of cooked rice in his hand. He offered the man one piece of money to sell him the packet of meal.

The man, realising that there must be some special reason for offering one piece of money for the food packet when it was not worth the sixteenth part of it, refused to sell it for one piece of money. Darubhaṇḍaka increased his offer to two, then three pieces of money and so on until he had offered all the money he possessed. But the man still declined the offer (thinking Darubhaṇḍaka had still more money with him).

Finally, Darubhaṇḍaka explained to the man: “I have no money with me other than these twelve pieces. I would have given you more if I had. I am buying this meal packet not for myself but, wishing to offer alms-food, I have requested a *bhikkhu* to wait for me under the shade of that tree. The food is to be offered to that *bhikkhu*. Do sell me the packet of food for this twelve pieces of money. You will also gain merit by doing so.”

The man finally agreed to sell his food-packet and Darubhaṇḍaka took it with great happiness to the waiting *bhikkhu*. Taking the bowl from the *bhikkhu*, Dārubhaṇḍaka put the cooked rice from the packet into it. But the Venerable Tissa accepted only half of the meal. Darubhaṇḍaka made an earnest request to the *bhikkhu*: “Venerable Sir, this meal is sufficient for only one person. I will not eat any of it. I bought the food intending it only for you. Out of compassion for me, may the Venerable One accept all the food.” Upon this, the Venerable permitted him to offer all the food in the packet.

After the Venerable had finished the meal, they continued the journey together and he asked Dārubhaṇḍaka about himself. Darubhaṇḍaka told everything about himself very frankly to the Venerable. The Venerable was struck with awe by the intense piety of Darubhaṇḍaka and he thought to himself: “This man has made a **dukkara-dāna**, an offering which is difficult to make. Having partaken of the meal offered by him, under difficult circumstances, I am greatly indebted to him and I should show my gratitude in return. If I can find a suitable place, I shall strive hard to attain arahatship in one sitting. Let all my skin, flesh and blood dry up. I will not stir from this position until I attain the goal.” As they reached Mahāgāma, they went on their separate ways.

On arriving at the Tissa Mahāvihāra Monastery, the Venerable Tissa was allotted a room

for himself, where he made his great effort, determined not to stir from the place until he had eradicated all defilements and become an arahat. Not even getting up to go on the alms round, he steadfastly worked on until at the dawn of the seventh day, he became an Arahata fully accomplished in the four branches of Analytical Knowledge (*Patisambhidā*). Then he thought to himself thus: "My body is greatly enfeebled. I wonder whether I could live longer." He realised, through exercise of his psychic powers, that the phenomenon of *nāma-rūpa*, which constituted his living body, would not continue much longer. Putting everything in order in his dwelling place and taking his bowl and great robes, he went to the Assembly Hall at the centre of the monastery and sounded the drum to assemble all the *bhikkhus*.

When all the *bhikkhus* had gathered together, the head *thera* enquired who had called for the assembly. The Venerable Tissa, who had cultivated the austere practice of taking only alms food, replied: "I have sounded the drum, Venerable Sir." "And why have you done so?" "I have no other purpose, but if any member of the Sangha has doubts about the attainments of the Path and Fruition, I wish them to ask me about them."

The head *thera* told him there were no questions. He then asked the Venerable Tissa why he had persevered so arduously sacrificing even his life for the attainment. He related all that had happened and informed him that he would pass away the same day. Then he said: "May the catafalque, on which my corpse would be supported, remains immovable until my alms-food donor, Dārubhaṇḍaka, comes and lifts it with his own hands." And he passed away that very day.

Then King Kāvakannatissa came and ordered his men to put the body on the catafalque and take it to the funeral pyre at the cremating grounds, but they were not able to move it. Finding out the reason for this, the King sent for Dārubhaṇḍaka, had him dressed in fine clothes and asked him to lift up the catafalque.

The text gives an elaborate account of how Darubhaṇḍaka lifted the catafalque with the body on it easily over his head and how, as he did so, the catafalque rose in the air and travelled by itself to the funeral pyre.

Dārubhaṇḍaka's *dāna* involving the sacrifice ungrudgingly of twelve pieces of money which were needed for redeeming his own daughter from servitude and which had taken six whole months to earn is indeed a very difficult one to give and thus is known as **Dukkara-dāna**.

Another example of such gifts is found in the story of Sukha Sāmaṇera given in the tenth *vagga* of the Commentary to the **Dhammapada**. Before he became a *sāmaṇera*, he was a poor villager who wanted to eat the sumptuous meal of a rich man. The rich man Gandha told him that he would have to work for three years to earn such a meal. Accordingly, he worked for three years and obtained the meal he so earnestly longed for. When he was about to enjoy it, a Paccekabuddha happened to come by. Without any hesitation, he offered the Paccekabuddha the meal, which he had so cherished and which had taken him three years to earn.

Another example is provided by the Ummādatī Jātaka of **Paññāsa Nipāta**, which gives the story of a poor girl who worked for three years to get the printed clothes, which she wanted to adorn herself. When she was about to dress herself in the clothes, which she had so yearned for, a disciple of the Buddha Kassapa came by (who was covered only with leaves because he had been robbed of his robes by the dacoits). The giving away of clothes, which she so cherished and for which she had to work for three years, is also a *Dukkara* type of *dāna*.

Awe-inspiring gifts of great magnificence are called **Mahā-dāna**. The great Siri Dhammāsoka's (Asoka's) gifts of 84,000 monasteries in honour of 84,000 passages of the Piṭaka are great *dānas* of this type. On this account, the Venerable Mahā Moggaliputta Tissa said: "In the Dispensation of the Buddha, or even in the life time of the Buddha, there is no one equal to you as a donor of the four requisites. Your offering is the greatest."

Although Venerable Mahā Moggaliputta Tissa said so, the gifts of Asoka were made on

his own initiative, without anyone to compete and, therefore, there is no need to classify them as **Sadisa** or **Asadisa** type of *dāna*. Passenadi Kosala's gifts were made in competition with those of the citizens (of Savatthi) and are, therefore, termed '**Asadisa-dāna**', the Matchless gift.

All other gifts of ordinary nature which are neither difficult to make nor of great magnitude are just common gifts, **Sāmañña-dāna**.

In addition to these, there is another classification of three **Dhamma-dānas** described in the Vinaya Parivāra Texts and its commentary, viz.:

- (1) Giving to the Sangha gifts which were verbally declared to be offered to the Sangha,
- (2) Giving to the Pagoda gifts which were verbally declared to be offered to the Pagoda, and
- (3) Giving to the individual gifts which were verbally declared to be offered to the individual.

These are called **Dhammika-dāna**, gifts offered in connection with the Dhamma. (Further details of these types of gifts will be found below in accordance with the nine gifts of **Adhammika-dāna**).

Type of Dāna in Groups of Fours

The texts do not mention any type of gifts by fours. But Vinaya lists four kinds of requisites which may be offered as gifts. They are:

- (1) Gift of robe or robe-materials (**civara-dāna**).
- (2) Gift of alms food (**pindapāta-dāna**).
- (3) Gift of dwelling places (**senāsana-dāna**).
- (4) Gift of medicinal materials (**bhesajja-dāna**).

Gifts may also be classified into four types depending on the purity of the donor and the receiver, viz:

- (1) *Dāna* whose donor has morality but the recipient has not.
- (2) *Dāna* whose recipient has morality but the donor has not.
- (3) *Dāna* whose both the donor and the recipient are immoral.
- (4) *Dāna* whose both the recipient and the donor have morality.

Type of Dāna in Groups of Fives

The Kāladāna Sutta in the Sumana Vagga, Pañcaka Nipāta, **Aṅguttara Nikāya** mentions the following five types of gifts which are to be given at an appropriate time:

- (1) Gift made to a visitor.
- (2) Gift made to one starting on a journey.
- (3) Gift made to one who is ill.
- (4) Gift made at the time of scarcity.
- (5) Gift of newly harvested grains and crops made to those endowed with virtue.

The fifth type has direct reference to farmers and cultivators, but it should be understood that it also includes the first fruits of labour of any one who offers them as *dāna* before using them for oneself.

Five Kinds of Asappurisa-dāna

There are five kinds of gifts made by men of no virtue:

- (1) *Dāna* made without seeing carefully that the gift to be offered is properly prepared, fresh, wholesome and clean.

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- (2) *Dāna* made without due reverence or considerations.
- (3) *Dāna* made without offering it with one's own hands; (For example, the *dāna* of King Pāyāsī⁶, who instead of presenting the gifts with his own hands, had his attendant Uttara do so for him.)
- (4) *Dāna* made in the manner of discarding one's leftovers.
- (5) *Dāna* made without the knowledge that the good deed done now, will surely bring good results in the future (*kammassakatā-ñāṇa*).

Five Kinds of Sappurisa-dāna

There are five kinds of gifts made by men of virtue:

- (1) *Dāna* made after seeing carefully that the gift to be offered is properly prepared, fresh, wholesome and clean.
- (2) *Dāna* made with due reverence, with the mind firmly placed on the material for offering.
- (3) *Dāna* made with one's own hands. (Throughout the beginningless cycle of existences, the beginning of which we have no knowledge, there have been many existences in which one is not equipped with hands and feet. In this existence, when one has the rare fortune of being equipped with complete limbs, one should avail oneself of this rare opportunity of offering gifts with one's own hands, reflecting that one would work for liberation making use of the hands one is fortunate enough to be born with).
- (4) *Dāna* made with due care, and not as if one is discarding one's own leftovers.
- (5) *Dāna* made with the knowledge that the good deed done now, will surely bring good results in the future.

These two groups of five kinds of gifts are described in the seventh *sutta* of the Tikanda Vagga, Pañcaka Nipāta, **Aṅguttara Nikāya**.

Another five kinds of gifts made by men of virtue (**Sappurisa-dāna**).

- (1) *Dāna* made with faith in the law of cause and effect (**saddhā-dāna**).
- (2) *Dāna* made after seeing carefully that the gift to be offered is properly prepared fresh, wholesome and clean (**sakkacca-dāna**).
- (3) *Dāna* made at the right time, on the proper occasion (**kāla-dāna**). (When it is the meal-time, alms food is offered; when it is the Kaṭhina season, robes are offered).
- (4) *Dāna* made with a view to rendering assistance to the recipient or to show kindness to him (**anuggaha-dāna**).
- (5) *Dāna* made without affecting, in any way, one's dignity and the dignity of others (**anupaghāta-dāna**).

All of these five kinds of gifts give rise to great wealth, riches and prosperity. In addition, *saddhā-dāna* results in fair, handsome appearance. As a result of *sakkacca-dāna*, one's followers and attendants are attentive and obedient. Resulting from *kāla-dāna* are benefits that come at the right time and in abundance. As a result of *anuggaha-dāna*, one is well disposed to enjoy the fruits of one's good deeds and is able to do so in full. As a result of *anupaghāta-dāna*, one's property is fully protected against the five destructive elements (water, fire, king, thieves and opponents. This classification of five kinds of *Dāna* comes in

6. Pāyāsī, a chieftain at Setavya in the kingdom of Kosala, was reborn in Catumaharajika as a result of his alms-giving in the human world. He related his past experiences to the visiting *Mahāthera* Gavampati. He said he had given alms without thorough preparation, not with his own hand, without due thought, as something discarded. Hence his rebirth in that lowest of the six celestial planes. But Uttara, the young man who supervised his alms-giving at his request, was reborn in a higher abode, Tāvātimsa, because he gave with thorough preparation with his own hand, with due thought, not as something discarded. The story teaches the right way of alms-giving.

the eighth sutta of the above Text).

The opposites of these five kinds of *Dāna* are not mentioned in the Texts; but it may be assumed that the five corresponding *dāna* made by men of no virtues would be as follows:

- (1) *Dāna* made without believing in the law of cause and effect (**asaddhiya-dāna**), just to imitate others' *dāna* or to escape from being censured or reviled. (Such *dāna* will produce wealth and riches for the donor but he will not be bestowed with fine appearance.)
- (2) *Dāna* made without seeing carefully that the gift to be offered is properly prepared, fresh, wholesome and clean (**asakacca-dāna**). (Wealth and riches will accrue from such *dānas*, but the donor will not receive obedience and discipline from his sub-ordinates.)
- (3) *Dāna* made at inappropriate time (**akāla-dāna**). (It will produce wealth but its beneficial results will not be in great abundance and will not come at the time needed.)
- (4) *Dāna* made perfunctorily (**ananuggaha-dāna**) without intention of assisting or doing honour to the recipient. (One may reap riches and wealth out of such deeds, but he will not be disposed to enjoy his wealth or he may be denied the occasion to enjoy them.)
- (5) *Dāna* made in such a way that it will affect, in some way, one's dignity or the dignity of others (**upaghāta-dāna**). (Wealth and riches may accrue from such *dānas* but they will be subject to damage or destruction by the five enemies.)

In view of the **Kala-dāna** and **Akāla-dāna** types of offering mentioned above, i.e. offerings made at appropriate or inappropriate times, it should be well noted that it is improper to make offerings, even with the best of intentions, of light to the Buddha during the day when there is light, or of food when it is afternoon.

Five Kinds of Immoral Gifts

The Parivāra (Vinaya Piṭaka) mentions five kinds of giving which are commonly and conventionally called by people as acts of merit, but which are nothing but harmful, demeritorious forms of offering.

They are:

- (1) Gift of intoxicants (**majja-dāna**).
- (2) Holding of festivals (**samajja-dāna**).
- (3) Provision of prostitutes for sexual enjoyment of those who wish to do so (**itthi-dāna**).
- (4) Dispatch of bulls into a herd of cows for mating (**usabha-dāna**).
- (5) Drawing and offering of pornographic pictures (**cittakamma-dāna**).

The Buddha described these forms of offering as immoral, demeritorious gifts because they cannot be accompanied by good intentions, wholesome volitions. Some people think that by providing opium to an addicted person, who is nearing death because of the withdrawal of the drug, they are doing a meritorious deed of life-giving (*jivita-dana*). As a matter of fact, this does not constitute an act of merit, because it is unwholesome consciousness that motivates one to offer opium which is not suitable for consumption. The same consideration holds good in the case of offering of intoxicants.

The Commentary to the Jātaka mentions the inclusion of intoxicating drinks in the display of materials to be given away by the Bodhisatta King Vessantara as a great offering, *mahā-dāna*.

Some people try to explain this inclusion of intoxicants as materials for offering by the King Vessantara by saying that the King had no intention of providing liquor to the drunkards; that it is only the volition that determines the merits of an offering; that King Vessantara did not want anyone to drink the intoxicants; there is no wrong intention involved. He merely wanted to avoid being criticised by those who would say that the King's great *dāna* has no offerings of intoxicants.

(But such rationalization is untenable.) Great persons, like King Vessantara, do not worry about criticism levelled at them by others, especially when the criticism is unjustified. The fact of the matter is that it is only in drinking that the guilt lies; using it as a lotion or for

medicinal preparations in a proper manner is not demeritorious. We should take it, therefore, that it is for such purposes that King Vessantara included intoxicants as materials for offering in his great *dāna*.

Five Kinds of 'Great Gifts' (Mahā-Dāna)

In the ninth Sutta of the fourth Vagga of the Aṭṭhaka Nipāta, **Aniguttara Nikāya**, are given comprehensive expositions of the Five Precepts beginning with the words: “*Pañcimāni bhikkhave dināni mahādānāni*,” describing the Five Precepts as the Five Kinds of Great Gifts (*Mahā-dāna*). But it should not be wrongly understood that *sīla* is *dāna* just because the Five Precepts are described as the Five Great Dāna in the Text mentioned above. The Buddha does not mean to say that *sīla* is not different from *dāna* or the two are exactly the same. *Sīla* is proper restraint of one's physical and verbal actions and *dāna* is offering of a gift, and the two should not be taken as identical.

When a virtuous person observes the precept of non-killing and abstains from taking life of other beings, that virtuous person is actually giving them the gift of harmlessness (*abhaya-dāna*). The same consideration applies to the remaining precepts. Thus, when all the Five Precepts are well observed by a moral person, he is, by his restraint, offering all beings gifts of freedom from harm, from danger, from worries, from anxiety, etc. It is in this sense that the Buddha teaches here that observance of the Five Precepts constitutes offering of the Five Great Gifts (*Mahā-dāna*).

Types of Dāna in Groups of Sixes

Just as the Texts do not mention any list of gifts in groups of Fours as such, so there is no direct mention of types of gifts in groups of six in the Texts. But the **Atthasālinā**, the Commentary to Dhammasangani, the first volume of Abhidhamma, gives an exposition of six types of gifts in which the six sense objects provide materials for offerings, viz. the gift of colour, of sound, of odour, of taste, of objects of touch, and of mind-objects.

Types of Dāna in Groups of Sevens

Similarly, there is no mention of types of *dāna* in groups of sevens as such; but the seven kinds of **Saṅghika-dāna**, described above under the heading ‘Types of gifts in pairs’, sub-heading ‘Gifts to the Sangha’ may be taken to represent this type of *dāna*.

Types of Dāna in Groups of Eights

- (A) The Buddha teaches the group of eight *dāna* in the first Sutta of the Fourth Vagga, Aṭṭhaka Nipāta, **Aṅguttara Nikāya**. The Eight *dānas* are:
- (1) *Dāna* made without delay, without hesitation, as soon as the recipient arrives.
 - (2) *Dāna* made through fear of censure or of being reborn in the realms of misery and suffering.
 - (3) *Dāna* made because the recipient had in the past given him gifts.
 - (4) *Dāna* made with the intention that the recipient of the offering will make a return offering in future.
 - (5) *Dāna* made with the thought that making a gift is a good deed.
 - (6) *Dāna* made with the thought: “I am a householder who prepares and cooks food to eat; it would not be proper if I partake of the food without making offerings to those who are not allowed (by their disciplinary rules, i.e. Buddhist monks) to prepare and cook their own food?”
 - (7) *Dāna* made with the thought: “The gift I am offering will bring me a good reputation which will spread far and wide.”
 - (8) *Dāna* made with the idea that it will serve as an instrument to help one attain concentration when one fails to achieve it while practising Concentration and Insight Meditation.

Of the eight kinds of *dāna*, the last one is the best and the noblest. The reason is that this

last type of *dāna* is unique, one which promotes joy and delight in one who is practising Concentration and Insight meditation, and renders great assistance to his endeavours in meditation. The first seven modes of giving do not arouse and encourage the mind in the work of Concentration and Insight Meditation and of them, the first and the fifth are superior ones (*panita*). The seventh type is an inferior one (*hīna*), while numbers 2, 3, 4, 6 are of medium status.

The eight categories of *dāna* may be divided into two groups: **Puññavisaya-dāna**, *dāna* which belongs to the sphere of meritorious giving and **Lokavisaya-dāna**, *dāna* which belongs to the sphere of worldly gifts. The first, the fifth and the eighth are **Puññavisaya-dāna** and the remaining five belong to the **Lokavisaya** type.

(B) Again, the third sutta in the Dāna Vagga, Aṭṭhaka Nipāta, **Āṅguttara Nikāya** provides another list of eight **dānas**.

- (1) *Dāna* made out of affection.
- (2) *Dāna* made under unavoidable circumstances, made reluctantly and showing resentment.
- (3) *Dāna* made through bewilderment and foolishness without understanding the law of cause and effect.
- (4) *Dāna* made through fear of censure, through fear of rebirth in the realms of misery and suffering, through fear of harm that may be caused by the recipient.
- (5) *Dāna* made with the thought: "It has been the tradition of generations of my ancestors and I should carry on the tradition".
- (6) *Dāna* made with the objective of gaining rebirth in the deva realms.
- (7) *Dāna* made with the hope of experiencing joy and delight with a pure mind.
- (8) *Dāna* made with the idea that it will serve as an instrument to help one attain concentration when one fails to achieve it while practising Concentration and Insight Meditation.

Of these eight categories of *dāna* also, only the eighth kind is the noblest; the sixth and the seventh are **Puññavisaya** type of *dāna* and are quite meritorious. The remaining five are of inferior type belonging to the **Lokavisaya** types.

(C) Again, in the fifth sutta of the Dāna Vagga, Atthaka Nipāta, **Āṅguttara Nikāya**, the Buddha had taught comprehensively on the subject of gaining rebirths as a result of giving alms, *danupapatti*. According to the eight kinds of destination to be gained as future births, the *dānas* are divided into eight categories:

- (1) Seeing the happy circumstance of rich and prosperous people in this life, one makes the *dāna* wishing for such wealth and comfortable life in the future and at the same time taking care to lead a life of morality. After death, his wish is fulfilled; he gains rebirth in the human world in happy, comfortable, wealthy circumstances.
- (2) Hearing that the Catumahārājika devas are **(p1:)** *powerful beings leading a life of comfort and pleasures, one makes the dāna wishing for such powerful, comfortable life full of pleasures in the Catumahārājika deva-world (p2:) and at the same time taking care to lead a life of morality. After death, his wish is fulfilled; he is reborn in the Catumahārājika deva-world.*
- (3) Hearing that the Tāvātimsa devas are **(repeat p1:)** in the Tāvātimsa deva-world **(repeat p2:)** in the Tāvātimsa deva-world.
- (4) Hearing that the Yāma devas are **(repeat p1:)** in the Yāma deva-world **(repeat p2:)** in the Yāma deva-world.
- (5) Hearing that the Tusitā devas are **(repeat p1:)** in the Tusitā deva-world **(repeat p2:)** in the Tusitā deva-world.
- (6) Hearing that the Nimmānarati devas are **(repeat p1:)** in the Nimmānarati deva-world

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(repeat p2:) in the Nimmānarati deva-world.

- (7) Hearing that the Paranimmitavasavattī devas are (repeat p1:) in the Paranimmitavasavattī deva-world (repeat p2:) in the Paranimmitavasavattī deva-world.
- (8) Hearing that the Brahmās live a long life, having beautiful appearance and enjoying happy, blissful lives, one makes the *dāna*, wishing to be reborn in the Brahmā-world and at the same time taking care to lead a life of morality. After death, one gains rebirth in the Brahmā-world as one has wished.

It should not be concluded from the above statement that giving of alms alone is a sure guarantee for a happy life in the Brahmā-world. As stated under the eighth type, in the above two categories, it is only by making the mind soft and gentle through offering of alms and through development of concentration up to the Absorption stage, *jhāna*, by practising meditation on the four illimitables, namely, Loving-Kindness (*Mettā*), Compassion (*Karunā*), Sympathetic Joy (*Muditā*) and Equanimity (*Upekkhā*) that one can gain rebirth in the Brahmā-world.

(D) Again in the seventh *sutta* of the same **Dana Vagga** is given the following list of eight *dānas* given by a moral person (*sappurisa-dāna*):

- (1) Giving of gifts which have been made clean, pure and attractive.
- (2) Giving of gifts of choice materials and of excellent quality.
- (3) Giving of gifts at proper and appropriate times.
- (4) Giving of gifts which are suitable for and acceptable by the recipient.
- (5) Giving of gifts, after making careful selection of the recipient and the objects to be offered (*viceyya-dāna*). Excluding persons of immoral conduct, the selected recipients should be moral persons who follow the Teachings of the Buddha. As to the materials to be offered, when possessing things of both good and bad quality, better quality materials should be selected for making a gift
- (6) Giving of gifts according to one's ability in a consistent manner.
- (7) Giving of gifts with a pure, calm mind.
- (8) Giving of gifts and feeling glad after having done so.

(E) A separate list of eight types of gifts made by persons of immoral conduct (*Assappurisa-dāna*) is not given as such in the Texts, but one could surmise that they would be as follows:

- (1) Giving of gifts which are unclean, impure and unattractive.
- (2) Giving of gifts of inferior quality.
- (3) Giving of gifts at improper and inappropriate times.
- (4) Giving of gifts which are unsuitable for the recipient.
- (5) Giving of gifts without making careful selection of the recipient and the objects to be offered.
- (6) Giving of gifts only occasionally although one is capable of doing so in a consistent manner.
- (7) Giving of gifts without calming the mind.
- (8) Giving of gifts feeling remorse after having done so.

Types of Dāna by Groups of Nines

The Vinaya Parivāra Pāli Text mentions the Nine types of giving which were taught by the Buddha as not valid as a deed of offering (**Adhammika-dāna**). The Commentary on the Text explains these nine types of gifts as follows:

Causing the gift which has been intended by the donor for a certain group of the Sangha:-

- (1) to be given to another group of the Sangha,
- (2) to be given to a shrine,
- (3) to be given to an individual,

Causing the gift which has been intended by the donor for a certain shrine:-

- (4) to be given to another shrine,
- (5) to be given to the Sangha,
- (6) to be given to an individual,

Causing the gift which has been intended by the donor for a certain individual:-

- (7) to be given to another individual.
- (8) to be given to the Sangha, and
- (9) to be given to a shrine.

Here the gift which has been intended by the donor means the four requisites of robes, food, dwelling place and medicines and other small items of necessities which the donor has already committed verbally to give to the Sangha, or a shrine, or an individual.

The story of why the Buddha taught these nine types of **Adhammika-dāna** is given in the Pārajika kaṇḍa and Pācittiya Pāli Texts of the **Vinaya Piṭaka**.

Once the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana Monastery in Sāvatti. Then a certain group of people decided to make offerings of food and robes to the Sangha. Accordingly, they made necessary preparations and had the robes and food ready for the offering. A group of immoral *bhikkhus* went to the would-be donors and forcibly urged them to make the offering of robes to them instead. Being thus forced to give away the robes to the immoral *bhikkhus*, the people had only food left to offer to the Sangha. Hearing of this, the modest *bhikkhus* denounced the immoral *bhikkhus* and reported what had happened to the Buddha. It was then that the Buddha laid down the rule: “Whoever *bhikkhu* should knowingly appropriate for himself the gift which has been declared to be intended for the Sangha, there is an offence of expiation involving forfeiture (*Nissaggiya Pācittiya Āpatti*).”

In the explication that accompanies the rule, the Buddha explains: “If the gift already committed by word of mouth to be given to the Sangha is appropriated for oneself, there is the offence of expiation involving forfeiture (*Nissaggiya Pācittiya Āpatti*); if it is caused to be given to the Sangha other than the intended one or to a shrine, there is an offence of *Dukkata Āpatti*. Knowing the gift is intended for a certain shrine, if it is made to be given to another shrine or to the Sangha or to an individual, there is an offence of *Dukkata Āpatti*. Knowing the gift is intended to be given to a certain individual, if it is caused to be given to another individual, or to the Sangha, or to a shrine, there is an offence of *Dukkata Āpatti*.”

The above story is given to illustrate how one's well intentioned deed of merit could become vitiated through intervention and interference of undesirable intermediaries and how, due to their intervention, it could be turned into an *adhammika-dāna*. The Buddha also explained the nine unrighteous acceptances (*adhammika paṭiggaha*) of the nine *adhammika-dāna* and the nine righteous uses (*adhammika paribhoga*) of righteously offered requisites.

It should be noted, however, that not every transfer of gifts from the recipient originally intended by the donor to another results in an *adhammika-dāna*. The donor himself may change his original intention for some good reason or may be persuaded by a well-wisher to transfer the gift for acquiring more merit.

An illustration of such transfer of gifts is found in the story of Mahā Pajāpati who had made a new robe intending it to be offered to the Buddha. The Buddha advised her to offer the robe to the Sangha instead. If it were an offence, the Buddha would not have given the advice. As a matter of fact, the Buddha knew that Mahā Pajāpati would gain much greater merit by offering the robe to the Sangha headed by Himself.

In another instance, the Buddha persuaded King Pasenadī of Kosala to change his mind about permitting a monastery for ascetics of another faith to be built close by the Jetavana monastery. The King had been bribed by the ascetics for granting land to build their monastery. Foreseeing endless disputes that would later arise, the Buddha first sent the Venerable Ānanda and other *bhikkhus* and later the two Chief Disciples, the Venerable Sāriputta and the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna, to dissuade the King from taking the bribe and granting the land to the ascetics. The King gave some excuse to avoid seeing the great Disciples. Consequently, the Buddha Himself had to go to the King and told him the story of King Bharu, mentioned in the Duka Nipāta, who, in a similar situation, had caused much suffering through taking bribes. Fully convinced of his wrong doing, King Passenadi made amends by withdrawing the grant of land and appropriating the building materials gathered on it by the ascetics. The King then had a monastery built with those materials on the very site and donated it to the Buddha.

As stated above, there is no offence when a donor changes his first intention for a good reason and makes the offer to another person. This has direct reference to one of the attributes of the Ariya Sangha. If a donor prepares gifts for *bhikkhus* who would be visiting him, and if, in the meantime, *bhikkhus* who are well-established in the higher Dhammas and who are members of the Ariya Sangha come into the scene, he may change his mind and offer the gifts to the newcomers to his better advantage. And they may also accept such gifts. They may also make use of the gifts so received. Being worthy of accepting such gifts originally intended for visitors is known as the *pāhuneyya* attribute of the Ariya Sangha.

Type of Dāna in Groups of Tens and Fourteens

As in the case of *dāna* in Groups of Fours, Sixes, or Sevens there is no direct mention of type of *dāna* in groups of Tens in the Texts. But the Commentaries provide a list of ten material things which may be offered as *dāna*.

Likewise the Dakkhina Vibhanga Sutta gives a list of *dānas* which come under the category of fourteen kinds of gifts by individuals (see item 19 of types of *dānas* in groups of Twos).

5. WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS THAT STRENGTHEN THE BENEFICIAL RESULTS OF DĀNA

6. WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS THAT WEAKEN THE BENEFICIAL RESULTS OF DĀNA

The Dāna Sutta, the seventh discourse of the Devatā Vagga, in the Chakka Nipāta, **Āṅguttara Nikāya**, explains the elements that strengthen the beneficial results of *dāna* and those that weaken them.

At one time, the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana Monastery in Sāvatti. At that time, He saw, by His supernormal psychic power of divine sight, that a certain female follower of His Teaching by the name of Nandamātā, was making an offering to the two Chief Disciples and the Sangha, in the distant town of Velukandaki. He said to the *bhikkhus*:

“*Bhikkhus*, Nandamātā of Velukandaki is right now making a great offering to the Sangha headed by the Venerables Sāriputta and Moggallāna. Her offering has the distinguished feature of the donor possessing three special qualities of volitional purity, namely, (a) feeling happy before the act of offering; (b) having a clear, pure mind while making the offering and (c) rejoicing after having made the offering, and of the recipients possessing three special qualities of mental purity, namely, (a) being free of attachment (*rāga*) or practising to be liberated from it; (b) being free of ill will (*dosa*) or practising to be liberated from it, (c) being free of bewilderment (*moha*) or practising to be liberated from it.

“*Bhikkhus*, just as the water in the ocean is immeasurable, the benefit that will accrue from an offering distinguished by those six features is also immeasurable.

As a matter of fact, you speak of the water in the ocean as an immeasurably huge mass of water, likewise you say of such an offering, which is unique with these six features, as one that will bring an immeasurably huge accumulation of merit.”

According to this Pāli Text, it may be seen that the three qualities possessed by the donor and the three qualities possessed by the recipients form the elements that strengthen the beneficial results of *dāna*. It follows from it that, to the extent that the donor and the recipients are lacking in their respective qualities, to that extent will the act of *dāna* fall short of the full possible beneficial results.

Again, in the ninth birth story of Mahadhammapāla, in the Dasaka Nipāta of the **Jātaka**, it is mentioned that King Suddhodāna was a brahmin in a past life. The great teacher of the Textila, to whom he had entrusted his son for education, asked him why members of his clan did not die young but lived to a ripe old age.

He replied in verse:

*Pubbeva dānā sumanā bhavāma
dadampi ve attamanā bhavāma
datvāpi ve nānutappāma pacchā
tasmā hi amham dahara na mīyare.*

We feel very happy before we ever make an offering, We are delighted and satisfied while making the offering; And we rejoice after having made the the offering, never feeling remorseful. For these three reasons people never die young in our clan.

From this story one can surmise that when an offering is made with fulfilment of these three volitional conditions, the benefit that accrues from it, is enjoyment of long life in the present existence.

Again, in the **Atthasālini** and the **Dhammapada** Commentary are mentioned four conditions that bring beneficial results in the present life from an act of offering:

- (a) The materials to be offered as gifts have been acquired legitimately and equitably (**Paccayānam dhammikata**).
- (b) They are given with faith and confidence and with fulfilment of three volitional conditions. (**Cetanāmahattā**).
- (c) The recipient is one of high attainment, an *arahat* or an *anāgāmin* (**Vatthusampatti**).
- (d) The recipient has just arisen from ‘the unconditioned state’ (*nirodhasamāpatti*) (**Guṇatirekatā**).

Offerings of this kind, which bring beneficial results in the present life, were made by people, such as Puṇṇa, Kākavaliya and the flower girl Sumana, who reaped great benefits from their *dānas* which met these four conditions completely.

In the **Attahasālini**, these four conditions for a gift are termed, ‘the four purities of gifts (*dakkhinā visuddhi*)’; in the **Dhammapada** Commentary, they are called ‘the Four Accomplishments (*Sampadā*)’.

Again, there is a list of four kinds of purity (*dakkhinā visuddhi*) connected with an act of *dāna* given in the Dakkhinā Vibhaṅga Sutta of the Uparipannāsa Pāli. They are:

- (1) A gift made pure by the donor but not by the recipient. (Even if the recipient is of no moral virtue (*dussīla*), if the donor is virtuous and makes an offering of what has been acquired legitimately and equitably, with pure and good volition before, during and after giving the *dāna* and does it with full faith in the law of cause and effect, then the *dāna* is pure because of the donor and will bring great benefit.)
- (2) A gift made pure by the recipient but not by the donor. (Even if the donor is of no moral virtue, and makes an offering of what has been acquired illegitimately and unequitably, and does not have pure, good volition before, during and after giving the *dāna*, and without faith in the law of cause and effect, if the recipient is morally

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virtuous, then the *dāna* is pure because of the recipient and will bring great benefits.)

- (3) A gift not made pure either by the donor or the recipient. (When the donor of no moral virtue makes an offering of ill-gotten wealth to an immoral recipient with no pure, good volition before, during and after the act of offering and without faith in the law of cause and effect, the *dāna* will bring no great beneficial result, just as a poor seed planted on poor soil will not grow properly to produce good crops.)
- (4) A gift made pure both by the donor and the recipient. (When the donor of moral virtue makes an offering of what has been acquired legitimately and equitably, with pure and good volition before, during and after the act of offering to a morally virtuous recipient, the *dāna* will bring great beneficial result, just as a good seed planted in good soil produces good crops.)

The third type, of course, is not concerned with purity at all, but it is mentioned to include all the cases involved. To summarise all that we have considered, there are five elements that strengthen the beneficial results of *dāna*:

- (1) The donor observes the precepts and is of good moral conduct.
- (2) The recipient is also morally virtuous.
- (3) The materials offered have been acquired justly and rightly.
- (4) The offering is made with happiness before, with pure satisfaction and delight during and with rejoicing after making the offer.
- (5) The donor has complete faith in the law of cause and effect.

These five elements should accompany the *dāna* so that it will be of greatest purity and benefit; when they are lacking when offerings are made, to that extent will the *dāna* be deficient in beneficial results.

Some Remarks on 'Saddhā'

It is important to understand clearly the complete meaning of the fifth element, namely, 'faith in the law of cause and effect'. Here, faith is the rendering into Myanmar of the Pāli word '*saddhā*'. Grammatically it would mean 'that which holds and keeps well'.

Just as clear water in which all sediment and impurities have settled down to the bottom can hold the image of the moon, of the sun and keep it well, so also faith, which is devoid of mental defilements, can firmly hold the virtues and attributes of the Buddha (to serve as object for contemplation).

To give another illustration, if a man is not equipped with hands, he would not be able to help himself to jewels lying about him although he sees them. If he does not possess wealth, he would not be able to provide himself with a variety of goods and materials.

Without seeds, there would be no crops nor grains. Similarly, without faith, we cannot acquire the jewels of generosity, morality and development of concentration and insight; (and there can be no enjoyment of the pleasures of the human or deva-world or the bliss of Nibbāna). Hence, the Buddha in His Teaching compared faith to possessing hands, wealth or seeds.

In the **Milindapañha Pāli** and **Atthasālinī Commentary**, faith is compared to the crown jewel, ruby, of a Universal Monarch, which has the property of instantly purifying and clearing the water into which it is put, no matter how dirty the water is. In a similar manner, faith dispels instantly all that is defiling the mind and make it pure and clear at once. If the mind is filled with faith, there is no room in it for defilements, such as grief, worry, etc.

How difficult it is to keep the mind steadfastly contemplating on the attributes of the Buddha is within the experience of all good Buddhists. In other words, it is not a simple matter to keep the mind filled with only faith devoid of all defilements. But with practice, one can maintain a pure, clear mind through faith for short periods until, with steadfast effort, one can do so continuously for long periods.

As regards having faith in the law of cause and effect, mentioned above, we should reflect thus: “I will have spent a certain amount of my wealth by offering this *dāna*, but it will not be spent in vain. Through this act of *dāna*, I will have developed volitions which is much more precious than the wealth I will have spent. My wealth is liable to be destroyed by five kinds of enemies, but this mental action of volition is indestructible and will follow me through rounds of existence till I attain Nibbāna. Ability to keep the mind clear and pure in this manner is having faith in the law of cause, the mental action of volition.”

And considering the results that would accrue from the mental action, we will come to a very clear, definite conclusion: “Because of this mental action of volition, I will reap beneficial results throughout the rounds of existence, there is no doubt about it”. Reflecting thus and experiencing the exhilarating purity of the mind is having faith in the law of effect.

Thus, it is important to develop, through reflecting on the law of cause or the law of effect, faith which is conducive to purity of mind, for it is the fifth element that strengthens the beneficial results of *dāna*.

(b) The Perfection of Morality (Sīla-Pāramī)

The Game Animal *Cāmarī*

The author gives an elaborate description of the animal, *cāmarī*, which we have translated as ‘yak’. He quotes various authorities to dispel the notion of many people that *cāmarī* is a kind of winged animal. Far from it, the author says on the authority of Abhayarama Sayadaw of Mandalay, and Taung Pauk Sayadaw of Mawlamyine that it is a yak, a Tibetan beast of burden, useful also for its milk and flesh. The fan made of its tail is one of the emblems of royalty.

Wishing to prevent damage, the yak will sacrifice its life rather than making any effort to release it, when even a single hair of its tail happens to be caught in the branches of a bush. Sumedha admonished himself to take the example set by a yak and preserve the purity of morality even at the risk of his life.

Miscellaneous Notes on Different Respects of Morality

As with Perfection of Dāna, these notes are given in the form of answers to the following questions; quoting the authority of the **Visuddhi-magga**, the Path of Purification:

- (1) What is Morality?
- (2) Why is it called Morality ?
- (3) What are the characteristics, functions, manifestations, and proximate cause of Morality?
- (4) What are the benefits of Morality ?
- (5) How many types of Morality are there ?
- (6) What are the defiling factors of Morality ?
- (7) What are the purifying factors of Morality ?

Exposition of Morality

1. WHAT IS MORALITY?

Various factors, which may be defined as Morality, are mental volition (*cetanā*) which arises in the person who abstains from wrong physical actions, such as killing, etc., or which arises when performing duties towards one's elders, teachers, etc.; the three mental factors of abstention (*viratī*), i.e. right speech, right action, and right livelihood; greedlessness (*alobha* or *anabhijjhā*), absence of ill-will (*adosa* or *abyāpāda*), right view (*sammā-ditṭhi* or *amoha*); the five restraints (to be described in full later) and the mental factor of *avittikama*.

Thus morality may be conveniently studied as follows:

- (1) Volition that accompanies one when abstaining from wrong physical or verbal action or when performing duties towards one's elders or teachers, etc.;
- (2) the three mental factors of abstention from wrong action, wrong speech and wrong livelihood;
- (3) the three right mental actions of *anabhijjhā*, *abyāpāda* and *sammā-dit̥ṭhi*;
- (4) the five restraints (*samvara*); and
- (5) the mental factor which arises when avoiding transgressions.

(a) Morality of Volition (Cetanā-sīla)

(b) Morality of Abstinence (Virati-sīla)

The three wrong physical actions are taking the life of other beings, taking what is not given and sexual misconduct. The four wrong verbal actions are telling lies, gossiping or backbiting, using harsh, abusive words and indulgence in vain, frivolous talks. These two categories of wrong actions may be committed in association with earning a livelihood (like that of a fisherman or a hunter), or may not be associated with earning livelihood (like game hunting for sport).

Likewise, abstaining from these two categories of wrong actions may or may not be associated with earning a livelihood. Abstaining from three wrong physical actions, when not associated with earning a livelihood, is known as abstention through right action (*sammā kammanta virati*); abstaining from the four wrong verbal actions, when not associated with earning a livelihood, is known as abstention through right speech (*sammā vaca virati*); abstaining from these two categories of wrong actions, when associated with earning a livelihood, and from various kinds of wrong livelihood (especially those kinds which bhikkhus are enjoined against), is known as abstention through right livelihood (*sammā ajiva virati*).

The three mental factors of abstention mentioned above are known as morality of abstention (*virati-sīla*) and the mental factor of volition that accompanies them is known as morality of volition (*cetanā-sīla*). The volition that arises when performing acts of great merit of attending upon one's teacher is also known as morality of volition (*cetanā-sīla*).

(c) Morality of Non-covetousness, etc. (Anabhijjhādi-sīla)

The greed that prompts one to covet others' property, harbouring the thought: "It would be good if these were mine", is known as the wrong mental action of covetousness (*abhijjhā manoduccarita*). When one dispels such thoughts, there arise in one the mental factors of dispelling volition (*cetanā*) and greedlessness (*alobha*) or non-covetousness (*anabhijjhā*). These mental factors are called Morality.

Wishing harm to someone, there arises in a person the mental factor of hatred which is known as wrong mental action of ill will (*byāpāda manoduccarita*). When one dispels such thoughts of ill-will, there arise in him the mental factors of dispelling volition and hatelessness (*adosa* or *abyāpāda*). These mental factors are called Morality.

When someone holds that there is no such thing as generosity and that there are no beneficial results accruing from it, he holds a wrong view which is called wrong mental action of wrong view (*micchā dit̥ṭhi manoduccarita*). When he dispels such beliefs, there arise in him the dispelling volition and non-delusion (*amoha*) or right view (*sammā-dit̥ṭhi*). These mental factors are called Morality.

When three wrong mental actions (*abhijjhā*, *byāpāda*, and *micchā-dit̥ṭhi*) are present, a person is liable to commit such demeritorious deeds as killing, etc. which ruin one's *sīla*. When volition and the three right mental actions arise in one, it is impossible for one to commit deeds, such as killing, etc. which are ruinous to one's *sīla*. Therefore, the three right mental actions of *anabhijjhā*, *abyāpāda* and *sammā-dit̥ṭhi* are called Morality.

When consciousness arises, it is always accompanied by volition. That volition is

responsible for prompting the mind to take notice of an object; it serves as a link between the mind and an object. Without its prompting, there would be no mind-object linkage; the mind will not rest on the object; it will not be aware of the object. It is only through the services of volition that a mind-object linkage is possible at all. Thus, every volition accompanying consciousness that arises for each moral act is called Morality.

(d) **Morality of Restraints (Saṁvara-sīla)**

(e) **Morality of Avoiding Transgression (Avitikkama-sīla)**

The kinds of morality, as described, apply to laymen and bhikkhus equally. But there are other forms of morality which are concerned with bhikkhus only, viz.: morality of restraints (*saṁvara-sīla*) and morality of avoiding transgressions (*avitikkama-sīla*).

(d) **Morality of Restraints (Saṁvara-sīla):**

- (i) **Paṭimokkha Saṁvara:** Restraint through the Fundamental Precepts for bhikkhus, observance of which liberates the observer from the dangers of rebirths in the realms of miseries and continuous suffering.
- (ii) **Sati Saṁvara:** Restraint through Mindfulness, which means keeping close guard over the doors of the five senses, viz. eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, so that no ‘thief of demeritoriousness’ can gain entry into one.
- (iii) **Ñāṇa Saṁvara:** Restraint through Wisdom, which means control of the mind with Insight, so that the current of mental defilements of craving, wrong view and ignorance which normally flows incessantly, stops flowing. Under this type is also included *Paccayasānissita Sīla*, exercise of proper care over the use of requisites.
- (iv) **Khanti Saṁvara:** Restraint through Forbearance, which means controlling the mind, so that no defiling thoughts disturb it when enduring extreme heat or cold.
- (v) **Vīriya Saṁvara:** Restraint through Development of Energy, which means strenuous mental exertion, to prevent the arising of demeritorious thoughts, such as sensuous thought (*kāma-vitakka*), thought of ill-will (*byāpāda-vitakka*), thought of cruelty (*vihimsā-vitakka*). Purification of livelihood (*ājīva-pārisuddhi-sīla*) is also included under this type.

(e) **Morality of Avoiding Transgression (Avitikkama-sīla)**

This is the morality cultivated through avoidance of physical and verbal transgression of precepts which one has undertaken to observe.

From the above descriptions of five kinds of **Saṁvara Sīla** and **Avitikkama Sīla**, it could be inferred that, in essence, **Paṭimokkha Saṁvara Sīla** means a group of mental factors (*cetasikas*) including volition and the three abstentions of non-greed (*alobha*), non-hate (*adosa*) and non-delusion (*amoha*): **Sati Saṁvara** means the mental factor of *Sati*, mindfulness (which is also accompanied by volition); **Ñāṇa Saṁvara** means the mental factor of wisdom (which is also accompanied by volition); **Khanti Saṁvara** means a group of moral consciousness and mental factors headed by non-hate which has the characteristic of not losing temper, in other words, the mental factor of non-hate; **Vīriya Saṁvara** means mental factor of energy (which is also accompanied by volition).

As for *avitikkama-sīla*, in ultimate sense, it is a group of moral consciousness and mental factors which lead one to avoid transgression of precepts which one is observing. In the case of generosity (*dāna*), volition forms its basis. For morality too, volition serves as a main factor, but in addition to it, the group of moral consciousness and mental factors led by the three abstentions, the three mental factors of non-greed, non-hate, non-delusion and the three mental factors of mindfulness, wisdom, energy also play their respective roles.

2. WHY IS IT CALLED MORALITY?

The Pāli word ‘*sīla*’ is translated as ‘morality’ or ‘virtue’; it is adopted in toto in the Myanmar language. ‘*Sīla*’ has two meanings: first, it is employed to convey the sense of

natural character, behaviour or habit. We find it used in this sense in such expression as ‘*pāpakarana-silo* — one who is in the habit of doing evil’; ‘*dubbhāsana-silo* — one who is in the habit of speaking evil’; ‘*abhivādana-silo* — one who is in the habit of showing reverence to those worthy of homage’; ‘*dhammakathana-silo* — one who is in the habit of teaching the doctrines’. It is also employed to describe natural phenomena: ‘*vassāna-samaye rukkha ruhana-sīla* — trees usually grow during the rainy season’; ‘*gimhasamaye patta patana-sīla* — leaves usually fall in summer’. In this first sense, *sīla* is employed to describe the habits of both moral and immoral persons; and also natural events which are outside the domain of moral, good or bad.

Secondly, it has the meaning of good practice which implies only that practice which is noble, moral, ethical. This is the sense employed in this chapter on the ‘Perfection of Morality’. And in this sense also, there are two meanings, namely, (a) orientating and (b) upholding.

(a) ‘Orientating’ means controlling one’s physical and verbal actions and steering them towards the right direction so that they do not get out of hand. In a person, who does not observe the precepts, physical and verbal actions take place in a haphazard manner, like loose yarn, not properly wound in a roll, is uncontrolled and undirected. But a person, who observes the precepts, watches closely over his physical and verbal actions to see that they take place in an orderly manner under his proper control. Even a person of ill-humour, who is easily irritated and loses temper at the slightest provocation, can manage to keep his physical and verbal actions under control when he is observing the precepts.

(b) *Sīla* is ‘upholding’ because no act of merit can be accomplished without accompaniment of moral virtue. Meritorious acts can arise only in persons of morality; thus *sīla* serves as the basis or foundation of all acts of meritoriousness; it facilitates the arising of meritoriousness through performance of meritorious deeds that would lead to rebirths in the four planes of existence (*catubhūmaka*), viz. the sensuous world, the fine material world, the non-material world and the supra-mundane states.

In this chapter on the Perfection of Morality, it is mentioned that the hermit Sumedha, having received the definite prophecy that he would become a Perfectly Self-Enlightened One, admonished himself to establish first in the Perfection of Alms-giving. But this does not imply that he should practise generosity first without observance of precepts. In his investigation of the Buddha-making factors, by the exercise of Perfection Investigating Wisdom (*Pāramī pavicaya ñāṇa*), it was the Perfection of Alms-giving that appeared first in his mind’s eye, followed, in succession, by Perfection of Morality, Perfection of Renunciation, etc. The order of Perfection given in the Text is the order in which they appeared in the mind’s eye of Hermit Sumedha. It was not possible for him to discern all the ten *pāramīs* simultaneously; they were investigated one after another and were mentioned accordingly. The first Perfection reviewed happened to be the Perfection of Alms-giving; hence it heads the list of the *pāramīs*, but this does not mean that the order in the list is the order in which *pāramīs* are to be fulfilled.

In actual practice, an act of giving is pure only when the donor is established in morality; alms-giving is made more fruitful when it is preceded by observance of precepts. That is the reason why when bhikkhus are invited by lay people to accept robes and other gifts, they see to it that the lay people are first established in the precepts (even though taking of precepts is not mentioned when making the invitation).

Thus to the question “Why is it called **Sīla**?” The plain, clear-cut answer is: It is called *Sīla* because (1) it does not permit physical and verbal actions to take place in a violent, disorderly manner; it controls and directs them to become quiet and gentle, (2) it serves as a foundation for the arising, by stages, of four classes of moral consciousness, namely, the moral consciousness pertaining to the sensuous world, the moral consciousness pertaining to the material world, the moral consciousness pertaining to the non-material world and the supra-mundane

consciousness.

Out of these discussions may arise the following questions:

(1) If both morality (*sīla*) and concentration (*samādhi*) are orientating, how do they differ in their functions? *Sīla* promotes calm and peace by keeping physical and verbal actions under proper control; whereas concentration prevents the mind and mental factors that are associated with it from distraction by directing them to converge on a single object. In this manner, morality differs from concentration in its function of orientating.

(2) If both Morality and the Element of Solidity (*pathavī*) are ‘upholding’, what is the difference in their functions? Morality is the fundamental cause of the arising of the four classes of moral consciousness; hence it is said to serve as the foundation for the arising of the moral consciousness pertaining to the sensuous world, the moral consciousness pertaining to the material world, the moral consciousness pertaining to the immaterial world and the supra-mundane consciousness.

Just as a royal wet-nurse holds the infant prince in her arms to keep him from crawling all over the royal chamber, so also the Element of Solidity holds together other elements that arise along with it, preventing them from dispersing and scattering in all directions. In this manner, Morality and the Element of Solidity differ in their respective functions of upholding and facilitating. (**Visuddhi-magga Sub-commentary**-Chapter on Morality).

The **Visuddhi-magga** mentions only two grammatical meanings as explained above. But there are different views expressed by other teachers. According to them, the Pāli word, ‘*sīla*’, for morality, is derived from the words, ‘*sira*’ or ‘*sisā*’, both meaning ‘head’. When the head is cut off, the whole body of a being is destroyed; so also when morality is ruined, all forms of meritoriousness come to ruins. Thus morality is like the head of the body of meritoriousness and termed ‘*sīla*’, a derivative of ‘*sira*’ or ‘*sisā*’ by replacing the letter ‘r’ or ‘s’ with ‘l’.

But the author opines that this alternative view is far-fetched since it draws only upon the similarity of the sounds produced by uttering the words ‘*sira*’, ‘*sisā*’ and ‘*sīla*’ and does not deal with the intrinsic meaning of the word *sīla* as defined in the **Abhidhānappadīpikā** verse no. 1092.

He concludes that morality is called *sīla* because, according to the **Abhidhānappadīpikā**, it conveys two meanings of (1) natural characteristic, and (2) good practice.

Although natural characteristic may mean both good and bad ones, as explained above, since we are dealing with the habit and practices of ancient sages or of future Buddhas, Arahats, etc. we should take that *sīla* refers only to good aspects. For instance, although *dhamma* may be meritorious or demeritorious when we say: ‘I take refuge in the Dhamma,’ the *dhamma* here can only be the meritorious *dhamma*. So also, although *sangha* means ‘a group’, ‘an assemblage’ in such words as ‘*manussa-sangha* — a group of people’, ‘*sakuna-sangha* — a flock of birds’, when we say: “I take refuge in the Sangha”, it implies only the Order of Bhikkhus.

Considering in this manner, *sīla* should also be taken in the sense of the **Abhidhānappadīpikā** definition of ‘natural characteristic’. Thus, it should be stated that it is called Morality because it is the natural characteristic of ancient sages, future Buddhas, arahats, etc.

3. WHAT ARE ITS CHARACTERISTIC, FUNCTION, ETC.?

Morality has the characteristic of controlling one's physical and verbal actions and orientating them towards right direction; it also serves as a basis or foundation of all meritoriousness.

Its function is to prevent one from becoming immoral through uncontrolled physical and verbal actions. It helps one to remain spotless in conduct, free from blame by the wise.

Morality is manifested as purity in thought, word and deed. When the wise reflect on the nature of morality, they come to realise that it is the purity of physical action, the purity of

verbal action and the purity of mental action.

The proximate cause for arising of morality is moral shame for doing an immoral act (*hirī*) and moral dread for doing an immoral act (*ottappa*). Although listening to the Dhamma promotes arising of morality, it serves only as a remote cause. It is only through *hirī* and *ottappa* the precepts are observed.

(4) WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MORALITY?

A man of virtuous conduct enjoys many benefits such as a gladdening heart which leads to joy and happiness (*pāmojja*). This in turn results in delightful satisfaction (*pīti*). In one who enjoys delightful satisfaction, there arises calmness of mind and body (*passaddhi*) followed by bliss (*sukha*). The tranquil state of mind and body brings about development of concentration (*samādhi*) which enables one to see things as they really are (*yathābhūta-ñāṇa*). When one gains this knowledge of things as they really are, one gets wearied of and detached from the ills and suffering of the cycle of rebirths. In him arises powerful insight into reality (*balava vipassanā-ñāṇa*). With this insight, he becomes detached from craving and achieves the knowledge of the Path, which leads to full liberation (*vimutti*) through the knowledge of Fruition. After gaining the Path and Fruition knowledge, he develops reflective knowledge (*paccavekkhanā-ñāṇa*) which enables him to see that the cessation of phenomena of the aggregates of *nāma* and *rūpa* has taken place in him. In other words, he has realised the Perfect Peace, Nibbāna. Thus morality has many benefits including the realisation of Nibbāna. (*AN III, P. 615*).

In several discourses, the Buddha mentions the following five benefits gained by one who observes precepts and who is established in morality:

- (1) based on mindfulness through *sīla*, he acquires great wealth;
- (2) he gains fame and good reputation;
- (3) he approaches and enters any assembly of nobles, brahmins, householders or recluses with complete self-assurance (born of his morality), without any indication of inferiority complex;
- (4) he lives the full span of life and dies unconfused. (An immoral person repents on his death bed that he has not done meritorious deeds throughout his life; a man of moral habits never suffers from any remorse when death approaches him; instead, memories of good deeds previously performed by him flashed past his mind's eye making him fearless, mentally lucid, unconfused to face death even as someone who is about to acquire a golden pot gladly abandons an earthen pot.)
- (5) he is reborn after that in happy realms of devas and human beings.

— (DN II, p. 73; AN II, p. 22 I; Vin III, p. 322) —

In the Ākaṅkheyya Sutta of the **Majjhima Nikāya**, the Buddha enumerates 13 benefits which come from practising morality; such benefits range from reverence and respect shown by fellow followers of the Teaching to realization of *arahatta-phala*, that is, attainment of arahatship.

(5) HOW MANY TYPES OF MORALITY ARE THERE?

Morality in Groups of Twos:

- (1) Precept involving performance of certain action (*cāritta*); Precept of abstentions (*vāritta*).

Of these two kinds, the precept laid down by the Buddha saying, “This should be done” is **Cāritta-sīla**. For example, performance of duties towards a preceptor (*upajjhāya vatta*); or duties towards a teacher (*ācariya vatta*), is fulfilment of *cāritta sīla* through practice.

Not doing what is prohibited by the Buddha saying, “This should not be done” is fulfilment of **Vāritta-sīla**. For example, observance of *Parajika* rules of the Vinaya (which

prohibits *bhikkhus* from indulgence in sexual intercourse, from stealing, from killing and from falsely claiming attainments to *magga* and *phala* Insight) is observance of *vāritta-sīla* through avoidance.

Some people casually misinterpret these disciplinary rules saying that *cāritta-sīla* is the precept which would lead to no offence if it is not fulfilled, but its observance contributes to purifying one's morality. In interpreting thus they make no distinction between *bhikkhus* and lay men.

Actually, the Buddha has laid down definite disciplinary rules concerning duties to be performed by a pupil towards his preceptor or teacher. Any co-resident pupil, who fails to abide by these rules, not only fails to fulfil the *cāritta-sīla* but is also guilty of breaking the disciplinary rules concerning performance of duties (*vatta bhedaka dukkata āpatti*).

Thus, for *bhikkhus*, it cannot be said that non-fulfilment of *cāritta-sīla* would lead to no offence; for them, *cāritta-sīla* is the mandatory observance of the precepts laid down by the Buddha.

As for lay person, it may be said that avoidance of wrong deeds, which would definitely give rise to rebirths in lower planes of existence, falls under the category of *cāritta-sīla*. On the other hand, abstinence from wrong deeds, which may or may not result in such rebirths, *varitta*, showing reverence to the aged, should be classified as *cāritta-sīla*.

For example, there are five precepts to be observed by lay men: abstinence from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and taking intoxicants. Indulgence in these deeds, instead of avoiding them, leads definitely to lower planes of existence. Therefore, abstaining from these five wrong deeds which will certainly result in such rebirths constitutes *vāritta-sīla*.

A lay person can also observe the eight precepts which are the avoidance of killing, stealing, lying and taking intoxicants, (these four precepts, falling under the category of *vāritta-sīla* and the additional four precepts of total sexual abstinence, abstaining from eating in the afternoon, abstaining from dancing, singing, playing music, and enjoying to them, and abstaining from using high and luxurious beds.

Actions included in these four additional precepts do not necessarily lead to the lower planes of existence. Lay noble persons, such as 'Stream Winners' (*Sotāpanna*), 'Once Returners' (*Sakadāgāmin*), enjoy lawful sexual relations with their own spouses, eat in the afternoon, dance, sing, etc. and sleep on high and luxurious beds. But, since they do so with mind unassociated with wrong view (*diṭṭhi-vippayutta citta*), their action will not result in rebirths in the lower planes of existence.

But an ordinary worldling may do these acts with mind either accompanied by wrong view (*diṭṭhi-sampayutta*) or unaccompanied by wrong view (*diṭṭhi-vippayutta*). These actions may or may not lead to rebirths in the lower plane of existence. Therefore, the four precepts, namely, total sexual abstinence, abstaining from eating in the afternoon, abstaining from dancing, singing, playing music, etc. and abstaining from using high and luxurious beds should be called *Cāritta-sīla*.

When a person, who has taken refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, observes the Five Precepts with meticulous care, he would be a lay disciple of the Buddha, an *upāsaka*. If he makes further efforts to observe the Eight Precepts, it is for the purpose of practising holy life at a higher level of endeavour. But, the Buddha has not said that the observance of the Eight Precepts will save one from the lower destinations and that observance of the Five Precepts alone is not enough to secure safety from the danger of falling into the lower planes of existence.

In this sense, therefore, the four additional observances included in the Eight Precepts should be considered to belong to the category of *Cāritta-sīla*. For *bhikkhus*, however, the Buddha has strictly forbidden them from indulging in these four acts; hence, for *bhikkhus*, avoidance of these acts constitutes definitely *Vāritta-sīla*.

Note for Special Consideration

A cursory reading of the above distinction between *Cāritta-sīla* and *Vāritta-sīla* or a superficial consideration of the fact of indulgence by noble disciples such as Visākha in

lawful sexual relation, eating in the afternoon, dancing, singing, playing music, etc. in using high and luxurious beds could lead one to wrong conceptions. One could easily take the wrong view that all such acts are faultless, blameless and, therefore, one is then liable to indulge in them more and more with the accompaniment of wrong view (*micchā-dit̥ṭhi*). It is most important that one should not fall into such error of conception.

Killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and taking intoxicants, being demeritorious wrong deeds, invariably lead to the lower planes of existence. There is no escape from their ill consequences. That is why noble persons (*ariyas*), will never do such acts, even if they are under the threat of death to do so. They will willingly give up their lives rather than acquiesce to do such acts, because they have uprooted, through *magga* Insight, all traces of latent tendency (*anusaya*) to do demeritorious acts. Just because *ariyas*, such as the 'Stream Winners', 'Once-Returners' and 'Non-Returners', indulge in taking food in the afternoon, etc. just as ordinary persons do, it is not correct to say that they do so with identical mental attitudes in their various acts.

The *ariyas* do not look upon objects of sense pleasure in the same way an ordinary worldling does; their manner of indulgence in sense pleasure is also different from that of worldlings.

The Commentary to the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** (*AN I, p.350*) says that the *ariya's* attitude towards pleasurable sense objects is like that of a clean brahmin, who, pursued by an elephant in rut, seeks refuge with loathing and much reluctance in a dumping ground of excreta. When oppressed by craving for sensual pleasures, the defilement that has not been eradicated by the knowledge of the Path, the 'Stream Winner' or the 'Once Returner' deals with objects of sensual pleasures with mind unaccompanied by wrong view, just to pacify, subdue the burning heat of the defilement.

This exposition deserves careful consideration. Citing the example of *ariya* persons such as Visākha, the worldling is liable to say wrongly that the *ariyas* indulge in sense-pleasures exactly in the same way as he does. As pointed out in the **Aṅguttara Commentary**, the *ariyas* enjoy sense pleasures, with mind unaccompanied by wrong view, just to calm the burning desire, which is the defilement they have not yet destroyed with the knowledge of the Path, whereas the worldling indulges in sense pleasures generally with mind associated with wrong view.

To summarise, one may have sex relation with one's spouse, take meal in the afternoon, dance, sing, play music, etc. and use high and luxurious beds, etc. with mind accompanied by wrong view resulting in rebirths in the lower planes of existence, or with mind unaccompanied by wrong view, not resulting in the lower planes of existence. Therefore, abstinence from these four actions (which may not lead to the lower planes of existence) should be classed as *Cārīta-sīla* and not as *Vārīta-sīla*.

The division of the Eight Precepts into four *Cārīta-sīla* and four *Vārīta-sīla* is tenable only when the vow of abstinence is made, separately for each individual precept as is current now. Should the vow be taken for the whole group of the Eight Precepts, saying: "I observe the Eight precepts," it would simply be observance of *Cārīta-sīla*, because the Eight Precepts constitute a code of morality which one may or may not observe.

As for the Five Precepts, whether the vow is taken for the Five Precepts as a whole or as separate individual precepts, its observance is practice of *Vārīta-sīla* definitely. (More detailed treatment of *Vārīta* and *Cārīta-sīlas* is given in the Chapter on Miscellany below).

Of the two categories of *Sīla*, observance of *Cārīta-sīla* can be accomplished only when one is endowed with faith and energy. Faith is believing that good results will follow good deeds of practising morality; and energy means the relentless effort with which one observes the precepts in keeping with his faith.

No special effort is needed to become accomplished in the observance of the *Vārīta-sīla*. It requires only faith. Mere refrain through faith from doing deeds which the Buddha has taught to be demeritorious is sufficient for the fulfilment of *Vārīta-sīla*.

(2) Group of moral practices (**Abhisamācārika-sīla**) which promote good conduct and

which include all forms of virtuous acts other than those classed as a set of eight precepts with right livelihood as the eighth, **Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla**. All forms of moral practices which are taught for fulfilment of the Path and the Fruition come under this classification.

Since it forms the beginning of the life of purity consisting in the Path, the set of eight precepts consisting of the practices of the right livelihood. (**Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla** is also termed **Adibrahmacariyaka-sīla**).

Precepts with right livelihood as the eighth, *Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla*, include three moral physical actions: abstaining from killing, from stealing, from indulging in wrongful sexual intercourse; four moral verbal actions: abstaining from lying, from malicious speech, from using harsh and abusive words, from frivolous talks; and finally abstaining from wrong livelihood.

The **Visuddhi-magga** states that the *Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla* may also be termed *Ādibrahmacariyaka-sīla* as it includes precepts which are to be fulfilled in the initial stage of developing the Noble Path.

This Commentary statement is likely to be misinterpreted by some as to mean that only *Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla* is the precept which should be observed first for the attainment of the Path. There have even appeared some groups which maintained that the Five Precepts, the Eight Precepts and the Ten Precepts, which are generally observed at present, are not the initial precepts which should be observed for the attainment of the Path.

On the other hand, there are some people who say that they have not even heard of this strange code of morality called *Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla*; it could not have been taught by the Buddha; it may be a later accretion of no particular worth.

As a matter of fact, *Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla* is certainly the precept taught by the Buddha himself. The **Visuddhi-magga** quoted the **Uparipannasa Pāli** (*5 Vagga, 7 Sutta*): “*Tenāha pubbeva kho panassa kāyakammam vacikammam ājivo suparisuddho hoti ti*” to show that the Buddha taught the *Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla*, the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth.

The Buddha made His appearance in the world at a time when it was enveloped in the dark mass of evil forces. People were depraved, bereft of morality, steeped as they were in evil thoughts, words and deeds. When the Buddha wanted to inculcate in those wild, debased beings a sense of gentle civility through practice of morality, He had to select a moral code from amongst various sets of precepts which would best suit their coarse minds. He thus taught them at the initial stages the *Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla*. When the grosser forms of evil had been removed from the habits of the untamed beings by teaching them the *Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla*, the Buddha no longer made use of it; instead he taught the Five Precepts and the Eight Precepts in his further civilizing endeavours.

Having thus been set aside by the Buddha when a certain stage of moral purification has been reached by the people, successive teachers from the time of the Buddha till the present time have not given much attention to the *Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla*; lay people also have not made special effort to observe it (because *Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla* was originally meant for people of debased morality only).

A question arises here: Since *Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla* forms the initial practice for the Path and since it had been used at the time when the Buddha first appeared, would it not be even more suitable to observe it at the present time?

The term ‘initial practice for the Path’ is applicable only when the *Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla* is observed by those who have no code of morality whatever at the start to serve as the precept for the Path. Those who have only recently given up wrong views and begun to embrace Buddhism should no doubt start to purify themselves by observing this *Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla* but when they have become well established in the Buddhist belief after being well trained in the *Sīla*, it should no longer be

termed 'the initial practice for the Path'.

Even children of Buddhist parents have been taught to understand the dire consequences of gross misdeeds such as taking the life of sentient beings and they refrain from doing so. Accordingly, when they grow up and begin to observe precepts, there is no need for them to keep the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*. They should gradually advance in their training from the Five Precepts to the Eight Precepts and on to the Ten Precepts.

In other words, observance of *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* is the necessary step which those steeped in immorality should take to rid themselves of debased habits; but for those who have been well brought up under the guidance of Buddhist parents, it is clear that they already possess a modicum of moral conduct. Therefore, there is no special need for them to observe the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*. What has been said above applies to the present time when the Buddha's Teaching is widely extant.

Although brought up in a Buddhist environment and taught to refrain from gross misdeeds, if one judges oneself to be deficient in moral conduct and to have committed all kinds of grave transgression, one has no alternative but to start with the initial purification process of observing the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* for the practice of the Noble Path.

Those inclined to follow the line of least resistance are likely to find this *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* attractive if someone points out that in observing this *Sīla*, one does not have to refrain from indulging in intoxicating drinks and drugs, one does not have to refrain from dancing, singing, enjoying shows, that it is easily observed, being free from difficult restraints and that it serves as the basis for the attainment of the Path and the Fruition.

It is a weakness of human nature to look for easy means of acquiring wealth. People forget or ignore the fact that even with hard labour and diligent work, it is not always possible to have one's dream of riches fulfilled. Many of them have become a prey to fraudulent villains who claim to possess magical secrets of multiplying one's wealth. By seeking an easy way of becoming rich, people have fallen a victim to their own avarice.

Just as there are deceivers in worldly affairs, there are also frauds in religious matters, especially concerning the attainment of the Path and the Fruition which is, of course, not easy at all to come by. Many are those who, inclining to seek short cuts, have followed to their great loss the spurious teachings of self-acclaimed masters who promise them the stage of a 'Stream-Winner' within seven days of practising their technique or that of a 'Once-Returner' if one has adequate intellectual development. After finishing their seven days' course of practice, the master announces pseudo-attainments of his pupils as a 'Stream-Winner' or a 'Once-Returner' who consequently are delighted with their illusory achievements.

Here, we would like to sound a note of caution. The copper metal, if it could be converted into the precious metal of gold, through practice of alchemy, would become possessed of the properties of gold which are vastly different from those of the original base metal of copper. Likewise a noble person known as an Ariya who has achieved the First Path and Fruition only as a 'Stream-Winner' is easily distinguished from an ordinary worldlyling by means of his physical, verbal, mental demeanour. Instead of placidly accepting the announcement of the master as having attained the stage of a 'Stream-Winner' or a 'Once-Returner', one should, by self-inspection, examine one's true nature to see if one has changed for the better and has truly benefited by the seven days' course of practice. Only by self-evaluation in this manner could one save oneself from being misled by dubious teachers of religion.

Thus, in matters of observing the precepts or in other pursuits there is no short cut or easy way to achieve one's cherished object. A person addicted to drinks will not

be able to observe even the Five Precepts, not to speak of the higher practices such as the Eight Precepts.

The group of moral precepts other than the said *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* is classified as *Abhisamācārika-sīla*, precepts which promote good conduct. Even the Five Precepts are to be considered as superior to the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*.

It may be questioned: 'How could the Five Precepts, which have only one restraint (i.e. not to speak lies) out of the four verbal restraints, be superior to the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* which requires the observance of all the four verbal restraints (lying, gossiping, using abusive language and engaging in frivolous talks)?'

The answer lies in the fact that of the four verbal restraints, lying forms the basis of breach of all the verbal restraints. The Buddha teaches that for one who commits falsehood, there is no misdeed which he is not liable to perpetuate; and one who can abstain from lying can easily observe the remaining precepts.

How could one, who does not speak lies, engage himself in slandering, abusing and frivolous talks? This explains why only the restraint of falsehood is included as the main verbal restraint in the Five Precepts. Question arises, therefore, that the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* is superior to the Five Precepts.

Again, it may be asked: 'Since the precept to refrain from wrong livelihood, which does not feature in the Five Precepts, forms the Eighth Precept of the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*, surely it should be deemed superior to the Five Precepts.'

The answer in brief to this question is: For one who observes the Five Precepts, no special effort is needed to refrain from wrong livelihood. After all, wrong livelihood means earning one's living through wrong means of killing, stealing and lying. By observing the Five Precepts meticulously, one is automatically avoiding the misdeeds of killing, stealing and lying. Thus, the precept to refrain from wrong livelihood as an additional observance in the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* does not justify the claim of its superiority over the Five Precepts. What has been discussed above applies only to lay devotees.

For members of the Sangha, the rules of discipline laid down by the Buddha for them as expounded in the Vinaya Piṭaka are known as **Sikkhāpadas**. The offences, for which penalties are imposed, may be classified under seven categories depending on their nature:

- (i) **Pārājika**, (ii) **Sanghādisesa**, (iii) **Thullaccaya**, (iv) **Pācittiya**,
(v) **Patidesaniya**, (vi) **Dukkata**, (vii) **Dubbhāsita**.

An offence in the first category of offences (*Pārājika*), and one in the second category (*Sanghādisesa*), are classified as grave offences (*Garukāpatti*).

The remaining five categories which consist of light offences are called '**Lahukāpatti**'.

The group of moral precepts observed by bhikkhus so that there is no breach of lesser and minor offences classified under *lahukāpatti* is known as *Abhisamācārika-sīla*; that observed by them to avoid transgression of grave offences (*garukāpatti*), is known as *Ādibrahmacariyaka-sīla*.

Of the five volumes of the Vinaya Piṭaka, **Pārājika Pāli** and **Pācittiya Pāli**, also known as **Ubhato Vibhanga** deal with codes of morality which belong to *Ādibrahmacariya* category of *sīla*; **Mahā Vagga Pāli** and **Cūla Vagga Pāli** which are collectively termed **Khandhaka Vagga** describe the group of morality which has been classified *Abhisamācārika-sīla*. (The last volume, **Parivāra**, gives a summary and classification of the rules in the four previous volumes).

(Bhikkhus become accomplished in *Ādibrahmacariyaka-sīla* only after completing observance of *Abhisamācārika-sīla*. When a bhikkhu meticulously avoids transgression of even a minor fault, a light offence, it goes without saying that he will take the greatest care not to be guilty of grave offences).

(3) **Virati-sīla** and **Avirati-sīla**

- (a) **Virati-sīla** means the mental concomitants of three abstinences, that is, right speech, right action and right livelihood as explained under the subtitle “What is morality?”
- (b) **Avirati-sīla** consists of precepts associated with various mental concomitants, such as volition, etc., other than the mental factors of three abstinences (*virati*).

(4) **Nissita-sīla** and **Anissita-sīla**

- (a) **Nissita-sīla** is morality practised depending upon craving or upon wrong view. When one observes precepts with the aim of achieving a happy existence in the future abounding in wealth and property, one's *sīla* is called morality of dependence upon craving. Observance of precepts or rituals (such as imitating cows or dogs) in the wrong belief that they are conducive to spiritual purification is called morality of dependence upon wrong view.
(Those who have embraced Buddhism are not likely to practise the morality of dependence upon wrong view; but they should guard themselves against practising the morality of dependence upon craving which they are liable to do).
- (b) **Anissita-sīla** is morality practised without depending upon craving or upon wrong view with the sole aim of cultivating the noble practice. This means practice of mundane morality which is prerequisite for that supramundane morality.

(5) **Kālapariyanta-sīla** and **Āpānakotika-sīla**

- (a) **Kālapariyanta-sīla** is morality observed for a limited period.
- (b) **Āpānakotika-sīla** is morality observed for life.

In describing **Kālapariyanta-sīla**, the **Visuddhi-magga** mentions only in a general way the limit of the observing period (*kālaparicchedam katvā samādinnaṃ sīlam*). But its *Tikā* is more specific in prescribing the time limit: whole day or whole night, etc. (*kālaparicchedam katvā ti imaṅ ca rattim imaṅ ca divan ti ādinā viya kālavasena paricchedam katvā*).

Nowadays, many people take the precepts without mentioning any time limit; so it seems for life. But as the intention is to observe a certain precept for a day or a limited period only, it is certainly a temporary morality. As the formulae in the Commentary and the Sub-Commentary for taking the vow of precept, mentioned above, require the stating of the period of observance, one should mention the period during which one would observe the precept. However, neglecting to do so constitutes no fault; it would still be a temporary practice of morality.

The intention, though unspoken, is generally assumed to be for the whole period of a day, or a night, or a whole day and night. But it is not necessarily so, according to the **Commentary** on the **Patisambhidā Magga**, which states that one may observe the precepts for one sitting, like lay devotees who, having established themselves in the Triple Gem, observe a set of Precepts while making a donation to an invited *bhikkhu* in their home. They observe the Precepts only for the duration of the ceremony of alms-giving. Or they may undertake to observe a set of precepts during their sojourn at a monastery for a day or two or more. These are all observances of temporary morality.

Thus, according to this Commentary, it is beneficial to observe precepts even for a very short period. Therefore, teachers explain that it is quite proper to encourage children, who are not used to go without an evening meal, to take the eight precepts on *uposatha* days and observe them all throughout the morning only. One always gains merit for doing the good deed of observing precepts. however short the duration of the observance may be.

Two stories in the *Cula Vagga* of the **Peta Vatthu** illustrate this point. During the time of the Buddha, there was, in Rājagaha, a hunter who earned his living by killing deer day and night. A friend of his was a disciple of the Buddha, being established in the Triple Refuge. The friend advised the hunter to refrain from the evil act of killing game animals. But his

advice fell on deaf ears. Undaunted, he suggested to the hunter to refrain from killing at least during night time and instead to engage himself in the meritorious act of observing precepts. The hunter finally gave in to his friend's persistent persuasion, and abandoning all acts of preparations for killing during night time, he spent his time observing precepts.

After his death, the hunter gained rebirth near Rājagaha as a Vemanika *peta*, who was subjected to great suffering during the day, but lived a happy life at night enjoying fully the pleasures of the senses.

The Venerable Nārada Thera, encountering this *peta* in the course of his wanderings, enquired of him as to what kind of meritorious acts he had performed in his previous lives. The *peta* recounted his life as a hunter, how he earned his living by killing; how his friend, who was established in the Triple Refuge, counselled him to give up his wrong mode of living; how he refused his friend's good advice at first but finally succumbed to his persuasion half-heartedly by giving up hunting at night time and devoting to good deed of observing precepts. For his cruel misdeeds in the day time, he was suffering intensely during the day while at night he lived the blissful, sensuous life of devas.

The second *peta* story is similar. But it concerns a wealthy sportsman who hunted deer, day and night, as a pastime for sheer enjoyment, not for livelihood. He also paid no heed to a friend of his who proffered him good advice for his benefit. Ultimately, he was won over by an *arahat*, who came on an alms-round to his friend's house, who instructed him to devote at least the night time to meritorious acts instead of full-time pursuit after sport. He suffered the same fate after death as the hunter of the previous story.

We learn from these two stories that we reap the benefit of meritorious deeds even if they were performed only for the short period of night time. Accordingly, we should make an endeavour to observe the precepts for whatever time we could afford however short it may be.

(6) Sapariyanta-sīla and Apariyanta-sīla.

- (a) **Sapariyanta-sīla** is morality, the observance of which is brought to an end before a stipulated time for some reason such as being coaxed or tempted with an offer of wealth or servants and attendants to break the observance or being threatened with destruction of one's life and limb or of one's relatives to do so. In this type of *sīla* it should be noted that although its observance is brought to an end through outside interference, nevertheless, merit has been already gained, commensurate with one's precepts. *Sīla* observed before is not rendered fruitless by its termination.
- (b) **Apariyanta-sīla** is morality, the observance of which is not cut short by any outside influence but is maintained till completion of the intended period.

(7) Lokiya-sīla and Lokuttara-sīla

- (a) **Lokiya-sīla** is morality subject to (or accompanied by) mental intoxicants (*āsavas*) such as sensual desire, desire for future existence, wrong view and ignorance.
- (b) **Lokuttara-sīla** is morality not subject to (or not accompanied by) the mental intoxicants.

Lokiya-sīla is conducive to happy future rebirths (as a human being or a deva) and is a prerequisite for escape from the cycle of rebirths. *Lokuttara-sīla* brings about escape from *samsāra*; it is also an object for contemplation with Reflective Knowledge (*Paccavekkhanā-nāṇa*).

Morality in Groups of Threes

(1) (a) Hīna-sīla, (b) Majjhima-sīla, and (c) Paṇīta-sīla.

When the four elements, viz. will (*chanda*), energy (*vīriya*), consciousness (*citta*) and investigative knowledge (*vimamsa*), (a) with which precepts are observed are of inferior quality, it is **Hīna-sīla**; (b) when they are of medium quality, it is **Majjhima-sīla**; (c) when they are of superior quality, it is **Paṇīta-sīla**.

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

- (a) When morality is observed through desire for fame, it is **Hīna-sīla**. Such an observance is an act of hypocrisy, a deceptive show of sham piety, without pure volition for doing a genuine meritorious deed. Hence it is low (*hīna*).
- (b) Observance of morality through desire for a good destination is no doubt associated with a certain amount of greed, but it is a wholesome wish for beneficial results of one's good deeds and is accompanied by volition and faith. Hence it is nobler than one observed through desire for fame.

On the other hand, since the motivating force here is still tainted with the expectation of beneficial results from one's meritoriousness, it is not ranked a superior kind, but only a middle one.

- (c) The morality observed, not through desire for fame nor through desire for reaping beneficial results of one's good deeds, but through understanding that observance of precept is a noble practice for pure life and through realization that one should indeed cultivate these practices, solely for their nobleness is known as a major morality. Only such a morality of superior quality observed with pure wholesome volition, unassociated with any form of greed, is reckoned as the genuine Perfection of Morality (*Sīla-pāramī*).

(When the Bodhisatta took the existence of a *nāga*, during his two lives as Campeyya Nāga and Bhūridatta Nāga, he could not exert for the superior kind of morality, but observed precepts only in the hope of attaining rebirth as a human being. In that sense, the morality he observed was of medium quality. Nevertheless, since he did not break the precepts and persisted in their observance even at the risk of his life, his effort is to be regarded as fulfilment of the Perfection of Morality).

Again:

- (a) When the morality is defiled by demeritorious thoughts of self-praise and disparagement of others such as "I am virtuous; others are not virtuous and inferior to me", it is a minor morality.
- (b) The morality which is not tainted with such defilements but is a mundane *sīla* is a middle morality.
- (c) When the morality is free from all taints and is associated with supramundane Path and Fruition it is classed as a major morality.

Again:

- (a) **Hīna-sīla** (Minor morality) is the morality that is observed with a view to attain happy prosperous rebirths.
- (b) **Majjhima-sīla** (Middle morality) is one practised for self-liberation from the cycle of suffering such as that practised by future ordinary disciples of the Buddhas or by future Paccekabuddhas (Non-Teaching Buddhas).
- (c) **Panīta-sīla** is observed by Bodhisattas for the purpose of liberating all beings from the cycle of rebirths and it qualifies as Perfection of Morality (*Sīla-pāramī*). (This Commentarial statement is made with reference to the noblest type of morality. But this does not mean that morality observed by Bodhisattas alone qualifies as such; morality belonging to Paccekabuddhas and Disciples of a Buddha, though it is not the noblest type, should also be recognized as Perfection of Morality).

(2) (a) **Attādhīpateyya-sīla**, (b) **Lokādhīpateyya-sīla** and (c) **Dhammādhīpateyya-sīla**.

- (a) **Attādhīpateyya-sīla** is the morality observed out of self-respect and to satisfy one's conscious by abandoning what is unbecoming and unprofitable.
- (b) **Lokādhīpateyya-sīla** is the morality observed out of regard for the world and to ward off censure of others.
- (c) **Dhammādhīpateyya-sīla** is the morality observed in reverence to the glory of the Buddha's Teaching. One who practises this *sīla* is convinced that the discourse of

the Buddha on the subjects of the Path, the Fruition and Nibbāna truly show the way to liberation from the cycle of rebirths and that the only way to pay respect to the Dhamma and to honour the Dhamma is through observance of precepts.

(3) (a) **Parāmatṭha-sīla**, (b) **Aparāmatṭha-sīla**, and (c) **Patippassaddha-sīla**.

- (a) **Parāmatṭha-sīla** is the same as *Nissita-sīla* (item 4 of the Groups of Twos); it is observed with adherence to craving or wrong view. Because of craving, one is pleased with the thought that his morality would result in happy destination he longs for and that it is superior to that of others. Because of wrong view, he holds that his morality is the ‘Soul or Substance’. In either case, that morality falls under the category of *Paramatṭha-sīla*.

(Even while practising it, this morality burns with the fires of craving and wrong view. The fires of craving and wrong view burn not only when enjoying the sense pleasures, but even while practising alms-giving and morality. Only when the practice of good deeds reaches the state of meditation, that it becomes immune from the ravages of these fires. By practising (Vipassanā Meditation) till one comes to realize that this body is not self, not a personality but mere phenomenon of matter and mind, one can become free from the fires of wrong personality-belief, *sakkaya-diṭṭhi*).

- (b) **Aparāmatṭha-sīla** is morality observed by a virtuous worldling (*kalyāna-puthujjana*) who is established in the Triple Gem and who has started cultivating the Noble Path of eight constituents with a view to attain the Path and Fruition. This is also the morality of a learner (*sekkha*) who, through cultivating the Noble Path of eight constituents, has attained one of the four Paths or the first three Fruitions but still has to work for the Final Goal of the Fourth Fruition.

- (c) **Patippassaddha-sīla** is morality that becomes calm on attaining the four Fruition States (of *sotāpatti*, *sakadāgāmī*, *anāgāmī* and *arahatta*).

(4) (a) **Visuddha-sīla**, (b) **Avisuddha-sīla**, and (c) **Vematika-sīla**.

- (a) **Visuddha-sīla** is morality of a *bhikkhu* who has not committed a single offence (of the Vinaya rules) or who has made amends after committing an offence.

- (b) **Avisuddha-sīla** is morality of a *bhikkhu* who has committed an offence and has not made amends after committing it.

- (c) **Vematika-sīla** is morality of a *bhikkhu* who has misgivings about the alms-food he has accepted (whether it is bear meat which is not allowable, or pork which is allowable for him); who has misgivings about the offence he has committed (whether it is a *pācittiya-āpatti* or *dukkata-āpatti*) and who is uncertain whether the act he has done constitutes an offence or not.

(A *bhikkhu* engaged in meditation should endeavour to purify his *sīla* if it is impure. Should he be guilty of a light offence (i.e. one of the ninety-two *pacittiya* offences), he should remedy it by admission of the offence to a *bhikkhu* and thus purify his *sīla*. Should he be guilty of a grave offence (i.e. one of the thirteen *sanghādisesa* offences), he should approach the Sangha and confess his offence. Then, as ordered by the Sangha, he should first observe the *parivāsa* penance⁷ and then carry out the *manatta* penance⁸. Then only would his *sīla* become pure and he is fit for practice of meditation. Should he have doubts about the nature of the alms-food he has accepted or of any of the actions he has done, he should carefully scrutinize them or consult a Vinaya specialist who is learned in the

7. *Parivāsa*: a penalty for a *sanghādisesa* offence requiring him to live under suspension from association with the rest of the Sangha for as many days as he has knowingly concealed his offence. At the end of this *parivāsa* observance he undergoes a further period of penance, *mānatta*.

8. *Manatta*: a period of penance for six days to gain approbation of the Sangha, after which he requests the Sangha to reinstate him to full association with the rest of the Sangha.

Vinaya rules and thus remove his scruples and purify his *sīla*).

(5) (a) **Sekka-sīla**, (b) **Asekkha-sīla**, and (c) **Nevasekkha-nāsekkha-sīla**.

- (a) **Sekka-sīla** is the morality observed by one who is still undergoing Training. It is the morality associated with those who have attained the Four Paths and the first Three Fruition States.
- (b) **Asekkha-sīla** is the morality observed by one who no longer requires any training. It is the morality associated with those who have attained the Fruition State of an Arahāt.
- (c) The group of mundane precepts not falling under (a) and (b) is **Nevasekkha-nāsekkha-sīla**. It is the morality observed by one who is neither a learner nor a non-learner; it is the morality of an ordinary worldling.

Morality in Groups of Fours

(1) (a) **Hānabhāgiya-sīla**, (b) **Thitibhāgiya-sīla**, (c) **Visesabhāgiya-sīla**, and (d) **Nibbedhabhāgiya-sīla**.

- (a) The morality that is bound to decrease is called **Hānabhāgiya-sīla**. (A certain *bhikkhu* associates himself with immoral persons only and does not associate with the virtuous; he does not know or see the fault of committing an offence, he often dwells with wrong thoughts and does not guard his faculties. The morality of such a *bhikkhu* makes no progress, instead it decreases day by day.)
- (b) The morality that remains stagnant is called **Thitibhāgiya-sīla**. (A certain *bhikkhu* remains satisfied with the morality he is already established in and does not wish to practise meditation for further advancement. He is quite content with mere morality and does not strive for any higher state; his morality neither makes progress nor decreases, it just stagnates.)
- (c) The morality that will gain distinction is called **Visesabhāgiya-sīla**. (A certain *bhikkhu*, having established himself in morality, is not content with mere morality but strives for concentration of mind. The morality of that *bhikkhu* is called **Visesabhāgiya-sīla** or the morality that will gain the special benefit of the concentration of mind.)
- (d) The morality that penetrates and dispels the darkness of defilements is **Nibbedhabhāgiya-sīla**. (A certain *bhikkhu* is not content with mere morality but strives hard to get, through Vipassanā meditation, strong Vipassanā-insight (*balavavipassanā-nāna*) which is the knowledge of disgust with the sufferings of the cycle of rebirths. The morality of that *bhikkhu* is the one that penetrates and dispels the darkness of defilements through the Path and the Fruition.)

(2) (a) **Bhikkhu-sīla**, (b) **Bhikkhunī-sīla**, (c) **Anupasampanna-sīla**, and (d) **Gahaṭṭha-sīla**.

- (a) The rules of discipline promulgated by the Exalted One for *bhikkhus* and those which should also be observed by them although promulgated for *bhikkhunīs* are called **Bhikkhu-sīla**.
- (b) The rules of discipline promulgated for *bhikkhunīs* and those which should also be observed by them although promulgated for *bhikkhus* are called **Bhikkhunī-sīla**.
- (c) The Ten Precepts observed by male and female novices or neophytes, *sāmaṇeras* and *sāmaṇerīs*, are called **Anupasampanna-sīla**. (Non-*bhikkhus* are called *anupasampanna*. Although lay men are also *Anupasampanna*, according to this definition, they will be shown as *gahaṭṭha* separately and are, therefore, not included here. Only *sāmaṇeras* and *sāmaṇerīs* are taken as *anupasampanna* by the Commentator. Yet there is another kind called *sikkhamāna*. As the *sikkhamānas* are elder *sāmaṇerīs* who undergo a special training as probationers to become *bhikkhunīs*, they are not mentioned here separately but are reckoned as *sāmaṇerīs*).

(d) The morality observed by the laity is called **Gahaṭṭha-sīla**.

With regard to Gahaṭṭha Sīla, the **Visuddhi-magga** says:

Upasaka upāsikānam nīccasīlavasena pañcasikkhāpadāni sati vā ussāhe dasa upesathaṅga vasena atthāti idam gahaṭṭha-sīlam.

The Five Precepts as a permanent undertaking, the Ten Precepts when possible and the Eight Precepts as a special observance on an Uposatha day, come under Gahaṭṭha Sīla which should be observed by male and female followers.

There are different views on the meaning of the Pāli phrase: “*sati vā ussāhe* — when possible” of the Visuddhi-magga.

Some teachers take the view that not only the Five Precepts but also the Ten Precepts are to be observed as permanent undertaking. They wrongly apply to the Ten Precepts the attribute of *nīcca-sīla*, a ‘permanent undertaking’ which is only meant for the Five Precepts.

According to these teachers, “To observe the Five Precepts, it is not necessary to consider whether a person has the ability; he should observe the Five Precepts forever. Regarding the Ten Precepts, even though it is urged that the Ten Precepts should be observed as a permanent undertaking, only persons with the ability should observe them. The ‘ability’ means the ability to abandon his treasure of gold and silver with no more attachment to it; giving up his possessions in this manner, he should observe the Ten Precepts for the whole of his life, not just for some days and months only’. If his intention is to avoid handing gold and silver during the period of observance only and to use them again afterwards, then he should not observe them at all.

Again, some people erroneously think and say: “It is difficult for people to abandon their own possessions of gold and silver; therefore, laymen are not fit to observe the Ten Precepts.” Also, according to the **Visuddhi-magga Mahātīka**, the term ‘*dāsa*’ (ten), should be taken as the Ten Precepts of *sāmañeras*. It is commented further that *sīla* here is meant to be like the *sīla* observed by Ghatikāra the pot-maker and others. This commentarial statement makes for more confusion in the already mistaken view of these people. They take the extreme view that it is not enough for people to merely refrain from acquiring and accepting new wealth; they should be able to abandon all that they have already possessed just as Gha Tikara of the Ghatikāra Sutta (**Rājavagga, Majjhimaṇṇāsa**) refrained from using gold and silver for his whole life. And only when they are like Ghatikāra in this respect, they can be fully established in the Ten Precepts. Thus they have made an overstatement.

To clarify:

Their view is that only when a person can “abandon his treasure of gold and silver with no more attachment to it”, he should observe the Ten Precepts. It is mistaken as it arises with reference to *Jātarūpa sikkhāpada* of the Ten Precepts. According to this interpretation, only when people can abandon all the wealth they possess, without clinging any more, they will be fully established in the precepts. Ghatikāra is an *anāgāmin* (a Non-Returner), who has already abandoned all his wealth without clinging any more. Nowadays, although the laity do not acquire fresh wealth on the day of observance of the Ten Precepts, they have stored up at home and elsewhere all the wealth they have made previously and so it is against the *jātarūpa sikkhāpada*. Hence, they should not observe the Ten Precepts unless they abandon all their wealth with no more attachment. Even if they take the Ten Precepts, they fail to keep them.

The interpretation of these teachers is not sustainable, because there is for *bhikkhus*, *rupiyasikkhapada*, concerning handling and possession of money which is more subtle and nobler than the *jātarūpa sikkhapada* of the laity. According to that *sikkhāpada*, a *bhikkhu* should not accept money nor let others do so for him; if it is left near him in the absence of someone to receive it, he should not remain complacent but raise his objection saying: “Gold and silver is not allowable for *bhikkhus*; we do not want to accept it.” If he does not

raise any objection, then he commits an offence; and the gold and silver should be abandoned by him too. This is the disciplinary rule laid down by the Buddha.

Suppose a *dāyaka* comes to a *bhikkhu* and offers money, even though the *bhikkhu*, following the Vinaya rules, forbade him and refuses to accept it; but he leaves it all the same and goes away; if another *dāyaka* comes along and the *bhikkhu* tells him about the money and the *dāyaka* says: "Then please show me a safe place for keeping the money", the *bhikkhu* may go up to the seventh terrace of the monastery, taking the *dāyaka* with him, and says: "Here is a safe place". But he should not say: "Keep it here". However, when the *dāyaka* has gone away after keeping the money safely in the place shown by the *bhikkhu*, the *bhikkhu* can close the door of the room carefully and keep watch on it. In doing so, the *bhikkhu* is not guilty of infringement of any disciplinary rule, states the Commentary clearly on *rūpiya sikkhāpada*.

If possession of gold and silver is not allowable for the laity observing the *jātarūpa sikkhāpada*, it will, by no means, be allowable for the *bhikkhu* who observes the subtler and nobler precepts to keep watch on his gold and silver. Thus, it should be noted that if such a *bhikkhu* is free from offence, so is the laity who is not affected in the observance of the *jātarūpa sikkhāpada* by his possession of wealth left in place of security.

In the **Visuddhi-magga Mahātikā**, the example of Ghaṭikāra the pot-maker, is not cited to convey the meaning that "the laity should observe the Ten Precepts only when they can abandon all their wealth without clinging any more" like Ghatikāra. Actually, the example of Ghaṭikāra, a superior observer of the Ten Precepts, is cited just to exhort the people not to be content with their ordinary observance of the Ten Precepts, but that they should make efforts to become observers of a higher type following Ghatikāra's example. Even though they cannot be equal to him, the citation is made in order to encourage them to emulate Ghatikāra as far as possible.

The authority for this remark is: "*sīlamayanti niccasīla uposatha niyamādivasena pañca attha dasa vā silāni samādiyantassa*" as commented in the **Itivuttaka Aṭṭhakathā** by Acariya Dhammapāla Thera, the author of **Visuddhi-magga Mahātikā**. The Commentary mentions three kinds of morality, namely, (i) the Five Precepts observed permanently (*nicca sīla*), (ii) the Eight Precepts observed on *uposatha* days, (*uposatha sīla*), and (iii) the Ten Precepts observed occasionally (*niyama sīla*). It is clear that, according to this Commentary, the ten precepts are not observed permanently; they are observed occasionally.

Again, in the **Sagāthāvagga Saṃyutta Pāli, Sakka Saṃyutta**, we find the following account. Sakka, King of Devas, came down from Vejayanta Palace to go to the royal garden. When he was about to get onto his chariot, he paid homage to the eight directions. Then the Deve Mātali said: "To whom do you pay homage, Sir?"

Sakka said: *Ye gahaṭṭhā puññakarā,
sīlavanto upasakā,
dhammena dāraṃ posenti,
te namassāmi Mātali.*

Mātali, some people perform meritorious deeds; they are also endowed with morality; they take refuge in the Three Gems of Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, and they support their wives and children righteously. To them I pay homage.

The term 'Sīlavanto' in the Sakka's reply is explained by the commentator thus: "*Sīlavanto ti upāsakatte patiṭṭhāya pañcahi pi dasahi pi sīlehi samannāgatā*. — Those, who are endowed with morality means those who take refuge in the Three Gems and become established in the Five Precepts and the Ten Precepts." (According to this Commentary it is clear that the people to whom Sakka, King of Devas, pay homage are the people who, living with their families, observe the Five and Ten Precepts).

Also in the Saṃyutta Sub-Commentary, it is commented thus: *niccasīlavasena pañcahi*

niyamavasena dasahi — the Five Precepts should be taken as *Nicca-sīla*, the Ten Precepts as *Niyama-sīla*.

Niyama Sīla

In the Magadha Dictionary, verse 444, the meaning ‘*Niyama Sīla*’ is briefly shown thus: “The morality which must be observed forever is *Yāma Sīla*. The morality which is not observed forever but only occasionally is called *Niyama Sīla*. The expression, ‘*Yāma-sīla*’ and ‘*Niyama-sīla*’, has its origin in Brahmanism. (Not harming, not speaking lies, not stealing, not indulging in ignoble sexual act, not accepting alms-food—these five are *yāma-sīla* which must be observed forever; purifying, being easily content, practising austerity, reciting the Vedas, recollecting the Brahmā—these five are *niyama-sīla* which should be observed occasionally (*Amarakosa Brāhmaṇa Vagga*, v. 49.)

According to the *Saṃyutta Pāli* and its Commentary, it is clear that even the people who are supporting their families by right livelihood can observe the Ten Precepts. Hence the view: “People should observe the Ten Precepts only when they can abandon their gold and silver without clinging anymore, like Ghaṭikāra, the pot-maker” is not a right one; it is merely an overstatement.

Moreover, of the ten duties of a king, mentioned in the Mahāhamisa Jātaka of the *Asīti Nipāta*, the Commentary says that by the term ‘*sīla*’ is meant both the Five and the Ten Precepts. Therefore, it is evident that kings observe also the Ten Precepts as (one of) their duties. If it is maintained that “the Ten Precepts should be observed only when they can be observed forever”, then kings who have chief queens, lesser queens and maids of honour and a treasury filled with gold and silver would not be able to observe the Ten Precepts because of the *Abrahmacariya* and *Jātarūpa sikkhāpada*s. Had it been impossible for kings to observe, then the Commentator would not have included the Ten Precepts in his comment on *sīla* of the ten kingly duties. But the Commentator has definitely mentioned them in his comment. Therefore, the Ten Precepts are not *nicca-sīla*; they are the morality to be observed whenever one is able to do so.

Moreover, the *Khuddakapāṭha Commentary* explains how the Eight Precepts are derived from the ten *sikkhāpada*s: “Of the ten precepts⁹, the first two, *Pānātipātā sikkhāpada* and *Adinnādāna sikkhāpada*, are to be observed by the laity or *sāmaṇeras* as *nicca sīla*. (The third precept, *Abrahmacariya sikkhāpada*, is not mentioned as *nicca sīla* for the laity. It is the precept to be observed only when one is able to do so.) Again, out of the ten precepts, the seventh one, namely, *Naccagīta sikkhāpada* and the eighth one, namely, *Mālāgandha sikkhāpada* merge as one factor, the last *sikkhāpada* of *Jātarūpa* is excluded.

In accordance with this Commentary also, those out of the ten precepts which the laity should observe permanently are four, namely, refraining from killing, stealing, lies and taking intoxicants. The laity cannot always observe *Abrahmacariya sikkhāpada*. They are also unable to observe permanently the precepts of *Vikālabhojana*, *Naccagīta*, etc. Thus it is clear that all these ten precepts are *niyama* type of *sīla* to be observed only when able.

Although it is mentioned in the *Khuddakapāṭha Commentary* that *Jātarūpa sikkhāpada* is a special precept for *sāmaṇeras*, breaking it will not entail falling from novicehood. Because in the *Mahākhandhaka* of the *Vinaya Mahāvagga Pāli*, although the Exalted One laid down the ten *liṅgas* (factors) which will make the novices fall from their novicehood, only the first five from the Ten Precepts are included in the ten *liṅgas*. The last five are not include. Therefore, in spite of breaking one of these last five factors, the novices will not fall from their novicehood; they are only guilty of breach of the rules which entail due punishment. If they take the punishment imposed by their teachers in the form of carrying sand, water, etc., they will become again good novices, duly absolved from guilt.

9. The Ten Precepts (*Dasa Sikkhāpada*): (1) *Pānātipātā*, (2) *Adinnādāna*, (3) *Abrahmacariya*, (4) *Musavāda* (5) *Surāmeraya*, (6) *Vikālabhojana*, (7) *Nacca gīta vādita visuka-dassana*, (8) *Mālāgandha vilepana dhāraṇa mandana vibbūsanatthāna*, (9) *Uceccāsayana Mahāsayana*, and (10) *Jātarūpa rajata patiggahana*.

Thus, even *sāmaṇeras* for whom the Ten Precepts are mandatory will not fall from their novicehood in spite of the *Jātarūpa sikkhāpada*. It is clear, therefore, that of the ten precepts, the last five are not so important as the first five for *semen eras*. Thus, it is not proper to say and write very seriously exhorting strict observance of the *Jātarūpa sikkhāpada* for the laity when it is not regarded as very important even for *sāmaṇeras*.

It is accepted that both the **Visuddhi-magga** and the **Khuddakapātha Commentary** are written by the Venerable Mahā Buddhaghosa. As the two books are written by one and the same author, the exposition should not be different. The passage from the **Visuddhi-magga**: “*upasakanamniccīlavasena pañca sikkhāpadāni sati vā ussāhe dasa* — The Ten Precepts is not *nicca-sīla* for the laity; they are *niyama-sīla* to be observed only when able” should thus be noted to be in line with the **Khuddakapātha** and **Itivuttaka Commentaries**.

With respect to breach of precepts, the **Khuddakapātha Commentary**, after dealing with matters concerning novices, states: “Whereas, in the case of the laity, after taking the vow of the Five Precepts, if one of them is broken, only that one is broken; and if that one be observed by taking a new vow, the five precepts are complete again.” But some teachers (*apare*) maintain thus: “If the five precepts be taken separately, i.e. one after another, breach of one will not cause the breach of the rest.” However, if they say, at the beginning of taking precepts, “*Pañcaṅga samannāgatam sīlam samādiyāmi* — I vow to observe the complete Five Precepts”, then, if one of them is broken, all are broken; because the vow was initially taken to keep the precepts together. As to the result of breach of precepts, each breach will have its own consequences, not affecting others.

But some teachers rationalize this view by saying that after vowing to observe the complete Five Precepts, if one of them is broken, all are not broken; others remain unaffected. If we thus accept this rationalization, there will be no difference at all in their views. In this connection, the *Sikkhapada Vibhaṅga* of the **Sammohavinodani** states:

“Gahattha yam yam vitikkamanti, tam tadeva khandam hoti bhijjati, avasesam na bhijjati, kasmā gahattha hi anibaddhasilā honti, yam yam sakkonti, tam tadeva gopenti.

After taking the precepts, if the lay men break one of them, only that one is broken; the rest are not. Because for the laity there is no mandatory permanent precepts to observe like novices. Of the five precepts, they may observe whichever they can; one, two or three, but not necessarily all the five. We should not say that because they observe only partially and not the complete Five Precepts it does not amount to observance of the precepts and that they will not get any merit for it.”

It should be noted thus that even though the laity cannot observe all five precepts but only as many as possible, they will get merit and that their *sīla* is genuine. In this connection, the **Patisambhidāmagga Commentary** comments on *Pariyanta Pārisuddhi-sīla* (this morality is described fully under morality in groups of fives). There are two kinds of limit regarding *sīla*, namely, the limit to the number of precepts observed and the limit to the duration of observance. The laity may observe one precept, or two, three, four, five, eight or ten precepts. But the trainees (*sikkhamāna sāmaṇera* and *sāmaṇerī*) have to observe the Ten Precepts in full. This is the limit to the number of precepts observed.

The essential meaning here is: If the laity take precepts numbering one, two, three, four, five, eight or ten and observed them properly, his morality will become *Sikkhāpada Pariyanta Pārisuddhi-sīla*, a pure one with the limit in number.

Therefore, although in practice one does not vow to take one, two, three or four, but all five precepts, it is not mandatory to observe all of them. If they can observe only one precept, they should observe that one. If they can observe two, they should observe those two; and so on.

It may be questioned when the laity have the right to observe any number of precepts they wish, why the Five Precepts alone are prescribed in the **Visuddhi-magga** thus: “*Upāsakopāsikānam niccāsīlavasena pañca sikkhāpadāni?*”

The answer is that the Commentary is here concerned mainly with the principle of morality, which requires that all the five precepts must be observed permanently, “*niccasīlavasena pañca sikkhāpadāni*”. We have no right to leave out any precept we wish. It will be a guilt to break any one of the five precepts. It is not only in the **Visuddhi-magga** but also in other texts that the Five Precepts is shown as *Nicca-sīla* in the light of the principle of morality.

Brahmacariya-Pañcama Sīla

In addition to the Five, Eight and Ten Precepts, there is also *Brahmacariya-Pañcama Sīla* observed by the laity. However, that *Brahmacariya-Pañcama Sīla* is, in reality, the five precepts. The third precept of the original five, “*Kāmesu micchā cārā veramani-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi*” is replaced by “*Abrahmacariyā veramani-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi*” to be *Brahmacariya-Pañcama Sīla*.

The *Brahmacariya-Pañcama Sīla* was observed at the time of Buddha Kassapa by Gavesi Upāsaka. (**Āṅguttara Nikāya**, Pañcaka Nipāta, 3. Upāsaka Vagga, 13. Gavesi Sutta.) At the time of Buddha Gotama, this *sīla* was observed by Uggā, the Banker of Vesālī and Uggā, the Banker of Hatthigāma, Vajjian Country. (**Āṅguttara Nikāya**, Atthaka Nipāta, 3. Gahapati Vagga, 1 Sutta and 2 Sutta.) The two Uggas took the *Brahmacariya-Pañcama Sīla* from the Exalted One and kept observing them; of the four wives they each possessed, the eldest ones were given away in marriage to the men they loved and the remaining ones were also abandoned likewise and thereafter they remained single for life; they were lay ‘Non-Returners’. It should not be misunderstood that married persons who want to observe the *Brahmacariya-sīla* at the present time have to abandon their wives with no more attachment to them. In other words, it should not be taken that they may not observe this *sīla* unless they are prepared to renounce their wives altogether. Because in the words of the **Khuddakapāṭha Commentary**, mentioned above, “of the ten precepts only four, namely, *Pāṇātipātā*, *Adinnādāna*, *Musāvāda*, and *Surāmeraya*, are regarded as *nicca-sīla*”. Hence it is evident that *Abrahmacariya sikkhāpada* and the remaining precepts, such as *Vikālabhojana*, etc. are not *nicca-sīla*; they are *niyama-sīla* to be observed occasionally. Even though they cannot observe the precepts exactly like Ghatikara the Pot-Maker, they can observe them as *niyama-sīla* as far as possible. So also, with regard to *Brahmacariya-Pañcama Sīla*, the two Uggas, being ‘Non-Returners’, abandoned their wives without anymore attachment, and observed the precepts for life. If other people can follow their example and observe this precept, it is well and good; but if they cannot emulate them fully, they should observe the precept only according to their ability.

Brahmacariya-Pañcama Ekabhaddika Sīla

Furthermore, there is yet *Brahmacariya-Pañcama Ekabhaddika Sīla* (or *Ekabhaddika Sīla*). *Ekabhaddika* means taking only one meal a day, in the morning. So, if lay people want to observe this *sīla*, they may, after making the vow of *Brahmacariya-Pañcama* precepts, take one more precept by saying: “*Vikālabhojanā veramani-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi*”. Or, if they wish to take the vow as a whole, they may do so by saying: “*Brahmacariya- Pañcama Ekabhaddikasīlam samādiyāmi*”. This *sīla* was observed by Dhammika Upāsaka and Nandamatā Upāsikā, etc. at the time of the Exalted One, according to the *Dhammika Sutta* of the *Suttanipāta* Commentary. At the time of Buddha Kassapa, Gavesi Upāsaka also observed this *sīla*; so did five hundred laymen. (**Āṅguttara Nikāya**, Pañcaka Nipāta, 3. Upāsaka Vagga, 10. Gavesi Sutta.)

Aṭṭhanga Uposatha Sīla

It may be questioned why, regarding the Five Precepts, the term ‘*pañna*’ alone is used, and, regarding the Ten Precepts, the term ‘*dāsa*’ is used; whereas in describing the Eight Precepts not only the term ‘*attha*’ but the additional term ‘*uposatha*’ is used?

The term ‘*Uposatha*’ has five meanings, namely,

- (1) Recitation of *Pātimokkha*,
- (2) Proper name for persons or animals,

- (3) Observance,
- (4) The *sīla* which should be observed, and
- (5) The day for observing *sīla*.

Of these five, the first meaning (1) is concerned only with the *bhikkhu*; and the second meaning (2), being the name for a prince (e.g. Prince Uposatha) or of an elephant (e.g. Uposatha Elephant), etc. has no connection with the Chapter on *Sīla*; only the remaining three meanings are to be considered here.

The three meanings are derived from the Pāli term ‘*Upavasa*’ which means observing or fulfilling the precepts. The third meaning (3) is the act of observing the precepts. The fourth meaning (4) is the precepts, which should be kept. The fifth meaning (5) is the day on which the precepts are kept.

No particular day was fixed by the virtuous people in the past for observance of the Five Precepts and the Ten Precepts; only the Eight Precepts was observed on specially fixed day. Hence the special epithet of *Uposatha* for these eight precepts.

There is another point to consider. The Five Precepts is not as numerous as the Eight Precepts and as it is to be kept everyday, no special day was named for their observance. But as the Ten Precepts is higher than the Eight Precepts, the virtuous people in the past should have fixed a special day for their observance. If so, why had they not done so? The probable reason is that the Eight Precepts is specially suitable for the laity whereas the Ten Precepts is not. According to the **Visuddhi-magga**, the Ten Precepts is for *sāmaṇeras* and *sāmaṇerīs*. The **Khuddakapatha Commentary** also states that the last precept, *Jātarūpa sikkhāpada*, of the Ten Precepts, is a special one for *sāmaṇeras*. It is, therefore, evident that the Ten Precepts is specifically for *sāmaṇeras*, not for laymen.

Therefore, the learned and virtuous in the past selected, out of the two kinds of *sīla* which concerned them, the Eight Precepts which is of a higher form, to be observed on a specially appointed day. Only the Eight Precepts is therefore called **Uposatha** as explained in the **Visuddhi-magga**.

The virtuous are not content with the observance of *sīla* only; they also wish to make meritorious deeds through giving alms, which entail acquiring, buying, shopping of things to offer. Consequently, they cannot properly observe the *Jātarūpa-rajata sikkhāpada*. Therefore, the ancient people fixed a special day for observance of the Eight Precepts only.

Navaṅga Uposatha

In the **Anguttara Nikāya** (Navaka Nipāta, 2. Sihanāda Vagga, 8. Sutta) an exposition on *Navaṅga Uposatha Sīla* is given with this introduction: “The Nine Precepts is beneficial, advantageous, powerful”. In enumerating them, the Exalted One expounds the usual Eight Precepts from the *Pāṇātipātā sikkhāpada* up to *Uccāsayana-Mahāsayana sikkhāpada*, but ends up with the formula for practice of loving-kindness thus: “*Mettā sahaḡatena cetasaṃ ekam disaṃ pharitvā viharāmi* — I abide with thoughts of loving-kindness directed to beings in one direction.”

According to the discourse, to keep the *Navaṅga Uposatha Sīla*, after taking the usual Eight Precepts, one keeps on developing Loving-kindness. A man who observes the Eight Precepts without any breach and keeps on developing loving-kindness is called an observer of the Nine Precepts. Loving-kindness is to be developed whereas *sīla* is to be observed. Therefore, to practise the Nine Precepts, one need not recite the nine precepts when taking the vow. It is sufficient to take the usual Eight Precepts and to develop loving-kindness as much as possible; then one is said to be practising the Nine Precepts (*Navaṅga Uposatha*).

With regard to loving-kindness, as the Exalted One particularly mentioned ‘*ekam disaṃ*’, diffusing loving-kindness with one direction in mind is more effective than doing so without minding the direction. One should direct one’s thought to all beings in the ten directions (the four cardinal points, the four intermediate points, plus above and below), one after another, beginning from whichever direction one wishes.

Even though there are four sublime mental states¹⁰, the Exalted One takes only loving-kindness and adds it to the Eight, thus prescribing the Nine Precepts because loving-kindness has a great power. That is why the Exalted One has expounded the *Mettā Sutta* in the **Khuddakapāṭha** and the **Suttanipāṭa**.

Also, in the **Āṅguttara Nikāya**, (Ekādasaka Nipata, 2. Anussati Vagga, 5. Sutta), are expounded the eleven advantages that accrue repeatedly to him who develops loving-kindness:

- (a) he sleeps well in peace,
- (b) he wakes up well in peace,
- (c) he dreams no bad dreams,
- (d) he is dearly loved by human beings,
- (e) he is dearly loved by non-human beings (*ogres* and *petas*),
- (f) he is protected by devas,
- (g) he is not afflicted by fire, poison and weapons,
- (h) his mind is easily concentrated,
- (i) his face is calm and clear,
- (j) he dies unconfused, and
- (k) if he cannot penetrate higher Dhamma, *arahatta-magga* and *phala*, in this life, he will take rebirth in the Brahmā-world.

Therefore, it is clear that loving-kindness is more powerful than the other three sublime mental states.

Three Kinds of Uposatha Sīla

Uposatha Sīla is of three kinds:

- (1) **Gopala Uposatha** - The Cowherd's Uposatha
- (2) **Nigantha Uposatha** - The Naked Ascetic's Uposatha
- (3) **Ariya Uposatha** - The Noble One's Uposatha

as expounded by the Exalted One in the **Āṅguttara Nikāya** (Tika Nipāta, 2. Mahā Vagga, 10. Visakhuposatha Sutta). The essential meanings are-

(1) The **Uposatha Sīla** observed with thoughts of a cowherd is called '**Gopāla Uposatha**'. After grazing the cattle all day long, the cowherd returns them to the owner in the evening. On reaching home, he thinks only in this way: "Today, I have grazed the cattle in such-and-such a field and taken them to water at such-and-such a place. Tomorrow, I'll take them to such-and-such field for food and to such-and-such a place for water." Similarly, the observer of **Uposatha Sīla**, having greedy thoughts of food, thinks: "Today, I have taken such-and-such a kind of food. Tomorrow, I'll take such-and-such a kind." If he spends the day thus like the cowherd, his *uposatha* is called **Gopāla Uposatha**.

(2) The **Uposatha Sīla** observed by a naked ascetic who holds wrong views is called **Nigantha Uposatha**. For example, according to their practice with regard to *Pāṇātipātā* precept, killing living beings beyond a distance of one hundred *yojana* east, west, north and south must not be done. Within such-and-such a distance killing is allowed, thus giving a chance of committing evil. Differentiation between forbidden and unforbidden places for doing wrong, they practise their *uposatha*. The *uposatha* practised by the holders of such a view is called **Nigantha Uposatha**.

(3) If the *uposatha* is observed after purifying the mind of defilements through recollection of the special attributes of the Buddha, etc. it is called **Ariya Uposatha**. The *Ariya Uposatha* again is of six kinds:

10. The Four Sublime mental states: Loving-kindness (*Metta*), Compassion (*Karuṇā*), Altruistic joy (*Mudita*) and Equanimity (*Upekkhā*).

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

- (a) Brahmuposatha - Noble¹¹ Uposatha
(b) Dhammuposatha - Dhamma Uposatha
(c) Sanghuposatha - Sangha Uposatha
(d) Sīluposatha - Sīla Uposatha
(e) Devatuposatha - Devata Uposatha
(f) Atthanguposatha - Uposatha with the eight precepts
- (a) The *uposatha* that is observed by taking the Eight Precepts and repeatedly recollecting the special attributes of the Buddha such as Arahā, etc. is called **Brahmuposatha**.
(b) The *uposatha* that is observed by taking the Eight Precepts and repeatedly recollecting the special attributes of the Dhamma is called **Dhammuposatha**.
(c) The *uposatha* that is observed by taking the Eight Precepts and repeatedly recollecting the special attributes of the Sangha is called **Sanghuposatha**.
(d) The *uposatha* that is observed by taking the Eight Precepts, observing without breaking any of them and repeatedly recollecting the special attributes of *sīla* is called **Sīluposatha**.
(e) Reflecting that “there are in the world devas and Brahmās who have endowed themselves with noble qualities of pure faith, morality, learning, generosity, and wisdom in their previous births and as a result are reborn in the realm of devas and Brahmās; such noble qualities are present in me, too”, one observes the *uposatha* comparing himself with *devatās*. Such *uposatha* is called **Devatuposatha**. (Here *devatā* stands for both devas and Brahmās.)
(f) After taking the Eight Precepts, one reflects thus: “Just as *arahats* never kill or harm any living being and always have compassion for them, so also I do not kill or harm any living being and have compassion for them; by this practice, I am following the way of *arahats*.” The *uposatha* observed in this manner reflecting on each of the eight precepts is called **Atthanguposatha**.

It should be noted that the division of *uposatha* into the three and the six kinds is in reference to the manner of keeping it. Primarily, however, the *sīla* which is observed is of two kinds only, **Atthanga Uposatha Sīla** and **Navāṅga Uposatha Sīla** as already stated above.

Three Kinds of Uposatha Day

The classification below is made in the light of the **Aṅguttara Nikāya (Tika Nipata, 4. Devadutadvagga, 7. Raja Sutta, etc.)**, which says: “*uposatham upavasanti patijagaronti*” and

*cātuddasim pañcaddasim,
yā ca pakkhassa atthami,
pātihāriya pakkhañ ca,
atthanga susamāgatam.*

(1) Pakati Uposatha (Ordinary Uposatha Day)

In the above Pāli verse, the lines reading “*cātuddasim pañcaddasim, yā ca pakkhassa atthami*” refer to ordinary **Uposatha** days. In accordance with this, each fortnight of a month, waxing or waning, has three *uposatha* days, namely, the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth days. Therefore, a month has six **Uposatha** days, which are called ordinary **Uposatha** days. In the Commentary, however, the waxing fortnight has four **Uposatha** days,

11. Noble: Brahmā; here Brahmā refers to the Buddha, the Noblest Being.

namely, the fifth, the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth waxing days; the waning fortnight has four **Uposatha** days, too, namely, the fifth, the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth waning days; altogether there are eight **Uposatha** days in a month. These eight are ordinary **Uposatha** days usually observed by the laity.

(Whereas, nowadays, the lay people observe only four **Uposatha** days in each month. These are the eighth waxing, the full-moon, the eighth waning and the new-moon days.)

(2) **Paṭijāgara Uposatha (Pre-and Post-Uposatha Days)**

Paṭijāgara Uposatha means the eight ordinary **Uposatha** days observed with one additional day before and after each of them. (*Pati* means ‘repeatedly’; *Jāgara* means ‘waking’. Therefore, *Paṭijāgara-sīla* may be interpreted as morality which repeatedly wakes up from the slumber of defilements.) To calculate the number of days: the fifth waxing **Uposatha** day is preceded by the fourth waxing, and followed by the sixth waxing **Uposatha** days; the eighth **Uposatha** day is preceded by the seventh waxing and followed by the ninth waxing **Uposatha** days; the fortnight waxing **Uposatha** day is preceded by the thirteenth waxing **Uposatha** day (but there is not **Uposatha** day to follow); the full-moon day is not preceded by an **Uposatha** day but is followed by the first waning **Uposatha** day. Hence, serially there are the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, the seventh, the eighth, the ninth, the thirteenth, the fourteenth waxing, the full-moon and the first waning days. Thus there are ten days in the waxing fortnight and ten days in the waning fortnight of the month, making altogether eight **Pakati Uposatha** and twelve **Paṭijāgara Uposatha** days in a month.

(3) **Pāṭihāriya Uposatha.**

The **Uposatha** which is more powerful than the *Paṭijāgara* is called **Pāṭihāriya. Paṭijāgara Uposatha** has intervening days in the waxing and waning fortnight. **Pāṭihāriya Uposatha** has no such days, *sīla* being observed continuously.

If the laity wants to observe **Pāṭihāriya Uposatha**, they should observe for the whole three months of *Vassa* (rains-retreat) without a break. If they cannot observe for the whole three months, they should do so for one month from the full moon of Thadingyut (October) to the full moon of Tazaungmon (November). If they cannot observe for one month, they should do so for fifteen days from the full moon to the new moon of Thadingyut. This is stated in the **Āṅguttara Nikāya Commentary**.

However, according to the **Sutta Nipāta Attakhatha** (the Dhammika Sutta of the Cūla Vagga), the **Uposatha** observed for five months (Waso, Wagoung, Tawthalin, Thadingyut, Tazaungmon) without break is **Pāṭihāriya Uposatha**. Whereas other teachers say that the **Uposatha** observed for each of the three months of Waso, Tazaungmon and Tabaung without break is called **Pāṭihāriya Uposatha**. Still other teachers say that, according to Pāli Texts, there are three **Pakati Uposatha** days, namely, the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth of each fortnight of a month. If, in addition to those three **Pakati Uposatha** days, four more days, namely, the seventh before the eighth and the ninth after the eighth, the thirteenth before the fourteenth and the first day after the fifteenth are observed, such **Uposatha** is called **Pāṭihāriya Uposatha**. The Commentator remarks that for the benefit of the good people, who wish to acquire good merit, all kinds of *Sīlas* are mentioned to enable them to observe whichever they like.

Of the three views shown in the **Suttanipāta Atthakatha**, the Commentator's own view: “the **Uposatha** observed for five months is **Pāṭihāriya Uposatha**,” agrees in essence with the **Āṅguttara Commentary**, where the period of continuous observance is shown as three months; whereas in the **Suttanipata Commentary**, it is five months. That is the only difference.

The third view from the **Suttanipāta Commentary** is in agreement with that of the Commentaries on the **Nemi Jātaka**, **Vimānavatthu (Uttara Vimānavatthu)**, the **Theragātha** and the **Suruci Jātaka** of the **Pakinnaka Nipāta**.

However, according to the Sagathavagga of the **Sarṇyutta Atthakathā** (Indaka Vagga, 5. Sutta) the *Pāṭihāriya-uposatha* days in each fortnight of the month are the seventh, the ninth, the thirteenth, and the first waning or waxing day after the fifteenth and the half month after *vassa*, i.e. from the first waning to the new-moon day of Thadingyut.

Herein, there is one thing to consider: Even though the Commentaries on the **Āṅguttara**, the **Suttanipāṭa**, the **Jātaka**, and the **Saṃyutta** are written by the same Commentator, Venerable Mahā Buddhaghosa, why are they different from one another regarding *Uposatha* days?

That the Buddha actually described the three kinds of **Uposatha** is clear from the Visakh'uposath Sutta, but there is no *sutta* delivered by the Buddha to set aside specific days, three or six, as **Uposatha** days. The fourteenth **Uposatha**, the fifteenth **Uposatha**, the eighth **Uposatha**, **Paṭihāriya Uposatha** mentioned before are not prescribed by the Exalted One as days of **Uposatha** observance. Indeed, it was Sakka, King of Devas, who said to Tāvātimsa Deities: "People observe **Uposatha** on the fourteenth, the fifteenth, and the eighth. On the days called **Paṭihāriya**, too, they observe **Uposatha**." He was given this information by Catumaharajika who went round in the human world preparing a list of the virtuous. The Buddha was only reproducing the words of Sakka. The classification of the fourteenth, the fifteenth and the eighth **Uposatha** days is merely a statement of the **Uposatha** days traditionally observed by people. There is no special discourse expounded by the Exalted One to enjoin **Uposatha** must be observed on these days or must not be observed on other days.

Thus the fourteenth, the fifteenth, the eighth **Uposatha** days were the days of **Uposatha** observance prescribed by the ancient people. So, traditionally, there were only three **Pakati-Uposatha** days, but later on people observed the fifth day also and therefore there come to be four **Uposatha** days in each fortnight of a month. Thus the fifth **Uposatha** day is mentioned in the Commentary. Nowadays people observe only four **Uposatha** in a month.

The Buddha did not prescribe any specific **Uposatha** day because people can observe the precepts on whichever day they like. In mentioning **Paṭijāgara** and **Paṭihāriya Uposatha** days as special days for observance, the Commentators are merely recording the various customary practices of the people. Hence these seeming differences in the Commentaries.

Moreover, the **Āṅguttara**, the **Suttanipāṭa**, the **Saṃyutta** and the **Jātaka** which make expositions of *sīla* are known as the *Suttanta Desanā*, the teachings in discourses; they are also known as *Vohāra Desanā* because, in these discourses, the Buddha, who is incomparable in the usage of the world, employs the terms and expressions of the people which can never be uniform. Thus, with regard to different classifications of **Uposatha**, as all are meant to develop good merit, it is not necessary to decide which view is right and which view is wrong. In the **Suttanipata Commentary** the three views are described advising readers to accept whichever they like.

Sīla-observers select suitable days which they prefer and observe **Uposatha** accordingly in many ways. And all their observance develops merits, so the Commentators write, recording the ways employed by the people. In the Discourses, *Suttanta Desanā*, even the Buddha expounded following the usages of the people. Why did the Exalted One expound in this manner? Because He wished them not to violate their traditional customs which are not demeritorious.

The principal objective of the Exalted One is to expound only such realities as mind and matter (*Nāma-rūpa Paramattha Dhamma*) that would facilitate attainment of the Paths, Fruition States and Nibbāna. Teaching in such abstruse terms could be beneficial to those with right perception. But it could make those lacking it to commit wrong deeds which would lead them to the four lower worlds. For example, those who have wrong perception of *Nāma-rūpa dhamma* would think thus: "In this world there is *nāma-rūpa* only; there is neither 'I' nor 'others'; if there is no 'others' there will be no harm in killing them: and there will be neither 'mine' nor 'others'; therefore, there will be no harm in stealing things, in committing adultery, etc. In this manner, they will freely break the rules of society and do such unwholesome acts which will cause rebirths in the lower planes of existence.

In terms of Ultimate Truth (*paramattha-sacca*) there is neither 'I' nor 'others', neither 'man' nor 'woman', etc. There are only aggregates of *nāma-rūpa* (mental and physical phenomena). For those incapable of understanding the terms of Ultimate Truth, the Buddha employed terms of Conventional Truth (*samuti-sacca*) in giving Discourses (*Suttanta*

desanā). Though all is a mass of *nāma* and *rūpa*, by conventional-usage, it is determined for easy discrimination that such-and-such a mass is ‘I’ such and such a mass is ‘they’, such-and-such a mass is ‘mother’, ‘father’, etc. If people deviate the norm set up by conventional usages, they will go astray doing wrong deeds. It is to prevent them from falling to the lower planes of existence as a consequence of their misdeeds that the Buddha teaches the discourses in conventional terms.

If, however, only Discourses were delivered, people would take such term as ‘I’, ‘they’, ‘my son’, ‘my daughter’, ‘my wife’, ‘my property’, etc., as Ultimate Realities and their belief in Permanent Personality (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*) would become so great that they would not attain *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*.

Hence the teaching of *Nāma-Rūpa Paramattha Dhamma* by the Buddha.

Some teachers write: “In the **Vinaya Piṭaka** there is an injunction for *bhikkhus* not to observe ‘*bhikkhu uposatha*’ (recitation of *Pātimokkha* rules) on non-*Uposatha* days. If they do so, they commit the offence of *dukkata-apatti*. Likewise, laymen should not observe the Eight Precepts on non-*Uposatha* days.”

Such writing shows they are not accomplished in interpreting the Teaching of the Buddha. *Vinaya Desanā* is called **Anādesanā** in Buddhist literature; it means the authoritative injunction laid down by the Exalted One. If a *bhikkhu* commits even with good intention a forbidden act, he is guilty because he goes against the command of the Exalted One and transgresses the rules of the *Vinaya*. To assume that such a *Vinaya* rule is also applicable to laymen in their observance of **Uposatha**, to say that people must not observe precepts on non-*Uposatha* days and that doing so will be an offence, is a clear misinterpretation of the *Desanā*. In brief, **Uposatha** being a pure and noble observance can be fulfilled on any day. The more it is observed the greater will be the beneficial results.

Therefore, the Sub-commentary on the Mahā Sudassana Sutta of the Mahā Vagga, **Dīgha Nikāya**, says: “*uposatham vuccati atthaṅgasamannāgatam sabbadivasesu gahaṭṭhehi rakkhītabbasīlam-uposatha* is said to be the *sīla* with eight factors that can be observed by laymen on all days.” (This Sub-commentary is written by the Ven. Dhammapāla who has also written the **Anutikā**, the Sub-commentary of the **Mūlatikā**, the **Visuddhi-magga Mahātikā**, the **Itivuttaka Atthakathā**, etc., and other Sub-commentaries.)

(3) (a) Pakati-sīla, (b) Acāra-sīla, (c) Dhammatā-sīla and (d) Pubbahetu-sīla.

- (a) Non-transgression of the Five Precepts by inhabitants of the Northern Continent is called **Pakati-sīla**. (By nature, these inhabitants refrain from wrong deeds, such as killing, etc. without taking the vow of the Five Precepts.) Non-breaking of the Five Precepts by them is not a matter of restraint through a vow (*samadana-virati*), but of natural restraint even when transgression is demanded by circumstances (*sampatta-virati*).
- (b) Following traditional practices of one's family, locality or sect is called **Acāra-sīla**. (Refraining from evil because it is done so by one's ancestry is called **Kula-acāra**; refraining from evil because it is generally done so in one's locality is called **Desa-acāra**; refraining from evil because it is done so in one's sect is called **Pāsaṇa-sīla**.)
- (c) The kind of *sīla* kept by the mother of a Bodhisatta since she conceived her son, by virtue of which she has no thought for man, is called **Dhammatā-sīla**. (A Bodhisatta's mother regularly observes the Five Precepts and desires no man, not even her husband, from the moment of conception. This is because an extremely Noble Being, the Bodhisatta, is lying in her womb. As the *sīla* is kept as a rule by the mother of a Bodhisatta, it is called **Dhammatā-sīla**.)
- (d) The observance of *sīla* by chaste persons, such as the youth Pippali (who later became Mahā Kassapa) and the Bodhisatta like King Mahāsīlava, through natural inclination and without anyone's instruction is called **Pubbahetu-sīla**. (As a result of habitual observance of *sīla* in their former births, they are by nature inclined to observe *sīla* in this life.)

(4) (a) **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla**, (b) **Indriyasamvara-sīla**, (c) **Ājivapārisuddhi-sīla**, and (d) **Paccayasannissita-sīla**.

These four are chiefly concerned with the *bhikkhu*. When the *Bodhisatta*, Sumedha the Hermit, reflected on the Perfection of Morality, he said to himself: “*tath’eva tvam catūsu bhūmisu, silāni paripūraya* — likewise, you should become accomplished in the four realms of *sīla*.”

(a) **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla**

The *Sīla* that liberates its observer from suffering of the four lower worlds is called **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla**. (“*pāti*” - observer; “*mokkha*” - to set free)

The observer of this *sīla* (i) should have proper conduct, (ii) should have blameless, wholesome resorts, (iii) should see great danger in the slightest fault; the offence may be small like a particle of dust but one should see in it a danger as big as Mount Meru which has a height of one hundred and sixty-eight thousand yojanas above and under water and (iv) should observe and practise the precepts properly.

To explain further:

(i) In the world, there is **Ācāra-dhamma** that should be practised, and there is **Anācāra-dhamma** that should not be practised. The three wrong physical actions (killing, stealing and unlawful sexual intercourse) and the four wrong speeches (telling lies, backbiting, abusing and babbling), altogether seven wrong doings (*duccarita*), and other deeds that cause breach of *sīla* constitute *anācāra*.

To give some examples of unwholesome actions that would cause breach of *sīla*: in the world, some *bhikkhus* earn their living by making gifts of bamboo, leaves, flowers, fruits, soap powder, and tooth sticks to the laity; they degrade themselves by approving of the wrong speeches of the laity, flattering them to gain favour, telling much falsehood mixed with a little truth just like a lot of uncooked peas mixed with a few cooked ones in a pot. They look after children of the laity as nurse-maids, embracing them, dressing them, etc. They serve as messengers running errands for their lay supporters; they give medical treatment to laity, look after their properties, exchange food and beverage with them. Such wrong livelihood as well as every other resort of wrong livelihood condemned by the Buddha are called **Anācāra-dhamma**.

It is improper for the *bhikkhu* to give bamboo, leaves, etc. even if the laity come and ask for their use; more so, therefore, when they are not asked for. Such acts of giving are not the business of *bhikkhus*. If they do so, they would be destroying the faith of the laity (*kuladūsana*) in the Vinaya.

In this connection, it might be asked whether the laity’s faith would not be destroyed if the *bhikkhu* does not give them what they want, or whether, if the *bhikkhu* gave them what they want, their faith would develop with the thought: “This is the *bhikkhu* who satisfies our needs.” The laity’s faith in the *bhikkhu* as a disciple of the Exalted One has been genuine and pure even before receiving gifts from the *bhikkhu*; after their receipt, the laity will see him as the giver of bamboo, the giver of leaves, etc. and as a result attachment will arise in them. Therefore, their faith in the *bhikkhu* becomes tainted with attachment. The genuine faith has been destroyed. Accordingly, the Exalted One has condemned the giving of gifts by the *bhikkhu*, naming such act as **Kuladūsana**, ‘despoilment of the laity’s faith’.

All practices which are the opposite of the aforesaid **Anācāra** are **Ācāra** practices which should be cultivated.

(ii) Resort is of two kinds, namely, wrong resort and right resort.

Wrong resort: some *bhikkhus*, in the Teachings of the Buddha, have intimate dealings with prostitutes, widows, divorced women, spinsters, eunuchs and *bhikkhunīs*. They frequent ale houses which is unbecoming for a *bhikkhu*. They mingle with kings, ministers, heretics and their followers like ordinary laymen. They associate with people who have no faith, who abuse and threaten the disciples of the Buddha, *bhikkhus*, *bhikkhunīs*, male and

female lay devotees and who wish them ill. All these intimate associates of *bhikkhus* and places frequented by them are wrong resort for *bhikkhus*.

'Wrong resorts' here refers to unwholesome friendship and association and improper places for *bhikkhus* to visit. But if a prostitute invites *bhikkhus* for alms offering, they can go and receive it, maintaining steadfast mindfulness. Herein, prostitutes, widows, divorced women, spinsters, eunuchs and *bhikkhunīs* are regarded as unwholesome resorts, because they form the bases of five sensual pleasures. Ale houses, taverns etc. are dangerous to the noble practice of Dhamma. Association with kings and ministers are also not beneficial; offerings made by them may prove destructive like a thunderbolt. And the houses, where there is no faith, where people are abusive and threatening, are unwholesome resorts because they discourage faith and cause fear in the *bhikkhu*.

People and places as opposed to those described above constitute the *bhikkhu's* wholesome resort. Some lay people have faith and confidence in the Triple Gem; they believe also in *kamma* and its results; they are like wells or lakes where the *bhikkhu* may enjoy inexhaustible supply of water. Their houses are brightened by the colour of the robes of *bhikkhus* who visit them frequently. The atmosphere of such a place is filled with the breeze which is caused by movements of *bhikkhus*. Here, people wish them well, wish for the welfare of *bhikkhus*, *bhikkhunīs* and male and female lay devotees; such a house is a wholesome resort for *bhikkhus*.

To explain still further: Ācāra, Anācāra and Gocara.

***Anācāra* (Improper Conduct)**

There are two kinds of improper conduct (**Anācāra**), namely, improper bodily conduct (**Kāyika Anācāra**) and improper verbal conduct (**Vacasika Anācāra**).

Improper bodily conduct (*Kāyika Anācāra*)

After entering the Order, a *bhikkhu* acts disrespectfully towards the Sangha. He stands jostling the Elders, sits jostling them, stands or sits in front of them, takes a seat higher than that of the Elders, sits with his head covered with the robe, speaks while standing, waves his hands while talking, walks with the footwear on while the Elders are walking bare foot, takes a higher path while the Elders are taking a lower path, walks on a path while the Elders are walking on the ground, sits pushing the Elders, stands pushing them and give no place to the younger *bhikkhus*; (at the bath house) he puts faggots into stove without permission of the Elders and closes the door; (at the bathing place) he pushes the Elders and gets into the water in front of them, pushes them and bathes before they do, comes out jostling them before they do, and goes before them overtaking the Elders ahead of him; on reaching the village and town, he hurries into the laity's private and secret chambers and ladies' rooms; he strokes children's heads (showing signs of fondness). This is called improper bodily conduct (*Kāyika Anācāra*).

Improper verbal conduct (*Vacasika Anācāra*)

After entering the Order, a *bhikkhu* acts disrespectfully towards the Sangha. He talks about Dhamma without asking for permission of the Elders, answers questions, recites the *Pātimokkha* without permission; talks while standing, waves his hands while talking. On reaching the village and town, without restraining himself, he speaks to the women or young girls: "You so and so of such and such a family, what do you have? Is there rice gruel? Is there cooked rice? Is there hard food to eat? What shall we drink? What hard food shall we eat? What sort of food shall we eat? What will you offer me?", etc. This is called improper verbal conduct (*Vacasika Anācāra*).

***Ācāra* (Proper Conduct)**

Ācāra should be understood as the reverse of the said **Anācāra**, improper conduct. Furthermore, a *bhikkhu* is reverential, obedient, possessed of shame and conscience, wears his lower robe properly, wears his upper robe properly, his manners inspire reverential faith whether moving forwards or backwards, looking sideways, bending or stretching, his eyes are downcast, he guards the doors of his sense-faculties; he knows the right measure

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in eating, strives to be always wakeful, possesses mindfulness with full comprehension, he wants little, he is easily contented, he is strenuous in the practice of wholesome Dhamma, observes with meticulous care the *Abhisamācārika-sīla* described above. This is called proper conduct (**Ācāra**).

Gocara (Proper Resort)

Gocara is of three kinds: **Upanissaya Gocara**, the resort that serves as a powerful support for one's moral developments; **Ārakkha Gocara**, the resort that serves as a guardian of the mind, and **Upanibandha Gocara**, the resort that serves as an anchor of the mind.

A good friend who always uses the ten kinds of right speech conducive to liberation from *samsāra* is called **Upanissaya Gocara**. By depending upon such a friend, he hears the Dhamma which is unheard of before, dispels doubts, rectifies his views, gains clearness of mind. In addition to these benefits, he grows in faith, morality, learning, generosity and wisdom. Hence that good friend is the **Upanissaya Gocara**, the powerful support for developing wholesome qualities, such as morality, etc.

The ten kinds of speech conducive to liberation:

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| (1) appiccha kathā | - | speech about wanting little |
| (2) santutthi kathā | - | speech about contentment with what one has in hand |
| (3) paviveka kathā | - | speech about living in solitude |
| (4) asamsagga kathā | - | speech about living in seclusion |
| (5) viriyārambha kathā | - | speech about making effort |
| (6) sīla kathā | - | speech about morality |
| (7) samādhi kathā | - | speech about concentration of the mind |
| (8) paññā kathā | - | speech about Vipassanā Insight and the knowledge of the Paths |
| (9) vimutti kathā | - | speech about the Fruition States (liberation) |
| (10) vimuttiñānadassana kathā | - | speech about the <i>Paccavekhanā ñāna</i> (Reflective Knowledge of the Path and Fruition) |

In brief, the person who uses ten kinds of speech relating to liberation from the suffering of *samsāra* bringing thus five advantages such as hearing the Dhamma unheard of before, etc. The good friend, who can make others progress in five attributes, such as faith, morality, learning, generosity, and wisdom, is called **Upanissaya Gocara**, the resort which provides the strong sufficing condition for the development of wholesome qualities, such as morality, etc.

Mindfulness (*sati*) that guards the mind is called **Ārakkha Gocara**. (*‘Ārakkha’* - that guards the mind; *‘Gocara’* - *Sati*, mindfulness.) (A *bhikkhu*, who takes resort in mindfulness, goes for alms round into the village and town with downcast eyes, seeing at the length of a plough yoke in front of him, and guarding his sense faculties. He goes on without looking at the troops of elephants, or troops of horses., or troops of chariots, or infantry soldiers, or at women or men. He does not look up or down, or towards any of the eight directions and keeps going. A *bhikkhu* who does not take resort in mindfulness, **Ārakkha Gocara**, when going round for alms food in the village and town, looks this way and that way, everywhere, like a crow kept in a covered basket.) Hence, mindfulness is the resort that protects the mind of the *bhikkhu* from the danger of evil thoughts.

As the Four Foundations of Steadfast Mindfulness (*Satipatthāna Kammattāna*) are the resort to which the mind is anchored, it is called **Upanibandha Gocara**. ('**Upanibanda**' - where mind is anchored; '**gocara**' - resort.)

The bhikkhu, who wants to make his **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla** completely pure, should have proper conduct, wholesome resort and look upon the slightest fault as an enormous danger.

(b) Indriyasamvara-sīla

Guarding the faculty of sense is called **Indriyasamvara-sīla**. [(The six bases, namely, eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are called *Indriya*.) *Indriya* means governing. In seeing a sight, the eye (*cakkhu pasāda*) is the governing organ. If the eye is defective, it cannot see an object (eye-consciousness cannot arise); therefore, the Buddha says that the eye is called **cakkhundriya**. Similarly, in hearing a sound, the ear (*sota pasāda*) is the governing organ. If the ear is defective, it cannot hear a sound (ear-consciousness cannot arise); therefore, the ear is called **soṭindriya**. In smelling an odour, the nose (*ghāna pasāda*) is the governing organ; if the nose is defective, it cannot smell an odour (nose-consciousness cannot arise); therefore, the nose is called **ghānindriya**. In tasting a flavour, the tongue (*jivhā pasāda*) is the governing organ. If the tongue is defective, it cannot taste a flavour (tongue-consciousness cannot arise); therefore, the tongue is called **jivhindriya**. In touching a tangible object, the body (*kāya pasāda*) is the governing organ. If the body is defective, it cannot feel a tangible object (body-consciousness cannot arise); therefore, the body is called **kāyindriya**. In cognizing a mental object, the mind (*mana*) is the governing organ. With no mind there cannot arise mind-consciousness; therefore, mind is called **manidriya**. Thus guarding these six faculties (*indriya*) is called **Indriyasamvara-sīla**.]

This is how to guard the six sense faculties: when seeing a visible object with the eye, one should be aware of it only as a visible object; one should not cognize even the general aspect of what is seen, e.g. "this is a woman", "this is a man", "this is beautiful", that will cause the arising of defilements. Nor should one give attention to details (*anubyañjana*) regarding the sign or image of that woman, man, etc., such as shape of hand, leg, etc. the manner of smiling, laughing, talking, etc. looking aside, etc., which will cause repeated arising of defilements.

Example of Venerable Mahā Tissa:

With regard to guarding the faculty of eye, Venerable Mahā Tissa who lived on the top of Cetīya mountain should be shown as an example. One day, the Venerable Mahā Tissa went into Anurādha for alms food. That day, a woman, who had quarrelled with her husband, left her house to go back to her parents' place. She had dressed herself in fine clothes. Seeing the Venerable, who was coming with the restraint of his faculties, she laughed loudly with the thought: "I will make him my husband after alluring him." The Venerable Mahā Tissa looked up to see what it was. Seeing the bones of her teeth, he developed Perception of Foulness (*Asubha saññā*), and contemplating on it, he attained arahatship.

Her husband who was going after her saw the Venerable and asked:

"Venerable Sir, did you see a woman on the way?"

*"Nābhijānāmi itthi vā, puriso vā ito gato,
api ca atthisamghato, gacchatesa mahāpathe"*

"Dāyaka, I don't notice whether it was a man or a woman that went by. I was only aware that a skeleton had gone along the road."

Even though the Venerable saw the sight of a woman, he just saw it, but was not aware that it was a woman; instead, he simply developed his meditation and became an *arahat*. That incident should be taken as a good example.

Without control of the sense of sight, when a *bhikkhu* sees a pleasant object, covetousness (*abhijjhā*) will arise in him; if he sees an unpleasant object, unhappiness, grief (*domanassa*) will arise in him. Therefore, one should exercise control over one's sense of sight through

mindfulness to prevent arising of such unwholesome states of mind.

With regard to the remaining sense doors, similar control is to be maintained so that no defilement would arise from hearing a sound, smelling an odour, tasting a flavour, touching a tangible object or cognizing a mental object.

(c) **Ājivapārisuddhi-sīla**

Ājivapārisuddhi-sīla, the morality of purity of livelihood, means avoiding six kinds of livelihood which the Vinaya prohibits and avoiding of all other kinds of wrong livelihood. The six *sikkhāpadas* promulgated by the Buddha with regard to livelihood are:

- (1) Having evil wishes and being oppressed by them, if a *bhikkhu* boasts of *jhāna*, *magga*, *phala* attainments which are not present in him, and which have never been present before, he is guilty of *Pārājika-āpatti*.
- (2) For the sake of livelihood, if he acts as a go-between, arranging marriages, he is guilty of *Sanghadisesa-āpatti*.
- (3) Without mentioning directly: “I am an *arahat*”, if he says, for the sake of livelihood: “A certain *bhikkhu* lives at your monastery, that *bhikkhu* is an *arahat*” and if the donor of the monastery understands what he means, he is guilty of *Thullaccaya-āpatti*.
- (4) For the sake of livelihood, if he asks for and eats sumptuous food¹², without being ill, he is guilty of *Pācittiya-āpatti*.
- (5) For the sake of livelihood, if a *bhikkhunī* asks for and eats sumptuous food, without being ill, she is guilty of *Pāidesaniya-āpatti*.
- (6) For the sake of livelihood, if a *bhikkhu* asks for and eats curry or boiled rice, without being ill, he is guilty of *Dukkata-āpatti*.

Other kinds of wrong livelihood, in addition to the above six are:

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| (1) Kuhana , hypocrisy, | (2) Lapana , talking, |
| (3) Nemittkata , hinting, | (4) Nippesikatā , belittling. |
| (5) Lābbhena lābham nijjigisanatā , seeking gain with gain. | |

(1) **Kuhana** (hypocrisy), is of three kinds:

- (i) Hypocrisy in use of requisites (**Paccaya patisevana**).
- (ii) Hypocrisy in talk on subjects close to attainments of the Path and the Fruition States (**Samanta jappana**).
- (iii) Hypocrisy in change of postures to deceive lay devotees (**Iriyāpatha saṅṭhapana**).

(i) When lay devotees offer a *bhikkhu* robes, etc. although he wants them, having evil desires to pretend and pose himself as if he has attributes which are non-existent, he says, in order to get even more, (for robes): “What is the use of such expensive robes for a *bhikkhu*? Only *pansukulika* robes made of refuse rags is proper for him.” (For food) he says: “What is the use of such expensive food for a *bhikkhu*? Only food obtained on alms round is proper for a *bhikkhu*.” (For dwelling place) he says: “What is the use of such a fine dwelling place for a *bhikkhu*? Only dwelling at the foot of a tree or in the open air is proper for him.” (For medicine) he says: “What is the use of such expensive medicine for a *bhikkhu*? Cow urine or a portion of gall nut or myrobalan is good for him as medicine.”

Accordingly, to practise what he preaches, he uses only coarse robes, coarse dwelling place and coarse medicines. Lay devotees think so highly of him thus: “This Venerable One has few wishes; he is easily contented; he is free from desires of material goods and sense pleasures; he does not mix with lay people; he is also very diligent (in the practice of Dhamma).” Then they invite him to accept more and more of requisites. Then the *bhikkhu* with evil desires boastfully says: “*Dayaka*, when these three things: the faith, material goods to offer and the person to receive them are present, then the good person who has

12. Sumptuous food means food mixed with ghee, butter, oil, honey, molasses, fish, milk and curd.

faith can develop much merit. Here, you devotees surely have faith; you have things to give away in charity; and indeed, I am a donee. If I do not accept your alms, your merit will decline. So out of compassion for you, I should accept your alms although I am not in need of them.” So saying, he accepts cartloads of robes and food, numerous dwelling places and large quantities of medicine. Thus, though he is avaricious, he pretends to be of little wants, and uses coarse requisites to make others think highly of him. This is called **Paccaya patisevana kuhana**, hypocrisy in use of requisites.

(ii) Without saying directly: “I have already attained *jhāna*, *magga* and *phala*”, he makes other people think that he is already in possession of them by insinuating: “The *bhikkhu* who wears such kind of robes is powerful, the *bhikkhu* who carries such a kind of bowl, such a kind of water filter, such a kind of water strainer, such a kind of waist-band, such a kind of sandal, is powerful.” This is called **Sāmanta Jappana**, hypocrisy in talk on subjects close to attainments of *jhāna*, *magga* and *phala*.

(iii) Determined on gaining the praise and high esteem of lay devotees, the *bhikkhu* thinks: “If I were to walk like this, people will praise me and think highly of me,” and effects the deportment of Noble Ones in going, standing, sitting and lying down. This is called **Iriyāpatha saṅghapana**, hypocrisy in change of posture to deceive lay devotees.

(2) **Lapana** means talking with an evil motive. When the *bhikkhu* sees people coming to the monastery, he speaks to them first: “*Dayaka*, for what purpose do you come here? Do you come here to invite *bhikkhus*? If so, you go ahead, I will follow you carrying the bowl” or he says: “I am Tissa Thera. The king reveres me. The ministers revere me,” etc. While talking with the people, he takes care not to go against them, or to bore them, thus avoiding their displeasure. He flatters them, calling: “a great banker”, “a great miller”, etc. Talking thus in many ways to wheedle alms from lay devotees is called **Lapana**.

(3) **Nemittikatā** means hinting by making signs or giving indications with an evil motive to induce charity. For example, seeing a man carrying some food, he gives an indication that he also wants some food by saying: “Have you already got food? Where have you got it from? How do you manage to get it?” etc. Seeing cowherds, he points to the calves and says: “Do these calves grow up on milk or water?” The cowherds reply: “Venerable sir, the calves grow up on milk.” “I don’t think so. Should the calves get milk, the *bhikkhus* would have got it, too”, etc. thus sending the message through to their parents to offer them milk. Hinting thus to induce charity is called **Nemittikatā**.

The forms of talk which gives more direct and glaring indications of what one wants is called *sāmanta jappa*. Both *nemittikatā* and *sāmanta jappa* being different kinds of *Lapana*, are of evil nature.

In describing the *sāmanta jappa* kind of talk which indicates unmistakably the object of desire, the **Visuddhi-magga** gives the story of a *kulupaka bhikkhu*, a *bhikkhu* who habitually visited lay people.

The Story of A Kulupaka Bhikkhu

Wanting a meal, a *bhikkhu*, who was in the habit of visiting lay people, entered a house and took a seat uninvited. Seeing the *bhikkhu* and unwilling to give food to him, the woman of the house grumbled: “I haven’t got any rice,” went out as though to look for some and stayed at a nearby house. The *bhikkhu* then stealthily went into an inner room and looking everywhere saw sugarcane in the corner behind the door, lumps of jaggery in a bowl, flattened piece of dried fish in a basket, rice in a pot and butter in a jar. Thereafter, he returned to his seat and sat there as before.

The woman came back murmuring: “I didn’t get any rice.” The *bhikkhu* then said: “*Dayika*, this morning I saw some signs suggesting that I would get nothing to eat.” “What signs, Venerable Sir?” the woman asked. “As I came to this house for alms-food, I saw on the way a snake as big as sugarcane in the corner behind the door. To drive it away, I looked for something and found a stone which was as big as the lump of jaggery in your bowl. When I hurled the stone at the snake, its hood spread out to the size of the piece of flattened dried fish in your basket. When the snake opened its mouth to bite the stone it

showed its teeth and fangs which were like the rice-grains in your pot. The foamy saliva mixed with poison of the angry snake was like the butter in your jar.” Caught inextricably in the web of words which glaringly indicates his wish, the woman thought to herself: “Here is no way to deceive the shaven head!” And she reluctantly gave him the sugarcane, cooked the rice and offered it to him together with the butter, jaggery and dried fish.

(4) **Nippesikatā**, another form of wickedness, means pursuit of gain by wiping off or grinding or pulverising the virtuous qualities of a lay devotee like pursuit of perfume by grinding or pulverising scented materials. Such pursuit is made in many ways: use of abusive language to compel one to give; reproach by saying: “You are a fellow with no faith at all”, “You are not like other devotees”; sarcasm, by saying to one who does not give: “Oh, what a donor! Oh, what a great donor”; ridiculing remark made to a non-giver in the midst of people by saying: “Why do you say that this man does not offer any thing? He always gives the words: ‘I have nothing’ to everyone who comes for alms.” Such pursuit of gain by belittling the virtuous qualities of lay devotees is called **Nippesikatā**.

(5) **Lābbhena lābham nijigisanatā** means pursuit of gain with gain motivated by covetousness. For example, after receiving some food offered at a *dayaka's* house, a *bhikkhu* gives it away to the children in the neighbourhood. He does so just to make the families of children give him more in return to express their thanks and delight (for his seeming interest in their children). In brief, seeking for more alms from another house by giving away the few offerings he has already received is called **Lābbhena lābham nijigisanatā**.

The five kinds of wrong livelihood, such as *Kuhana*, etc. described above, are different from one another only in the manner of pursuance in their nature, they are all the same, i.e. beguiling lay devotees into giving him offerings reluctantly.

Thus living on things obtained by infringing the six *sikkhāpadas* laid down by the Buddha with regard to livelihood as stated before and so things obtained by evil practices of *kuhana*, *lapana*, *nemittikatā*, *nippesikatā* and *lābbhena lābham nijigisanatā*, is called **Micchājīva** (Wrong Livelihood). Refraining from all forms of wrong livelihood and becoming pure in means of living is called **Ajivapārisuddhi-sīla**.

(d) **Paccayasannissita-sīla**

Morality fulfilled by depending on the four requisites is called **Paccayasannissita-sīla**.

The four requisites are robes, food, dwelling place and medicine. They are indispensable; living is impossible without them. But when using them, one should reflect on the nature of the requisite concerned so that such evils as greed, hatred, etc. may not arise.

The way in which one should reflect: (While using robes) without considering it as an embellishment (which will cause arising of demeritorious thoughts), one reflects on it wisely: “For the purpose of protection from the cold, I wear this robe; for the purpose of protection from the heat of the sun, I wear this robe; for the purpose of protection from contact with mosquitoes, gad-flies, wind, heat of the sun, snakes, scorpions, fleas, etc. I wear this robe; for the purpose of concealing the private parts of the body (that would disturb conscience), I wear this robe.”

(While using alms-food) one reflects wisely: “I take this alms-food not for amusement as children do; I take this alms-food not for intoxication with manliness; I take this alms-food not for development of body beauty; I take this alms-food not for a clear skin and complexion. I take this alms-food only for long endurance and maintenance of the body; I take this alms-food for warding off the oppression of hunger; I take this alms-food for facilitating the noble practice. By thus taking alms-food, the old suffering of hunger and thirst will be got rid of; I will also ward off the new suffering of indigestion due to overeating, etc. By moderate eating, the old suffering of hunger and thirst and the new suffering of indigestion due to over-eating cannot arise, and my body will be maintained. This alms-food is sought properly and eaten in a blameless manner and by taking it moderately I shall live in comfort.”

With regard to living in comfort by eating moderately, the Buddha expounded:

*Cattāro pañca ālope,
abhutvā udakam pive.
Alam phāsuviharāya,
pahitattassa bhikkhuno.*

With four or five morsels still to eat, a *bhikkhu* should finish off his meal by drinking water. This is sufficient to abiding in comfort of the *bhikkhu* with resolute will for meditation.

Even though this discourse was expounded by the Buddha primarily to meditating yogis, it is also beneficial to non-meditators. By following this instruction, they can abide in ease, free from discomfort of immoderate eating.

(While using a dwelling place) one reflects: “I use this dwelling place for the purpose of protection from the cold; I use this dwelling place for the purpose of protection from the heat of the sun; I use this dwelling place for the purpose of protection from mosquitoes, gadflies, wind, heat of the sun, snakes, scorpions, fleas, etc. I use this dwelling place to ward off the perils of extreme climates and for enjoying (secluded living).”

(While using medicine) one reflects: “I take this medicine for the purpose of countering illness, for the protection of life and for immunity from afflictions that have arisen or are arising.”

This elaborate manner of reflection is called **Mahā Paccavekkhanā**.

How to fulfil these four kinds of *sīla*

Of these four kinds, the **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla** should be fulfilled with faith and confidence (*saddhā*): faith and confidence in the Buddha thus, “The Exalted One who has promulgated the *sikkhāpadas* is truly a Buddha who realizes all the Laws of Nature without exception, (i.e. having a clear vision of the Buddha)”; faith and confidence in the Dhamma thus, “The *sikkhāpadas* to be practised by the Sangha are indeed those promulgated by the Buddha. (i.e. having a clear vision of the Dhamma)”; faith and confidence in the Sangha thus, “Members of the Sangha are the disciples of the Buddha, all of whom practising well these *sikkhāpadas* (i.e. having a clear vision of the Sangha).”

Thus, if one has faith and confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, one would be able to fulfil the **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla**.

Therefore, the *sikkhāpadas* as promulgated by the Buddha should be observed without exception, with faith and confidence and should be fulfilled even at the cost of one’s life. The Buddha, indeed, has expounded thus: “*Kiki va andam camarīva vāladhim*, etc. — Just as the female pheasant guards her eggs, even sacrificing her life, just as the yak (*camari*) guards its tail, even sacrificing its life, just as the householder guards his only son with loving-kindness, just as the one-eyed man protects his only eye with meticulous care, even so the observers of moral precepts in all three ages should have a high regard for the *sīla*, and guarding it with affection.”

The Story of Elders who fulfilled Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla at The Cost of Their Lives

Once, in Mahāvattani forest grove of Sri Lanka, robbers caught a *thera* and bound him with creepers and made him lie down. Even though he could free himself with his effort, if he desired, he feared that should he make a struggle the black creepers would break and he would be guilty of ‘*Bhūtagāma pācittiya āpatti*’. So he developed Vipassanā Insight by meditation for seven days in his lying posture, attained the *anāgāmi-phala*, the Fruition State of Non-Returner, and passed away on the very spot. He was reborn in the Brahmā-world.

Also in Sri Lanka, a Venerable was similarly mistreated by robbers. At that time a forest fire broke out. Even though he could manage to free himself, he feared that he might be guilty of ‘*Bhūtagāma pācittiya āpatti*’. By developing Vipassanā Insight without cutting the creepers, he became a *Samasisi arahat*, whose defilements and life span ended at the same

time, and attained *parinibbāna*. Then Abhaya Thera, the Dighanikāya Reciter together with five hundred *bhikkhus*, arrived on the scene. Seeing the body of the Venerable, he had it cremated properly and a shrine built. Therefore, it is stated in the commentary:

*Pātimokkham visodhento,
appeva jivitaṃ jahe.
Paññattam lokanathena,
na bhinde sīla samvaram.*

The good man who maintains the purity of the **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla** would sacrifice his own life rather than break the precepts laid down by the Buddha.

Just as **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla** is fulfilled with faith and confidence, so also **Indriyasamvara-sīla** should be fulfilled with mindfulness. Only when **Indriyasamvara-sīla** is well-guarded by mindfulness, **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla** will endure long. When **Indriyasamvara-sīla** is broken, **Pātimokkhasamvara-sīla** will be broken too.

At the time of the Buddha, a newly ordained *bhikkhu*, Venerable Vangisa, while going on alms-round broke **Indriyasamvara-sīla** losing his restraint of faculties and was filled with lust on seeing a woman. He said to Ānanda: “Venerable Ānanda, I am burning with sensual lust, my mind is consumed by the flames of lust. Out of compassion, please teach me the Dhamma to extinguish the burning flames.”

Then the Venerable Ānanda replied: “As you perceive wrongly, the burning flames consume your mind. Dispel your perception of pleasantness in what you see, for it leads to lust; see foulness there to purify your mind.” The Venerable Vangisa followed the Venerable Ānanda’s advice and the burning fires of lust died down.

There are two other examples which should be followed by one who wishes to fulfil **Indriyasamvara-sīla**.

The Story of Venerable Cittagutta

In the great cave Kurandaka, in Sri Lanka, there was a lovely painting depicting the renunciation of the Seven Buddhas, such as Vipassī, etc. A number of guest *bhikkhus* wandering amidst the dwellings, saw the painting and said: “Venerable Sir, what a lovely painting it is in your cave!” The Venerable replied: “For more than sixty years, friends, I have lived in the cave, and I did not know whether there was any painting or not. Today, I come to know about it through you who have very keen eyesight.” (Though the Venerable had lived there for more than sixty years, he had never raised his eyes and looked up at the cave even once. And, at the entrance of his cave, there was a great ironwood tree. The Venerable had never looked up at the tree either. But seeing the flower petals on the ground each year, he knew it was in bloom.)

Hearing the Venerable’s strict observance of **Indriyasamvara-sīla**, the King of Mahāgama sent for him three times, desiring to pay homage to him. When the Venerable did not go, the King had the breasts of all the women with infants in the village bound and sealed off, saying: “As long as the Venerable does not come, let the children go without milk.” Out of compassion for the children the Venerable went to Mahāgama.

Being informed that the Venerable had arrived, the King said: “Go and bring the Thera into the palace. I want to take the precepts.” In the inner chamber, the King paid homage to the Venerable and provided him with a meal, after which, he said: “Venerable Sir, it is not opportune for me today to take the precepts. I shall do so tomorrow.” Carrying the Venerable’s bowl, he followed him for a short distance and paid homage with the Queen. Whether it was the King or the Queen who paid homage to him, the Venerable gave the blessing: “May the King be happy!” Seven days went by in this manner.

The fellow-*bhikkhus* asked him: “Venerable Sir, why it is that, whether it is the King or the Queen who pays homage, you say: ‘May the King be happy?’” The Venerable replied: “Friends, I have no particular awareness whether it is the King or the Queen.” At the end

of seven days, when the King found that the Venerable was not happy living there, he allowed him to leave. He went back to the great cave at Kurandaka. When night came, he went out onto his walk.

A deva, who dwelt in the ironwood tree, stood by with a torch. The Venerable's meditation was so pure and bright that it gladdened him. Immediately after the middle watch, he attained arahatship, making the whole mountain resound with a thunderous roar.

(This story gives a good example of how **Indriyasamvara** should be observed.)

The Story of Venerable Mahā-Mitta

The Venerable Mahā-Mitta's mother was sick with a breast tumour. She told her daughter, who also had gone forth as a *bhikkhuni*: "Go to your brother. Tell him my trouble and bring back some medicine." She went and told him, but he said: "I do not know how to gather herbs and concoct a medicine from them. But I will rather tell you a kind of medicine: 'Since I became a recluse, I have not broken my **Indriyasamvara-sīla** by looking at the bodily form of the opposite sex with lustful thoughts.' By this declaration of truth, may my mother get well. Go back and repeat the words of truth I have just uttered and rub her body." She went back and reported to her mother what her brother had told her and did as she has been instructed. At that very moment, the mother's tumour vanished like a lump of froth breaking into pieces. She got up and uttered with joy: "If the Fully Enlightened One were still alive, why should he not stroke with His net-adorned hand¹³ the head of a *bhikkhu* like my son!"

The Venerable Mahā Mitta's way of restraint of the faculties is somewhat different from that of the former Venerable Cittagutta. Venerable Cittagutta restrained his faculties with down-cast eyes so as not to look at any of the objects even by chance, whereas Venerable Mahā Mitta did not restrain with down-cast eyes, he looked at things as they presented themselves. Even when he caught the sight of the opposite sex, he restrained his faculty of eye to prevent lust from arising.

The Venerable Cittagutta's way of restraint of the faculties is like the closing of the door of the house completely, not letting any robbers to come in. The Venerable Mahā Mitta's way of restraint is not closing the door, but keeping the robbers from entering the house even once. Both types of restraint are marvellous and worthy of emulation.

While restraint of the faculties is to be undertaken with mindfulness (*sati*), purification of livelihood is to be practised with energy (*vīriya*). This is because one is able to abandon wrong livelihood only by applying right energy. Therefore, avoiding unbefitting, improper means, purification of livelihood should be undertaken with the right kind of search like going on alms round with energy.

No hint, roundabout talk, indication or intimation is allowable to acquire such requisites as robes and alms food. But, as regards acquiring a dwelling place, only intimation is not allowable.

'Hint': when a *bhikkhu*, who is preparing the ground, etc. as if to build a dwelling place, is asked: "What is being done, Venerable Sir? Who is having it done?" and he replies: "No one."; such a reply of his is a 'hint' (implying that there is no donor yet for the dwelling place). All other actions which communicate his need for a residence also constitute a hint.

'Roundabout talk': a *bhikkhu* asks a lay devotee: "What kind of a house do you live in?" "In a mansion. Venerable Sir." "But, *dāyaka*, is a mansion not allowed for *bhikkhus*?" This and any such expressions constitute a 'roundabout talk'.

'Indication': "The dwelling place is too small for the community of *bhikkhus*" or any other such suggestive talks constitute an 'Indication'.

All four forms of talk, such as hint, etc., are allowed in the case of medicine. But when

13. It is one of the 32 distinctive marks of a Great Being (*Mahāpurisa Lakkhana*.) For details, refer to **Digha Nikāya**, Vol II & III.

the disease is cured, is it or is it not allowed to use the medicine obtained in this way? Herein, the Vinaya specialists say that since the Buddha has opened the way for its use, it is allowable. But the Suttanta specialists maintain that though there is no offence, nevertheless the purity of livelihood is sullied; therefore, it is not allowable. But one who wishes to live a completely pure noble life should not use hint, roundabout talk, indication or intimation, even though these are permitted by the Blessed One. Endowed as he is with special qualities such as having few wants, etc. he should make use only of requisites obtained by means other than hint, etc. even when he is to risk his life. Such a one is called a person of extremely noble, austere practice like the Venerable Sāriputta.

The Story of Venerable Sāriputta

Once, the Venerable Sāriputta, wishing to cultivate noble life, lived in a solitary place in a certain forest with the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna. One day, an affliction of colic arose in him, causing him great pain. In the evening, the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna went to confer with him and found him lying down. He asked: “What is the matter?” When the Venerable Sāriputta explained, he asked again: “What had helped you in the past?” The Venerable Sāriputta said: “When I was layman, friend, my mother gave me rice gruel prepared with a mixture of ghee, honey, sugar and so on. That used to make me recover.” Then the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna said: “So be it, friend, if either you or I have accumulated enough merit, perhaps tomorrow we shall get some.”

Now, a deva, who lived in a tree at the end of the walk, overheard their conversation. Thinking: “I will find rice gruel for the Venerable tomorrow”, he went immediately to the family who was supporting the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna and entered the eldest son's body to cause him discomfort. Then he told the boy's family, who had gathered, that if they would prepare rice gruel of such and such a kind next day for the Venerable, he would set the boy free.

They replied: “Even without being told by you, we regularly offer alms-food to the Venerable.” The next day they prepared rice gruel.

The Venerable Mahā Moggallāna went to the Venerable Sāriputta in the morning and told him: “Stay here, friend, till I come back from the alms round.” Then he went into the village. The people met him, took his bowl, filled it with rice gruel prepared as required and gave it back to him. When the Venerable wanted to leave, they said: “Eat, Venerable Sir, we shall give you more.” When the Venerable had eaten, they gave him another bowlful. The Venerable left taking the alms-food to the Venerable Sāriputta, and told him to eat. When the Venerable Sāriputta saw it, he thought: “The rice gruel is very nice. How was it got?” He then reflected and, seeing how it had been obtained, said: “Friend, the alms-food is not fit to be used.” Instead of feeling offended and thinking: “He does not eat the alms-food brought by someone like me”, the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna at once took the bowl by the rim and turned it over. (Not because he was angry.)

As the rice gruel fell on the ground, the Venerable Sāriputta's affliction vanished. (And it did not re-appear during the remaining forty-five years of his life.) Then he said to the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna: “Friend, even if one's bowels come out and fall to the ground in a whole coil through hunger, it is not fitting to eat gruel got by verbal intimation.”

Herein, it should be noted: the Blessed One prohibited only verbal intimation about the food. The Venerable Sāriputta did not use verbal intimation to get the food. When the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna wanted to know what had cured his affliction before, he only related the relief given by rice gruel in the past. However, he was not pleased that a verbal intimation had been made at all and did not accept the rice gruel.

The Story of Venerable Ambakhadaka Mahā Tissa

Let alone a *thera* of the Venerable Sāriputta's stature during the lifetime of the Buddha, even little known Mahā Tissa of Ciragumba in Sri Lanka, long after the demise of the Buddha, had strictly observed the disciplinary rules. Once Mahā Tissa, while travelling during a famine, became weary and weak owing to lack of food and tedious journey. So, he

lay down at the foot of a mango tree, which was full of fruit. Several mangoes fell everywhere on the ground near him. But he would not think of picking up some to eat in spite of his hunger.

At that time, an old man came near him and, seeing him in the state of exhaustion, prepared some mango juice and offered to him. Then, carrying him on his back, the man took him where he wanted to go. While being carried thus, the Mahā Tissa thought to himself: "This man is not my father, nor my mother, nor any relative of mine. Yet, he carries me on his back; this is only because of the morality I possess." Reflecting thus he admonished himself to keep his morality and concentration of mind intact without blemishes. He then developed Vipassanā Insight and while still being carried on the back of the man, he attained arahatship through successive stages of the Path.

This Venerable is a noble person whose abstemiousness in food serves as an example for emulation.

While Purification of livelihood (**Ajivapārisuddhi-sīla**) is to be practised with energy (*vīriya*), Morality which depends upon the four requisites (**Paccaya sannissita-sīla**) should be fulfilled with wisdom (*paññā*). Since only men of wisdom can discern the advantages and dangers of the four requisites, **Paccaya sannissita-sīla** is the morality which is fulfilled through wisdom. Therefore, one should make use of the four requisites, which have been obtained lawfully, without craving for them and after reflecting with wisdom in the aforesaid manner.

Two Kinds of Reflection (**Paccavekkhanā**)

There are two kinds of reflection (*paccavekkhanā*) on the four requisites (1) reflection at the time of receiving them and (2) reflection at the time of using them. Not only at the time of using the requisites but also at the time of receiving them one reflects either (a) as mere elements (**Dhātu paccavekkhanā**), or (b) as repulsive objects (**Patikūla paccavekkhanā**) and put them away for later use.

- (a) Reflection as elements: This robe (etc.) is a mere aggregate of eight elements which arise when conditions are present. So is the person who uses them.
- (b) Reflection as repulsive objects: Reflection on food as in meditation on perception of foulness in nutriment (*Ahare patikula sanna*); and reflection on robes, etc. thus: "All these robes, etc. which are not in themselves disgusting become utterly repulsive when associated with this filthy body."

(To recapitulate, reflection is of three kinds in all: (1) **Mahā paccavekkhanā** as described in detail regarding the use in general of the four requisites, (2) **Dhātu paccavekkhana**, reflecting on the four requisites as mere elements, and (3) **Patikūdamanasikāra paccavekkhanā** reflection on them as repulsive objects whether in their own nature or when put in use.)

If a *bhikkhu* reflects on the robes, etc. at the time of receiving them and if he does again at the time of use, his use of the requisites is blameless from beginning to end.

Four Kinds of Use

To dispel doubts about use of requisites, one should take note of four kinds of their use:

(a) **Theyya paribhoga**

Use like an act of thieving (*theyya paribhoga*): use of requisites by an immoral person even in the midst of the Sangha is called *theyya paribhoga*.

(The Blessed One has permitted the use of the four requisites for men of morality. Lay devotees also make their offerings to virtuous persons only, expecting great benefit for their good deeds. Therefore, immoral persons have no right whatever to enjoy the requisites.)

Hence, using them without such right by immoral persons resembles an act of thieving.)

(b) Ina paribhoga

Use like owing debt (ina paribhoga): use of requisites by a moral person without due reflection is like owing a debt. One should reflect every time a robe is used; every time a morsel of food is eaten. Failing to do so at the time of using these requisites, one should reflect on them in the morning, at dusk, during the first watch, middle watch and last watch of the night. If dawn breaks without his making such reflection, he finds himself in the position of one who owes a debt.

Every time he passes under the roof to enter the dwelling place and after entering it, every time he sits, every time he lies down, he should make due reflection. In receiving a requisite of medicine and in using it, he should make reflection. But if he makes reflection while receiving and fails to do so when using it, he is guilty of an offence. On the other hand, even if he fails to make reflection when receiving but does when using it, he is free from guilt.

Four Kinds of Purification of Sīla

If a bhikkhu happens to have committed an offence, he should take a recourse to any of the four kinds of purification of his morality as mentioned below:

- (1) Purification by admission of fault (*desanā suddhi*): **Patimokkāsamvara-sīla** is purified by open declaration of its breach.
- (2) Purification by restraint (*samvara suddhi*): **Indriyasamvara-sīla** is purified by making the resolution, “Never will I do it again.”
- (3) Purification by search (*pariyetthi suddhi*): **Ajivapariuddhi-sīla** is purified by abandoning wrong search and seeking requisites in a lawful manner.
- (4) Purification by reflection (*paccavekkanā suddhi*): **Paccayasannissita-sīla** is purified by reflection according to the manner mentioned above.

(c) Dāyajja paribhoga

Use like getting an inheritance (dāyajja paribhoga): use of requisite by the seven kinds of Learners (*sekkha* implying Noble Ones who have realized three lower Paths and three lower Fruition States and the Path of arahatship). These seven kinds of Learners are sons of the Buddha. Just as a son is a heir to his father, these noble persons, as heirs, make use of the requisites allowed by the Buddha. (Although the requisites are, in practice, given by the laity, yet they are allowed by the Buddha and thus they are to be considered as the Buddha's requisites.)

(d) Sami paribhoga

Use like a master by an arahat (sami paribhoga); worldlings (*puthujjanas*) and Learners (*sekkhas*) are not free from craving yet and accordingly, they remain subject to craving and their use of requisites is not as masters but as slaves of craving. On the other hand, Arahats have been liberated from servitude of craving and their use of requisites is as masters with full control over craving. Therefore, they can use disgusting things, reflecting on their non-disgusting nature or they can use non-disgusting things reflecting on their disgusting nature, or they can use reflecting on them as neither disgusting nor non-disgusting things.

Of these four kinds of use, use like a master by an arahat and use like getting an inheritance are allowable to all. Herein, as said before, use of requisites like a master is applicable only to arahats; but if *sekkhas* and *puthujjanas* use the requisites by abandoning craving through perception of their foulness, it is like being liberated from servitude of craving; therefore, this kind of use may also be classed as use like a master by an arahat, **sami paribhoga**. In the same way, arahats and *puthujjanas* may also be considered as inheriting sons of the Buddha.

Use like owing a debt is not allowable, more so is the use like an act of thieving which is certainly not allowable. Use of requisites after reflection by one endowed with morality is opposite to use like owing a debt, **ina paribhoga** and is thus called use without owing a debt, **ananya paribhoga**. At the same time *puthujjanas*

endowed with morality who use the requisites after due reflection may be reckoned as a *sekkha*, noble person. Therefore, use of requisites after due reflection by such *puthujjanas* endowed with morality is also reckoned as use like getting an inheritance.

Of these four kinds of use, use like a master by an *arahat* is the noblest; a bhikkhu who wishes to use the requisites like a master should fulfil the *Paccayasannissita-sīla* by using the four requisites only after due reflection.

Morality in Groups of Fives

(1) Morality is of five kinds:

- (a) Pariyanta Parisuddhi Sīla,
- (b) Apariyanta Parisuddhi Sīla,
- (c) Paripunna Parisuddhi Sīla,
- (d) Aparāmattha Parisuddhi Sīla, and
- (e) Patippassaddhi Parisuddhi Sīla.

(a) Morality consisting in limited purification (**Pariyanta Parisuddhi Sīla**). Morality observed by lay devotees and *sāmaṇeras* are called morality consisting in limited purification, because it is limited by the number of precepts to be kept.

The **Visuddhi-magga** does explain the limit by the number of the precepts in **Pariyanta Parisuddhi Sīla**. But the **Patisambhidā Magga Commentary** explains, as has been mentioned before, two kinds of limit (i) limit regarding the number of precepts observed (**Sikkhāpada pariyanta**); (ii) limit regarding the period of observance of precepts (**Kala pariyanta**).

- (i) Limit regarding the number of precepts observed: this refers to the number of precepts traditionally observed by lay devotees, namely, one, two, three or four precepts; five, eight or ten precepts (whatever number of precepts they can observe). Probationers, *sāmaṇeras* and *sāmaṇerīs* keep the ten precepts. This is the limit regarding the number of precept observed.
- (ii) Limit regarding the period of observance of precepts: when lay devotees make a ceremonial offering of alms, they also observe precepts within the limited period of the ceremony; whenever they go to monastery too, they observe precepts before returning home, or for a few days or more during day-time or night-time. This is the limit regarding the period of observance of precepts.

(b) Morality without limit (**Apariyanta pārisuddhi Sīla**). The **Dve Matika** which is the summary of the **Ubhato Vibhanga** enumerates 227 *sikkhāpadas* for members of the Sangha. When expanded, these *sikkhāpadas* total up to nine thousand, one hundred and eighty crores, five million and thirty-six thousand. These disciplinary rules for *bhikkhus* are promulgated by the Buddha and were recorded in brief by the Convenors of the First Council. The whole group of these disciplinary rules is called **Apariyanta parisuddhi Sīla**.

Though the disciplinary rules are laid down by the Buddha in a definite number, the Sangha has to observe all of them without exception; furthermore, it is impossible to foresee the termination of observance of *sīla* through five kinds of destruction, namely, that due to gain, that due to fame, that due to relatives, that due to impairment of body and that due to loss of life. For these reasons, these disciplinary rules are collectively called **Apariyanta parisuddhi Sīla**. This is the kind of *sīla* observed by the Venerable Mahā Tissa of Ciraḡumba described above.

(c) Morality which is completely purified by a worldling who is striving for the spiritual good is called **Paripunna parisuddhi Sīla**. His morality, since the time of admission to the Order, has been very pure like a bright ruby properly cut or like well refined gold. Therefore, it is devoid of even the stain of impure thoughts and becomes the approximate cause for arahatship. Hence it is named **Paripunna parisuddhi Sīla**. The Venerable Mahā

Sangharakkhita and his nephew, Venerable Sangharakkhitta, set examples of how such *sīla* is to be observed.

The Story of Venerable Mahā Sangharakkhita

While the Venerable Mahā Sangharakkhita of over sixty years standing in the Order (aged eighty) was lying on his death bed, *bhikkhus* enquired of him: “Venerable Sir, have you attained the supramundane states?” The Venerable replied: “I have not made any such attainment yet.” At that time a young *bhikkhu* attendant of the Venerable addressed him: “Venerable Sir, people living within twelve leagues have assembled here thinking that the Venerable One has passed into *parinibbāna*. If they come to know that you have passed away as an ordinary worldling, they will be much disappointed.”

Then the Venerable said, “Friend, thinking I will see the coming Buddha Metteya, I have not strived for Vipassanā Insight meditation. If it will be a disappointment for many, help me to sit up and give me a chance to contemplate with mindfulness.” The young *bhikkhu* helped the Venerable to sit up and went out. As soon as the young *bhikkhu* left the room the Venerable attained arahatship and gave a sign by a snap of his fingers. The young *bhikkhu* then returned and made him lie down as before. He reported the matter to the Sangha who assembled and addressed the Venerable: “Venerable Sir, you have performed such a difficult task of attaining the supramundane state even when so close to death.” The Venerable replied: “Friends, it is not difficult for me to attain arahatship when the hour of death is drawing near. Rather, I will tell you what is really difficult to perform. Friends, I see no action which I have done without mindfulness and full comprehension since the time of my admission into the Order. It is only such kind of action which is always accompanied by mindfulness and full comprehension that is far more difficult to do.”

The Venerable's nephew also attained arahatship like him when he completed fifty-sixth year as a *bhikkhu*.

(d) Morality unaffected by wrong view and observed by *sekkha*, noble persons and morality untarnished by lust, and observed by worldlings are called **Aparāmatṭha pārisuddhi Sīla**, the kind of morality observed by the Venerable Tissa the householder's son.

The Story of The Venerable Tissa, The Son of A Householder

A householder in Sri Lanka had two sons. After the death of their father, the elder son, Tissa, gave all inheritance to his younger brother and became a *bhikkhu*, practising meditation in a jungle monastery. Then the younger brother's wife thought to herself: “Now we get all the wealth because my brother-in-law became a *bhikkhu*. If he decides to return to layman's life, we will have to give him back half the wealth. There is no knowing whether he will do so or not. We will have peace of mind only when he dies.” With this thought she engaged some men to kill her brother-in-law.

The men went to the jungle monastery and seized the Venerable Tissa in the evening. The Venerable told them that he possessed nothing which they might want. The men explained: “We do not come here to get your wealth. We come here to kill you (at the instance of your sister-in-law).” The Venerable said: “I possess pure *sīla*, but I haven't yet attained *arahatta-phala*. As I want to achieve arahatship depending on this pure *sīla*, allow me to practise Vipassanā Meditation before dawn.” “We cannot grant your request. If you run away during the night, we will have to take the trouble of catching you again.” Saying: “I will let you see clearly how I cannot run away,” the Venerable broke his two knees himself with a big stone.

When both knees were completely broken thus, the Venerable said: “Now you have seen my condition. By no means can I run away from you. I abhor to die as a worldling with sensual lust. I feel ashamed of it.” Only then did the men give him permission to practise meditation. Then the Venerable, depending upon his *sīla* which was not tarnished by lust, made efforts throughout the night until dawn when he attained arahatship.

The Story of A Senior Monk

Once there was a senior monk who was very ill and unable to eat with his hands. He lay rolling smeared with his own urine and excrement. Seeing him a young *bhikkhu*, he exclaimed: “Oh, how painful is the life process!” The senior monk said: “Friend, if I die now I will surely achieve divine bliss. I have no doubt of that. The bliss obtained by breaking¹⁴ this *sīla* is like forsaking monkhood and becoming a lay man. But I am determined to die with my *sīla* intact.¹⁵” So saying he lay in the same place, contemplating on the same illness inherent in the five aggregates of mind and matter and attained arahatship.

(The *sīla* of these noble Venerables is **Aparamattha-sīla**.)

(e) Morality of *arahats*, etc.¹⁶ which is purified through subsidence of the fires of defilements is called **Patipassaddhi pārisuddhi Sīla**.

Again:

(2) Morality is of five kinds:

- (a) *Pahāna-sīla*
- (b) *Veramani-sīla*
- (c) *Cetanā-sīla*
- (d) *Samrata-sīla*
- (e) *Avitikkama-sīla*

(a) Morality observed by abandoning killing, etc. is called Morality of abandoning (***Pahāna-sīla***). (Here ‘etc.’ covers not only the wrong deeds of stealing, sexual misconduct and so on but also abandoning of everything that ought to be abandoned through successive stages of meritorious deeds. In terms of Abhidhamma, ‘abandoning’ (*pahāna*) means a group of wholesome consciousness together with their mental concomitants which are characterised by their function of abandoning everything that is to be abandoned wherever necessary.)

(b) Morality observed by abstaining from killing, etc. is called Morality of abstention (***Veramani-sīla***). In terms of Abhidhamma, it is a group of wholesome consciousness together with their mental concomitants headed by *virati cetasika*.

(c) Morality observed by volition which associates avoidance of killing, etc. with consciousness is called Morality of Volition (***Cetanā-sīla***).

(d) Morality observed by preventing thoughts of wrong deeds, such as killing, etc. from defiling the mind is called Morality of Restraint (***Samvara-sīla***). In terms of Abhidhamma, it is a group of wholesome consciousness together with their mental concomitants headed by *sati cetasika*.

(e) Morality observed by not committing wrong deeds, such as killing, etc. is called Morality of Non-transgression (***Avitikkama-sīla***). In terms of Abhidhamma it is wholesome consciousness together with their mental concomitants.

(These five kinds of morality beginning with ***Pahāna-sīla*** are not separate ones like other sets of *sīla*; observance of one, e.g. *Pahāna Sīla*, by abandoning killing, etc. means observance of all the remaining ones as well.)

Defilement and Purification of Morality

(6) WHAT IS DEFILEMENT OF MORALITY?

(7) WHAT IS PURIFICATION OF MORALITY?

14. To break *sīla* means to die without becoming an *arahat*.

15. “*Sīla* intact” means passing away only after attaining arahatship.

16. Here ‘etc.’ means refers to other Enlightened Ones, namely, Paccekabuddhas and Sammāsambuddhas.

In answering these questions, Defilement and Purification of morality should be explained together.

Defilement of Morality means impairment of morality; and in reverse, non-impairment of morality is Purification of Morality.

Impairment of morality may arise through destruction due to gain, fame, etc. or through seven minor acts of sexuality.

To explain further:

Of the seven groups of transgression (*āpatti*)¹⁷, if a *sikkhāpada* of the first or the last group is impaired due to craving for gain, fame, etc. a *bhikkhu's sīla* is said to be torn like the cloth which is cut at the edge.

If a *sikkhāpada* in the middle group is impaired, his *sīla* is said to be rent like the cloth having a hole in the middle.

If two or three *sikkhāpadas* are impaired serially, his *sīla* is said to be blotched like a cow having irregular marks of brown, red and other colours on her back or belly.

If the *sikkhāpadas* are impaired at intervals, his *sīla* is said to be mottled like a cow having variegated spots of different colours on her body.

Thus impairment of morality through tearing, rending, blotching or mottling due to gain, fame, etc. is Defilement of Morality.

Even in the absence of impairment of morality through tearing, rending, blotching or mottling, there can be defilement of morality through seven minor acts of sexuality.

The seven minor acts of sexuality are expounded elaborately by the Buddha in the Jānussoṇi Sutta of Mahāyañña Vagga, Sattaka Nipāta of the Aṅguttara Nikāya. They may be mentioned briefly as follows:

- (i) An ascetic or a brahmin claiming to be leading the noble life does not have actual sexual intercourse with a woman, but enjoys being caressed, massaged, bathed and rubbed down by her. (He loves to be attended upon in person by a woman.)
- (ii) He does not have sexual intercourse with a woman, he does not enjoy being attended upon in person by her, but he enjoys joking and laughing with her.
- (iii) Or else, he enjoys staring and gazing at a woman eye to eye.
- (iv) Or else, he enjoys listening to a woman on the other side of a wall or a fence as she laughs, talks, sings or cries.
- (v) Or else, he enjoys recollecting frequently how he has talked, laughed and played with a woman formerly.
- (vi) Or else, he enjoys seeing a householder or his son who possesses five kinds of worldly pleasures and who is being served by a host of servants and attendants.
- (vii) Or else, he enjoys longing for a divine abode and leads the noble life with the wish: "With this *sīla*, with this practice, with this effort and with this noble life, may I be reborn as a great deva or some deva."

Thus impairment of morality through tearing, rending, blotching or mottling due to gain, fame, etc. and also through seven minor acts of sexuality is Defilement of Morality.

Purification of morality characterized by non-tearing, non-rending, non-blotching or non-mottling of *sīla* is brought about:

- (a) by not transgressing any of the *sikkhāpadas*;
- (b) by taking proper remedial measure whenever there is transgression;

17. (1) Pārajika, (2) Saṅghādisesa, (3) Thullaccaya, (4) Pācittiya, (5) Pātidēsaniya, (6) Dukkata and (7) Dubbhisita.

- (c) by avoiding seven minor acts of sexuality; furthermore,
- (d) through non-arising of anger, grudge, disparagement, rivalry, jealousy, meanness-stinginess, deceit, hypocrisy and such evils, and
- (e) through development of such attributes as fewness of wishes, being easily satisfied, practice of austerity, etc.

These types of morality (*sīlas*), which are not torn, not rent, not blotched and not mottled, also assume other names such as, **Bhujissa-sīla** because they set one free from servitude of craving; **Vīññūpasattha-sīla** because they are praised by the wise; **Aparāmattha-sīla** because they are not effected by craving: “My *sīla* is very pure, it will produce great beneficial results in future”, or by wrong personality belief: “This *sīla* is mine; my *sīla* is very pure; no one possesses *sīla* like mine”; **Samādhi samvattanika-sīla** because they are conducive to advancement towards Access Concentration (*Upacāra-samādhi*) and Absorption Concentration (*Appanā-samādhi*).

As stated above, these seven factors, namely, not torn, not rent, not blotched, not mottled, liberating, praised by the wise and not tarnished by craving and wrong view are the factors conducive to purification of morality. Only when morality is complete with these seven factors can it develop the aforesaid two kinds of concentration. Therefore, a noble person wishing to develop these two kinds of Concentration should earnestly endeavour to make his *sīla* complete with all these seven factors.

(c) The Perfection of Renunciation (Nekkhamma-Pāramī)

Nekkhamma means renunciation which is here synonymous with emancipation. Emancipation is of two kinds: emancipation from cycle of existences (*saṃsāra*) and emancipation from sense-desire (*kāma*), the former being the result of the latter. Only when emancipation from sense-desire has been achieved through practice, can one gain emancipation from *saṃsāra*. Of these two kinds of emancipation, it is for the purpose of the resultant emancipation (from existences) that the Buddha expounds in the Buddhavaṃsa Text, likening the three states of existence¹⁸ to prisons.

Essential Meaning of Perfection of Renunciation

According to the **Cariyāpīṭaka Commentary**, Perfection of Renunciation, in terms of Abhidhamma, is wholesome consciousness together with mental concomitants that arises by virtue of emancipation from sense-desire and from the three states of existence. The **Mahā Niddesa** describes two kinds of sense-desire: pleasant objects of sense-desire (*vatthu-kāma*), and mental defilement of greed which is desire for pleasant objects (*kilesa-kāma*). With reference to Perfection of Renunciation, emancipation from sense-desire means emancipation from both kinds of sense-desire.

How to be Mindful to achieve Emancipation

How to achieve emancipation from bonds of *kilesa-kāma* is explained in the **Mahā Niddesa Pāli**:

*Addasam kāma te mūlam sankappā kāma jāyasi
na tam sankappayissāmi evam kāma na hohisi.*

O greed, I have seen your source; you arise from my thoughts of pleasant objects of sense (**Kāma Vitakka**). No more will I think of any pleasant object of sense. Then, O greed, you will arise no more.

In this connection, three kinds of wrong thought and three kinds of right thought should be understood. The three kinds of wrong thought are:

18. The three states of existence are: (a) *Kāma-bhava*, the state of sensual existence, (b) *Rūpa-bhava*, the state of fine material existence and (c) *Arūpa-bhava*, the states of formless, non-material existence.

- (i) **Kāma Vitakka**, sensuous thought, i.e. thinking of pleasant objects as desirable things;
- (ii) **Byāpāda Vitakka**, hateful thought, i.e. thinking of harming others, and
- (iii) **Vihimsā Vitakka**, cruel thought, i.e. thinking of torturing others.

The three kinds of right thought are:

- (i) **Nekkhamma Vitakka**, thought of renunciation, i.e. thinking of emancipating oneself from sensuous objects.
- (ii) **Avyāpāda Vitakka**, thought of hatelessness, i.e. thinking of others with loving-kindness. and
- (iii) **Avihimsā Vitakka**, thought of non-violence, i.e. thinking of others with compassion.

The source of greed (*kilesa kāma*), on close examination is found to lie in sensuous thought (**Kāma Vitakka**) which is one of the three wrong thoughts. As long as one keeps on thinking of sensuous thought, greed continues to multiply and there is no emancipation from that mental defilement of greed. Only when one ceases to think of pleasant objects of sense-desire, greed will not arise and one achieves emancipation. Therefore, as stated above, one should be mindful to be free from mental defilement of greed. Just as freedom from sense-desire leads to freedom from cycle of *samsāra*, even so, making efforts to free oneself from greed results in freedom from pleasant objects of sense-desire.

The characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes of this Perfection of Renunciation and of the remaining ones are dealt in the Chapter: On Miscellany.

Relation between Renunciation and The Life of A Bhikkhu

The **Cariyapitaka Commentary** defines '*nekkhamma*': "*Nekkhammam pabbajja-mūlakam.*" This definition can be interpreted in two ways: "Emancipation has a *bhikkhu's* life as its cause," and "Emancipation is the cause of a *bhikkhu's* life." The first interpretation, namely, a *bhikkhu's* life as a cause of emancipation is in consonance with the narration in the **Mahā Janaka Jātaka**. King Mahā Janaka first acquired requisites of robes, a bowl etc. without the knowledge of his Queen, lesser Queens and royal attendants and he then went up to the upper terrace of his palace and became a *bhikkhu*; thereafter, he renounced the world. In this instance, the Bodhisatta Mahā Janaka became a *bhikkhu* before he made the renunciation. Therefore, it may be said that the *bhikkhu's* life is the cause and renunciation is the effect.

The second interpretation, namely, emancipation as a cause of *bhikkhu's* life, is in consonance with the stories of Sumedha the Wise, the Hatthipāla brothers, etc. Sumedha the Wise, first went forth and reaching Dhammika Mountain, found a dwelling place readily prepared by Sakka, King of Devas. Then only he became a *bhikkhu*. Similarly, the Hatthipala brothers went forth first and when pursued by the whole country led by royal parents, they became *bhikkhus*. Therefore, it may be said renunciation of Sumedha the Wise, Hatthipāla brothers etc. is the cause and the *bhikkhu's* life is the effect.

The **Cariyāpitaka Commentary** gives the exposition in accordance with the first interpretation. (This is mentioned in detail in the Chapter: On Miscellany.) Though Sumedha the Wise, the Hatthipāla brothers, etc. renounced the world first and became *bhikkhus* afterwards, they did so only because they wanted a *bhikkhu's* life. Therefore, even though renunciation took place first, it may be said that a *bhikkhu's* life which follows later is the real cause. (For example, to construct a building, the wood is cut first. Although cutting of wood precedes construction, the wood is cut with the intention of constructing the building. Therefore, it should be said the desire to build the building is the cause and cutting of the wood is its effect.)

Five Kinds of Forest Dwelling

As expounded in the **Vinaya Parivāra Ekuttarikanaya pañcaka** and **Upāli Pañha**, **Dhutanga Vagga**, forest dwelling is of five kinds:

- i) Dwelling in the forest because of stupidity, dullness of mind, not knowing the

advantages and their causes;

- ii) Dwelling in the forest with an evil desire, “If I go and dwell in the forest, people will support me generously as a forest dweller”;
- iii) Dwelling in the forest because of insanity;
- iv) Dwelling in the forest because the practice is praised by the Buddhas and the virtuous; and
- v) Dwelling in the forest because one has few wishes, contentment and such virtues.

Only the last two of these kinds of forest dwelling are praiseworthy.

Perfection of Renunciation is not a matter of where one lives. Defilement of sense-desire (*kilesa-kāma*), craving for pleasant sensuous objects, is liable to arise anywhere. This defilement of sense-desire should be eradicated wherever it appears and not be permitted to thrive. Emancipation from defilement of sense-desire by eradication in this way is the true characteristic of renunciation.

As for Emancipation from pleasant objects of sense-desire, there are examples of Sumedha the Wise, the Hatthipala brothers etc. who went forth as far as the Himalayas. Therefore, it may be asked whether it is necessary for those who wish to fulfil Perfection of Renunciation (Emancipation from pleasant objects of sense-desire) to go forth as far as the Himalayas. One should do so if possible, or if one wishes to or if circumstances favour. In the Jātaka Stories concerning renunciation, the majority went forth up to the Himalayas. They did so as circumstances were favourable to them.

According to the Maghadeva Jātaka of the **Ekaka Nipata** and the Nimi Jātaka of the **Mahā Nipata**, the continuous line of rulers numbering eighty-four thousand, beginning with King Maghadeva to King Nimi, went forth from household life to homeless one as soon as a single hair on the head turned grey. However, none of them went up to the Himalayas. They repaired only to the royal mango grove near their capital city of Mithila. It is said that by strenuous practice of meditation they attained *jhānas* and were reborn in Brahmā realms. It is evident from these stories that, although not travelling as far as the Himalayas, just leaving the place, where mental defilement of greed thrives, is sufficient for successful fulfilment of Perfection of Renunciation. The eighty-four thousand kings such as Maghadeva completely abandoned their luxurious palaces, and by living in the mango grove, their Perfection of Renunciation was fulfilled.

Therefore, Perfection of Renunciation can be fulfilled by anyone who abandons completely the place where his mental defilement of greed flourishes and without establishing such new resorts, dwells in a suitable place free from such defilement.

Two Kinds of Renunciation

Renunciation of Bodhisattas is of two kinds:

- (i) Renunciation when they are young (and single), and
- (ii) Renunciation when they are old (and married).

Sumedha the Wise, the Hatthipāla brothers, etc. renounced the worldly life to escape from (bonds of) pleasant objects of sense-desire, namely, luxuries of their palaces or homes. Although the Jātakas referred to them as examples of those who fulfilled the Perfection of Renunciation, they were then mere youths still unmarried. They were possessors of pleasant objects of sense-desire, but it may be said that their ties to them were not so strong. Only older people living a household life with wife and children are tightly bound with these fetters of *vatthu-kāma*. In this connection, it may be said that renunciation by old married people is more difficult than that by younger persons. But some could point out that the renunciation by the Bodhisatta Prince Temiya, made at a time when he was only sixteen and unmarried was really an arduous one. But his difficulty arose not from the bonds of pleasant objects of sense-desire but from the great troubles of having to pretend to be cripple, deaf and dumb to make his renunciation possible. Therefore, although he faced much difficulty when contriving to make his renunciation, when he actually did so, he encountered little difficulty because he had only few fetters of pleasant

objects of sense desire.

The **Atthasālini** gives, in the chapter on Perfection of Renunciation, full accounts of *pāramī* fulfilled by the Bodhisatta when he was Prince Somanassa, Prince Hatthipāla, Prince Ayoghara, etc. in innumerable existences. The Commentary gives the special names of *Paramattha Pāramī*, Supreme Perfection, to the Perfection of Renunciation fulfilled by King Cūla Sutasoma.

In the case of Prince Somanassa, Prince Ayoghara, Prince Hatthipāla, and Prince Temiya, they were youthful persons at the time of their renunciation. Renunciation by King Mahā Janaka was more difficult than theirs because he was an older and married man. He became a *bhikkhu* without the knowledge of his Queen, lesser Queens and royal attendants. And only at the time of renunciation that he faced difficulty, as he was pursued by his Queens and retinue to persuade him to return to them. They had not taken any measures to ensure that he would not go forth as a *bhikkhu* or renounce the worldly life.

As for the eighty-four thousand kings, such as Maghadeva, they openly and publicly declared their intention to renounce. In spite of the entreaties of their families, they refused to yield and made their renunciation. But they did not go very far. They dwelt in their own mango groves near their palaces.

In contrast to them, King Cūla Sutasoma announced his intention of leaving the world as he was deeply stirred by spiritual sense of urgency on seeing a grey hair on his head. Although his Queens, royal parents and the assembled citizens prayed in tears to him to give up his plan, he remained firm and indifferent to their earnest pleas and went away till he reached the Himalayas. Therefore, renunciation of King Cūla Sutasoma was far more powerful than those of King Maghadeva, etc. On this account, the Commentator has described the Perfection of Renunciation fulfilled by King Cūla Sutasoma as of the highest type, *Paramattha Pāramī*.

(d) The Perfection of Wisdom (Paññā-Pāramī)

Three Kinds of Wisdom

The Vibhanga of the Abhidhamma, in the section on **Nana Vibhanga**, mentions three kinds of Wisdom (*paññā*):

- (a) **Cintāmaya Paññā**,
- (b) **Sutamaya Paññā**, and
- (c) **Bhāvanamaya Paññā**.

(a) Knowledge of various kinds, whether low or noble, including various crafts and professions, etc., which are acquired through one's own reasoning and not through asking others or hearing about it from others, is called **Cintāmaya Paññā** ('*cinta*' - thinking; '*māyā*' - formed of; hence, literally, wisdom formed of thinking.)

This kind of wisdom includes not only thoughts on mundane affairs but also on things concerning Dhamma matters. Therefore, it comprises the knowledge of ordinary worldly things, such as carpentry, agriculture, etc., as well as the knowledge of things of Dhamma nature, such as Generosity, Morality, Concentration and Vipassanā Insight Meditation. The Omniscience (*sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*) of the Buddhas may even be called **Cintāmaya Paññā**, if one wishes to do so, because the Bodhisatta, Prince Siddhattha, had thought out by himself the practice leading to Omniscience without hearing of it from anyone and became Omniscient.

However, Wisdom as the fourth Perfection to be fulfilled by the Bodhisatta should be considered as only the group of fundamental knowledge necessary for the attainment of knowledge of the Path and Fruition State and Omniscience. We are not concerned here with the group of Wisdom, which is acquired in the final existence of a Bodhisatta, entitling him to Buddhahood. Bodhisattas, fulfilling the Perfection of Wisdom before the last life, practised only up to the first part of the

ninth stage (*saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*, 'Knowledge of Equanimity about Formations') out of the ten stages of Vipassanā Insight. The final part of this *saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa* leads on directly to the knowledge of the Path. So, Bodhisattas do not attempt to go beyond the first part until their last life, for should they do so, they would have accordingly attained *maggā-phala* and become *ariyas* and passed into Nibbāna in those existences; they would not become a Buddha though. Therefore, it should be noted that as a Bodhisatta, the Perfection of Wisdom is fulfilled only up to the first part of the *saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*.

(b) Knowledge gained by listening to the wise who talk either on their own or at one's request when one is unable to think out or reason by oneself is called **Sutamaya Paññā**. ('*Suta*' - hearing, '*māyā*' - formed of; hence, wisdom formed of hearing.) Like **Cintāmaya Paññā**, this kind of wisdom is of very extensive nature. The only difference between the two is that in the first, wisdom is gained through one's own thought or reasoning and in the second by hearing from others.

(c) The kind of Wisdom gained at the time when one is actually experiencing the *jhāna* or *phala* states is called **Bhāvanamaya Paññā**.

The **Abhidhamma Vibhanga**, in the Chapter on the **Ñāṇa Vibhanga**, gives types of wisdom in groups of one kind, two kinds, etc. up to ten kinds.

All these groups of wisdom, however, may be taken as coming under the three types of wisdom given above. For example, in the *Vibhanga*, after the group of the three kinds of wisdom, namely, **Cintāmaya**, etc. are enumerated **Dānamaya Paññā**, **Sīlamaya Paññā** and **Bhāvanamaya Paññā**. **Dānamaya Paññā** is wisdom formed of generosity. Volition associated with generosity is of three kinds, namely, volition that arises before, volition that arises during and volition that arises after the offering. The wisdom associated with these volitions in each case is *Dānamaya Paññā*. Similarly, in the case of observance of morality, wisdom that arises with the intention: "I will observe the precepts", wisdom that arises while observing and wisdom that arises on reflection after observing the precepts, all three are **Sīlamaya Paññā**.

If the *Dānamaya Paññā* and *Sīlamaya Paññā* have been deduced through one's process of thinking and reasoning, then it is to be classed as *Cintāmaya Paññā*; if it has been gained through hearing from others, they are to be included in *Sutamaya Paññā*. Other kinds of wisdom can similarly be classified under the same three heading of *Cintāmaya Paññā*, etc.

The teaching "*paripucchanto budham janam paññā paramitam gantvā* — accomplishing the Perfection of Wisdom by learning from the wise," in the *Buddhavaṃsa* clearly indicates that the Buddha regards the *Sutamaya Paññā* as the basic wisdom. This is because in this world, one, who has not yet acquired basic wisdom, cannot know any thing through thinking it out for himself; he has to learn it first from the wise by listening to them. Therefore, the Buddha has expounded that one, who wishes to fulfil the Perfection of Wisdom, should first acquire knowledge from the wise before he has any basic wisdom.

In brief, Wisdom through hearing (*Sutamaya Paññā*) should be acquired before Wisdom through thinking (*Cintāmaya Paññā*).

The Commentaries such as the **Atthasālini** describe the innumerable lives of the Bodhisatta, for example, as the wise men Vidhura, Mahā Govinda, Kudala, Araka, Bodhi the Wondering Ascetic, Mahosadha, etc. when he had to fulfil the Perfection of Wisdom. In these lives, the Bodhisatta had already acquired basic wisdom; he also possessed therefore *Cintāmaya Paññā*. As his basic wisdom was already great enough, acquiring *Sutamaya Paññā* was no longer his chief concern in those existences.

Four Kinds of Kavi

The *Catukka Nipāta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya* describes four kinds of **Kavi**:

- (1) **Cinta kavi**
- (2) **Suta kavi**
- (3) **Attha kavi**

(4) **Patibhāna kavi**

(The term *kavi* is derived from the root, ‘*kava*’ which means ‘to praise’; so a person who praises things worthy of praises is called *kavi* meaning a ‘wise person’.)

- (1) One who is capable of knowing a given matter by thinking it out for himself is called a **Cinta kavi**, a wise man of original thinking. It is the province of such persons to sing verses lauding those deserving praise. Thus **Cinta kavi** is one who composes poems relying solely on his own thinking.
- (2) One who puts into verse what one knows through hearing is called a **Suta kavi**.
- (3) One who does not know through his original thinking or through learning from others but interprets the meaning of a difficult point based upon the knowledge he already possesses of similar problems is called an **Attha kavi**, a wise man who explains meaning. He writes verses based on a given subject-matter.
- (4) One who, without having recourse to thinking out himself or listening to others or referring to what is already known, has the ability to penetrate at once the meaning of a given subject is called a **Patibhāna kavi**, a wise man of ready speech (like the Venerable Vangisa Thera during the Buddha’s time).

The Nature of Wisdom

Wisdom is a separate mental concomitant, one of the ultimate realities. In the **Dhammasaṅgani**, various names, such as *paññīndriya*, *paññā*, *pajānanā*, etc. are given to wisdom, because it is the characteristic of the **Abhidhamma** to give complete details of everything that should be taught about each subject. The principal term for wisdom is ‘*paññīndriya*’ made up of ‘*paññā*’ and ‘*indriya*’.

It is called **Paññā** (Wisdom), because it is conducive to understanding in all aspects the Four Truths or the Three Characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anatta*).

It is called faculty (*indriya*), (controlling or governing) because it can overcome ignorance (*avijjā*) and delusion (*moha*) or because it dominates in understanding the real nature. *Paññā* (wisdom), has the characteristic of creating light. Just as darkness is dispelled as soon as light appears in a dark room, even so, where ignorance blinds us, as soon as wisdom appears, ignorance is dispelled enabling us to see clearly. Therefore, the Buddha has said: “*Paññā samā ābhā natthi* — There is no light like wisdom”.

Wisdom has the characteristic of perceiving things with discrimination. Just as a clever physician discerns which food is suitable for his patient and which food is not, so when wisdom arises it enables one to distinguish between what is meritorious and what is not.

Wisdom also has the characteristic of penetrating the real nature as it is. It may be likened to an arrow which, shot by a clever archer, penetrates the target unerringly.

An important point to note with regard to this characteristic of wisdom: Genuine wisdom is knowing a thing as it really is and such a knowledge is blameless. That is why in the **Abhidhammattha Sangaha**, the mental concomitant of wisdom (*Paññā Cetasika*) is included in the ‘Beautiful’ (*Sobhaṇa*) types of mental concomitants.

Sulasā Jātaka in Brief

Questions arise concerning wisdom with reference to the action of Sulasā in the **Sulasā Jātaka** of the **Atthaka Nipāta**. In Bārāṇasī, a prostitute by the name of Sulasā saved the life of robber Suttaka who was about to be executed. She made him her husband and they lived together. Wanting to possess her jewellery, the robber persuaded her to put on her jewelled ornaments which worth one lakh of money and went up a mountain with him. On reaching the top of the mountain, he told her to take off all her jewellery and prepared to kill her. Then Sulasā thought to herself: “He is sure to kill me, I must strike first and kill him by a ruse.” So she begged him: “My dear, even though you are going to kill me, I lose no love for you. Nearing my death, may I pay my respects to you from the four quarters, i.e.

front, back and the sides.” Not suspecting her stratagem, the robber allowed her to do so. After paying respects to the robber, who was standing on the edge of a precipice, from the front and the sides, when she went behind him, she pushed him over the precipice with all her might and killed him.

The Bodhisatta, who was a deva then, living in the mountain remarked: “*Na hi sabbesu thānesu puriso hoti pandito; ithipi pandito hoti tattha tattha vicakkhanā.* – Not in all circumstances is the man the wise one: woman is also wise and far sighted.”

Some raise the question as to whether it is proper for the Bodhisatta Deva to praise Sulasa as being wise. Sulasa's intention to kill the robber is a matter of committing the wrong deed of killing and cannot be associated with *paññā cetasika*.

In reply to that, some say that Sulasa's knowledge was not true *paññā*. Of the three kinds of knowledge, namely, knowledge through perception (*sanna*), knowledge through consciousness (*viññāṇa*), and knowledge through wisdom (*paññā*). Sulasa's was knowledge through consciousness only, that is to say, through exercise of imagination. That knowledge through consciousness has been referred to, here, as *paññā*.

Others wrongly assert that of the two views: wrong view (*miccha diṭṭhi*) and right view (*sammā diṭṭhi*); Sulasa had wrong view and the Bodhisatta Deva was referring to her view as *paññā* and not praising her because of the faculty of wisdom, and, therefore, it is not against **Abhidhamma**.

Both these answers, taking consciousness (*viññāṇa*) and view (*diṭṭhi*) as wisdom (*paññā*) contrary to the principles of **Abhidhamma**, are entirely wrong.

Sulasa's knowledge that she would win the robber, if she adopted a ruse was true knowledge and was, therefore, wisdom. One should not doubt whether genuine wisdom can be involved in matters connected with evil actions. For example, it is blameless to know discriminatingly about alcoholic drinks which should not be indulged in and which lead to immoral actions, as to which ones contain more or less alcohol, how much does each cost, what will happen if one drinks them etc. It begins to be immoral only from the moment one thinks of drinking the intoxicant.

Similarly, one can make a thorough study of all the various views and beliefs in the world without any exception, differentiating between what is correct and reasonable and what is wrong. Thus, studying and getting to know about them as they really are, whether right or wrong, is entirely faultless. Only when one misconstrues a wrong view to be right is one at fault.

So in Sulasa's case, knowing: “I will win over him, if I use a ruse” is knowing rightly; it is knowing through wisdom and therefore blameless. But, since the moment of her decision to kill her husband by means of a stratagem, her action had become blameworthy, immoral. It is only with reference to the correct knowledge which initially arose in her, before the deed of killing, that the Bodhisatta Deva praised, saying she was wise.

As has been said above, we should distinguish clearly between the knowledge about evil on one hand and the commission of evil such as killing on the other. If one persists in the belief that knowledge about evil is not true wisdom, one would make the error of thinking that the great Omniscience of the Buddha itself is not free from blemish.

Through His supreme Wisdom, the Buddha knows all there is to know, everything moral or immoral; hence the name of Omniscience. If true Wisdom has nothing to do with anything evil, then the Buddha would have no knowledge whatever of evil things; indeed, the Buddha's Wisdom is very extensive, infinite and is thus known as Omniscience.

In brief, the Buddha knows everything, good or evil. But since He has uprooted all latent defilements, He has no desire to commit anything evil, not to say of the actual deed. Thus reflecting on the attributes of knowing everything that is evil, of having abandoned what should be abandoned and of refraining from doing any evil, we should develop faith in the Buddha.

Again, we should also examine the story of Mahosadha the Wise as described in the

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Mahosadha Jātaka. In this story, Culani Brahmadatta with rulers of his vassal states surrounded and attacked the royal city of King Videha, who had as his right-hand man, Mahosadha the Wise. Mahosadha master-minded the defence of the city by devising various stratagem to deceive the enemy hordes, to break down their morale and finally to force them to retreat to all directions in a disorderly rout. Should we opine that deceptive measures adopted by Mahosadha, not being moral undertaking, do not count as Wisdom, there would be no occasion for the Bodhisatta to fulfil the Perfection of Wisdom. As a matter of fact, all the strategic devices employed by Mahosadha are the products of the Bodhisatta's Wisdom. The Buddha has therefore specifically mentioned the story of Mahosadha as an example of how the Bodhisatta had fulfilled his Perfection of Wisdom.

In view of what has been said, it should be noted that in the story of Sulasa, the Mountain deva praised Sulasa as a wise person because she indeed had Wisdom.

(This is an explanation on doubtful points with regard to characteristics of Wisdom.)

The Kinds of Wisdom

The definition of 'wisdom' given in the Commentaries, such as the **Aṭṭhasalini**, etc. as the knowledge of or the knowledge leading to full comprehension of the Four Noble Truths and the Three Characteristics refers to the highest (*ukkaṭṭha*) type of Wisdom. There are also certain types of Wisdom which are much lower.

The Commentary on the **Abhidhamma Vibhaṅga**, in expounding on **Cintāmaya Paññā** and **Sutamaya Paññā**, describes the kinds of Wisdom involved in 'manual labour for earning one's livelihood' (*kammāyatana*) and in 'skills for earning one's livelihood' (*sippāyatana*). Each is again divided into two kinds, lower and higher. Carpentry is an example of a lower type of manual labour. Farming, trading are of a higher type. Mat-making, weaving, etc. are of lower forms of skill for earning one's living and writing, calculating, etc. are higher forms of skill for earning one's living.

The essential distinction between forms of livelihood is that when manual labour is done for livelihood without taking special training, it is **Kammāyatana** type and when skill for earning livelihood is acquired after special training, it is called **Sippayatana**. When special training is for skill in vocal accomplishments it is called **Vijjāthāna**.

When we discriminate one fire from another, our discrimination is not based on the quality of the fuel used for burning but on the quantity of the fuel and we say "a small fire" or "a big fire". So also in the case of wisdom, discrimination should be done not on the basis of the quality of what is known but rather on the basis of the degree or extent of what is known and we should speak of wisdom as "weak" or "powerful", in other words, "simple" or "profound". We should not restrict ourselves to higher forms of knowledge, as expounded in the Commentary, but also recognize the lower forms also as wisdom.

Therefore, one who wishes to fulfil the Perfection of Wisdom should do so irrespective of the standard of wisdom, whether low or high, and regarding things unknown, one should approach the wise for learning from them. Therefore, it is said in the Buddhavaṃsa: "*Paripucchanto budham panna-paramitam gantva.*" meaning "Repeatedly asking the wise, having reached the Perfection of Wisdom."

Seven Ways of Developing Wisdom

The **Sammohavinodani**, Commentary to the **Abhidhamma Vibhaṅga** gives seven ways of developing wisdom in the chapter on the Foundations of Steadfast Mindfulness (**Satipathāna**):

- (1) **Paripucchakāṭā** – asking the wise again and again. (This is in accordance with the Pāli phrase quoted above.)
- (2) **Vatthuvisadakiriya** – making objects, both inside and outside the body, pure. (For internal cleanliness, one's hair, nails and beard should not be too long. The body

should not be soiled with sweat and dirt. For external cleanliness, one's clothes should not be old and bad smelling; one's dwelling should be kept clean. When there is impurity inside and outside the body, the wisdom that arises is like the thick flame produced from a dirty wick soaked in the turbid oil of an unclean lamp. In order to have clean and bright wisdom, which is like the flame of a clean lamp, one should keep one's body clean both internally and externally.)

(3) Indriya samatta patipādanā – bringing the faculties, such as faith, etc., into perfect balance.

(There are five faculties¹⁹ which control consciousness and mental concomitants of beings. If the faith faculty is too strong, the other four faculties are bound to be weak; consequently, energy faculty cannot exercise its function of giving support and encouragement to exertion; mindfulness faculty cannot fulfil its task of minding the object of attention; concentration faculty cannot prevent distraction of mind; and wisdom faculty fails to discern. When faith faculty is in excess, an attempt should be made to moderate it and bring it in line with others either by reflecting on the Dhamma that will normalise it or avoiding to reflect on the Dhamma that will promote and strengthen it.

(If the energy faculty is too strong, faith faculty will not be able to perform its function; the rest of the faculties also cannot perform their respective functions. This excess of energy should be corrected by developing tranquillity. The same holds true in the case of each of the remaining faculties.)

What is particularly praised by the wise and virtuous is balancing faith with wisdom, and concentration with energy. If one is strong in faith and weak in wisdom, one will have faith in unworthy ones to no purpose. (Being weak in wisdom, one is unable to discern critically who is deserving of reverence and who is not; mistaking what is not true 'Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha' for genuine ones, one's devotion is then of no avail and fruitless.) Mistaken belief of those who wrongly devote themselves to false Buddha or false Dhamma is not true faith but only wrong and harmful conclusion (*micchadhimokkha*).

If wisdom is strong and faith is weak, one will miss the correct path and follow the wrong one, which leads to the side of cunning. To bring such a person to the right path is as hard to cure as a patient suffering from ill-effects of wrong medicine. For example, these are two kinds of giving: (i) gift of volition (*cetanā-dāna*) and (ii) gift of material objects (*vatthu-dāna*). A person, who has cunning ways of thinking, might consider that it is only volition not the material objects that would be fruitful in future; therefore, it is not necessary to offer material things as *dāna*; gift of volition is sufficient. Such a person who fails to do meritorious deeds of alms-giving, because of his cunning, would be reborn in the lower planes of existence.

Only when faith and wisdom are in balance can one have proper faith in deserving ones and with the absence of cunning, there can develop many advantages. Energy and concentration should also be in balance; when energy is weak and concentration strong, idleness (*kosajja*) will result: without any activities but assuming an air of calmness as if in good concentration, one is overwhelmed by indolence.

When energy is strong and concentration weak, there will be agitation and excitement but no steadiness. Overwhelmed by restlessness (*uddhacca*), one may be distracted with the thought: "If this work does not yield any good result as

19. The five faculties are faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom; each has its own function: faith enables one to give devoted attention to the object of reverence; energy gives support and encouragement enabling one to exert and strive hard; mindfulness keeps track of the object of attention; concentration prevents distraction of mind; and wisdom enables one to see, to understand. These faculties must be kept in balance, for if one is in excess, the others would suffer and fail to do their functions.

expected, it will not be suitable for me. I would abandon it and try something else.”

When energy and concentration are in equilibrium, idleness (*kosajja*) and restlessness (*uddhacca*) get no chance to arise. Balancing of these two leads to quick attainment of *jhāna* or Absorption Concentration (*Appannā*).

However, mindfulness-faculty can never be in excess; there may be only its shortage. In the Text, it is likened to salt, a necessary ingredient of all food preparations or to a Prime Minister who attends to all the royal business. Therefore, while maintaining the maximum possible mindfulness, faculties in each of the two pairs, namely, faith and wisdom, energy and concentration, should be kept in perfect balance with each other. Excess of any is a disadvantage. In this connection, the Venerable U Budh has made the following comment in his Mahā Satipatthana-Nissaya:

Excess of faith leads to over enthusiasm,
Excess of wisdom leads to craftiness,
Excess of energy leads to restlessness,
Excess of concentration leads to ennui (mental weariness),
But there is never an excess of mindfulness.

(4) Duppaññapuggala parivajjanam – avoiding persons without wisdom.

(*Duppañña* means an individual who has no wisdom to discern penetratingly such groups of Dhamma as the aggregates (*khandha*), the bases (*āyatana*), etc. One should keep oneself far away from such people.)

(5) Paññavanta puggalasevana – associating with the wise.

(The wise means persons who are possessed of the fifty characteristics of the knowledge of arising and falling (*udaya bhaya ñāṇa*). For details of the fifty characteristics of *Udhaya bhaya ñāṇa*, **Patisambhidāmagga** may be consulted²⁰.)

Concerning both items no's (4) and (5), the commentator is only describing the developments of the highest (*ukkattha*) type of wisdom. In item (4), a person without wisdom means one who cannot discern penetratingly the group of Dhammas such as aggregates and the bases; a person with penetrating knowledge of such Dhammas can only be one who is of great wisdom. But there are those, who though not possessing wisdom to discern such subtle Dhammas as aggregates and bases, know ordinary matters concerning practice of Dhamma: “It is proper to make such offering; it is not proper to do so. Precepts should be observed thus; they should not be observed otherwise.” They also know matters concerning worldly living, “This act will prolong one's life; this act will shorten one's life.” Such persons cannot be said to be entirely devoid of wisdom. One should cultivate association with them too.

In item (5) also, by defining a wise person as one who in possessed of the fifty characteristics of the knowledge of arising and falling (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*), the commentator is referring by way of excellence (*ukkattha naya*) only to the wise who are most highly advanced in Vipassanā Meditation.

But with regard to acquiring knowledge, the Buddha had expounded in the Buddhavaṃsa: “Taking the example of a *bhikkhu* going on alms round to all the houses in serial order without discrimination, a learner should approach whoever can answer his questions, regardless of his social or educational status. Therefore, he should avoid only a totally ignorant one and approach all who can help him in his quest of knowledge.”

In short, avoiding only those who are completely incapable of answering any questions, one should associate with those who can furnish him with even the slightest information he is seeking.

20. May also see Path of Purification by Bhikkhu Nanamoli. Chapter XX para 93-104.

According to the Buddhavaṃsa, in acquiring wisdom, one should first ask and learn from the wise to develop wisdom through hearing, **Sutamaya paññā**. Then, if one is not clear about any point, one should reflect on it and think about it, and thus develop wisdom by means of thinking, **Cintamaya paññā**.

In the Discourse to the Kalamas (**Aṅguttara Nikāya**, Tikanipata, Dutiya Pannasaka, 2-Mahavagga, 5-Kalama Sutta), the Buddha was told by the Kalamas that many preachers visited their place, that all of these visiting preachers praised only their own doctrines, denouncing and condemning others and that they had doubt and perplexity as to which doctrine to accept and follow. The Buddha's reply to them may be summarized as "you should accept the doctrine which you find after due consideration to be free of fault."

This Discourse shows that one should first acquire **Sutamaya paññā** by listening to the talks of preachers. and then think over which doctrine is blameless by using the **Cintamaya paññā**.

Moreover, in the Patha Jātaka, Dasaka Nipata, **9-Maha Dhammapala Jātaka**, when the great teacher of Takkaṣiḷa went in person to the village of Dhammapala to find out why the young people of the village did not die before the end of their life span, Mahadhammapala, (the village headman) who would be reborn as King Suddhodāna in time to come, replied: "We listen to all who come and preach. After listening, we ponder upon their preaching. We do not heed what the immoral persons teach, instead we forsake them. We accept only the teachings of the moral ones with which we are delighted and which we follow. Therefore, in our village, the young ones never die before the end of their life span."

This Jātaka story also clearly shows that one acquires wisdom first by means of **Sutamaya Paññā**, and then accepts only what is confirmed to be true by **Cintamaya Paññā**.

Associating with The Wise

The expression 'associating with the wise' does not mean mere approaching a wise person and staying with him day and night. It implies learning and acquiring some knowledge from the person who is possessed of wisdom.

The advice "Do not associate with the fool", given as one of the Blessings in the Maṅgala Sutta, does not necessarily present staying with a foolish person. One may even live with him for the purpose of coaxing and persuading him to the right path. In such a case, one is not going against the advice of the Maṅgala Sutta. An example is the sojourn of the Buddha in the Uruvelā Grove in the company of ascetics of wrong view (to help them abandon their wrong path).

Thus, only when one accepts the view and follows the practices of a foolish person, one is then said to be associating with the fool. Likewise, the advice given in the Maṅgala Sutta exhorting one to associate with the wise is well taken, not by merely keeping company with him but only when one acquires some form of knowledge (from him), be it only a little.

(6) **Gambhirananacariya paccavekkhana** – reflecting on the nature of Dhamma which is the resort of profound wisdom. (Herein, wisdom is like fire which burns all inflammable things whether big or small. Depending on the size of what is burning, fire is said to be a small fire or a big one. In the same way, wisdom knows everything there is to know; it is called small, manifest or profound depending on what is known as small, manifest or profound. The Dhamma which is the resort of profound wisdom comprises aggregates, bases, etc. The wisdom, which arises from the knowledge of these profound subjects, is what is meant by profound wisdom. Such profound wisdom is as numerous as there are profound Dhammas. Analytical review of all these numerous profound Dhammas leads to the development of wisdom.)

(7) **Tadadhimuttata** – Having the inclination towards developing wisdom. (In all four postures of lying, sitting, standing and walking one should be only inclined to development of wisdom. Having such a mind is one of the causes of developing wisdom.)

Resume in verse by U Budh:

- (1) Asking again and again,

- (2) Keeping things clean,
- (3) Having faculties in balance,
- (4) Avoiding the fool,
- (5) Associating with the wise,
- (6) Pondering deeply, and
- (7) Having the mind bent on development of wisdom constitute seven ways of developing of wisdom.

The Qualities of Wisdom

(1) When Wisdom takes a predominant place in performing multifarious functions, it acquires the name of **Vimamsadhīpati**, one of the four Predominance-conditions.

(2) Forming constituent parts of the twenty-two Controlling Faculties are four different faculties which are concerned with wisdom: (a) the Wisdom that is included in the thirty-nine mundane consciousness associated with knowledge (*lokiṇāna-sampayutta citta*) is called **Pannindriya**; (b) the Wisdom accompanying the consciousness that arises at the moment of the first stage of Enlightenment (*soṭāpatti-magga citta*) is known as **Anannātaññassāmit'indriya**; (c) the Wisdom that arises with the Fruition State of Arahatsip (*arahatta-phala*) is called **Aññātavindriya**; (d) the Wisdom that is associated with the six intermediate supramundane consciousness (that comes between the *soṭāpanna* and *arahatta* stage) is termed **Aññindriya**.

The Wisdom that should be fulfilled as a Perfection is concerned only with mundane consciousness; thus it is included in the thirteen kinds of moral consciousness (*Kusala Nana Sampayutta Citta*) of the thirty-nine *lokiṇāna-sampayutta citta*. (The non-functional consciousness (*kiriya citta*) belongs only to *arahats*; it is not the concern of Bodhisattas who are still worldlings; the Resultant Consciousness (*Vipāka citta*) arises without any special effort as a consequence of one's past *kamma*. Therefore, the wisdom that is associated with these two types of consciousness does not count as Perfection.) Bodhisattas concentrate only on the mundane wisdom so as to fulfil the Perfection of Wisdom to its highest degree.

In the thirty-seven Constituents of Enlightenment (*Bodhipakkhiya Dhamma*) are included the five Controlling Faculties (*Indriya*), one of which is Faculty of Wisdom (*Pannindriya*); this Faculty of Wisdom is of two kinds: mundane and supramundane. The supramundane kind is not included in the Perfection of Wisdom developed by a Bodhisatta. Only the wisdom that is associated with mundane moral consciousness which arises while undertaking purification of morality and purification of mind previous to attainment of *magga-phala* states is the Perfection of Wisdom fulfilled by Bodhisattas.

(3) Similarly, in the other four constituents of the *Bodhipakkhiya* are included factors of wisdom (*paññā*) under different names. Thus in the Five Powers (*bala*) it is known as Power of Wisdom (*Paññā bala*); in the Four Means of Accomplishment (*Iddhipada*) as Accomplishment by Wisdom (*vimansiddhipada*); in the Seven Factors of Enlightenments (*Bojjhaṅga*) as Investigation of Dhamma (*Dhammavicaya Sambojjhanga*) and in the Eight Constituents of the Noble Path (*Ariya-magganga*) as Right View (*Samma-ditthi*).

As with Faculty of Wisdom (**Paññindriya**), these various factors of wisdom, under different names, are developed at two different levels: mundane and supramundane. The Wisdom that accompanies the supramundane consciousness is not included in the Perfection of Wisdom as fulfilled by Bodhisattas. It is only the wisdom associated with mundane moral consciousness, which arises while undertaking purification of morality and purification of mind previous to attainments of *magga-phala* states, that counts as the Perfection of Wisdom fulfilled by Bodhisattas.

Contemplating on these special qualities of wisdom, may you fulfil the Perfection of Wisdom to its highest possible stage.

(e) The Perfection of Energy (Vīriya-Pāramī)

Bodhisatta's Exertion of Energy

In matters of the Perfection of Energy, the Texts give the example of a maned lion whose nature is to put forth maximum effort whether in hunting a rabbit or in hunting an elephant. He does not exert less in hunting a rabbit because it is a small animal; nor does he strive more in hunting an elephant because of its great size. In both cases, he uses equal degree of exertion.

Following the ways of a maned lion, a Bodhisatta while fulfilling the Perfection of Energy, does not make less effort for ordinary tasks nor put forth more energy for more arduous ones. He always makes the same amount of maximum exertion, whether the task is small or great.

Deep Impression of Past Exertions on The Buddha

As a result of the habit of employing uniform energy whether attending to big or small affairs in past lives as a Bodhisatta, when He finally became an Enlightened One, the Buddha made equal efforts when giving discourses. He did not reduce His effort and deliver an address casually to a single person; neither did he put forth more energy to enable the audience at the extreme end hear Him when addressing a huge assembly as, for example, at the time of delivering the First Sermon. He maintained an even voice putting forth equal energy for both occasions.

Special Glory of the Buddha. The Buddha being blessed with unthinkable majestic glory, His voice uttered with uniform exertion reaches all who listen. If there is only one person listening to Him, only that person hears the discourse. When there are many people, each person, whether near or far from the Buddha, hears Him clearly. (When the Chief Disciple Mahāthera Sāriputta gave the Discourse of Samacitta Suttanta, as the audience was very large, his normal voice could not reach all of them; he had to make them all hear him with the help of his Supernormal Psychic Powers of Accomplishments (*Iddhividha Abhiññāna*); he had to use the 'abhiññā loud-speaker,' so to say. However, it was not necessary for the Buddha to do so to make everyone in the audience hear Him.) This is the special glory of the Buddha.

Every Buddha exerts Himself to fulfil the Perfection of Energy in all His previous lives as a Bodhisatta. In addition, in His last birth when He would gain Enlightenment, He renounces the world and makes strenuous efforts to practise austerities (*dukkaracariya*) at least for seven days. Having performed the austerities, as the time draws near for Buddhahood, He sits on a seat of grass at the foot of the Bodhi tree and makes a resolute effort with a firm determination: "Let only My skin remain; let only My sinews remain; let only My bones remain; let all the blood and flesh dry up, I will not rise from this seat until I have attained Omniscience (*sabbāññuta-ñāṇa*)."

Through this effort, He developed the Knowledge of Insight as powerful as a thunder bolt (*Mahā Vajira Vipassanā Nāṇa*) which enables Him to realize first, the Law of Dependent Origination, followed by the knowledge of the three characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*), unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*) and unsubstantiality (*anatta*) in all material and mental phenomena (*rūpa* and *nāma*).

Energy (*Vīriya*) like Wisdom (*Paññā*), is a mental concomitant, but whereas Wisdom is, as stated before, always associated with moral consciousness, energy being a miscellaneous type of concomitant (*pakiṇṇaka cetasika*) is associated with both moral and immoral consciousness and also of indeterminate type (*abyākata*) which is neither moral nor immoral. Consequently, energy can be wholesome or unwholesome or indeterminate. Effort which is wholesome is known as Right Effort (*Sammā vāyāma*); effort employed for wrong purpose is unwholesome and is called Wrong Effort (*Micchā vāyāma*). It is only the Right Effort which should be cultivated to the fullest extent as the Perfection of Energy.

Right Exertion (Sammappadhana)

Right Effort (*Sammā vāyāma*) is also known as Right Exertion (*Sammappadhāna*). The

meaning is the same. In exposition on Sammappadhāna of the **Abhidhamma Vibhanga**, the Buddha has explained four kinds of Right Exertion:

- (1) The endeavour to prevent the arising at any time, any place on any object of evil which has not yet arisen; or which one cannot recall to mind of having arisen at a certain time, at a certain place, on a certain object.
- (2) The endeavour to put away evil that has arisen.
(As a matter of fact, it is impossible to abandon evil that had already arisen or that had arisen and passed away. The evil that had arisen in the past had ceased; it is no longer existing. What does not exist cannot be removed. What is to be understood here is that one should strive to prevent arising of new evil which is of similar nature to the one that has arisen before.)
- (3) The endeavour to bring about the arising of the good which has not yet arisen or which one cannot recall to mind of having arisen at a certain time, a certain place, on a certain object.
- (4) The endeavour to maintain and further develop the good that has arisen or that is arising. (Here also what is to be understood is that one should strive to bring about the repeated arising of the good similar to the one that has already arisen.)

Eleven Factors of Developing Energy

The **Satipatthana Vibhanga Commentary** and the **Mahā Satipatthana Sutta Commentary** describe eleven factors of development of energy.

- (1) Reflecting on the dangers of lower worlds of existence (**Apāya bhaya paccavekkhanata**).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: “If I am lax in making effort, I may be reborn in the realms of misery (*apāya*). Of the four realms of misery, if I am reborn in the realm of continuous suffering (*niraya*), I will suffer intense pains resulting from numerous, terrible tortures; or if I am reborn in the animal world, I may be subjected to all forms of ill-treatment by human beings; or if I am reborn in the ghost realm (*peta-loka*), I will be tormented by hunger for long periods (of world-cycles) between the appearance of one Buddha and of another; or if I am reborn in the demon world (*asura loka*), with my huge body, sixty or eighty cubits in length, of bones and skins only, I will suffer from heat, cold or winds. In any of these terrible rebirths, I will get no chance of developing the four Right Exertions. This life is my only opportunity to do so.”

- (2) Perceiving the benefits accruing from development of energy (**Ānimsadassāvītā**).

Energy will develop in him who, reviewing and seeing the advantages of developing energy, reflects thus: “A lazy man can never get out of the cycle of rebirths (*samsāra*) and attain the supramundane Paths and Fruition States. Only the industrious can attain them. The beneficial result of making effort is the attainment of the supramundane Path and Fruition States which are so difficult to realize.”

- (3) Reviewing the path to be tread (**Gamanavithi paccavekkhanatā**).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: “All Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and Noble Disciples of a Buddha realize their goals by walking along the path of industry. Exertion is the straight path trod by the Noble Ones. No idle person can follow this road. Only the industrious take to this path.”

- (4) Honouring the alms food of devotees (**Piṇḍapātāpacāyanatā**).

This factor is the specific concern of *bhikkhus*. Energy will develop in him who, regarding with esteem and appreciation rich food offered by devotees, reflects thus: “These devotees are not my relatives; they give me this alms food not because they want to make their living by depending on me; they do so only because of the great merit that accrues from giving (to the Sangha). The Buddha does not allow us to eat alms food in a light minded, irresponsible manner, or to live an easy-going life. He permits it only for the

purpose of practising the Dhamma to achieve liberation from *samsāra*. Alms food is not for the lazy or the indolent. Only men of diligence are worthy of it.”

(5) Reflecting on the nobility of the inheritance (**Dāyajjamahatta paccavekkhanatā**).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: “The heritage of the Buddha known as ‘the treasures of the virtuous’ to be received by His disciples is of seven kinds: faith (*saddhā*), morality (*sīla*), learning (*suta*), liberality (*cāga*), wisdom (*paññā*), moral shame (*hiri*), and moral dread (*ottappa*).

The indolent are not entitled to inherit from the Buddha. Just as bad children, disowned by their parents, cannot inherit from them, even so those who are lazy cannot receive the ‘treasures of the virtuous’ as heritage from the Buddha. Only men of diligence deserve this inheritance.”

(6) Reflecting on the nobility of the Teacher, the Buddha (**Satthumahatta-paccavekkhanatā**).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: “My Teacher, the Buddha, is so noble that the ten-thousand world-universe shook when He took conception (as a Bodhisatta for His last life), when He renounced the world, when He became the Enlightened One, when He expounded the First Sermon (**Dhammacakka-pavattana Sutta**), when He performed the Twin Miracle at Savatthi to defeat the heretics (*tiṭṭhiya*), when He descended from the Tāvātimsa deva-world to Sankassa Nagara, when He renounced the Vital Principle (*Āyusankhāra*) and when He passed into Parinibbāna. Being a true son (or daughter) of such a noble Buddha, should I remain care-free and lazy without exerting myself to practise His Teachings?”

(7) Reflecting on the nobility of own lineage (**Jāti mahatta paccavekkhanatā**).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: “My lineage is not humble; I am descended from (the first king) Mahasammata of pure and high caste; I am the brother of Rāhula who is the grandson of King Suddhodāna and Queen Mahā Māyā, who belonged to the House of King Okkāka, one of the descendants of Mahāsammata; Rāhula is the Buddha’s son; since I have also taken the name of Buddha’s son of Sakya ancestry, we are brothers. Being of such noble ancestry, I should not live a life of indolence but exert myself to practise the noble Teaching.”

(8) Reflecting on the nobility of companions in the holy life (**Sabrahmacārimahatta-paccavekkhanatā**).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: “My companions in the holy life, the Mahāthera Sāriputta and Mahā Moggallāna, as well as eighty Great Disciples, who practised the noble Dhamma, have already realized the supramundane Paths and Fruition States. I should follow the way of the venerable companions in the holy life.”

(9) Keeping away from those who are indolent (**Kusita puggala parivajjanata**).

Energy will develop in him who avoids idle ones, i.e. those who forsake all physical, verbal and mental activities to lie down and roll in sleep like a python that has eaten its fill.

(10) Associating with people who are industrious and energetic (**Araddha vīriya puggala sevanatā**).

Energy will develop in him who associates himself with industrious and energetic people who are devoted only to their task whole-heartedly.

Men of dedication (*pahitatta*) are always determined not to leave their efforts in carrying out a set task until success is achieved (or if not successful until death). Those lacking dedication hesitate even before beginning a work with the thought, "Shall I succeed or not?" While carrying out the work, if the expected goal is not easily achieved, he flinches with the thought, "Even though I carry on with the work, I shall not succeed" and thus they stop putting effort.

(11) Inclination towards development of Energy in all four postures (**Tad adhimuttatā**).

Energy will develop in him who is intent on and inclined to cultivating it in all four

postures of lying down, sitting, standing and walking.

These are the eleven factors which develop Energy.

The Main Foundation of Energy

The main foundation of Energy is the emotion of dread (**saṃvega**). It is of three kinds:

(1) **Cittutrāsa Saṃvega**

Disturbance of mind through dread of dangers of elephants, tigers, weapons, such as swords, spears, etc. is known as “**Cittutrāsa Saṃvega**.” In terms of Abhidhamma, it is the mental concomitant of aversion (*dosa*). Through weak aversion arises fear; through strong aversion arises aggressiveness.

(2) **Ottappa Saṃvega**

Dread to do evil is **Ottappa Saṃvega**. It is a wholesome type of mental concomitant (*sobhana cetasika*).

(3) **Ñāṇa Saṃvega**

Dread that arises as religious emotion through reflecting on cause and effect is known as **Ñāṇa Saṃvega**. It is the kind of fear of *saṃsāra* felt by the virtuous. In the Texts, **Ñāṇa Saṃvega** is described also as the knowledge that is accompanied by moral dread of evil.

(Should one include **Dhamma Saṃvega** which is the wisdom of Arahats that arises accompanied by moral dread on seeing the dangers of conditioned phenomena, there will be four kinds of **Saṃvega**).

Of these types of *saṃvega*, only *ñāṇa saṃvega* should be considered as the main spring of Energy. When one sees the dangers of *saṃsāra* through wisdom and is stirred by moral dread, one would certainly work arduously for liberation from these dangers. Without such wisdom, one will not work for it at all.

Even in everyday mundane life, a student who is struck with fear of poverty, that is, one who has *ñāṇa saṃvega* will work hard reflecting thus: “Without education, I will be faced with poverty when I grow up”; another who is not moved by such anxiety, that is, one who has no *ñāṇa saṃvega*, will put forth no effort whatever to acquire knowledge.

Similarly, motivated by fear of poverty, workers assiduously devote themselves to work which provides them with necessities of life; whereas those who do not consider for their future will remain indolent and carefree. It should be surmised from what has been said that only *ñāṇa saṃvega* can cause the development of Energy.

But this applies only to the development of Energy which serves as a Perfection. As already mentioned, there are two kinds of Energy, namely, Energy which is developed for a wholesome act and that developed for an unwholesome act. The energy necessary for an unwholesome act is also caused by stirring of emotion (*saṃvega*); but it is *cittutrāsa saṃvega* and not *ñāṇa saṃvega* that serves as its foundation.

An indigent person in need of money will make effort to steal; he cannot take up a proper mental attitude (*yoniso manasikāra*). This is an example of how wrong effort arises through unwholesome *cittutrāsa saṃvega*. A person who does not possess a proper mental attitude will have recourse to wrong efforts to prevent possible dangers falling upon him. But a person with right frame of mind will not exert to do wrong actions; he always strives for good ones.

Thus, whereas the main foundation of Energy is the emotion of dread (*saṃvega*), it is the mental attitude which determines the kind of energy whether wholesome or unwholesome to develop.

As a Perfection, unwholesome energy is not to be considered; it is only blameless, wholesome energy that is reckoned as a Perfection.

When we consider the four Right Exertions, it would seem that only energy that causes wholesome acts serves as a Perfection. But, although an effort may not result in wholesome

acts, if it is neither a wrong effort nor the kind that would produce unwholesome acts, it should be counted as a Perfection of Energy.

As an example of super effort for Perfection, the Commentary cites the story of Mahajanaka. The Bodhisatta, as Prince Janaka, made effort of swimming for seven days in the ocean (when the ship he was travelling in sank). His strenuous endeavour was not motivated by a desire to perform wholesome acts or to practise charity, observe morality or cultivate meditation. It does not result in arising of unwholesome states such as greed, hatred, bewilderment either and may thus be regarded as blameless. Prince Janaka's supreme exertion, being blameless and being free from unwholesomeness, counts as fulfilment of Perfection of Energy.

When the ship was about to be wrecked, seven hundred people on board wept and lamented in desperation without making any attempt to survive the disaster. Prince Janaka, unlike his fellow travellers, thought to himself: "To weep and lament in fear when faced with danger is not the way of the wise; a wise man endeavours to save himself from an impending danger. A man with wisdom as I am, I must put forth effort to swim my way through to safety." With this resolve and without any trepidation, he courageously swam across the ocean. Being urged by such a noble thought, his performance was laudable and the effort he put forth for this act was also extremely praiseworthy.

Bodhisattas in every existence undertake what they have to do bravely and without flinching; not to say of rebirths in the human world, even when he was born as a bull, the Bodhisatta performed arduous tasks (**Pātha Jātaka**, Ekaka Nipāta, 3-Kuru Vagga). Thus as a young bull named Kanha, the Bodhisatta, out of gratitude to the old woman who had tended him, pulled five hundred carts loaded with merchandise across a big swamp.

Even as an animal, the development of Energy as a Perfection by the Bodhisatta was not slackened; when reborn as a human, the tendency to put forth effort persisted in him. Extreme hardships he went through as King Kusa, in his endeavours to win back the favours of Princess Pabhavati (who ran away from him because of his ugly appearance), are examples of determined effort, unyielding in face of difficulties of the Bodhisatta. The latent tendency to develop such energy remained with a Bodhisatta throughout all his various existences.

The Life of Mahosadha

The Texts give the story of Mahosadha to show the Bodhisatta's fulfilment of the Perfection of Wisdom. But, in that very life, the Bodhisatta also developed the Perfection of Energy. On the whole, Mahosadha made use of Wisdom as a guide in attending to multifarious duties of his; but once a careful decision had been made, it was put to execution by making continual effort. Such endeavours of Mahosadha, even though they were not intended to develop meritorious acts of generosity, morality or meditation, should be considered as Perfection of Energy since they were made for the welfare of others.

Mahosadha's Endeavours

It may be asked whether some of Mahosadha's endeavours did not cause suffering to others. For example, when King Cūḷani-Brahmadatta laid siege to Mithilā with 18 divisions of his indestructible (*akkhobhaṇī*) army, Mahosadha devising a stratagem brought about a complete rout of the great army, causing much suffering to King Cūḷani-Brahmadatta and his hordes. Should we not blame Mahosadha then for his attempts to make his opponents suffer?

In answer to that: take the simile of scaring a snake which is about to catch a frog. Some people take the view that such an attempt is blameworthy because by so doing the frog will no doubt get out of harm's way but the snake will go hungry. The Buddha teaches that volition is the deciding factor in such a situation. If one frightens away the snake in order to make it suffer from hunger, it is blameworthy; on the other hand, if one acts only to get the frog out of danger without giving any thought to the snake's hunger, it is quite blameless.

Again, in the Questions of King Milinda (**Milindapaṇha**, 4-Meṇḍaka Vagga, 5-

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Devadattapabbajja pañha) the King asked the Venerable Nāgasena: “Venerable Sir, is it not a fact that the Buddha knew that Devadatta would create a schism if he was permitted to become a *bhikkhu*. Knowing thus, why did the Buddha admit him into the order? If he did not receive admission, he would not be able to cause the schism.”

The Venerable Nāgasena replies: “O King, the Buddha indeed foresaw that Devadatta would create a schism among *bhikkhus* but He also knew that if Devadatta did not gain admission into the Order, he would commit unwholesome acts such as holding ‘wrong view with fixed destiny’ (*niyata micchādīṭṭhi*); for which he would suffer worse fate than he would for causing schism. Creating the schism would no doubt lead him to miserable realms (*Apāya*), but there is a time limit for suffering in these realms. Staying outside the Order, however, through his unwholesome deeds such a holding ‘wrong views with fixed destiny’ he would be doomed to unlimited misery in the realms of intense suffering (*Niraya*). Foreseeing this possible limit to his suffering, the Buddha, out of compassion, admitted him into the Order thus mitigating his agony to a certain extent.”

In the same way, by putting to rout the great army of King Cūḷani-Brahmadatta without causing suffering to his country, Mahosadha was saving his own country of Mithilā from complete destruction. He acted thus to serve the best interest of both and was free of any blame.

The Qualities of Energy

(1) When Energy takes a predominant place in performing multifarious functions, it acquires the name of **Vīriyadhīpati**, one of the four Predominance-Conditions (**Adhīpati**).

(2) It forms a constituent part of the twenty-two controlling Faculties (*indriya*) and is known as **Vīriyindriya**. But only the energy that is associated with mundane moral consciousness is reckoned as the Perfection of Energy. In the five Controlling Faculties (*indriya*) of the Bodhipakkhiya Dhamma also, the *vīriyindriya*, just as in the case of *paññindriya*, is counted as a Perfection, only when it is included in the mundane purifications (of morality and mind).

Likewise, concerning the four kinds of Right Exertion (*sammappadhāna*) it is only the energy included in the mundane purification that is considered as a Perfection.

(3) The factor of Energy included in the Five Powers (*bala*) is known as Power of Energy (*vīriya-bala*); in the Four Means of Accomplishment (*iddhipada*) as Accomplishment by Energy (*vīriyiddhipāda*); in the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*) as Energy Factor of Enlightenment (*vīriya-sambojjhaṅga*) and in the Eight Constituents of the Noble Path (*ariya-maggaṅga*) as Right Effort (*sammā-vāyāma*). These various factors of Energy under different names are reckoned as Perfection of Energy only in association with mundane moral consciousness which arises while undertaking mundane purification.

Contemplating on these special qualities of Energy, may you fulfil the Perfection of Energy to its highest possible stage.

(f) The Perfection of Forbearance (Khantī-Pāramī)

The Text exhorts ‘to bear praise and disdain with patience’ (*sammānāvamānakkhamo*). One should neither be elated when meeting with pleasant objects nor upset when encountering unpleasant objects. It is no tolerance of pleasantness, if we develop greed under fortunate circumstances or of unpleasantness if we develop hate under unfortunate circumstances. The essential meaning here is: we are truly patient only when favourable situations are faced without greed; and unfavourable ones without hate.

However, with regard to the Perfection of Forbearance, the Commentaries generally use in illustrative stories the term Perfection of Forbearance (**Khantī-Pāramī**) only for tolerance to acts of physical or verbal aggression by others without giving way to anger. The **Cariyāpiṭaka Commentary**, expounds in the Chapter on Miscellany: “*Karuṇīpāyākosallapariggahitāṃ sattasaṅkhārāparādhasahanāṃ adosappadhāno*

tadākārappavattacittuppādo khantī-pāramitā.” The group of consciousness and its concomitants associated with tolerance of wrongs done by others, predominated by the mental factor of non-aversion (*adosa-cetasika*) and grasped by compassion and skill in means is called Perfection of Forbearance; that is, the group of consciousness and its concomitants formed in such a mode of tolerance to faults of beings is called Perfection of Forbearance.

The **Mūla Tikā** in commenting on the five restraints (morality, mindfulness, wisdom, forbearance and energy) briefly explained in the **Aṭṭhasālini**, defines the restraint of forbearance as: ‘*Khantīti adhivāsānā; sā ca tatha pavatīā khandhā; paññāti eke, adoso eva vā.*’ “*Khantī*” means forbearance; that forbearance is actually the four mental aggregates formed in such a mode of tolerance; some teachers say it is Wisdom (*paññā*) or only the mental factor of non-aversion.

Some scholars take the view:

“The exhortation in the Pāli Texts, ‘to bear praise and disdain with patience’ seems to imply that one should tolerate praise as well as disdain. But, in actual experience, one is liable to be displeased and angry only when one is insulted and despised; no one shows such emotions when treated with honour and veneration. Therefore, the term forbearance should be used only when one shows no anger in a situation which would normally provoke anger to many others.

“To take the Pāli Text exhortation literally is to equate the Perfection of Forbearance with the Perfection of Equanimity, seeing no difference between the two.”

As the authority quoted by these scholars is the aforesaid **Cariyāpīṭaka Commentary** and **Mūla Tikā**, their view may not be set aside.

It should be noted, however, that forbearance is considered to be tolerance of others' treatment whereas equanimity is indifference towards beings, without hate or love.

The Venerable Ledi Sayadaw in his *Maṅgala Sutta Nissaya* defines *Khantī* as “not feeling exalted when encountering pleasantness and remaining patient without giving vent to anger when encountering hardships.” This definition is in agreement with the exhortation ‘*sammānāvamānakkhama*’.

To reconcile the Commentary's exposition and the Text: Bodhisattas are by nature serious minded; pleasant experiences or happy circumstances do not make them excited with greed; they are accustomed to remain unmoved by them without having to make a special effort to discipline their mind. When faced with an unhappy turn of events, however, they have to make special endeavour to bear them patiently so as to fulfil their Perfection of Forbearance.

Bodhisattas, who are fulfilling the Perfection of Forbearance, have to put up with both pleasant and unpleasant experiences so as not to develop greed and ill-will. Hence, the exhortation given in the Text, to bear praise without developing greed and to tolerate insults and ill-treatments without generating hate. But it is nothing strange for Bodhisattas, who are serious minded, to experience pleasantness without being moved by greed. Therefore, the Commentary comments only upon tolerance, which is to be cultivated as Perfection of Forbearance in unpleasant situations which are unbearable to ordinary persons. Viewed in this way, there is no disagreement between the exposition in the Commentary and the teaching in the Text.

The Nature of Forbearance

Forbearance being the group of consciousness and its concomitants led by the mental factor of non-aversion (*adosa cetasika*), which has the characteristics of lack of ill-will or anger, is not a separate ultimate reality like Wisdom or Energy. However, When considered by itself as *adosa cetasika*, it is of course an ultimate reality like Wisdom or Energy.

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Although forbearance (*khantī*) is non-aversion (*adosa cetasika*) every case of non-aversion is not forbearance. The *adosa cetasika* accompanies every arising of a 'Beautiful' (*sobhana*) type of Consciousness but it is called forbearance (*khantī*) only if it serves as a deterrent to anger when provoked by others. If the 'Beautiful' consciousness arises due to any other cause, the *adosa cetasika* that accompanies it is not called forbearance.

The Venerable Puṇṇa's Forbearance

The Venerable Puṇṇa's mental attitude serves as a good example of forbearance one should develop. It is, therefore, briefly described here. Once during the Buddha's time, the Venerable Puṇṇa approached and informed the Buddha that he would like to go to Sunāparanta district and live there. The Buddha said to him: "Puṇṇa, the people in Sunāparanta are rough and brutal. How would you feel, should they abuse and revile you?"

The Thera replied: "Venerable Sir, should the people of Sunāparanta abuse and revile me, I would regard them as good people, control my temper and bear them patiently with the thought: 'These are good people, extremely good people; they merely abuse and revile me, but not assault me with their fists and elbows.' "

The Buddha asked him further: "Puṇṇa, suppose the people of Sunāparanta assault you with their fists and elbows, how would you feel?" "Venerable Sir, I would regard them as good people, control my temper and bear them patiently with the thought: 'These are good people, extremely good people; they merely assault me with their fists and elbows but not stoned me.'"

(The Buddha asked him further how he would feel if people stoned him, beat him with a stick, cut him with a sword or even kill him.)

The Thera replied: "Venerable Sir, I would control my temper and bear them patiently with the thought: 'The disciples of the Bhagavā, such as Venerable Godhika, Venerable Channa, etc. (being weary of, and ashamed of and being disgusted with the body and with life), had to commit suicide (*satthahāraka kamma*); how fortunate I am. I need not kill myself.'" The Buddha then approved of his replies and blessed him. (**Majjhima Nikāya**, Uparipannāsa, 5-Salāyatana Vagga, 3-Punnovāda Sutta)

Again, in the **Pātha Jātaka**, Sattālisa Nipāta, Sarabhaṅga Jātaka, Sakka, the King of Devas, asked the hermit, Sarabhaṅga:

"O Hermit of Koṇḍañña ancestry, what may one slay without having to repent? What may one abandon to gain praise from the virtuous? Whose abusive, harsh words should one bear with patience? Give me answers to these questions."

The Bodhisatta, Sarabhaṅga, the Hermit, replied:

"One may slay anger without having to repent; one may abandon ingratitude to gain praise from the virtuous; one should bear with patience abusive, harsh words from everyone, whether superior, equal or inferior; the virtuous call this the highest form of patience."

Again, Sakka asked:

"O Hermit, it may be possible to put up with the abusive, harsh words of those who are superior or one's equal but why should one tolerate the rude words coming from one's inferiors?"

The Bodhisatta answered:

"One may bear with patience the rudeness of one's superior through fear; or the abusive language from those who are equal to ward off danger of rivalry. (Both cases are not superior types of patience.) But the wise say that to put up with the rude language coming from one's inferiors, with no special reason to do so, is the supreme form of forbearance."

Sakka's Forbearance

Once, in a battle between the devas of Tāvātimsa and the *asuras*, the devas captured

Vepacitti, King of the Asuras, and brought him to the presence of Sakka. As he entered or left the Assembly, he reviled Sakka with abusive words but Sakka endured him without showing anger. (**Saṃyutta Nikāya**, Sagatha Vagga, Sakka Saṃyutta, Vepacitti Sutta.)

Then Mātali (Sakka's charioteer) asked his master why he remained calm, without showing any resentment in the face of such insults. Sakka's reply in verse included the following extract:

*Sadatthaparamā atthā,
Khantiyā bhīyyo na vijjati.
Yo have balavā santo,
Dubbalassa titikkhati,
Tam āhu paramam khantim.*

Of all kinds of interest, self-interest is supreme; and amongst acts that promote self-interest, forbearance is the best. He who being strong himself endures the weak; this the virtuous call the supreme forbearance.

Explanation on quotations from the Texts.

Although the above quotations, from the **Sakka Saṃyutta** and **Sarabhaṅga Jātaka**, refer particularly to forbearance to verbal insults, it should be understood that enduring physical assaults also is meant. The Texts mention verbal insults because these are more commonly met with than physical attacks.

This is borne out by the example of the aforesaid story of Venerable Puṇṇa which included physical ill-treatments in ascending order of grievousness.

In the **Khantivādī Jātaka** also is found the story of Hermit Khantivādī who set an example of supreme forbearance when King Kalabu tortured him, not only verbally but also physically, causing him death.

Anger (akkodha) and Forbearance (khantī)

As has been stated above, forbearance is controlling oneself not to resent when being attacked by others, either verbally or physically. But there is another form of anger which is not connected with verbal or physical wrongs done by others. Suppose a man employs someone to do a certain job and the workman performs it to the best of his ability. But the employer is not satisfied with his work and may burst out with anger. If one controls one's temper in such a situation, it is not forbearance (*khantī*), it is just giving no vent to anger (*akkodha*).

Akkodha and Khantī as Kingly Duties

In the Mahā Hamsa Jātaka of the Asiti Nipata, **Pāṭha Jātaka**, the Buddha teaches 'Ten Duties of the King' (*dāsa rāga-dhamma*) which include both *akkodha* and *khantī*.

In carrying out various orders of a monarch, his executives may have performed their tasks well with the best of intention, but not to his satisfaction. *Akkodha* as one of the Ten Duties of the King forbids him from giving way to royal anger in such a situation. In contrast, *khantī* which is bearing verbal or physical insults without losing temper is laid down separately as another Duty of the King.

Nine Causes of Anger

There are nine causes of anger which arises in relation to oneself, to friends, loved ones or to one's enemies. It may also arise regarding actions in the past, present or future. Thus there are nine causes of anger arising with regard to individuals and with regard to time:

- (1) One is angry in relation to oneself, thinking: "He *has* caused damage to my interest."
- (2) One is angry in relation to oneself, thinking: "He *is* causing damage to my interest."
- (3) One is angry in relation to oneself, thinking: "He *will* cause damage to my interest."
- (4) One is angry in relation to one's friends, thinking: "He has caused damage to the interest of my friend."
- (5) One is angry in relation to one's friends, thinking: "He is causing damage to the

interest of my friend.”

- (6) One is angry in relation to one's friends, thinking: “He will cause damage to the interest of my friend.”
- (7) One is angry in relation to one's enemies, thinking: “He has promoted the interest of my enemies.”
- (8) One is angry in relation to one's enemies, thinking: “He is promoting the interest of my enemies.”
- (9) One is angry in relation to one's enemies, thinking: “He will promote the interest of my enemies.”

— **Āṅguttara Pāli**, Navaka Nipāta, 1-Pannāsaka. 3-Vagga. 9-Suits —
Irrational Anger (Aṭṭhāna kopa)

In addition to the above nine causes of anger, one can also become angry if it is raining too heavily or too windy or too hot, etc. Losing temper over matters about which one should not get angry is called irrational anger (*aṭṭhāna kopa*). It is the mental factor of ill-will (*dosa cetasika*) which arises mostly in those having no reasoning ability. To restrain such irrational anger (*aṭṭhāna kopa*) is to remain without anger (*akkodha*).

Eight Kinds of Power (Bala)

In a list of eight kinds of power of the noble and virtuous is included Forbearance. (**Āṅguttara Pāli**, Athaka Hipāta, 1-Pannāsaka, 3-Gahapati Vagga, 7-Sutta). The eight kinds of power are:

- (1) crying is the power of children
- (2) anger is the power of women
- (3) weapon is the power of robbers
- (4) sovereignty over wide territories is the power of kings
- (5) finding fault with others is the power of fools
- (6) careful scrutiny is the power of the wise
- (7) repeated consideration is the power of the learned
- (8) tolerance to wrongs done by others is the power of *samaṇas* and *brāhmanas*.

Samaṇas and Brāhmanas

With reference to the terms *Samaṇas* and *Brāhmanas* in no. (8) of the above list, it may be asked whether *samaṇas* are of equal status.

Outside of the Teaching, ‘*Samaṇa*’ means a recluse. Within the Teaching, it is understood as a *bhikkhu*, a member of the Order, a son of the Buddha. The term ‘*Samaṇa*’ is thus well known and needs no further explanation.

What requires elaboration is the word ‘*Brāhmaṇa*’. The Aggañña Sutta of the Pāthika Vagga, **Dīgha Nikāya**, gives an account of how this appellation ‘*Brāhmaṇa*’ comes to be used first.

At the beginning of the world, (after humans had lived on earth for aeons) evil ways had appeared amongst them and they elected a certain individual to rule over them as ‘the Great Elect’, King Mahā Sammata. At that time, some people saying: “The world is being overwhelmed by forces of evil; we do not wish to live in association with people who are so corrupted as to be governed by a king. We will repair to the forest and drive away, wash away these evil ways,” went to the forest and stayed there meditating and being absorbed in *jhāna*. Because they lived in this manner they were called ‘**Brāhmanas**’.

‘*Brāhmaṇa*’ is a Pāli word which means ‘one who has done away with evil’. *Brāhmanas* did not cook their own food; they lived on fruits which had fallen from trees or on alms-food collected from towns and villages. They were called ‘*Brāhmaṇa*’ because they led a pure, holy life in keeping with the literal meaning of the Pāli word ‘*Brāhmaṇa*’. They were

thus **Guṇa brāhmanas**, that is, *brāhmanas* by virtue of their holy practice.

After lapse of many aeons, some of these *Guṇa brāhmanas* failed to keep to the practice of meditation and absorption in *jhāna*. They settled down on the outskirts of towns and villages; they composed and taught Vedas to those eager to learn them. They no longer practised meditation to attain *jhāna* absorption and to cast off evil. But they still retained the name of *Brāhmaṇa*; but they were not *Guṇa brāhmanas* since they did not possess any more, the attribute of holy practice. They could only claim to be **Jāti brāhmanas**, i.e. *brāhmanas* by birth being descended from the *Guṇa brāhmanas*. As they could not practice meditation to attain *jhāna*, they are regarded to be of inferior class. But with lapse of time, writing Vedic books and teaching, they came to be considered as quite respectable and noble. Although these *brāhmanas* by birth would not actually cast off and wash away mental defilements by cultivation of *jhāna*, they immersed themselves in the waters of rivers and streams to deceive people, calling their deceptive performance as acts of ablution to wash away impurities.

A reference to this practice of washing out one's sins by *brāhmanas* is found in the **Bhūridatta Jātaka**. Bhūridatta, King of Nāgas, used to visit the human world to observe precepts. On one such visits, he failed to return to the *nāga* land at the expected time. His two brothers went in search of him.

(They were able to retrieve him in time from the captivity of a snake charmer who ill-treated him. He was betrayed by a brahmin named Nesāda who saw him observing precepts on top of an ant-hill.)²¹

His younger brother, Subhoga Nāga, while following the course of the river Yamunā in search of him, came across the Brahmin Nesāda who was responsible for his capture by the snake charmer. The Brahmin was found immersed in the Yamunā river in order to wash out the impurities of his betrayal.

The Buddha had in mind only *Guṇa brāhmanas* when he said that tolerance is the power of *samaṇas* or *brāhmanas*. The ascetics of Aggañña Sutta, who, wearing white clothes, practised to rid themselves of defilements were ordinary *brāhmanas* or *brāhmanas* by birth. But when the Buddha made His appearance and started teaching, He described attributes only by virtue of which one may be called a *brāhmaṇa*. In the **Dhammapada**, the Buddha devoted an entire *Vagga-Brāhmaṇa Vagga* of 42 verses to explain fully the noble qualities, possession of which would entitle one to be called a *brāhmaṇa*. Such *brāhmanas* are all *Guṇa brāhmanas*; there is no division of this class. The *brāhmanas* by birth, however, are split into many divisions.

(The last four Paragraphs dealing with the etymology of which is Myanmar word for *brāhmaṇa* are left out from our translation.)

(g) The Perfection of Truthfulness (Sacca-Pāramī)

(The opening paragraphs of this Chapter deals with how the Pāli words, 'Khaṇṭī' and 'Sacca' are adopted with some change in the Myanmar language and how Truthfulness is likened in the Myanmar literature to the Morning Star which never deviates from its course. We have left them out of our translation.)

What is to be noted, however, is this: as has been mentioned in the Text, Just as the morning star always goes straight without deviating from its course, so one should speak straight and truthfully, Such a speech alone means truthfulness. Hence the Commentator Buddhaghosa's explanation of the simile of the morning star.

Two Kinds of Truth

Truth (*sacca*) is not a separate ultimate principle like wisdom (*paññā*) or energy (*vīriya*). It is truthfulness without having a trace of falsehood. It involves such mental concomitants as restraint (*virati-cetasika*), volition (*cetanā-cetasika*), etc. As truthfulness varies under

21. This paragraph is inserted by translators to provide continuity of the story.

different circumstances, truth is basically of two kinds: (1) Conventional Truth (*Sammuti-sacca*) and (2) Ultimate Truth (*Paramattha-sacca*). (Only these two kinds of Truth are taught by the Buddha; there is no such thing as a third truth; there is no truth other than these two in the entire world.)

Conventional Truth (*Sammuti-Sacca*)

Of these two kinds, the conventional truth is the truth which agrees with what has been named by people. People generally name things according to their shapes. They call a thing of this shape a 'human', a thing of that shape a 'bull', a thing of another shape a 'horse'. Again, among humans, one of this shape is called a 'man' and one of that shape a 'woman'. There are, in this way, as many names as there are things.

If you call a thing named 'man', a 'man', it is a conventional truth; it is conventionally correct for you to say so. If you call what has been named 'man', a 'bull', it is not a conventional truth; it is not conventionally correct for you to say so. If you refer to someone, who has been named 'woman', as a 'man', it is not a conventional truth; it is not conventionally correct for you to say so. In this way, one should differentiate between the two truths.

Ultimate Truth (*Paramattha-Sacca*)

That which not only has been named by people but which really exists in its ultimate sense is called Ultimate Truth. For example, when it is said, "the thing that knows various sense objects is mind (*citta*)", the knowing principle is an Ultimate Truth because it truly exists in its ultimate sense. When it is said, "the thing that changes owing to opposite phenomena, such as heat and cold, etc. is matter (*rūpa*)", the changing principle is an Ultimate Truth, because it truly exists in its ultimate sense. In this way, mental concomitants (*cetasika*) and Nibbāna should also be known as Ultimate Truths, because they also truly exist in their ultimate sense.

Perception (*Saññā*) and Wisdom (*Paññā*)

Of the two kinds of truth, the conventional truth is associated with perception; in other words, the conventional truth depends on perception. Recognition of things according to their respective shapes as one has been saying since one's childhood 'such a shape is a man', 'such a shape is a woman', 'such a shape is a bull', 'such a shape is a horse' and so on, is perception. A person seeing through perception will say: "There exists a human body', 'there exists a man', 'there exists a woman', etc."

The Ultimate Truth is the object of wisdom. In other words, it manifests itself through wisdom. The greater the wisdom, the more discernable the Ultimate Truth. Wisdom makes an analysis of everything and sees its true nature. When it is said "the thing that knows various sense objects in mind", wisdom investigates whether a knowing principle exists or not and decides that it does. If there were no such thing as knowing, wisdom ponders, there would never be beings; all would have been sheer matter, such as stones, rocks and the like. Material things are far from knowing. But all beings do cognize various sense objects. When wisdom thus ponders, there manifests itself the principle (*citta*) which knows sense objects.

Therefore, that mind exists, in ultimate sense, is clear to those who think through wisdom; the more they think, the clearer they comprehend. But to those who see things through perception, it will not be clear; it will remain indiscernible. Because, as has been said before, perception is a notion of shapes. When you say there is mind, the perceptionist may ask, "Is the mind round, flat, or square? Is it a powder, a liquid, or a gas?" But you cannot answer that it is round, flat, or square nor can you say that it is a powder, a liquid, or a gas. If you cannot say anything, he may argue that there is no such thing as mind; because if there were such a thing, it must be round, flat or square; it must be a powder, a liquid or a gas. To the perceptionist, who is preoccupied with the idea of concrete forms, mind does not exist simply because it does not assume any concrete form.

Just as the perceptionist cannot see the ultimate truth, so the intellectual cannot see the

conventional truth. When the intellectual takes a look at what has been named ‘man’ by the perceptionist, he does so with an analytical mind and makes thirty-two portions of this person, such as hair on the head, hair on the body, fingernails, toenails, etc. “Is hair on the head called man?” “Is hair on the body called man?” The answers to these questions cannot be in the affirmative. In the same way, when a similar question on each of the remaining portions of the human body is asked, the answer will be no every time. If none of these portions can be called ‘man’, the intellectual will say, “Well, there really does not exist such a thing called man.”

Conventional truth appears only when it is seen through perception; but when seen through wisdom, it disappears; so also the Ultimate Truth, which appears when it is seen through wisdom; when seen through perception, it disappears.

In this connection, what is particularly noteworthy is the fact that Nibbāna is an Ultimate Truth. This Ultimate Truth is peace through cessation of all kinds of sorrow and suffering. This peace can be discerned only when it is examined by means of sharp insight but not by means of perception.

The Perceptionist's View

Nowadays, some people might like to ask: “Are there in Nibbāna palatial buildings? How do those who have passed into Nibbāna enjoy there?” and so on. They ask such questions because of their perception of Nibbāna, which as Ultimate Truth lies in the sphere of wisdom.

To be sure, there are no palatial buildings in Nibbāna nor are there any individuals that pass into Nibbāna. (Those, who have realized peace of Nibbāna with their attainment of arahatship, are no longer subject to rebirth, and their minds and bodies cease to exist when complete demise takes place in their final existence, like a great flame of fire become extinct. Such a cessation is called passing into *parinibbāna*. No living entity exists in Nibbāna.)

“If that were the case, such thing as Nibbāna would not exist”, the perceptionist would say, “It is, therefore, useless and unnecessary.” In order to encourage him, others would assert: “Nibbāna is a place where beings are immortal, assuming special mental and physical forms and enjoying incomparable luxury in palaces and mansions.” Then only is the perceptionist satisfied immensely because the assertion agrees with what he has preconceived.

If one looks through perception at something and sees the appearance of its concrete form, that is not absolute (*paramattha*) but merely a conventional designation (*paññatti*). So also, if one looks through wisdom at something and sees the disappearance of its form, that is not absolute either, but merely a conventional designation too. Only when one looks through wisdom and sees its true nature, then this is absolute. The more one looks thus, the more one sees such reality. Therefore, Nibbāna, which is just Peace, highly unique Absoluteness, should not be sought through perception which tends to grasp form and substance. Instead, it should be examined through wisdom which tends to remove form and substance and delve into their true nature so that Peace, Nibbāna, manifests itself.

Conventional truth and ultimate truth are both acceptable, each in its own context, as has been shown above. Suppose a person takes an oath saying: “I declare that there really exist man and woman. If what I have declared is not correct let misfortune befall me”, and suppose another person also take an oath saying: “I declare that there really do not exist man and woman. If what I have declared is not correct let misfortune befall me”, never will misfortune befall either of them. The reason is: though the two declarations are against each other, both are correct from their respective points of view. The former, correct from the point of view of conventional usage, is conventional truth; the latter, correct from the point of view of ultimate sense, is ultimate truth.

Although Buddhas intend to teach only the nature of absolute reality, they do not exclude the conventional terms from their teaching. Instead they mention them side by side with those of ultimate truth. For instance, even in the First Sermon, though the emphasis is on

the two extremes and the Middle Path, it is taught that “The two extremes should not be taken up by a recluse,” in which “recluse” is a mere designation.

Importance of Conventional Designation

When the Buddha teaches Ultimate Truth, He uses conventional designation wherever necessary. He does so not just to make a contrast. For ordinary persons, the conventional truth is as important as the ultimate truth. Had the Buddha taught things only in ultimate terms, those with proper mental attitude will understand that “whatever exists in the world is impermanent, unsatisfactory and unsubstantial,” and they will make efforts to cultivate Vipassanā Meditation, which will directly lead them to Nibbāna.

On the other hand, those with improper mental attitude will hold thus: “It is said that there are only aggregates of mind and matter which are subject to impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and unsubstantiality in this world. There is no self, nor are there other persons. Then there cannot be such things as ‘my wealth, my son, my wife’; nor can there be such things as ‘his wealth, his son, his wife’. One can make use of anything as one desires. Because there is no such thing as ‘he’, there can be no such thing as ‘killing him’, no such thing as ‘stealing his property’, no such thing as ‘doing wrong with his wife’.” Thus will they commit evil according to their wild desires. So upon their death, they will be reborn in woeful states. To prevent this, the Suttanta Desanā Discourses, are delivered embodying conventional terms. The Suttanta teachings thus form effective, preventive measures for beings from falling into the four woeful states.

Besides, the Suttanta teachings lead beings to such happy states as human world, celestial world and Brahmā-world, because the virtues, namely, generosity, morality and tranquillity meditation, which are conducive to rebirth in those states, are most numerous taught in the Suttantas. (For example, to accomplish a meritorious act of generosity, there must be the donor, his volition, the recipient and the object to offer. Of these factors, volition alone is an ultimate reality, but the rest are just designations, exclusion of which makes generosity impossible. The same is true of morality and tranquillity meditation.) Therefore, it should be noted without any doubt that conventional truth leads to happy abodes as has been stated. Exclusion of conventional truth, to say the least, will deter fulfilment of Perfections which are required for Buddhahood.

Although it is true that the Buddha's Teachings of Suttantas alone would make beings avoid wrongdoings. Since the Buddha Himself has said that there exist ‘I’, ‘he’, ‘mine’, ‘his’, ‘my wife and children’ and ‘his wife and children’, etc. there is danger of beings becoming strongly attached to the wrong notion that there really exist such things and becoming gradually removed from the Path, Fruition and Nibbāna. In order to help them reach the Path, Fruition and Nibbāna, the Buddha had to teach Ultimate Truth as embodied in the Abhidhamma.

Reasons for teaching Two Kinds of Truth

The Suttanta's teaching of the existence of individuals and things belonging to them is made in agreement with designations which are universally used. But by means of Abhidhamma, the Buddha had to remove their wrong notions saying that there is no such thing as ‘I’, ‘he’, ‘man’, ‘woman’, etc., therefore, because of their conventional terms it should not be grasped that they really exist; all is but impermanent, unsatisfactory and unsubstantial.

In this way, the Buddha explained that there exist ‘I’, ‘he’, ‘man’, ‘woman’, etc. only as mere designations (or as conventional truth), and that these things do not exist in their ultimate sense. Hence the need for Him to teach both kinds of truth.

Natural Truth (Sabhāva Sacca) and Noble Truth (Ariya Sacca)

Ultimate Truth is of two kinds: (a) Natural and (b) Noble. All the four ultimate realities, namely, mind, mental concomitants, matter and Nibbāna, constitute Natural Truth because they are real in their absolute sense.

In the field of mundane affairs, there are both physical happiness (*sukha*) and mental happiness (*somanassa*) which constitute Natural Truth. If one is in contact with a pleasant object, because of that touch, there arises happiness in one's person. None can deny saying: "No, it is not true." or "No, it is not good to be in contact with a pleasant object." Nobody can say so because of the fact that one is really happy to be in contact with a desirable body as a sense object (*iṭṭhaphotthabbārammaṇa*).

Similarly, if one's mind is in contact with a pleasant mind object, one enjoys mental happiness. Such a feeling is called *somanassa-vedanā*. This is irrefutable because arising of mental happiness is a reality. Thus, it should be held that both *sukha* and *somanassa* exist in mundane affairs.

Noble Truths (Ariya Sacca): The Noble Truth of Suffering (Dukkha Ariya Sacca)

In terms of Noble Truth, one does not see either *sukha* or *somanassa* in mundane affairs. If one clings to the view that there exist both *sukha* and *somanassa* as Natural Truth, one cannot be detached from worldly outlook; one cannot then attain the State of a Noble One (*ariya*). Therefore, one who aspires to become an *ariya* should make efforts to see that mental states called *sukha* and *somanassa*, in terms of natural truth, are all suffering. These feelings called *sukka* and *somanassa* are things which cannot remain without change forever; indeed they are subject to change every second.

Worldlings crave the pleasures of human and divine abodes, wrongly believing them to be a source of happiness and delight. They do so because they do not know such pleasures are transitory and subject to constant change. They are ignorant of the true nature of these pleasures because they have little intelligence but great craving. Such ignorant people will look upon them as enjoyable and delightful before process of decay and deterioration sets in. But it is in their nature to change and when that happens these people become sad much more than they had been happy.

For example, a poor man will become very happy the moment he hears that he has won a lottery prize. Then he starts day dreaming how to spend and enjoy his wealth to make up for his former poverty. While he is building castles in the air, he lost all his money through some misfortune. It may be imagined how much he will be unhappy then. His sorrow at the loss of his wealth will be far greater than his happiness on becoming suddenly rich.

In the field of worldly affairs, everything is associated with both enjoyment and sorrow. The five sense-pleasures are enjoyable to worldlings. But the Buddha says that they are more of suffering than enjoyment. Unlike worldlings, however, the Buddha's Disciples do not find them enjoyable, much less the Buddha. Yet the Buddha does not say that they are totally devoid of pleasantness; he does say that there is little pleasantness but much sorrow in them.

In any situation, the wise and virtuous always consider first whether there is fault or no fault, but never whether there is pleasantness or unpleasantness. If there is fault, they take no interest in it, even if there is pleasantness. They decide it is undesirable to them. If there is no fault, they take it to be desirable even if pleasantness is absent.

Supposing someone is told that he could rule a country as a sovereign monarch just for one day; but that the next day he would be executed. Then there will be none who dares or desires to rule. From the point of view of a worldling, a Universal Monarch's life for one day which has never been enjoyed before, may be entirely attractive. But as there is the impending death on the following day which is a great disadvantage, there can be nobody who will enjoy one day's life of such a Universal Monarch.

In the same way, seeing that everything is perishable, the Noble Ones cannot hold temporary pleasure, which occurs just before it vanishes, as enjoyment. One can become a Noble Person only through contemplation that "there is no such thing as happiness in this world; everything is impermanent; as there is no permanence, there is no happiness; there is but sorrow."

Only by developing Insight through contemplation that everything in the world is of the nature of suffering, it is possible to become an *ariya*. The aggregates of phenomena which

are the objects of such meditation is called the Noble Truth. In other words, since the Noble Ones meditate on this aggregate of mundane phenomena as they really are, it is called the Noble Truth.

The Insight that, in the cycle of existence which are called the three worlds, there is no enjoyment at all, but only suffering according to the right view held by those who are working for attaining the Noble State and by those who have already attained the same is a truth; it is therefore called the Noble Truth of Suffering.

In short, the five aggregates of clinging (*pañca-upādānakkhandha*), also named the phenomena of the three mundane planes of existence, are all suffering and that they are nothing but suffering. The *pañca-upādānakkhandha* are the five aggregates of clinging: the aggregate of matter (*rūpa*), the aggregate of feelings (*vedanā*), the aggregate of perceptions (*saññā*), the aggregate of mental formations (*saṅkhāra*) and the aggregate of consciousness (*viññāna*), which form objects of attachments as 'I', 'mine', 'myself'. These five aggregates are called the Noble Truth of Suffering.

The Noble Truth of The Cause of Suffering (Dukkha Samudaya Ariya Sacca)

The *pañca-upādānakkhandha*, which form the Noble Truth of Suffering, do not arise by themselves. They have their respective reasons for their arising, the most fundamental and important being craving for sense objects.

In the world, every being is subjected to suffering because he or she is to toil daily for essentials of living. And all this is motivated by craving. The more one craves for good living, the greater one's suffering is. If one would be satisfied with simple life, living very simply on bare necessities, one's misery would be alleviated to a corresponding extent. It is clear, therefore, that suffering, wrongly believed to be good living, is caused by craving.

Beings do all kinds of acts for wanting better things, not only for the present life but also for coming existences. When a new birth appears as a result of those acts, the real cause for this new birth is found to be craving that motivates those acts.

Craving is called the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering because it is truly that craving, which is the origin of suffering, *upādānakkhandha*, in the new birth. In other words, craving is the true cause of the aggregates which form suffering. This Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering (**Dukkha Samudaya-Sacca**) is also referred to, in short, as **Samudaya-Sacca**.

The Noble Truth of The Cessation of Suffering (Dukkha Nirodha Ariya Sacca)

Craving called the Truth of the cause of Suffering, like the gum of myaukhnai tree, clings to various mundane sense objects, but, like flies which cannot approach burning iron, it cannot form an attachment to Nibbāna.

The reason for this is that the Ultimate Reality, Nibbāna, the Unconditioned Element, is unattractive from the point of view of craving. To explain, craving rises from feeling, as the Buddha has stated "*vedanā paccaya taṅhā*" in the doctrine of the Dependent Origination (*Paṭicca-Samuppāda*), and accordingly craving owes its existence to feeling. But the Unconditioned Nibbāna has nothing to do with feeling (it is not the kind of happiness that is to be felt); it is but peaceful happiness (*santi-sukha*).

Then the question arises: Totally devoid of sensation, can Nibbāna be likeable and desirable?

If somebody asked like this, he does so because he thinks feeling is real happiness or he does not consider that peaceful happiness is real happiness.

The answer is: There are two kinds of happiness; happiness derived from feeling (*vedayita-sukha*) and happiness derived from peace (*santi-sukha*). Here is a simile: Suppose there is a rich man who is fond of food. He expends much to nourish himself with sumptuous delicacies. But a *vijjādhara* (one who is sustained by magical power) may find the rich man's food disgusting, let alone finding it appetitive, as he is endowed with the power of living without eating. When asked: "Of these two, who is happier as far as food

is concerned?" A man of craving will say the rich man is happier because he enjoys highly sumptuous food whenever he desires while the latter enjoys nothing. They will say so because, being overwhelmed by craving, they believe that feeling which stimulates craving is something to be esteemed.

Men of intelligence, on the other hand, will say that the *vijjādhara* is happier. The rich man, being a man of dainty palate, must go in quest of elaborate foodstuff. Having acquired them, he is flooded with troubles of making necessary preparations (*paṭisaṅkhāraṇa-dukkha*) and longing for novelty (*āsā-dukkha*). To enjoy happiness derived from feeling (*vedayita-sukha*) is to be burdened with these twin *dukkha*; there is no escape from them. The *vijjādhara* has no such *dukkha*; he lives happily having nothing to do with food. There is no trace of worries in his happiness, which is absolute. Thus, they will say he is happier.

Men of craving say that the rich man is happier because they do not see any of his troubles; what they do see is his enjoyment of food. They have no good impression of the peaceful life of the *vijjādhara* who need not eat at all. Instead they envy the rich man's way of living and want to become rich themselves. In the same way craving has no high opinion of and no desire or yearning for *santi-sukha* (the Unconditioned Nibbāna) which is devoid of feeling and which indeed is peace.

In this connection, the Third Sutta, 4. Mahāvagga, Navaka Nipāta of the **Aṅguttara Nikāya** says:

“Once, the Venerable Sāriputta, while staying in the midst of *bhikkhus*, uttered: ‘Friends, Nibbāna is indeed happiness; Nibbāna is indeed happiness.’ Then the Venerable Udāyi asked: ‘How can Nibbāna be happiness, Friend Sāriputta, if there is no feeling?’ The Venerable Sāriputta replied: ‘Friend Udāyi, Nibbāna's being devoid of feeling is in itself happiness.’ ”

Worldly people, who lack intelligence, view the five aggregates, the Truth of Suffering, as happiness. Intelligent worldly people and the Noble Ones view the cessation of the five aggregates, like the extinction of great fire, as happiness. A simile, to illustrate the superiority of happiness derived from cessation and extinction for those worldly people of poor intelligence, is as follows: A patient, who is suffering from a chronic, acute flatulence, takes a dose of medicine from a good physician. Consequently, he gets completely cured of his disease. It may be imagined how happy he would be. At that moment, he has no pleasant sensation whatever; what he experiences is simply the extinction of the flatulent trouble. He will certainly be delighted knowing, “Oh, gone is my trouble now!” as his suffering has ceased to trouble him. The flatulent trouble is nothing, when compared with *saṃsāric* suffering. If one takes delight in extinction of that insignificant trouble, why will he not find happiness in extinction of the great *saṃsāric* suffering. He will certainly be overjoyed.

Nibbāna

What is **Nibbāna**, the cessation of suffering? When the Unconditioned Element (*asankhata-dhātu*), the unique Ultimate Reality, which has the characteristics of peace, is realised with the four-fold knowledge of the Path, all the defilements, numbering one thousand and five hundred, are completely eradicated, never will they rise again. In any existence, when the *arahatta-magga* is attained, the suffering, in the form of the five aggregates, ceases once and for all immediately after death, just as a heap of fire has been extinguished. There is no more rebirth in any realms of existence. That Unconditioned Element, the unique Ultimate Reality, which has the characteristics of peace and all the unique attributes described above is called ‘**Nibbāna**’.

The worldlings do not know full well the nature of Nibbāna as the Noble Ones do. If they, without knowing it, say or write to let others understand it as the Noble Ones do, they could go wrong. Let alone speaking of Nibbāna, when they speak even of a mundane object which they know only from books, as though they have seen it with their own eyes, they are likely to make mistakes. The common worldlings not being able to see every aspect of it like the Noble Ones do, should speak of Nibbāna only in the aforesaid manner.

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

When Nibbāna is considered as to what it is like, those who have not understood what it really is, are likely to regard Nibbāna as a kind of indestructible country or city. When Nibbāna is mentioned as a secure city in a discourse at a water-pouring ceremony, it is just a figurative usage. Nibbāna is not a city, nor is it a country. Yet there are some who believe and say that Nibbāna is a city where those who have passed into it live happily with mind and body free of old age, sickness and death. The truth is that passing of Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and *arahats* into Nibbāna means complete cessation of the five aggregates, material and mental, of an *arahat* at his death in his last existence; they will no longer appear in any realm of existence. (Nibbāna is the Ultimate Reality which is the object of the Path and Fruition. Parinibbāna is complete cessation of the material and mental aggregates which will never come into being again.) Their passing into Nibbāna is not going into the city of Nibbāna. There is no such thing as the city of Nibbāna.

The Myanmar word ‘*Nibbān*’ is a Pāli derivative. When people perform meritorious deeds, their teachers will admonish them to pray for *Nibbān*. Though they do so accordingly, they generally do not know well what *Nibbān* means. So they are not very enthusiastic about it. The teachers, therefore, should ask them to pray for the extinction of all suffering and sorrow because the words are pure Myanmar and the devotees will understand thoroughly and pray enthusiastically and seriously.

Two Kinds of Nibbāna

Suppose there is a very costly garment. When its owner is still alive, you say: “It is an excellent garment with a user.” When he dies, you say: “It is an excellent garment with no user.” (The same garment is spoken of in accordance with the time in which the user is alive or in which the user is no longer alive.) Similarly, the Unconditioned Element, the Ultimate Reality of Nibbāna, which has the characteristic of peace and which is the object the Venerable Ones such as Sāriputta, who contemplate by means of the Path and Fruition, is called **Sa-upādisesa Nibbāna** (Nibbāna with the five aggregates of *upādisesa* contemplating) before his death; after his death, however, since there are no longer the five aggregates that contemplate Nibbāna, it is called **Anupādisesa Nibbāna** (Nibbāna without the five aggregates of *upādisesa* contemplating it.)

The peace of Nibbāna is aspired for, only when it is pondered after overcoming craving by wisdom. That the peace of Nibbāna is something which should really be aspired for, will not be understood if craving is foremost in one’s thinking and not overcome by wisdom.

Three Kinds of Nibbāna

Nibbāna is also of three kinds according to its attributes which are clearly manifest in it:

(1) **Suññata Nibbāna**, (2) **Animitta Nibbāna** and (3) **Appaṇihita Nibbāna**.

(1) The first attribute is that Nibbāna is devoid of all distractions (*palibodha*); hence **Suññata Nibbāna**. (“**Suññata**” means “void”.)

(2) The second attribute is that it is devoid of consciousness (*citta*), mental concomitants (*cetasika*) and matter (*rūpa*) which, as conditioned things, are the cause of defilements. Conditioned things, whether mental or material, cannot only arise individually and without combining with one another. Material things arise only when at least eight of them form a combination. (That is why they are called *athakalapa*, unit of eight.) Mental things also arise only when at least eight elements make a combination. (By this is meant *pañca-viññāṇa*, the fivefold consciousness.) When such combinations of mental and material components brought together to form an aggregate are wrongly taken to be ‘myself’, ‘my body’, ‘a thing of substance’, they give rise to mental defilements, such as craving, etc. Conditioned things are thus known as **nimitta**, ground or cause. In particular, mundane consciousness, mental concomitants and matter are called **nimitta**. In Nibbāna, however, there are no such things of substance as ‘myself’, ‘my body’, which cause the emergence of defilements. Hence the name **Animitta Nibbāna**.

- (3) The third attribute is that Nibbāna is devoid of craving which is *taṇhā*. As has been said before, Nibbāna has nothing to crave for. Nibbāna is not to be craved. Therefore, it is also called **Appaṇihita Nibbāna**. In this way there are three kinds of Nibbāna according to its attributes.

This Truth of Cessation of Suffering is in short called the Truth of Cessation. This Truth of Cessation is the Unconditioned (*Asaṅkhata*) Element. (It is not conditioned by any factor.) Therefore, this Truth of Cessation, the Unconditioned Element, the Ultimate Reality of Nibbāna, is named ‘**Appaccaya-Dhamma**’ (Uncaused Phenomenon), or ‘**Asaṅkhata-Dhamma**’ (Unconditioned Phenomenon), in the **Dhammasaṅgani**.

The Noble Truth of The Path

Though Nibbāna is causeless, not conditioned by any cause and always exists, it is not possible to realise its peace without a cause. It can be realised only through a cause. That cause is nothing but the Noble Practice. Therefore, the Noble Practice that leads to Nibbāna, the Cessation of Suffering, is termed **Dukkha Nirodhagāmini Paṭipadā**, the Course of Practice that leads to the Cessation of Suffering.

The Middle Path (Majjhima Paṭipadā)

Living in enjoyment of sensual pleasures in the world fulfilling the demands of craving is not the path for attainment of Nibbāna, the Cessation of Suffering. It is just an ignoble practice called *kāmasukhallikānuyoga*. Efforts to make oneself suffer by exposure of one's body to fire or to the sun, by keeping one's hand raised continuously, with a view to prevent mental defilements from appearing, do not form the way to Nibbāna, the Cessation of Suffering. It is another ignoble practice called *attakilamathānuyoga*. Avoiding self-indulgence in sensual pleasures on one hand and self-mortification on the other, following only the middle path which is neither too comfortable nor too arduous, like the string of a harp which is neither too taut nor too loose, is the practice that surely leads to Nibbāna. This practice which is neither easy nor difficult is called ‘**Majjhimapatipada**’, the Middle Course.

This very Middle Course is called the Path (*Magga*), the Way leading to Nibbāna. Wrong view, etc. which are unwholesome, are called *duggati-magga* or *micchā-magga* as they lead to the four woeful states (*apāya*). Right view, etc. which are mundane and wholesome, are called *sugati-magga* or *sammā-magga* as they lead to Nibbāna. The Commentary on *Sacca Vibhanga* explains that these factors, such as Right View, etc. which constitute Path Consciousness are called *Magga* because they are sought by those who aspire for Nibbāna; because these factors lead to Nibbāna; and because they find their way to Nibbāna after eradicating mental defilements.

This Path is not of one factor only; it is of eight factors, as will be shown below; hence it is called ‘**Atthangika-Magga**’, the Path of Eight Constituents, which are:

- (1) **Sammā-ditthi**: Right View (Knowledge of the Truth of Suffering, Knowledge of the Truth of the Cause of Suffering, Knowledge of the Truth of the Cessation of Suffering and Knowledge of the Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering. Thus it is the fourfold Knowledge).
- (2) **Sammā-saṅkappa**: Right Thought. (Three kinds of thought, namely, thought of liberating oneself from sensuous defilements (*kilesa-kāma*) and sensuous objects (*vatthu-kāma*) as has been explained in the section on the *Nekkhamā Pāramī*, Perfection of Renunciation; thought of not destroying others; and thought of not harming others).
- (3) **Sammā-vacā**: Right Speech (Restraint of four evil speeches).
- (4) **Sammā-kammanta**: Right Action (Restraint of three evil doings).
- (5) **Sammā-ājīva**: Right Livelihood (Livelihood that is free of seven evils).
- (6) **Sammā-vāyāma**: Right Exertion (Exertion so as not to give rise to unwholesomeness that has not yet occurred, exertion so as to eradicate unwholesomeness that has occurred, exertion so as to give rise to wholesomeness that has not yet occurred and

exertion so as to develop wholesomeness that has occurred).

- (7) **Sammā-sati**: Right Mindfulness (Mindfulness so as to be aware of one's body, of one's feelings, of one's consciousness and of mental hindrances, etc.).
- (8) **Sammā-samādhi**: Right Concentration (The first *jhāna*, the second *jhāna*, the third *jhāna* and the fourth *jhāna*).

These eight constituents do not arise simultaneously in the mundane fields; they arise in combination with one another as far as possible. When they come to the supramundane field, however, all the eight rise simultaneously. Only these eight constituents which arise simultaneously at the moment of attaining the supramundane Path are collectively called the Noble Truth of the Path. Thus by the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering is meant the group of eight factors beginning with Right View that arise as a whole and simultaneously. The Path which is included together with the Fruition and Nibbāna in the collection of supramundane phenomena (*magga-phala nibbāna*) stands for all these eight constituents which form the Noble Truth of the Path.

Truth of Learning (Pariyatti-sacca) and Truth of Practice (Patipatti-sacca)

The Truths we have so far discussed are those learnt from the Scriptures (**Pariyatti-sacca**). But what really counts as Perfection of Truthfulness is the Truth of Practice (**Patipatti-sacca**) fulfilled by the Noble Ones such as Bodhisattas and others. The Truth of Practice means Truthful Speech or Telling the Truth (*vacī-sacca*). Fulfilment of such a practice in one's self is fulfilment of Perfection of Truthfulness. It is the verbal Truth that Bodhisattas and other Noble Persons fulfil in particular. And this verbal truth is of three kinds:

- (1) **Saddahāpana-sacca**, the verbal truth told so that one may be believed by others;
- (2) **Ichchāpūrana-sacca**, the verbal truth told so that one's wish may be fulfilled; and
- (3) **Musāviraṃaṇa-sacca**, the verbal truth told so that telling lies may be avoided.

(1) Saddahāpana-sacca

Of these three truths, the way Bodhisattas fulfil **Saddahāpana-sacca** is mentioned in the Bhisā Jātaka of the **Pakinnaka Nipata**. The full story of the Bhisā Jātaka may be read in the Jātaka Book. The story in brief is as follows.

The Story of The Bhisā Jātaka in Brief

Once upon a time, a brahmin youth, Mahākañcana by name, who was born in the city of Bārāṇasī, went forth in renunciation into a forest together with ten companions including his young brothers, one young sister, a male servant, a female servant and a friend. They made their lodgings at a suitable place near a lotus pond and lived on gathered fruits.

In the beginning they all went out together to look for fruits; talking to one another they behaved like townfolk or villagers, not like forest-dwellers. To stop this unpleasant situation, the eldest brother Mahākañcana said: "I alone will go out for fruits. You all stay behind to practise Dhamma in peace." Then the other brothers said: "You are the chief of us all. It is not proper for you to gather fruits. The sister and the female servant should not do so either, for they are women. But the rest, eight of us, will do that by turns." This was agreeable to everyone and the remaining eight male persons gathered fruits on rotation to feed them all.

As time went by, they became so content that they did not care for fruits but took lotus sprouts from the nearby pond and shared among themselves in this manner. The one on duty brought lotus sprouts into the leaf roofed hut and divided them into eleven portions. The oldest of them took his portion first and, after striking the stone drum, went back to his place to eat it peacefully and carried on with his practice. When the next senior member heard the sound of the stone drum he took his share and struck the drum in turn. In this manner, they took their food one after another, went back to their place to eat and continue to practise. Thus, they did not see one another unless there was any special reason.

As their practice was so severe, causing Sakka's abode tremble, the King of Devas

thought of the reason and came to know it. He was then doubtful that these people were really detached from sensual pleasures. In order to investigate the matter, he kept the eldest brother's share of food hidden by his supernatural power for three days continuously.

When the oldest brother came to take his share on the first day, he did not see it and thought that it must be left out through forgetfulness; he then said nothing and went back to his place to continue his meditation. On the second day also he found his share missing; thinking that his share was purposely left out as a punishment because of some misunderstanding that he was guilty of something, he remained quiet as on the first day. On the third day, when he did not find his share, he thought that he should apologize if he had been guilty and in the evening he summoned the others by striking the stone drum. He said: "Why did you not keep my share of food? Please speak out if I have some guilt. I will tender my apology to you." Then the first younger brother stood up and after giving his respect to the eldest brother, said: "Sir, could I get your permission to speak only for myself?" On getting the permission, he took an oath, saying:

"Sir, if I had stolen your share of food, may I come into possession of horses, cattle, silver, gold and a beautiful wife here at this place and stay with my family (enjoying a full mundane life)."

(This form of oath suggests that as much as objects of desire give us pleasure when we are in possession of them, we feel grieved and distressed when we are bereft of them. The oath was taken to despise the objects of desire.)

The eldest brother said: "You have taken a very severe oath. I believe you did not take my food. Go and sit in your place." The rest of the group, covering their ears also said: "Brother, please do not say so. Your word is very serious and terrible." (They covered their ears because as meditators they found sense pleasures disgusting to them; sensuality was so dreadful that they could not bear even to hear something associated with it.) Then the second younger brother said:

"Sir, if I had stolen your lotus sprouts, may I become one who wears flowers, puts on sandalwood paste from Kāsi, has many children and who is very much involved in and attached to sensuality."

(In this way, the remaining eight persons took an oath individually.)

In this Jātaka, the ascetic Mahākañcana, leader of the group, was the Bodhisatta and the rest were destined to become foremost Disciples in their own right. Therefore, having attained spiritual maturity, they really abhorred sensuality. Each of them was bold enough to take such a dreadful oath to convince the others. The word "asseveration" is not used directly in this **Bhisa Jātaka** but the word "oath" is. Since that oath was based on what was true, it was the same as the verbal truth (*vacī-sacca*) fulfilled by Bodhisattas. In their individual oaths, the main point was, "We do not steal your share of lotus sprouts." Since it was a true statement, it amounts to verbal truth. Such words as: "May I be also have this or that" (which in effect mean, "May I encounter this or that") are included as proposed punishment for oneself in the oath just to make the others believe him or her. Accordingly, this truth is called '**Saddahapana-sacca**'. The oath that has been taken from the times of ancient Mahāsammata kings down to the present governments are all *saddahāpana-sacca*.

Taking of A Corporal Oath

Before the subject-matter of an oath was put into writing as a sacred text, taking of an oath was done verbally and was called "swearing of an oath". Since written sacred oath came into existence, purely verbal taking of an oath has been replaced by holding the sacred text (or placing it on one's head); thus taking of a corporal oath by holding a sacred text has come into use. This gives rise in Myanmar parlance to "holding the sacred text" for taking a corporal oath and "administering the corporal oath" for making someone else hold the sacred text. Only the form of taking an oath for oneself, whether it is taken verbally or by holding the sacred text, in order to convince others saying: "What I have said is the truth; if not, such and such a misfortune befall me.", etc. should be named **Saddahāpana-sacca**.

Curse

An utterance not based on truth, but made just to consign others to destruction is not an oath, but merely a curse. An example may be seen in the following story.

The Story of Two Hermits

In the past, while King Brahmadata was reigning in the city of Bārāṇasī, a hermit, Devila by name, was living in the Himalayas. On his visit to Bārāṇasī, in order to have acid and salt, he stayed in a potter's hut near the city with the owner's permission. Soon another hermit called Nārada came for a similar purpose and stayed at the same place. At night, when the time for sleeping came, the newcomer noted Devila's sleeping place as well as the door at the entrance to the hut and went to bed. But, after lying down at his place, Devila moved to the entrance and slept crosswise in the middle of the doorway.

When Nārada went out in the dead of the night, he happened to tread on Devila's matted hair. Devila then said: "Who has stepped on my hair?" Nārada replied gently: "Sir, I have, because I did not know that you were sleeping here. Please accept my apology." And he left the hut while Devila was grumbling.

Then, just in case Nārada should do it again when he came back, Devila completely reversed his lying position and went to sleep. When Nārada returned, he thought: "When I went out, I wrongly stepped on his hair because I did not know where his head lay; I shall now go in by the other way." Thus, he happened to tread on his neck. Devila asked: "Who trod on my neck?" "It is I, Sir," said Nārada. "You wicked hermit!" said Devila, "The first time, you stepped on my hair. This time, you did the same but on my neck. Curse you, I will." "Sir, I am not guilty," said Nārada, "The first time I was wrong because I did not know the way you were sleeping. Now I came by way of the foot-end not to wrong again. Please pardon me," apologized Nārada.

"O wicked hermit, I am going to curse you," threatened Devila. Then despite Nārada's plea, Devila uttered a curse: "Tomorrow morning, as soon as the sun rises, may your head be split into seven pieces!" "In spite of my apologies you did curse me," said Nārada, "May the guilty one's head be split into seven pieces." Thus Nārada put Devila under a curse in retaliation. (Unlike Devila's curse, Nārada's was free of anger and volition to harm him. He cursed him just to make him fear and admit his wrong. He was so powerful that he could see eighty *kappas*, i.e. the past forty and the future forty.) When he looked into Devila's future, he foresaw that the latter would be destroyed. So out of compassion for Devila, he tried with his power to prevent the sun from rising.

When the sun did not rise at the time it was due to, people thronged to the palace and shouted in unison: "O King, the sun does not rise while you are ruling over us. Please improve your conduct so that the sun reappears. The King pondered his conduct and did not see anything wrong. He thought that there must be some peculiar reason which might be a quarrel among ascetics in his country. On enquiry, he came to know the quarrel between the two hermits. The King then went overnight to the hermits. Under instructions from Nārada, he placed a solid mass of earth on Devila's head and made him plunge into a pond by force. When Nārada withdraw his power, no sooner had the sun risen than the solid mass of earth was split into seven pieces. Devila then moved to another place in the water and came out of it safe and sound. (**Dhammapada Commentary**, I. Yamaka Vagga, 3. Tissa Vatthu.)

Devila's curse in this story, "Tomorrow morning, as soon as the sun rises, may your head be split into seven pieces!" is for Nārada, uttered with anger. Thus it was not an oath but a mere curse.

Like the curse in this story, there are curses recorded in the Myanmar inscriptions of old. For instance, the Nadaungtat Pagoda inscription, dated 537 (M.E.) on the northern side of Cūlāmuni Pagoda of Bagan reads near the end: "He who destroys my work of merit, may the seven generations of his descendants be destroyed. May he suffer in Avīci Hell and may he not be liberated but become rooted there even when Buddhas of successive *kappas* come and try to save him." Such a curse is something that is not done by Bodhisattas. In

fact, it is a verbal evil called 'harsh speech' (*pharusa-vācā*). In other words, it is the kind of abusive words uttered by mean persons.

Saddahāpana-sacca may be understood not only from the Bhisā Jātaka but also from the Sutasoma Story of the Asitī Nipāta of the Jātaka. A summary of this latter story runs as follows.

(Once the cannibal Porisada, who formerly was King of Bārāṇasī but now living in a forest, made a vow to bathe the trunk of a banyan tree with the blood of a hundred and one kings if his foot that was pierced by an acacia thorn were healed in seven days. The foot was healed and he succeeded in capturing one hundred princes. At the command of the deity of the tree to make the number of captured kings complete, he was to catch King Sutasoma of Kuru. He managed to do so while Sutasoma was returning from Migājina Park and carried him away on his shoulder.) Then, Sutasoma said: "I have to go home for a while. Because, on my way to Migājina Park, I met a Brahmin Nanda, who offered to teach me four verses worth four hundred pieces. I have promised him to learn them on my way back from the Park and asked him to wait. Let me go and learn the verses and keep my promise. After that I will come back to you."

"You sound like saying: 'Having been freed from the hands of death, I will come back to death!' " replied the man-eater. "I do not believe you."

Then Sutasoma said: "Friend Porisāda, in the world, death after living a virtuous life is better than a long life full of wickedness, as it is blamed by others. Words uttered not truthfully cannot protect one from rebirth in a woeful state after one's death. Friend Porisāda, you may rather believe if somebody were to say: 'The strong winds blew away rocky mountains into the sky', or 'The sun and the moon have fallen to earth', or 'All rivers flow upstream', but you never believe if somebody says: 'Sutasoma tells lies.' Friend Porisāda, if somebody says: 'The sky has been split up', or 'The Ocean has dried up', or 'Mount Meru has been wiped out without a trace', you may believe it. But never do you believe if somebody says: 'Sutasoma tells lies.' " Still Porisāda was not fully convinced.

As Porisāda remained adamant Mahāsutasoma thought: "This Porisāda still do not believe me. I will make him believe by taking an oath." So he said: "Friend Porisāda, please put me down from your shoulder. I will convince you by taking an oath." Porisada then put him down from his shoulder. "Friend Porisāda, I will hold the sword and the spear and take the oath. I will take leave of you for a short time and will fulfil my promise given to Brahmin Nanda to learn the verse from him in the city. Then I will come back to you to keep my promise. If I do not say the truth may I not gain rebirth in a royal family, well protected by weapons such as this sword and this spear."

Then Porisāda thought: "This King Sutasoma has taken an oath which ordinary kings dare not do. No matter whether he comes back or not, I too am a king. If he does not come back, I will get the blood out of my arm to sacrifice it for the deity of the banyan tree." Thus thinking Porisāda set Bodhisatta Sutasoma free.)

This verbal truth of King Mahāsutasoma uttered to convince Porisāda is also *saddahāpana-sacca*. This is the kind of Perfection of Truthfulness which Bodhisattas have to fulfil.

(2) Icchāpūrana-sacca

This second verbal truth spoken to have one's desire fulfilled may be learnt from the Suvannasāma Story, the third story of the Mahānipāta of the Jātaka, as well as from other stories.

In the **Suvannasāma Jātaka**, the Bodhisatta Suvannasāma, looking after his blind parents, went to fetch water from a river. King Piḷiyakkha, who was out hunting, saw him and shot him with an arrow, mistaking him for a supernatural being. Being overcome by the poisonous effect of the arrow, the Bodhisatta became unconscious. King Piḷiyakkha brought the Bodhisatta's father and mother to the place where the Bodhisatta remained lying in a dead faint. On their arrival there, his father Dukūla sat down and lifted his head while his mother Pārikā sat down, held his feet placing them on her thigh and cried. They

touched their son's body and feeling the chest which still had body heat, the mother said to herself: "My son has not died yet. He is just unconscious because of the poison. I will remove that poison by my words of solemn truth." Accordingly, she made an asseveration comprising seven points:

- (1) Formerly, my son Sāma has practised righteousness (*dharmacāri*). If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son vanishes.
- (2) Formerly, my son Sāma has engaged himself in noble practice. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son vanishes.
- (3) Formerly, my son Sāma has spoken only truth. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son vanishes.
- (4) My son Sāma has looked after his parents. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son vanishes.
- (5) My son Sāma has shown respect to the elders in the family. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son vanishes.
- (6) I love my son Sāma more than my life. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son vanishes.
- (7) May my Sāma's poison disappears by virtue of meritorious deeds done by his father and by me.

Then Suvanna Sāma who was lying on one side turned over to the other side.

The father too thinking: "My son is still alive, I will also say words of solemn truth, made an asseveration comprising the same seven points as the mother's." Then the Bodhisatta changed again his lying position.

At that moment, a goddess, Bahusundari by name, who had been Suvannasāma's mother in the past seven existences and who was now staying at Gandhamādana Hill, came from the Hill to the spot where Suvannasama was lying and made her own asseveration: "I have long been dwelling at Gandhamādana Hill in the Himalayas. Throughout my life there is none whom I love more than Suvannasama. If this be true, may Sama's poison vanishes. In my abode at Gandamādana Hill, all the tree are scented ones. If this be true, may Sāma's poison vanishes." While the father, the mother and the goddess were thus lamenting, the handsome and youthful Bodhisatta Suvanna Sāma quickly sat up.

In this story, the words of truth are uttered by his mother, Parika, father, Dukula and Goddess Bahusandari in order to have their wish of eradicating Suvanna Sāma's poison and getting him well, fulfilled and are, therefore, called **Ichhāpūraṇa Vacīsacca**.

The Story of Suppāraka

Ichhāpūraṇa-sacca occurs also in the Suppāraka story of the Ekādasaka Nipāta of the **Jātaka**. The story in brief is:

In days gone by, the Bodhisatta, Suppāraka by name, who was highly learned, was living in the sea-port town of Kurukaccha (Bharukaccha). He had long worked as the captain of a ship and had become blind through contact of his eye with the vapour of sea-water. So he retired. However, at the request of certain merchants, he took control of a ship sailing out into the sea. After seven days, because of an unseasonal gale, the ship could not hold its course and wandered astray on the sea for four months. It then went beyond such seas as (1) Khuramālisamudra, (2) Aggimālisamudra, (3) Dadhimalisamudra, (4) Kusamālisamudra and (5) Nalamālisamudra, and was about to reach the most terrible sea of Balavāmukhasamudra. At that moment, Captain Suppāraka said that whoever came to this sea was not able to retreat, but would be drowned. This made all the merchants cry in fright.

Thinking: "I will save all these people by asseveration." the Bodhisatta made a solemn declaration: "Since I came of age, I have never ill-treated even a single person; I have not stolen other's property, even a blade of grass or a piece of split bamboo; I have not eyed even with an iota of lust another person's wife; I have not lied; I have not taken any

intoxicating drink even with the tip of a grass blade. On account of this truthful declaration of mine, may the ship get home safe and sound.” Then the ship that had wandered aimlessly for four months, turned back to Kurukaccha as though it were a mighty being and arrived at Kurukaccha port within one day by virtue of the Bodhisatta's asseveration.

This verbal truth of Suppāraka the Wise is also *icchāpūrana-sacca* as it was made to have his wish of saving the lives of all fulfilled.

The Story of King Sivi

It is the third story of the Visati Nipāta. In the city of Ariṭṭhapura, Sivi country, Bodhisatta, King Sivi, gave away six hundred thousand pieces daily in charity. Even then, he was not content and thought that he would like to give away parts of his body. In order to make the King's desire fulfilled, Sakka came down in the guise of a blind brahmin to the King and said: “O King, both your eyes can see, but mine cannot. If you would give me one of yours, you can see with the remaining one and I will also see with the eye given by you. So kindly give me one of your eyes.” The King was delighted, for a recipient had come to him the very moment he was thinking of giving. He summoned his surgeon Sivika and ordered: “Take out one of my eyes.” The surgeon, ministers and queens all tried to dissuade him. But he stood by his order and Sivika could do nothing but take out one of the King's eyes. Looking at the extracted eye with the one remaining, the King happily expressed his aspiration for Perfect Self-Enlightenment (*Sammāsambodhi*) and handed the gift of his eye over to the brahmin.

When the brahmin, who in reality was Sakka, put the eye into his eye-socket, it fitted in like his original. King Sivi, seeing this, was so delighted that he asked Sivika: “Get also my other eye out.” Despite protests from his ministers, the King had his remaining eye taken out and given to the Brahmin. The latter put the King's eye into the socket of his other eye which became as good as the original. He then gave his blessings and disappeared as though he had returned to his place.

As King Sivi became totally blind and was not fit to rule, he moved to a dwelling place near a pond in the royal gardens, where he reflected on his act of charity. Sakka then came to him and walked to and fro nearby so that the King would hear his footsteps. When the King heard, he asked who it was. Sakka replied: “I am Sakka. Ask for any boon you want.” “I have plenty of wealth such as gems, gold and silver. I want only death, for both my eyes are gone now,” said the King. “O King, you say you want death. Do you really desire to die? Or do you say so only because you are blind?” When the King answered he desired so because he was blind. Sakka said: “O King, I am not able to make you see again. You can see only with the power of your truthfulness. Make a solemn declaration of truth.” The King then uttered: “I adore those many people who came to me for gifts and I also adore those who actually asked for what they needed. By virtue of this verbal truth may my eye sight be restored to me.” No sooner had he said so than the first eye appeared in him. Then again he made another declaration of truth:

“When the blind brahmin came to me for my eye, I gave him both of mine. In so doing, my heart was full of joy. By virtue of this verbal truth, may the other eye be restored to me.”

Accordingly, he regained his second eye. These two eyes were not the ones which were with him at his birth; neither were they divine eyes. In fact, they were the eyes which appeared by the power of his verbal Perfection of Truthfulness.

This verbal truth of King Sivi was also *icchāpūrana-sacca* as it was spoken to have his wish for the restoration of his eyesight fulfilled.

In the Maccha Story of the Varana Vagga of the **Ekaka Nipāta**, the Bodhisatta, when reborn as a fish, made an asseveration because the water in the pond had dried up as a result of draught and the fish in it were eaten by crows. He declared solemnly: “Although I was born as a fish whose species survives by living upon one another. I have never eaten even a fish of the size of a rice-grain. By virtue of this verbal truth, may there be a great

thunderous downpour.” No sooner had he thus declared than there occurred a heavy rain.

Again in the Vaṭṭaka Story of the Kulāvaka Vagga of the **Ekaka Nipāta**, the Bodhisatta was born into a quail family. When he was still unable to fly or walk, there broke out a great forest fire and both of his parents had fled. “In this world there are such things as the virtues of pure morality, truthfulness and compassion. I have no other recourse to make but an oath of truth.” thinking thus, he uttered: “I have wings, yet I cannot fly. I have legs, yet I cannot walk. My parents have fled. O forest fire, please go passing by me.” The forest fire that went by from a distance of sixteen (*pais*) became extinct after leaving the young quail unharmed.

In this connection, there is something that calls for clarification. In the aforesaid *Suvaṇṇasāma* Story and others, asseverations were based on meritoriousness and it is, therefore, appropriate that the respective wishes were fulfilled. But the young quail's asseveration was not so based. What he said was simply: “I have wings, yet I cannot fly; I have legs, yet I cannot walk. My parents have fled.” His asseveration is in fact based on what is not meritorious. Why then had his wish been fulfilled?

The basis of an asseveration is truthfulness whether it is meritorious or not. Even if a speech is connected with meritoriousness but not spoken truthfully, it is not a verbal truth; it has no power, nor does it bear fruits. Truthfulness, which is a truthful speech alone, has power and bears fruits.

Being truthful, the Bodhisatta's speech amounted to a verbal truth and achieved what was desired. Though it was not a speech of meritoriousness, it was not demeritorious either. Even if a speech is connected with demeritoriousness, but spoken truthfully, it amounts to a verbal truth and achieves what is desired. This is known from the *Kaṇha Dīpāyana* Story of the **Dasaka Nipāta**.

(Once, the Bodhisatta *Dīpāyana* together with a friend, after giving away their wealth, became ascetics in the Himalayas. He later came to be known as *Kanha Dīpāyana*. For more details see the **Kanha Dīpāyana Jātaka**, No. 444.) One day *Kanha Dīpāyana* was visited by the householder *Mandavya*, the donor of his dwelling place, his wife and son *Yaññadatta*. While the parents were being engaged in a conversation with their teacher, *Yaññadatta* was playing with a top at the end of a walk. The top rolled into the hole of a mound, which was the abode of a snake. When the boy put his hand into the mound to retrieve his top, he was bitten by the snake and fell down suddenly, being overcome by the snake's poison.

Learning what had happened to their son, they brought and placed him at the feet of *Kanha Dīpāyana*. When the parents requested him to cure their son of snake bite, he said: “I do not know any remedy for snake bite. But I will try to cure him by declaration of an oath.” Placing his hand on the boy's head, he uttered: “Being tired of human society, I become an ascetic. But I could live the happy life of an ascetic only for seven days. Since my eighth day as an ascetic, I have not been happy up till now for fifty years. I have reluctantly struggled along only with self-restraint. By the power of this truthful saying, may the poison vanish so that the boy survives.” Then the poison drained away from the boy's chest and seeped into the earth.

Yaññadatta opened his eyes; seeing his parents he called out just once: “Mother, Father,” and went to sleep again writhing. The ascetic said to the father: “I have done my part. You, too, should do yours.” Then the father said: “I have never been pleased whenever ascetics and brahmins visit me. But I have not let this known to anybody else. Instead, I have hidden my feeling. When I give alms, I do it reluctantly. By this truthful saying may the poison vanish so that my little son, *Yaññadatta*, survives.” The poison remaining above the waist drained away into the earth.

The boy sat up, but he still could not rise. When the father asked the mother to follow suit, she said: “I have something to declare as an oath. But I dare not do it in your presence.” When the father insisted, she obliged saying: “I hate the snake that has bitten my son. I hate the boy's father as much as I hate the snake. By this truthful saying may the

poison vanish so that my son survives.” Then all the poison drained away into the earth and Yaññadatta stood up and played again with his top.

(The basis of the respective asseverations of the ascetic teacher and his two devotees was an unwholesome matter which each had long kept it to himself or herself. How he or she had revealed it boldly saying what was true, As this means truthfulness, their wish was completely fulfilled by its power.)

In this connection, it may be asked: “If the verbal truth, whether it is based on wholesome or unwholesome matter, was fruitful as has been mentioned, can it be similarly efficacious nowadays?”

The answer is: Of the three kinds of truthfulness, *musāvīramana-sacca*, avoidance of telling lies or speaking truthfully in any matter, was something that is always spoken by the virtuous. The ancient persons of virtue who had made asseverations, as mentioned in the texts, had lips which were the domain of truthfulness where *musāvīramana-sacca* dwelt forever. Such a domain was so pure and noble that truthfulness which was born in it was wish-fulfilling. In ancient times when truthfulness prospered and shone forth, an evil thing such as falsehood would quickly result in undesirable punishment; so also truthfulness would result in desirable reward. That falsehood would quickly bring about punishment in those days is known from the Cetīya story of the **Atthaka Nipāta**. (According to this story, King Cetīya knowingly lied, saying one of the two candidates for the post of royal chaplain was senior and the other junior although the reverse was true; in consequence he was swallowed up by the earth.)

But nowadays, adhering to the maxim, ‘no lie, no rhetoric’, people mostly tell lies. Thus, the evil domain of falsehood has been created and truthfulness born in this domain cannot produce beneficial results in a visible manner. Similarly, consequences of falsehood are not conspicuous either.

Other stories which contain fruitful asseverations are as follows:

The Nalapāna Story of the **Ekaka Nipāta** tells of the reeds which became hollow throughout because of the truthfulness shown by the Bodhisatta, Monkey King.

The Sambulā Story of the **Timsa Nipāta** tells of the complete cure of Prince Sothhisena's leprosy because of the truthful words spoken by Crown Princess Sambulā.

The Temiya Story of the **Mahā Nipāta** tells of the birth of the Bodhisatta, Prince Temiya, to the Chief Queen Candā Devi when she made an oath of truth after her observance of Sīla.

The Janaka story of the **Mahānipāta** tells of the escape of Crown Prince Pola Janaka from his bondage of iron chains and from prison because of his words of truth.

The Katthavāhana Story of the **Ekaka Nipāta** tells of an asseveration made by a mother, chopper of fuel wood. In order to convince the king that he was the father of her child, she threw the child into the sky taking an oath of truth, by which the boy remained sitting cross-legged in the sky.

The Mahāmora story of the **Pakinnaka Nipāta** tells of the escape of birds from their respective cages because of an oath of truth declared by a Paccekabuddha, who, formerly as a hunter, had caught the Bodhisatta, Peacock King, in a square. On hearing the Dhamma talk of the Bodhisatta, he gained enlightenment and became a Paccekabuddha. (As advised by the Bodhisatta) he made an asseveration thus: “I am now liberated from the bondage of defilements. May all the birds that I have kept in cages at home go free the way I do.” How powerful the asseveration in these stories should be thus understood.

Power of Truthfulness during The Buddha's Time

Once during the Buddha's time, there befell threefold misfortune of disease, demons and famine in the city of Vesali. The Buddha went there accompanied by *bhikkhus* and taught

the Venerable Ānanda how to recite the verses of oath. The Venerable Ānanda spent the whole night walking within the three walls of the city, chanting the verses by virtue of which all three misfortunes vanished. This story is mentioned in detail in the Commentary of the Ratana Sutta. The verses of oath comprising a number of verses forms a discourse of *paritta* (protection), called Ratana Sutta. It begins with an attribute of a Buddha: "In the worlds of devas, humans, *nāgas* and *garulas*, there exist various gems; but none is comparable to the gem of Buddha. By virtue of this truth may all beings be free of the threefold misfortune and be happy." In the Ratana Sutta there are twelve verses of asseveration which reveal the various attributes of the Triple Gem, i.e. the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. (Together with the three verses ascribed to Sakka, there are fifteen verses of asseveration.) This Sutta was recorded in the Buddhist Councils as the first Sutta in the Cūla Vagga of the **Sutta Nipāta** and as the sixth sutta of the **Khuddaka Pāṭha**.

The Angulimāla Sutta in the Rājavagga of the Majjhima Pannāsa contains another story that also took place in the lifetime of the Buddha. While the Buddha was sojourning at the Jetavana Monastery, Sāvatti, the Venerable Aṅgulimāla reported to the Buddha about a woman in confinement who found difficulty in delivering a baby. Under instructions from the Buddha, the Venerable Aṅgulimāla went to the woman to help her by means of an oath of truth. "Since the day I became a noble one," declared the Venerable, "I have never intentionally taken the life of a sentient being. By virtue of this truth may the mother and the son be well." The mother then gave birth to her son without any more trouble and both were well.

In this way, in the lifetime of the Buddha, too, solemn declarations of truth was efficacious and fruitful.

Power of Truthfulness during Buddhist Period in Sri Lanka

When Buddhism spread to Sri Lanka after the Parinibbāna of the Buddha, the Venerable Mahāmitta's mother was suffering from breast cancer. The mother sent her daughter, a *bhikkhunī*, to the Venerable for some medicine. "I know nothing of normal drugs." said the Venerable, "I will tell you a certain form of medicine. 'Since the moment of my ordination, I have never looked at a woman with a lustful eye. Because of this truthful declaration, may my mother become well again.' When you get back to mother, run your fingers over her body while repeating what I have just said." The sister went back to the ailing mother and carried out his instructions. No sooner had she done so, the mother's cancerous affliction dissolved like a foam. So says the Chapter on Analysis of Sila in the **Visuddhi-magga**.

A similar story is told in the Dvāra Kathā, Citt'uppāda Kaṇḍa, of the **Aṭṭhasālīnī Commentary**. While explaining the word *sampattavirati*, it says that a woman was suffering from a certain disease. Being told by the physician that hare's meat was needed for cure, the older brother sent the younger one, Jaggana, to a farm to look for a hare. On seeing Jaggana, a hare ran away in fright and was caught in a tangle of creepers. It then screamed. Jaggana rushed there and seized the hare. But he thought: "It is not justified to kill this little creature just to save my mother's life," and set the hare free and went home. "Have you got one?" asked the older brother. When Jaggana told his brother what he had done, the latter scolded him vehemently. Then Jaggana approached his mother and while standing by her, he uttered: "Since my birth, I have never known any instance of intentional killing of a creature by me. By virtue of this truth, may my mother become well and happy." At that very moment, the mother became well and happy again.

In this way, it should be noted that *icchāpūrana-sacca* was individually performed also after the Parinibbāna of the Buddha.

(3) Musāviraṃaṇa-sacca

Stories related to **Musāviraṃaṇa-sacca** are known from the Vidhura Jātaka of the **Mahānipāta** and other Jātakas. The following is a summary of the long narration of the Vidhura Story.

When King Korabya and Puṇṇaka the ogre were playing a game of dice, they agreed to bet as follow: should the King lose, Puṇṇaka would take anything from the King except (1) the King's person, (2) the Chief Queen and (3) the white parasol. Should Puṇṇaka lose on the other hand, the King would take from him the Manomaya Gem and the thoroughbred horse. The King lost the contest and Puṇṇaka asked: "I have won, O King, give me the stakes as agreed."

As it was a fact that the King had lost, he could not refuse, but allowed Puṇṇaka to take anything he wanted. Puṇṇaka said he would take Vidhura the Minister. Then the King pleaded: "The Minister is my person. He is also my refuge. Therefore, he should not be compared with other treasures of mine, such as gold, silver, etc. He should be compared only with my life. Thus I cannot surrender him."

Then Puṇṇaka said: "We shall not get anywhere if we are arguing whether he belongs to you or not. Let us go to him and abide by his decision." The King agreed and they went to the Minister, whom Puṇṇaka asked: "O Minister, as the Minister of the Kurus you are praised even by devas for standing in righteousness. Is it true? Are you King Korabya's servant? Are you a relative of the King's and of equal rank? Or are you a relative of the King's but of higher rank? Is your name Vidhura meaningful (*anvattha*) or without meaning (*rulhi*)?"

(The last question means to say like this: In this world there are two kinds of names. The first is *rulhi*, a name, the meaning of which does not agree with what it represents; instead, it is a name given at random. The other is *anvattha*, a name, the meaning of which agrees with what it represents. For example, if some ugly person is named Maung Hla (Pretty Boy), it is just a *rulhi* name because the name does not suit the boy. If some handsome person is named Maung Hla, it is an *anvattha* name because it goes well with the appearance.

When Puṇṇaka asked whether Vidhura's name was *rulhi* or *anvattha*, he wanted to verify whether the Minister was righteous or not, for the name Vidhura signifies a virtuous person who eradicates evils. Should the Minister not abide by righteousness, his name would then be *rulhi*, a name given to him with no significance. Should he abide by righteousness, his name would then be *anvattha*, a name in harmony with his true nature.

Should the Minister not abide by righteousness, his name would then be *rulhi*, a name given to him with no significance. Should he abide by righteousness, his name would then be *anvattha*, a name in harmony with his true nature.)

Then the Minister thought to himself: "I can say that I am a relative of the King, or I am of higher rank or I am not at all related to the King. But in this world there is no refuge like truthfulness. I should speak out what is true." So he said: "Friend, there are four kinds of servitude in the world:

- (1) the servitude of one born of a female slave,
- (2) the servitude of one bought by money,
- (3) the servitude of one who serves voluntarily, and
- (4) the servitude of a prisoner of war.

Of these four servitudes, I am a servant who comes to serve the King voluntarily." So the Minister answered truthfully.

Such an answer given truthfully without deceit was a speech of truth but not *saddahapana-sacca* because the speech was made not to convince others; nor was it *icchapurana-sacca* because it was made not to get one's wish fulfilled. It was made just to avoid telling lies and therefore was *musāviraṃaṇa-sacca* only.

Similarly, in the Suvanna Sāma Jātaka when King Piliyakkha asked Suvanna Sāma: "What is your clan? Whose son are you? Tell me the clan to which you and your father belong." he would have believed if Suvanna Sāma were to say: "I am a deva," or "a *Nāga*" or "a Kinnari" or "of a royal family" or if he were to give any other answer. But he thought he should say nothing but the truth; so he said truthfully: "I am a fisherman's son." Suvanna

Sāma's speech was like Vidhura's: it was not to make others believe nor was it to get his wish fulfilled. In fact, it was a speech made to avoid falsehood and, therefore, was *musāviraṃaṇa-sacca*.

In the Bhūridatta Jātaka also, when Nesāda Brahmin approached the (*Nāga*) Bodhisatta who was observing the precepts, and asked him: "Who are you? Are you a powerful god? Or are you a mighty *nāga*?" "This man will believe me," thought the Nāga King, "even if I say I am a divine being. But I ought to tell him the truth." and told him that he was a powerful *nāga*. This speech of the Nāga King, like Vidhura's, was made not to make others believe nor was it to have one's wish fulfilled. But as it was made to avoid falsehood and to reveal the truth, it was *musāviraṃaṇa-sacca*.

What constitutes the sixth of the Ten Perfections is this *musāviraṃaṇa-sacca*. Bodhisattas of old always made it a point to cultivate this kind of speech which is an avoidance of falsehood. They fulfilled their Perfection of Truthfulness by speaking truthfully, existence after existence. If they kept silent to avoid having to tell lies and to observe truthfulness, it was not pure verbal truth (*vacī-sacca*) because there was no speech at all. It was only *viratī-sacca*, avoidance of falsehood.

Use of The Three Kinds of Truth by Bodhisattas

Only when circumstances demand to convince others did Bodhisattas use truth of the first kind, *saddahāpana-sacca*; otherwise they did not. Similarly, only when they were required to get their wish fulfilled, they made use of the truth of the second kind, *icchapurana-sacca*. As regards the third kind, *musāviraṃaṇa-sacca*, they always resorted to it on all occasions. Following their examples, those who are virtuous should speak *musāviraṃaṇa-sacca* and make efforts to cultivate it.

Two Kinds of Truth

The aforesaid truths may be classified under two headings only, namely,

- (1) **Vacībhedasiddhi Sacca** (Truth that accomplishes something the moment one speaks.)
- (2) **Pacchānurakkhana Sacca** (Truth that entails a follow-up after one has spoken.)

As has been mentioned before, the *Saddahāpana Sacca* of the Bhisā Jātaka, the *Ichchāpurana Vacisacca* of the *Suvaṇṇa Sāma*, *Suppāraka*, *Sivi*, *Maccha*, *Vattaka*, *Kanhadipāyana*, *Nalapāna*, *Sambulā*, *Temiya*, *Janaka*, *Katthavāhana* and *Mahāmora Jātakas*, and the *Musāviraṃaṇa Sacca* of the *Vidhura*, *Suvaṇṇa Sāma* and *Bhūridatta Jātakas* produced results as soon as they were individually spoken out. There was nothing more to be performed to achieve results. Therefore, such truths are to be known as **Vacībhedasiddhi-sacca**.

But Truthfulness shown by King Sutasoma to Porisada in the above-mentioned Mahā Sutasoma Jātaka was different. It was a *Saddahāpana Sacca* spoken to convince Porisada that he would definitely return to him. This promise would be fulfilled when the King did return to the cannibal and only then would his truthfulness be established. For this, he had to make special arrangements to effect his return to the Bodhisatta. This truthfulness of King Sutasoma was therefore of *pacchānurakkhana-sacca* type.

In the same way, the truthfulness practised by King Jayadisa in the *Jayadisa Jātaka* of the *Timsa Nipata* and that practised by Prince Rāma in the *Dasaratha* are both *pacchānurakkhana-sacca*.

With reference to King Jayadisa's truthfulness, here is the story in brief. While King Jayadisa of Uttara Pañcāla City, in the Kingdom of Kapila, was going on a hunting spree, on the way, he met Nanda Brahmin who had come back from Takkaśīla and who wished to deliver a discourse.

The King promised him to hear the discourse on his return and went to the forest.

On arrival in the forest, the King and his ministers divided the hunting ground among themselves, each one to his own allocated area to catch deer. But one escaped through the King's location and the King had to pursue it with all his might. After a long pursuit, he

managed to catch the deer; he cut it into two halves and carried them, hanging from a pole on his shoulder. Having taken a rest for a short while under a banyan tree, he stood up to continue his journey. At that moment, the human-ogre who was dwelling at the banyan tree prevented him from going, he said: "You have now become my prey. You must not go." (A human-ogre is not a real ogre. He was, in fact, the King's older brother, who, while an infant was caught by an ogress. But she had no heart to eat the baby and brought him up as her own son. So he had an ogre's mental and physical behaviours. When his foster mother, the ogress, died, he was left alone and lived like an ogre.)

Then King Jayadisa said: "I have an appointment with a brahmin who has come back from Takkaṣāḷa. I have promised him to hear his discourse. Let me go and hear it, after which, I will come back and be true to my word." The human-ogre set him free readily accepting the king's assurance. (The human-ogre and the king were brothers in reality. Because of their blood relationship, which was not realized by both, the former had some compassion for the latter and let him go.) The King went to hear the brahmin's discourse and was about to return to the human-ogre. At that moment, his son, Prince Alīnasattu, (the Bodhisatta) pleaded with the King that he should go on behalf of his father. As the son insisted, the father allowed him to go. The King's word, "I will come back", had to be kept and made true after it had been spoken; so it was a *pacchānurakkhana-sacca*.

The story of Prince Rāma in brief is: After giving birth to the older son, Rāma, the younger son, Lakkhaṇa and the daughter, Sitā Devi, King Dasaratha's Chief Queen passed away. The King took a new Queen of whom Prince Bharata was born. The new Queen repeatedly pressed the King to hand over the throne to her own son Bharata. The King summoned his two senior sons and said: "I am worried about you, for you might be in danger because of the new Queen and her son Bharata. The astrologers have told me that I would live twelve more years. So you should stay in a forest for twelve years after which you should come back and take over the kingship."

Then Prince Rāma promised his father that he would obey him and the two brothers left the city. They were joined by their sister as she refused to be separated from them. In spite of the astrologers' prediction, the King died after nine years because of his worries about his children. Then the ministers, who did not want to have Bharata as their King, went after the royal children. They told them of the King's death and requested them to return to the city and rule over the people. But Prince Rama said: "I have promised my father to return only after twelve years as my father had ordered. If I return now, I will not be keeping my promise to my father. I do not want to break my word. Therefore, take my brother, Prince Lakkhaṇa, and my sister, Sitā Devi, to make them crown prince and crown princess and you ministers, yourselves rule the country." Here Prince Rāma had to wait for the end of the time limit so that what he had agreed upon with his father would be substantiated. This too was *pacchānurakkhana-sacca*.

Truth concerning Time

In order to make an easy distinction between *vacībhedaśiddhi-sacca* and *pacchānurakkhana-sacca*, there are four kinds of truth according to a brief classification:

- (1) Truth concerning the past only.
- (2) Truth concerning the past and the present.
- (3) Truth concerning the future only.
- (4) Truth concerning no particular time.

Of these four, the one concerning the future was *pacchānurakkhana-sacca* and the remaining three are *vacībhedaśiddhi-sacca*.

Of the truths in the **Suvannaśāma Jātaka**, the collection of truths uttered by the Bodhisatta's parents concerned the past, for they said: "Sāma had formerly practised Dhamma; he used to cultivate only noble practices; he used to speak only the truth; he had looked after his parents; he had shown respects to the elders."

The truth uttered by his parents that "We love Suvanna Sāma more than our lives" and the truth uttered by the Goddess Bahusundari that "There is none whom I love more than

Sāma” were truths which concern no particular time.

The collection of *icchapurana-saccas* in the **Suppāraka** and **Sivi Jātakas** concerned the past. Similarly, that contained in the **Kanha Dipayana** and **Nalapāna Jātakas** also concerned the past.

In the **Vaṭṭaka Jātaka**, the utterance, “I have wings, yet I cannot fly; I have legs, yet I cannot walk,” concerned both the past and the present.

The truth saying “There is none whom I love more than you,” in the **Sambulā Jātaka** and that of the Chief Queen, Candā Devi in the **Temiya Jātaka** concerned no particular time.

In this way, the relationship between the truths and their respective times referred to may be considered and noted.

The Supreme Perfection of Truthfulness

With reference to the Perfection of Truthfulness, the **Atthasālini Commentary** and the **Commentary on the Buddhavaṃsa** explain that King Mahāsutasoma's Perfection of Truthfulness was the Supreme Perfection because, in order to keep his word true, the King went back to Porisāda as promised at the risk of his own life. In this case, the vow was made in the presence of Porisāda but as it was a mere utterance, its purpose had not yet been fulfilled; to fulfil it, the vow still remained to be kept. As he had promised: “I will come back”, he returned even after he had been back in the city of Indapattha. At first, when he promised “I will come back”, his sacrifice of life did not appear imminent. It became so only when he returned to Porisāda from Indapattha. Therefore, in the Commentaries, he is mentioned as “the King who protected his truthfulness, sacrificing his life — *jīvitam cajitvā saccam anurakkhantassa*” but not as “the king who made an oath at the risk of his life — *jīvitam cajitvā saccam bhaṇantassa*.”

Thoughts on The Two Kinds of Truth

In this connection, the truthfulness of King Mahā Sutasoma and that of Minister Vidhura are worthy of a comparative study. The minister's truthfulness was his truthful saying that “I am a servant” as is told in the verse 102 of the **Vidhura Jātaka**. As soon as he said so, his truthfulness was accomplished. But, when he said that he had nothing to worry about his life, he could not die just being a servant. Therefore, one might say that Vidhura's truthfulness was inferior to Sutasoma's.

However, it may be considered that Vidhura was prepared to sacrifice his life, thinking to himself: “That young man may like to do away with me after taking me away. If he does so, I will accept death.” For, as he was wise, he must have kept pondering like this: “This young man asked for me, not to honour me. If he had a desire to honour me, he would have openly told me his purpose and invited me for the same. Now he had not invited me. He won possession of me by gambling and would not set me free.” Besides, though he was a young man, he was an ogre (by birth). Seeing his behaviour, the minister must have noticed that he was a wild tough person. Another thing that should be taken into consideration is this: When Vidhura had (by way of farewell) exhorted the king and his family members, and said: “I have done my job,” the young ogre, Puṇṇaka, replied: “Do not be afraid. Firmly hold on to the tail of my horse. This will be the last time for you to see the world while you are living.” (**Verse 196**). Vidhura boldly retorted: “I have done no evil that would lead to the woeful states. Why should I be afraid.” From this word of the minister, it is clear that the minister had decided to sacrifice his life.

All this points to the fact that Vidhura's truthfulness contained some element of taking risk of life and was thus not inferior to Sutasoma's. It should be concluded that it was, if not superior, of the same class as that of Sutasoma.

Moral Lesson

The unique feature of this Perfection of Truthfulness in contrast to the previous ones is that it possesses the power to have one's desire fulfilled because of the truth uttered. In the **Sutasoma Jātaka (Verse 62)** also it is said: “Of all the tastes which prevail on this earth, the

taste of truth is the sweetest.” Therefore, one should exert great efforts in order to enjoy the delicious taste of truth.

(h) The Perfection of Resolution (*Adhiṭṭhāna-Pāramī*)

The Pāli word ‘*adhiṭṭhāna*’ is usually translated as ‘resolution’. (Then the author goes on to explain the Myanmar word, which is a translation, not only of *adhiṭṭhāna* but also of *samādāna* used in observing precepts. As the author's explanation, though elaborate, is chiefly concerned with the Myanmar word, we left it out from our translation.) If one fulfils *adhiṭṭhāna* as a Perfection, one has to establish it firmly and steadfastly in one's mind. That was why when the Bodhisatta Sumedha reflected on *adhiṭṭhāna-pāramī*, he likened it to a rocky mountain which is unshaken by strong winds but remaining firmly rooted at its own place.

From this comparison, it is clear that *adhiṭṭhāna* means bearing in mind without wavering at all, as regards what one is determined to do. Therefore, if one intends to attain the knowledge of the Path and Fruition or Omniscience (i.e. if one is determined to become a Buddha) one's determination to practise for achieving them must be borne in mind as firmly as a rocky mountain.

Various Resolutions

Resolution has thus been likened to an unshaken mountain and there are various kinds of resolution as described in the texts.

Resolution concerning Uposatha

The Uposathakkhandhaka of the **Vinaya Mahāvagga** mentions three kinds of **Uposatha: Sangha Uposatha, Gaṇa Uposatha** and **Puggala Uposatha**. **Sangha Uposatha** is the one that is observed at the meeting of minimum four *bhikkhus* in a *sima* on full-moon and new-moon days. There, the *pātimokkha* is recited by one *bhikkhu* to whom others listen respectfully. Such an observance is also called ‘**Sutt'uddesa Uposatha**’ (Uposatha observance with a brief recitation of the Text of the disciplinary rules).

If there are only two or three *bhikkhus*, they observe **Gaṇa Uposatha** because the word **Sangha** is used for a meeting of at least four *bhikkhus*; when there are only two or three *bhikkhus*, the word “*Gaṇa*” is used. If the number of *bhikkhus* is three in a **Gaṇa Uposatha**, a motion is put first and if it is two, no motion is needed. Then each of the *bhikkhus* declares in Pāli that he is free from any offences. Therefore, it is also known as **Parisuddhi Uposatha** (*Uposatha* meeting where *bhikkhus* declare their individual purity).

If there is only one *bhikkhu*, he observes **Puggala Uposatha**. But before doing so, he should wait for other *bhikkhus* to join him, provided there is still time. When the time has passed without other *bhikkhus* arriving, he is to observe the *uposatha* alone. The Buddha had enjoined that he is to resolve: “Today is my *uposatha* day.” This means that he is mindful of this day constantly. Such an *uposatha* is known as **Adhiṭṭhāna Uposatha** (**Uposatha** kept firmly in one's mind.) This is the resolution concerning *uposatha*.

Resolution concerning The Robe

Bhikkhus are required to perform *adhiṭṭhāna* or *vikappana* concerning the robe within ten days after its acquisition. If the robe is kept more than ten days without performing either, it is to be discarded according to the Vinaya. The *bhikkhu* concerned also commits thereby a *Pācittiya* offence: Therefore, within ten days of its acquisition, he must resolve saying: “I undertake to put on this robe.” Then the robe is not to be discarded and he does not commit the offence. Resolution concerning the robe means making up one's mind firmly to use the robe either as a lower garment, or an upper garment or an outer garment or for general use. (Paṭhama Sikkhāpada, Nissaggiya civara Vagga, **Vinaya Pārajika**.)

Resolution concerning The Bowl

Similarly, when a *bhikkhu* acquires a bowl, he should resolve within ten days of its acquisition, saying: “I undertake to use this bowl.” If he does not do so in ten days, he has to discard it as required by the Vinaya. He also commits a *Pācittiya* offence. Resolution

concerning the bowl means determining firmly that “this receptacle is my bowl.”

Adhiṭṭhāna in these three cases is used as a technical term belonging to the Vinaya. It has nothing to do with the following three cases.

Resolution concerning Jhāna

In the case of *jhāna*, when for instance, the first *jhāna* has been attained, one should cultivate and develop it in five ways of *vasīhāva*; so it is said in the **Pathavikasina Niddesa** and in other places of the **Visuddhi-magga**. “*Vasīhāva*”, a Pāli word, means 'mastery'. So five way of *vasīhāva* are five kinds of mastery. When the first *jhāna* has been attained, one is to continue practising it until one gains complete mastery of the *jhāna* in all five kinds.

The first kind is **Āvajjana** (reflection), i.e. reflection as to what factors are contained in his first *jhāna* and as to which factor is of what character. At the beginning, he does not discern them easily. There may be a delay, for he is not yet skilled in reflecting. As he gains experience, he discerns them more easily. Then, he is said to be endowed with mastery of reflection.

The second kind is **Samapajjana** (absorption), *jhāna* consciousness being absorbed into the stream of one's consciousness, (i.e. *jhāna* consciousness continuously arising in the stream of one's consciousness). After mastering reflection, he has to gain mastery of absorption. He can do so by repeatedly developing the *jhāna* he has attained (just as by repeatedly reciting, one can master the literary piece that one has learnt by heart). If he tries for absorption before attainment of such mastery, *jhāna* consciousness does not arise easily in the stream of one's consciousness. This becomes easier only after mastering the development of *jhāna*. Then he is said to be endowed with mastery of absorption.

The third kind is **Adhiṭṭhana** (resolution), i.e. determining as to how long he wants to remain in *jhāna*. If he tries to determine the duration of absorption before mastery of resolution, *jhāna* consciousness may occur for either longer or shorter period than that of his determination. Suppose he resolves: “Let *jhāna* consciousness constitute my stream of consciousness for one hour,” the *jhāna* attainment may break off before or after one hour. This is because he is not yet skilled in making resolution. Once he is skilful enough, he can remain in *jhāna* for the exact length of the time he has resolved, Then he is said to be endowed with mastery of resolution.

The fourth kind is **Vutthāna** (rising from *jhāna*). [‘Rising from *jhāna* means change of *jhāna* consciousness to life-continuum (*bhavaṅga-citta*).] Mastery of rising from *jhāna* at the exact time of his determination is called ‘**Vutthāna-vasībhāva**’.

The fifth kind is **Paccavekkhanā** (reviewing) i.e. recollecting all the factors contained in the *jhāna*. In thus recollecting, as in the kind of **āvajjana**, they do not become manifest to him easily for lack of mastery on his part. Only when he gains mastery, they become manifest more easily. (Reflection (**āvajjana**), is a stage in the process of reviewing (*paccavekkhaṇā-vithi*), and reviewing (**paccavekkhanā**) is the stage that immediately follows the stage of reflection. If he has mastered **āvajjana**, he has mastered *paccavekkhanā* as well. Therefore, he who is endowed with mastery of reflection is endowed with mastery of reviewing; so it is stated in the texts.)

Among the five kinds of mastery, what we are concerned with here is **adhiṭṭhāna-vasībhāva** (mastery of resolution).

Resolution concerning Iddhi

The *Iddhividha Niddesa* of the **Visuddhi-magga** enumerates ten kinds of *iddhi* (supernormal power).

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| (1) Adhiṭṭhāna Iddhi, | (6) Ariya Iddhi, |
| (2) Vikubbana Iddhi, | (7) Kammavipākaja Iddhi, |
| (3) Manomaya Iddhi, | (8) Puññavanta Iddhi, |
| (4) Nānavipphāra Iddhi, | (9) Vijjāmaya Iddhi, and |

(5) Samādhivipphāra Iddhi, (10) Sammāpayoga Iddhi.

(‘Iddhi’, as a Pāli word, means ‘accomplishment gaining one’s wish’. In Myanmar it means supernatural power.)

- (1) **Adhiṭṭhāna Iddhi:** Power concerning resolution; when, for instance, one resolves: “Let there be a hundred or a thousand images of myself,” then the images appear miraculously and their number is exactly what one has determined. (It is the power to project one’s images without oneself disappearing. The images may or may not be in one’s original posture.)
- (2) **Vikubbana Iddhi:** Power concerning transformation of oneself into the form of a *nāga* or of a *garula*. (‘Vi’ means ‘various’ and ‘kubbana’, ‘making’. It is the power to make oneself assume various forms as one wishes.)
- (3) **Manomaya Iddhi:** Power concerning creation of mind-made image, i.e. to create a miniature image of oneself inside own body. ‘Manomaya’ means ‘mind-made’. (It is neither the projection of images as in the case of *adhiṭṭhāna-iddhi* nor the transformation of one’s form as in the case of *vikubbana-iddhi*. It is the power to create a miniature image of oneself inside own body.)
- (4) **Ñānavipphāra Iddhi:** Power concerning miraculous phenomena due to the influence of imminent supramundane wisdom. This power should be understood from the stories of the Venerable Bākula and others.

Venerable Bākula

The story of Bākula occurs in the commentary on the Etadagga Vagga, Ekaka Nipāta of the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**. The following is an extract in brief from the same story.

Bākula was son of a wealthy man of Kosambī. On the day his birth was celebrated, the infant was taken to the River Yamunā for ceremonial bath but he was swallowed by a fish. The fish, feeling very hot in the stomach, swam away. On its arrival at Bārāṇasī, a certain fisherman caught it and hawked it in the city. The wife of a wealthy man of Bārāṇasī bought the fish and when its stomach was cut open, a beautiful baby was found inside the fish. Since she had no child of her own and was longing for one, she was extremely delighted saying to herself: “This is my very own.”

When the strange news reached the natural parents of Kosambī, they hurried to Bārāṇasī to claim their son. But the lady of Bārāṇasī refused to give him back, saying: “The baby came to us because we deserve him. We cannot return him to you.” When they went to court to settle the dispute, the judges gave their verdict that the baby equally belonged to both pairs of parents. In this way, the baby had two mothers and two fathers, on account of which he was named Bākula. (*Bā* = two, *kula* = family; hence a boy of two families.)

It was a miracle that the boy was not harm though he was swallowed up by a fish. The miracle was due to the power of the *arahatta-magga ñāṇa* and was certainly to be attained by Bākula in that very existence. (Or, may be it was due to the influence of the glorious *pāramī ñāṇa* that was inherent in the boy and that would enable him to attain without fail, the *arahatta-magga ñāṇa* in that very life.) Such power is said to be *Ñānavipphāra-iddhi*.

Saṅkicca Sāmaṇera

Saṅkicca Sāmaṇera was conceived by the daughter of a householder of Savatthi. The mother died when she was about to give birth to the baby. While her body was being cremated, it was pierced with iron spikes so that it might burn better. A spike hurt the baby’s eye and the baby cried. Knowing that the baby was still alive, people took the body down from the funeral pyre, cut open the stomach and took out the baby. The baby grew up in due course and at the age of seven became an *arahat*.

The boy’s miraculous escape from death was also attributed to the power of the *arahatta-magga ñāṇa*. (Or it was attributed to the influence of the power of the boy’s inherent *pāramī-ñāṇa* that helped him attain the *arahatta-magga ñāṇa*.)

- (5) **Samādhivipphāra Iddhi:** Power by the influence of concentration. The miraculous phenomenon that occurs when one is about to enter upon or is entering upon or has

just entered upon *jhāna* is due to the influence of *samādhi*. The power that causes such a miracle is called **Samādhivipphāra Iddhi**. With reference to this power, the **Visuddhimagga** narrates a number of stories beginning with the story of Sāriputta, which alone will be reproduced here.

Venerable Sāriputta

One day while the Venerable Sāriputta was staying with the Venerable Moggallāna at a gorge called Kapota, he had his head newly shaven and engaged himself in *jhāna* in an open space during a moonlit night. When a mischievous ogre came with a friend of his and seeing the Venerable's cleanly-shaven, shining head, became desirous of striking it with his hand. His friend advised him not to do so; yet he struck the Venerable's head with all his might. The blow was so hard that the sound of it roared violently like thunder. But the Venerable felt no pain as the power of *samādhi* pervaded throughout his body.

- (6) **Ariya Iddhi**: When *ariyas* (Noble Ones) desire to contemplate on loathsome objects as though they were unloathsome or on unloathsome objects as though they were loathsome, they can do so. Such power of *ariya* to contemplate on any object in whatever way they wish is called '**Ariya Iddhi** (Power of Noble Ones.)
- (7) **Kammavipākaja Iddhi**: Creatures like birds fly in the sky. To possess that ability to fly they do not have to make any special effort in the present life. It is a result of what they did in past existences. Devas, Brahmās, the first inhabitants of the world and *Vinipatika asuras* have also the ability to move about in space. The power to perform such feats is **Kammavipākaja Iddhi**.
- (8) **Puññavanta Iddhi**: *Cakkavattis* (Universal Monarchs) and the like can travel in space. They can do so because they have accumulated merits for themselves. Those who accompany the Universal Monarch in his aerial travels can do so because they are associated with the monarch who is the real possessor of merits. The riches and luxuries that belonged to such wealthy persons as Jotika, Jatila. Ghosaka, Mendaka and others are also **Puññavanta Iddhi**.

(The difference between **Kammavipākaja Iddhi** and **Puññavanta Iddhi** is this: **Kammavipākaja Iddhi** is the power not due to one's deeds done in the present life but due to one's deeds done in the past; it accompanies one's birth. **Puññavanta Iddhi** is due not only to one's past deeds but also due to one's present efforts made in support of those deeds. It does not accompany one's birth; it becomes full and operative only when supported by one's deeds of the present life. To illustrate: To Cakkavatti, the Treasure of Wheel does not arise at his birth. It arises only when he has observed certain precepts and fulfilled special duties of a Universal Monarch. So this particular power is due not entirely to one's past deeds but also due to one's present supporting efforts.)

- (9) **Vijjāmayā Iddhi**: Aerial travels and such feats by *Vijjadhara*s (Bearers of magical knowledge). (The power acquired by means of the art of specially contrived *mantras*, medicine, etc.)
- (10) **Sammāpayoga Iddhi**: the power that accrues from various accomplishments. (The scope covered by this *iddhi* is vast. The Path and Fruition that are attained as a result of proper endeavours is the highest form of *Sammāpayoga Iddhi*. In short, all accomplishments that result from learning arts and crafts, the three Vedas, the three Piṭakas or (to say the least,) from agricultural activities, such as ploughing, sowing, etc. are all *Sammāpayoga Iddhi*.)

Of these ten *iddhis*, the first, **Adhiṭṭhāna Iddhi**, is the power of resolution to project images of oneself by the hundred or by the thousand, such as the power possessed by the Venerable Cūla Pathaka and others. Ordinary people who are not possessors of such power make similar resolutions; but because they lack the basic factor of *jhāna* or *samādhi*, they do not realize what they have resolved; on the other hand, possessors of such power have their resolution fulfilled because their *jhāna* or *samādhi* is strong enough to help them.

Adhiṭṭhāna preceding Nirodha-samāpatti

When an *anāgāmin* or an *arahat* who is endowed with all eight *samāpattis* is about to enter upon *nirodha-samāpatti*, he resolves thus: “During the period of my absorption in the *samāpatti*, let no destruction befall my belongings that are kept apart from me. If the Sangha wants my presence, may I be able to rise from my *samāpatti* before the messenger comes to me. Promptly, may I be able to do so when the Buddha summons me.” Only after resolving thus he enters upon *samāpatti*.

In accordance with his resolution, during the period of his absorption in the *samāpatti*, his personal effects kept apart from him cannot be destroyed by the five kinds of enemy. When the Sangha wants him during that very period, he has already arisen from his *samāpatti* before the messenger's arrival. No sooner has the Buddha called for him, then he emerges from his *samāpatti*. No damage can be done by the five enemies to his possessions, such as robes, etc. that are on his body because of the power of his *samāpatti* even though he has not resolved previously for their safety.

Three Kinds of Adhiṭṭhāna

Resolution is of three kinds, according to context:

- (1) **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna** (Resolution made so that portending signs appear before something happens);
- (2) **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna** (Resolution made so that one's dream comes true); and
- (3) **Vata Adhiṭṭhāna** (Resolution made so that one's duties are fulfilled).

(1) Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna

This kind of Adhiṭṭhāna may be understood from the Campeyya Jātaka of the **Viṣati Nipāta** and other stories. The extract from the Campeyya Jātaka in brief is: When the Nāga King Campeyya told his Queen Sumana that he would go to the human abode to observe precepts, the Queen said: “The human abode is full of dangers. If something happens to you by which signs should I know?” The Nāga King took her to the royal pond and said: “Look at the pond. Should I be caught by an enemy, the water will become dark. Should I be caught by a Garula, the water will boil. Should I be caught by a snake-charmer, the water will turn red like blood.” After that the Nāga King left for the human abode to observe precepts for fourteen days.

But the King could not return home even after about a month for he was caught by a snake-charmer. Worried about his safety, the Queen went to the pond and saw the surface of the water turned red like blood.

This resolution of the Nāga King Campeyya is **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna** because he made the firm determination beforehand for the appearance of portending signs.

Similarly, according to the Introduction to the **Jātaka Commentary**, when Prince Siddhattha renounced the world, he cut off his hair and threw it up into the sky resolving: “May this hair remain in the sky if I would become enlightened; if not let it fall back to the ground.” The hair hanged in the sky like a festoon. This resolution, too, made to know in advance whether or not he would become a Buddha is Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna.

Again, after six years of strenuous asceticism, after He had eaten the milk-rice offered by Sujātā on the bank of the Nerañjarā, He set the golden bowl afloat on the river with the resolution: “If I would become a Buddha, may this bowl go upstream; if not, may it go downstream,” and the bowl went upstream until it reached the Nāga King Kāla. The resolution in this account also is a **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna**.

Similarly, any resolution made in the world to know beforehand by portent whether one's wish will be fulfilled or not is **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna**. This kind of *adhiṭṭhāna* is still practised today and is thus well known. Some people are used to lifting the stone placed at a famous pagoda or at a nat (spirit) shrine after resolving: “If my plan would materialise, may the stone be heavy; if not may it be light,” or vice versa. After lifting the stone, they read the omen whether they would succeed or not from the feel of the stone's weight.

(2) Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna

Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna is a resolution made so that one's wish gets fulfilled. This kind of resolution may be known from the **Vidhura Jātaka**.

(Vidhura, the Minister, was taken away from King Korabya by Punnaka the ogre, who had won the game of dice.) It is stated in the commentary on Verse 197 of this particular Jātaka: Having valiantly thundered: "Of death I am not afraid," Vidhura resolved: "May my lower garment not go off against my wish." Reflecting on his Perfections, he tightened his garment and followed Punnaka by catching hold of the tail of his horse fearlessly with the dignity of a lion-king. This resolution made by Vidhura is **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna**.

In the Nalapana Jātaka of the Sīla Vagga, **Ekaka Nipāta**, eighty thousand monkeys headed by their king, the future Buddha, found it difficult to drink the water from a pond that was protected by a wild water-demon. The monkey king then took one of the reeds that grew around the pond, made an asseveration that the reed be rid of the joints and blew air into it. The reed became hollow throughout, with no joints. He thereby made it possible for his followers to drink the water through the hollow reeds. But there were too many monkeys and the king was unable to provide each with a hollow reed. So he resolved: "Let all the reeds around the pond become hollow." This resolution made by the monkey king to fulfil his wish to let the monkeys drink the water individually is **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna**.

In the Kukkura Jātaka of the Kurunga Vagga, **Ekaka Nipata**, it is mentioned that leather straps of the chariot of King Brahmadata of Bārāṇasī were gnawed by the dogs bred in the inner city. Under the wrong impression that the leather-eating dogs were owned by the citizens living in the outer city, royal servants chased to kill them. So the dogs dared not live in the city and gathered at a cemetery. Knowing the true reason of the trouble and realizing that the leather straps of the royal chariot could have been eaten only by the dogs of the inner city, the leader of the pack, the Bodhisatta, asked them to wait while he went to the palace. While he entered the city, he concentrated his thoughts on Perfections, and diffusing his *mettā*, he resolved: "May nobody be able to hurl stones or sticks at me." This resolution, too, made to fulfil his wish that the dogs of the outer city might be safe from harm is **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna**.

In the Mātāṅga Jātaka of the **Visati Nipāta**: During the reign of King Brahmadata of Bārāṇasī, the Bodhisatta was born into a lowly caste of candala and named Mātāṅga. The daughter of a wealthy man of Bārāṇasī was named Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā because she believed in auspiciousness of pleasant sights. One day, she went to a garden to amuse herself with her maids. On the way, she saw Mātāṅga who went into the city. Though he kept himself aside as he was of a low birth, the sight of his person aroused displeasure in Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā, who, therefore, returned home thinking that it was not an auspicious day for her. Her followers were also annoyed. Saying: "Because of you, we will have no fun today," they beat him until he became unconscious; thereafter they departed. When Mātāṅga regained consciousness after a while, he said to himself: "These people of Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā have tortured an innocent man like me." Then he went to the house of Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā's father and lay at the entrance with a resolution, "I will not get up until I win Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā's hand." This resolution of Mātāṅga made to humble Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā's pride is also **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna**.

In the Commentary on the **Mahāvagga** of the Vinaya, too, it is said thus: Just after His Enlightenment, the Buddha stayed for seven weeks at seven different places in the vicinity of the Bodhi tree spending a week at each place. At the end of the last seven day's stay at the foot of a rajayatana tree, the brothers, Tapussa and Bhallika, came to him and offered some cakes. The Buddha considered how to accept the offer of cakes. (The bowl offered by Brahmā Ghatikāra disappeared the day the Buddha accepted the milk-rice offered by Sujātā.) Then the Four Deva Kings presented the Buddha with four emerald bowls. But the Buddha refused to accept them. The Deva Kings then offered the Buddha four stone bowls having the colour of kidney beans. To strengthen their faith, the Buddha accepted the bowls and resolved: "May the bowls merge into one." Then the bowls became one with four concentric brims. This resolution of the Buddha also is **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna**.

It seems that **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna** and **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna** of this section on **Adhiṭṭhāna** and **Īcchāpūrana-sacca** of the section on *Sacca* are one and the same because all these are concerned with fulfilment of one's wish.

With regard to **Īcchāpūrana-sacca**, when Suvanna Sama's mother, father and Goddess Bahusundari made their respective resolutions, they all wished the disappearance of the poison of the arrow that struck Suvanna Sama; with regard to **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna**, too, when the Bodhisatta made his resolution, throwing up his cut-off hair to the sky, he had wished that the hair would hang in the sky if he would become a Buddha; with regard to **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna**, too, when Vidhura made his resolution, his wish was to keep his dress intact. The connection of these resolutions with their respective wishes makes one think that they all are the same. That is why some people nowadays combine the two words, *Sacca* and *Adhiṭṭhāna*, into one, saying, "We perform *sacca-adhiṭṭhāna*."

In reality, however, *sacca* is one and *adhiṭṭhāna* another of the Ten Perfections. Therefore, they are two different things and their difference is this: As has been said before, *sacca* is truth whether it is of good or evil nature. A wish based on that truth is **Īcchāpūrana**. But when one's wish is not based on some form of truth, the determination made of one's own accord to have one's wish fulfilled is **Adhiṭṭhāna**.

To explain further: In the **Suvanna Sama Jātaka**, when his parents made an asseveration, they said: "Sama has formerly practised only righteousness" (which is the basic truth). And they added: "By this truthful saying, may his poison vanish" (which is their wish). Thus expressing the wish based on what was true is **Īcchāpūrana-sacca**.

When the Bodhisatta threw up his cut-off hair to the sky resolving: "If I should become a Buddha, may the hair remain in the sky," he did so without any basis of truth. His truthfulness was made for portending signs which would let him know beforehand of his coming Buddhahood.

The resolution made by Vidhura when he was about to follow Punnaka by holding on to the tail of his horse, "May my dress remain intact," is also **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna** because it has no truth as a basis and is, therefore, a mere determination of his wish, **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna**.

Thus the difference between **Sacca** and **Adhiṭṭhāna** lies in the presence or absence of the basis of truth.

(3) **Vata Adhiṭṭhāna**

These habits and practices include those of a bull (*gosīla* and *govata*): cattle eat and discharge faeces and urine while standing; in imitation of cattle, some ascetics (during the lifetime of the Buddha) did the same, believing that by so doing they would be purified and liberated from *samsāra*. (That is not to say that cattle had that wrong view, but only those ascetics who imitated cattle had.) This practice (**vata**) is connected with evil.

But *adhiṭṭhāna* has nothing to do with such wrong practices, for it belongs to the noble practice of Perfection. Here **vata** refers to observances of such noble practices as generosity, morality, etc. When one resolves to observe these Practices, such an action may be termed **Vata Adhiṭṭhāna**, but mere resolution and mere designation do not mean fulfilling the Perfection of Resolution. The reason is that *adhiṭṭhāna* does not belong to the past nor does it belong to the present. One fulfils the Perfection of Resolution when one observes in the future exactly as one has resolved firmly now. However ardently one resolves at present, if one fails to observe later, one's resolution is useless and meaningless.

This idea is expressed in the **Kavilakkhaṇā Thatpon**. A line in it reads to the effect that resolution should be compared to the horn of a rhinoceros, a beast which has one horn, not two. Just as a rhinoceros has only one horn, so should one stick to his resolution steadfastly and firmly, but not waveringly. This line of the **Kavilakkhaṇā** agrees with such saying as "yathā pi pabbato selo" as mentioned in the Buddhavaṃsa. Its meaning has been shown above.

The different resolutions as classified before, such as *adhiṭṭhāna* concerning *uposatha*, *adhiṭṭhāna* concerning the robe and *adhiṭṭhāna* concerning the bowl, cannot be included under **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna**, **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna** and **Vata Adhiṭṭhāna**, for they are the

resolutions made as required by the Vinaya rules. On the other hand, the *adhiṭṭhāna* of one of the five *vasībhāvas* and the *adhiṭṭhāna* that precedes *Nirodhasamāpatti* and that belongs to the ten *iddhis* are **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhānas**.

The Future Buddhas and The Three Kinds of Adhiṭṭhāna

Of these three kinds of *adhiṭṭhāna*, the future Buddhas practise **Pubbanimitta Adhiṭṭhāna** and **Āsisa Adhiṭṭhāna** not for fulfilling the Perfection of **Ādhitṭhana**, but for meeting some requirements under certain circumstances. On the other hand, it is this **Vata Adhiṭṭhāna** that they practised to fulfil the Perfection of **Adhiṭṭhāna** that leads to the attainment of the *arahatta-magga nānā* and *sabbaññuta nāna*.

In order to mention a little of the way, they practise (this particular *adhiṭṭhāna*), here is an extract from the **Cariya Piṭaka**:

*Nisajja pāsādavare evaṃ cintes' aham tadā
Yam kiñ ci mānusam dānaṃ adinnam me na vijjati
Yo pi yāceyya maṃ cakkhum dadeyyam avikampito*

Sāriputta, when I was King Sivi, I thought to myself while in the palace: ‘Of the kinds of *dāna* that people give, there is nothing that I have not given. Should somebody ask for my eye, unshaken I will give it to him.’

By this, King Sivi meant to say that he had firmly resolved, “If someone comes to me today and begs for my eye, without hesitation I will offer it to him.”

When Sakka, in the guise of a brahmin, went to ask for one eye, true to his resolution, he gave away both eyes to him unhesitatingly. This resolution of King Sivi is with reference to *Dāna*.

In the Chapter on Bhuridatta's Practice, it is said:

*Caturo ange adhiṭṭhāya semi vammikamuddhani
chaviyā cammena maṃsena nahāru atthikehi vā
yassa etena karaniyam dinnam yeva harātu so*

This describes how the Nāga King Bhuridatta resolved when he observed the precepts. It means: “Having resolved with regard to four components of my body, namely, (1) skin, thick and thin, (2) flesh and blood, (3) muscles and (4) bones, I lay on the top of the anthill. He who has some use for any of these four components, let him take it, for I have already made a charity of them.” Wishing to promote his observance of the precepts, King Bhuridatta resolved: “I will guard my morality at the sacrifice of the four components of my body.” This resolution of King Bhuridatta is in connection with *sīla*.

In the Campeyya Jātaka of the **Visati Nipata**, too, the Nāga King Campeyya went to observe the precepts after telling his Queen of the signs that would show when he was in danger in the aforesaid manner; it is mentioned in the Commentary: “*Nimittāni ācikkhitvā cātuddasī uposatham adhiṭṭhāya nāgabavanā nikkhamitvā tattha gantvā vammikamatthake nīpajji*. — Having told of signalling signs and having resolved to observe the precept on the fourteenth day of the new moon, Campeyya left the abode of *nāgas* for the human world and lay on the top of an ant-hill.” This resolution of Campeyya was purely for observing *sīla*.

In all these stories, *dāna* or *sīla* is one thing and *adhiṭṭhāna* is another thing. King Sivi's *dāna* occurred the moment he gave his eyes, but his resolution took place when he resolved to do so before the actual giving. Therefore, resolution came first and it was followed by the act of giving. In the case of *sīla* observed by the Nāga Kings, too, the resolution was first and then came the act of observance of *sīla*. In the secular affairs, too, it is natural to do things only after making up one's mind “I will do like this.”

Prince Temiya's Adhiṭṭhāna

The future Buddha was once son of King of Kāsi and named Temiya. (He was so named

by his father because on the day he was born it rained heavily in the whole country of Kāsi and people became wet and happy.) When the prince was one month old, while he was in the lap of his father, four thieves were brought to the King, who ordered them to be punished. The Prince was shocked to see this and became sad, thinking: “What shall I do to escape from this palace.”

The next day, while he was staying alone under the white parasol, he reflected on his father's action and was scared to become a king. To him, who was pale like a lotus flower crushed by hand, the guardian goddess of the parasol, who was his mother in one of his previous births, said: “Do not worry, son, if you want to escape from this royal residence, resolve to pretend to be dumb, deaf and mute. Your wish will be fulfilled.” Then the Prince made a resolution and acted accordingly.

For sixteen years the Prince was tested by various means, but he remained firm without deviating from his resolution. Then the father ordered: “My son is really dumb, deaf and mute. Take him to the cemetery and bury him there.”

Although he was variously tested and presented with difficulties for sixteen long years, he remained resolute, like the example of a rocky mountain mentioned in the Buddhavaṃsa. His firm, unshaken determination is an act of tremendous resoluteness. Only when one fulfils one's **Vata** resolution with the kind of determination of Prince Temiya, with all might and valour and without wavering, will one be carrying out the fulfilment of the Perfection of Resolution as observed by Bodhisattas.

(i) The Perfection of Loving-kindness (Mettā-Pāramī)

Three Kinds of Pema

Teachers of old have translated the word “*mettā*” of *mettā-pāramī* into Myanmar (love). Similarly, they translate “*pema*” also as love. “Love” meant by *mettā* is a specialised term while “love” meant by *pema* is a general one. Therefore, **pema** is divided into three:

- (1) **Taṇhā-pema** is love between men and women and is generated by craving, greed; this love is called *singara* in books on rhetoric.
- (2) **Gehasita-pema** is attachment between parents and children, among brothers and sisters, and is based on living together in the same house. This kind of love is called *vacchala* in rhetoric.

Both **taṇhā-pema** and **gehasita-pema** are not wholesome, the former is passion (*taṇhā-rāga*) while the latter, greed (*lobha*).

- (3) **Mettā-pema** is loving-kindness or unbounded benevolence shown towards others for their wellbeing. This love is entirely free from attachment or desire to live always together with others. People may be living poles apart and yet one is happy to hear that those living far away are prosperous. Such separation does not prevent one from feeling satisfied with their wellbeing. Therefore, *mettā* is pure and noble and has been also called **Brahma-vihāra** (Sublime Abode). That is to say, developing such love is living in a sublime state of mind. Not only *mettā*, but *karuṇā* (compassion), *muditā* (altruistic joy) and *upekkhā* (equanimity) are also **Brahma-vihāra**.

So *Brahma-vihāra* comprises all these four virtues. They are also known as four *Brahma-cariya* (Noble Practices). (Another name for *Brahma-vihāra* is *Apamaññā* (Illimitable), for they are the mental qualities to be developed and extended towards all beings whose number is limitless.)

It should be carefully noted that development of loving-kindness is not development of impure *taṇhā-pema* and *gehasita-pema*, but that of pure and noble *mettā-pema*. How to develop *mettā* will be shown later.

Mettā and Adosa

Mettā is a reality which exists in its ultimate sense (*Paramattha*). But when ultimate realities are enumerated, *mettā* is not shown as a separate item for it is covered by the term

adosa cetasika (mental concomitant of hatelessness) which has wide connotation. *Mettā* forms a part of that mental concomitant of *adosa*.

To explain further: According to the **Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha**, *adosa cetasika* is associated with 59 *sobhana-cittas*. Whenever these 59 *cittas* arise, there arises *adosa cetasika*, too. *Adosa* can contemplate various objects, but *mettā* can have only living beings as its object. In performing different acts of *dāna* or observing various kinds of *sīla*, there invariably arises *adosa*. But each time *adosa* arises in this way, it is not necessarily *mettā*. Only when one contemplates living beings with the thought “may they be well and happy”, wishing them prosperity, can *adosa cetasika* be called *mettā*.

With reference to the aforesaid, **Khantī Pāramī** (Perfection of Forbearance), too, *khantī* may mean *adosa cetasika*, but not all *adosa cetasikas* are *khantī*; when one is wronged by others, one restrains oneself from showing *dosa* (hate or anger) to them, and it has been discussed that only such *adosa* should be taken as *khantī*. Similarly, not all *adosa* should be taken as *mettā*, but only that *adosa* that arises in the form of goodwill towards other beings should be.

528 Kinds of *Mettā*

With reference to *mettā*, people say that *mettā* is of 528 kinds. But in reality it is not so. It should be noted people say so because according to the **Patisambhidāmagga** there are 528 ways of developing *mettā*.

Of the 528 ways, five are *anodhisa* (without specifications of beings). They are:

- (1) **sabbe sattā** (all beings)
- (2) **sabbe panā** (all living things)
- (3) **sabbe bhūtā** (all existing creatures)
- (4) **sabbe puggala** (all persons or individuals)
- (5) **sabbe attabhāvapariyāpanā** (all those who have come to individual existences.)

When one directs one's thought to all beings that exist in the 31 planes of existence in any one of these five ways, they all are embraced without any one of them being left out. Since there is none who is not covered by these five ways, these five are called five *anodhisas*. (Or also called five *anodhisa* individuals.) “*Odhi*” of “*anodhisa*” means “boundary; limit”. Hence “*anodhisa*” is “having no limit.”

(The next paragraph on the usage of ‘*satta*’ and ‘*puggala*’ deals only with the meaning of those words in Myanmar; it is, therefore, left out from our translation.) When *mettā* is directed towards beings who are specified, the classification is as follows:

- (1) **sabbā itthiyo** (all females)
- (2) **sabbe pursā** (all males)
- (3) **sabbe ariya** (all noble persons, *ariyas*)
- (4) **sabbe anariya** (all ignoble persons, those who have not yet attained the state of *ariyas*)
- (5) **sabbe deva** (all devas)
- (6) **sabbe manussā** (all humans)
- (7) **sabbe vinipātikā** (*petas* belonging to miserable states).

Each of these seven belongs to a separate category of beings and they are accordingly called **odhisa** (or seven *odhisa* beings).

In this way, there are twelve kinds of beings, five *anodhisa* (unspecified) and seven *odhisa* (specified), to whom *mettā* should be directed.

How *mettā* is directed to these twelve categories of beings is taught as follows:

- (1) **averā hontu** (may they be free from enmity)
- (2) **abyāpajjā hontu** (may they be free from ill will)

- (3) **anīghā hontu** (may they be free from unhappiness)
 (4) **sukhī attānaṃ pariharantu** (may they be able to keep themselves happy).

When *mettā* is suffused in these four ways on each of the above twelve categories of persons, the modes of suffusing *mettā* become 48 in number. There is no mention of directions in these 48 modes.

When the four cardinal points, the four subordinate points and the upward and downward directions are mentioned in each of these 48 modes, there will be 480 modes all together: “May those beings in the east be free from enmity, be free from ill-will, be free from suffering and may they be able to keep themselves happy.” In this way, beings in other directions also should be suffused with *mettā* thus the number of modes of suffusing *mettā* become 480.)

If 48 modes of suffusing without mention of directions are added to those 480 modes, the total becomes 528.

These 528 modes of suffusing *mettā* are named briefly “suffusion of *mettā*” by teachers of old and composed as a traditional prayer. If one desires to suffuse *mettā* in the first way in Pāli one should do so by reciting “*Sabbe sattā averā hontu*. — May all beings be free from enmity.” Repeating in this way continuously means development of *mettā*. If one desires to do so in the second way in Pāli one should recite: “*Sabbe sattā abyāpajjā hontu*. — May all beings be free from ill-will.” Repeating in this way continuously also means development of *mettā*. (In this manner all the 528 ways of suffusing *mettā* should be understood.)

The development of *mettā* in these 528 ways, as shown above, is taught in the **Paṭisambhidā-magga** and is well-known. In that Text there is no mention of development of *karuṇā*, *muditā* and *upekkhā* at the end of that of *mettā*.) But, nowadays, suffusion of *mettā*, as published in some books, contains at the end of development of *mettā* (a) *dukkha muccantu* — ‘may they be free from suffering’, which is development of *karuṇā* (b) *yathā laddha sampattito māvigacchantu* — ‘may they not suffer loss of what they have gained’, which is development of *muditā*, and (c) *kamassakā* — ‘they have their deeds, *kamma*, as their own property; each being is what his or her *kamma* makes’, which is development of *upekkhā*. They are included by ancient teachers so that those who wish to develop *karuṇā*, *muditā* and *upekkhā* may do so by taking development of *mettā* as a guide.

Therefore, if one desires to develop *karuṇā* one should incline one's thought towards living beings like this: *Sabbe sattā dukkha muccantu*. — ‘May all beings be free from suffering’; if one desires to develop *muditā*: *Sabbe sattā yathā laddha sampattito māvigacchantu*. — ‘May all beings not suffer loss of what they have gained’; if one desires to develop *upekkhā*: *Sabbe sattā kamassakā*. — ‘All beings have their deeds, *kamma*, as their own property.’

But this does not mean that only this way, as mentioned in the scriptures, should be adopted but not others. Because for covering all beings without any classification, there are not only terms like *sattā*, *pāna*, *bhūta*, *puggala* and *attabhāvapariyāpannā*, but there are such words as *sariri*, *dehi*, *jīva*, *paja*, *jantu*, *hindagu*, etc. To suffuse beings with the thought: *Sabbe sariri averā hontu*. — ‘May all those having bodies be free from enmity’, etc. is also to direct *mettā* towards them.

The number of ways to direct *mettā* is also given as four in the **Paṭisambhidā-magga**. But there are other ways as well, for instance, *Sabbe satta sukhino hontu*. — ‘May all beings be happy.’: *Sabbe sattā khemino hontu*. — ‘May all beings be secure.’, and such thoughts are also *mettā*. The fact that suffusing beings with one's *mettā* by using other Pāli words and by adopting other ways also constitutes development of real *mettā* is evidenced by the **Mettā Sutta**.

Development of *Mettā* according to The *Mettā Sutta*

The **Mettā Sutta** was delivered by the Buddha in connection with forest-dwelling *bhikkhus* and was recited at the Councils and preserved in the **Sutta Nipāta** and the **Khuddaka Pāṭha**. The Sutta first describes fifteen virtues which those desirous of developing *mettā* should be

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endowed with. These fifteen are known in Pāli as fifteen *Mettāpubbabhāga*, i.e. virtues to be endowed with before developing *mettā*.

The Sutta says:

He who is clever in what is noble and profitable and who desires to abide contemplating Nibbāna through his wisdom, i.e. Nibbāna which is peaceful and blissful, should endeavour to be endowed with the following:

- (1) ability to execute what is good,
- (2) uprightness in conduct,
- (3) total straightforwardness,
- (4) being receptive to the words of the wise,
- (5) gentleness in manners,
- (6) having no conceit,
- (7) being easily contented with what one has,
- (8) being easy to support,
- (9) not being burdened by unnecessary cares and duties,
- (10) frugal living (i.e. not being saddled with too many personal belongings for one's travel; a *bhikkhu* should travel light only with his eight requisites just as a bird flies taking with it only its wings),
- (11) having calm and serene sense-faculties,
- (12) mature wisdom with regard to faultless things,
- (13) modesty in one's deeds, words and thoughts,
- (14) having no attachment to one's supporters, male or female, (which is particularly concerned with *bhikkhus* as the Sutta is originally meant for them. Lay people also should not have attachment to friends),
- (15) not doing even the slightest deed that would be reproved by the wise.

The Sutta explains how to develop *mettā* after becoming endowed with these fifteen virtues saying: “*Sukhino vā khemino hontu, sabbasattā bhavantu sukhittā*” etc.

How to develop *mettā*, as taught in the **Mettā Sutta**, should be briefly noted as follows:

- (a) **Sabbasaṅgāhika mettā**: ‘*Mettā* developed in an all inclusive manner covering all beings.’
- (b) **Dukabbhāvanā mettā**: ‘*Mettā* developed by dividing beings into two groups.’
- (c) **Tikabhāvanā mettā**: ‘*Mettā* developed by dividing beings into three groups.’

(a) Sabbasaṅgāhika Mettā.

Of these three ways of development of *mettā*, that of **Sabbasaṅgāhika mettā** is explained in Pāli as suffusing thus: *Sukhino vā khemino hontu, sabba sattā bhavantu sukhittā*. If one wishes to develop *mettā* according to this explanation one should keep reciting and contemplating as follows:

- (1) **Sabbe sattā sukino hontu** - ‘May all beings be happy physically’,
- (2) **Sabbe sattā khemino hontu** - ‘May all beings be free from dangers’,
- (3) **Sabbe sattā sukhittā hontu** - ‘May all beings be happy mentally’.

This is the development of **Sabbasaṅgāhika mettā** as taught in the Mettā Sutta.

(b) Dukabbhāvanā Mettā

Dukabbhāvanā mettā and **Tikabhāvanā mettā** are both likely to be confusing to those who do not know how to interpret the Pāli text. (How one may get confused will not be explained, lest it should cause more complications.) The **Dukabbhāvanā mettā** is developed as follows:

There are four pairs of beings, namely,

- (1) **Tasa thāvāra duka** - the pair of frightened and unfrightened beings.
- (2) **Diṭṭhādīṭṭha duka** - the pair of seen and unseen beings.
- (3) **Dūra santika duka** - the pair of far and near beings.
- (4) **Bhūta sambhavesi duka** - the pair of Arahats and worldlings together with learners.

(1) *Tasā vā thāvārā vā anavasesā sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhittā.* — ‘May all those worldlings and noble learners who are frightened and may those Arahats who are unfrightened, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally.’ Contemplating thus is development of **Tasa thāvāra duka bhāvanā mettā.**

(2) *Diṭṭhā vā adiṭṭhā vā anavasesā sabbasattā bhavantu sukhittā.* — ‘May all those beings seen and unseen, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally.’ Contemplating thus is development of **Diṭṭhādīṭṭha duka mettā.**

(3) *Dūra vā avidurā vā anavasesā sabbasatta bhavantu sukhittā.* — ‘May all those beings living afar and living near, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally.’ Contemplating is development of **Dūra santika dukabhavana mettā.**

(4) *Bhūta vā sambhavesi vā anavasesā sabbasattā bhavantu sukhittā.* — ‘May all those beings who are Arahats, and those who are worldlings and learners, (or those who have been born and those who are still in the womb of their mothers), without exception, be happy both physically and mentally.’ Contemplating thus is development of **Bhūta sambhavesi dukabhāvanā mettā.**

The above-mentioned four ways of development of *mettā* is called *dukabhavana mettā*, i.e., *mettā* developed after dividing beings into two groups.

(c) Tikabhāvanā Mettā

This **Tikabhāvanā mettā** is of three kinds:

- (1) **Dīgha rassa majjhima tika** - the set of three of tall, short and medium beings,
- (2) **Mahantānuka majjhima tika** - the set of three of large, small and medium beings.
- (3) **Thūlānuka majjhima tika** - the set of three of fat, thin and medium beings.

(1) *Dīgha vā rassā vā majjhima vā anavasesā sabbasattā bhavantu sukhittā.* — ‘May all those beings having long bodies, those having short bodies and those having bodies of medium length, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally.’ Contemplating thus is development of **Dīgha rassa majjhima tikabhāvanā mettā.**

(2) *Mahantā vā aṇukā vā majjhima vā anavasesā sabbasattā bhavantu sukhittā.* — ‘May all those beings having big bodies, those having small bodies and those having bodies of medium size, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally.’ Contemplating thus is development of **Mahantānuka majjhima tikabhāvanā mettā.**

(3) *Thūlā vā aṇukā vā majjhima vā anavasesā sabbasattā bhavantu sukhittā.* — ‘May all those beings having fat bodies, those having thin bodies and those having bodies of medium build, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally.’ Contemplating thus is development of **Thūlānuka majjhima tikabhāvanā mettā.**

The above-mentioned three ways of development of *mettā* is called *Tika bhāvanā mettā*, i.e., *mettā* developed after dividing beings into three groups.

Since these three ways of development of *mettā*, namely, (a) **Sabbasaṅgāhika mettā**, (b) **Dukabhāvanā mettā** and (c) **Tikabhāvanā mettā** are thoughts of loving-kindness, developed with the desire to see others attain prosperity and happiness, they are called *Hitasukhāgamapathanā mettā.*

Similarly, thoughts of loving-kindness developed with the desire to see others free from misfortune and not suffering are called *Ahitadukkhānāgamapathanā mettā.* This kind of *mettā* is described in Pāli:

Na paro param nikubbetha,

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*Nā' timaññetha katthaci nam kañ ci.
Vyārosanā patighasaññā,
Nānnamaññassa dukkham iccheyya.*

The meaning is: 'May not one being deceive another; may not one despise another; may they not wish to cause suffering to one another by offending and hurting physically, verbally and mentally.' Contemplating thus is development of *Ahītaḍḍakkhānāgamapattathanā mettā*.

It may be asked: "Why development of *mettā* is described not in one way only but in several different ways in the **Paṭisambhidā-magga** and the **Mettā Sutta**?"

The answer is: The mind of a worldlyling roams about continuously from one sense object to another. The mind, in such a state, cannot be kept steady on the object of *mettā* by adopting one means only. Steady concentration of the mind can be achieved by repeated change of method of contemplation. Therefore, a variety of ways of developing *mettā* was taught by the Buddha. Sages of later times, too, were obliged to explain these different ways. (Or alternative explanation:) Those who develop *mettā* are of different basic aptitudes; for some *anodhisa mettā* method is more comprehensible; for some *odhisa mettā* method is more intelligible; for some mode of suffusing beings in different directions with *mettā* is more lucid; for some *sabbasangāhika* means of the *Mettā Sutta* is clearer; for some *dukabhāvanā* is more suitable; still for some *tikabhāvanā* means is more appropriate. Since the different basic aptitudes of those who develop *mettā* require adoption of diverse means suitable for each individual, the Buddha had to teach these different method and later teachers had to explain them fully.

The Bodhisatta's Mettā

How the Bodhisatta had developed *mettā* (how he had fulfilled the Perfection of Loving-kindness) has been explained in the *Suvaṇṇasāma Jātaka* told in the **Cariya Piṭaka** and the **Mahā Nipāta** (of the **Jātaka**). The story as told in the **Cariya Piṭaka** in brief is as follows: "Dear Sāriputta, when I was *Suvaṇṇasāma*, living in the residence made ready by Sakka, I directed loving-kindness towards lions and tigers in the forest. I lived there being surrounded by lions, tigers, leopards, wolves, buffaloes, spotted deer and bears. None of these animals was frightened by me: nor am I frightened any of them. I was happy living in the forest as I was fortified with the powers of *mettā*."

From this passage, we know nothing of *Suvaṇṇasāma*'s family, birth, etc.; we know from it only of his noble and happy living without a trace of fear for the beasts in the forest, sustained by the virtues of his loving-kindness.

In the **Mahā Nipāta**, however, it is said that when the Bodhisatta *Suvaṇṇasāma* was struck by an arrow, he asked: "Why did you shoot me with the arrow?" and King *Piliyakkha* replied: "While I was aiming at a deer, the deer that had come nearer to the point of the arrow fled, being frightened by you. So I was annoyed and shot you." Then *Suvaṇṇasāma* replied: "*Na mam migā uttasanti, araññe sāpadānīpi*. — Seeing me, deers are not frightened; nor are the other beasts of the forest." He also said:

"O King, even *Kinnarās* who, with a very timid nature, are living in the mountain of *Gandhamādana*, would joyfully come to me while they are roaming in the hills and forests."

From this Pāli verse, it is known that the Bodhisatta *Suvaṇṇasāma*, living in the forest, directed *mettā* towards all forest-dwelling animals including *Kinnarās* and that he was accordingly loved by each and every animal in the forest.

In the list of eleven advantages that accrue by developing *mettā*, one is: being loved by devas, humans, demons and ghosts. But from the *Suvaṇṇasāma* story, we know that animals too love one who develops *mettā*. (The eleven advantages of developing *mettā* have been shown in connection with the *Navanga Uposatha* in the Section on the Perfection of Morality). Of these eleven advantages, in connection with *amanussanām piyo*, 'love of deva, demons and ghosts', the story of the Venerable *Visākhā* is cited in the *Brahmavihāra*

Niddesa of the **Visuddhi-magga**.

The Story of Venerable Visākhā

Visākhā, a householder of Pātaliputta, having heard about Ceylon, was desirous of going to that country to devote himself to practice of Dhamma. After leaving his wealth to his family, he crossed over to Ceylon and became a monk at the Mahāvihāra. For five months, he studied Dve Mātikā (the two books of concise Vinaya) and then left the Mahāvihāra for a group of monasteries which were suitable places for meditation. He spent four months at each monastery.

On his way to the hill-monastery called Cittala, Visākhā came to a junction of two roads and while he was thinking which road to follow, the deva of the hill guided him to the right direction. Accordingly, he arrived at the monastery and stayed for four months there. After planning to go to another monastery the following day, he went to sleep. While he was thus sleeping, the spirit of an emerald green tree sat on a wooden plank at the edge of a staircase and wept. "Who is weeping here?" asked the monk. "I am the spirit of the emerald green tree, Sir," was the reply. "Why are you weeping?" "Because you are about to leave." "What advantage is there to you of my stay here?" "Your stay here makes the local devas, demons and others show loving-kindness to one another. (Love prevails among them.) After your leaving, they will quarrel among themselves even using harsh words."

"If my stay here really helps you live happily as you have told," said the monk, "well, I will stay on for another four months." When the four months had lapsed, the monk was about to leave and the spirit wept again. In this way, the monk could not leave the place at all and passed into Nibbāna at the same monastery of Cittala.

The story shows that those who receive *mettā* not only love him who directs *mettā* to them, but they show goodwill to one another under the influence of his *mettā*.

Loving-kindness of A Hunter

In the Mahā Hamsa Jātaka of the **Asīti Nipāta**, when the Bodhisatta, King of Hamsas, was caught in a snare, he suffered much from injury. At the instance of the Hamsa General, the repentant hunter picked up the Hamsa King tenderly and nursed him with loving-kindness to relieve his pain. Even the weals raised by the snare did not remain on his feet, which became normal with the veins, flesh and skin undamaged because of the power of the hunter's *mettā*.

This is but a pertinent extract from the Mahā Hamsa Jātaka. The story in full may be learnt from the same Jātaka. Similar stories are told in the Pathama Cūla Hamsa Jātaka of the **Asīti Nipāta**, the Rohana Miga Jātaka and the Cūla Hamsa Jātaka of the **Visati Nipāta**. The power of *mettā* may be well understood from these stories.

Passion in The Guise of Loving-kindness

He who wants to direct his *mettā* towards beings should be careful about one thing and this is not to have developed passion (*rāga*) in the guise of *mettā* as it is warned in the **Netti Commentary**: "*Rāgo mettāyanā mukhena vañceti*. — Passion in the guise of loving-kindness is deceiving." In the Brahmavihāra Niddesa of the **Visuddhi-magga**, too, it is stated: "Extinction of anger means fulfilment of *mettā*, but arising of passion means destruction of *mettā*."

The meaning is: When a man directs his *mettā* towards another whom he has shown anger, the anger disappears and there appears in him *mettā* which is goodwill. Therefore, disappearance of anger leads to appearance of *mettā*. If passionate attachment appears in him while he is thus developing genuine *mettā*, his genuine *mettā* fails. He has now been deceived by passion which assumes the semblance of loving-kindness.

As *mettā* is one of the Ten Perfections, it should be directed towards other beings until they return their good-will. Therefore, disappearance of anger leads to appearance of *mettā*. If passionate attachment appears in him while he is thus developing genuine *mettā*, his genuine *mettā* fails. He has now been deceived by passion which assumes the semblance of loving-kindness.

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As *mettā* is one of the Ten Perfections, it should be directed towards other beings until they return their goodwill to oneself, as per example the Bodhisatta Suvannasama and others. Not only is *mettā* included in the Ten Perfections, but included in the forty methods of *Samatha* meditation, which leads to attainment of *jhāna* and *abhiññānas*. Therefore, Bodhisattas and virtuous men of ancient times developed *mettā* and with sharp and intense concentration attained *jhānas* and *abhiññānas* (which are called **Appanā** in Pāli). To give illustrations of such an attainment while fulfilling the Perfections, the Seyya Jātaka, Abbhantara Vagga of the **Tika Nipāta**, and the Ekarāja Jātaka, Kaliṅga Vagga of the **Caṭukka Nipāta**, may be cited.

Seyya Jātaka

A synopsis of the **Seyya Jātaka**: King Brahmadaṭṭa of Bārāṇasī ruled righteously, fulfilling his ten kingly duties. He gave alms, kept the Five Precepts, observed *uposatha* morality. Then a minister, who had committed a crime in the palace, was expelled by the King from the kingdom. He went to the neighbouring country of Kosala and while serving the King there, he urged him to attack and conquer Bārāṇasī which, he said, could easily be done. King Kosala followed his suggestion, arrested and imprisoned King Brahmadaṭṭa, who put up no resistance at all, with his ministers.

In the prison, Brahmadaṭṭa directed his *mettā* towards Kosala, who had robbed him of his kingdom, and in due course he (Brahmadaṭṭa) attained *mettā-jhāna*. Because of the power of that *mettā*, the robber King Kosala felt burning sensations throughout his whole body as if it were burnt with torches. Suffering from particularly severe pain, he asked his ministers: “Why has this happened to me?” They replied: “O King, you suffer thus because you have imprisoned King Brahmadaṭṭa who is endowed with morality.” Thereupon Kosala hurried to the Bodhisatta Brahmadaṭṭa, begged for forgiveness and returned Bārāṇasī to Brahmadaṭṭa, saying: “Let your country be yours again.” From this story it is clear that *mettā* is conducive to attainment of *jhāna*.

Ekarāja Jātaka

The story of Ekarāja: Once upon a time, a minister serving King Brahmadaṭṭa of Bārāṇasī committed an offence. The story thus begins with the same incident as that in the previous Seyya Jātaka. Both the Seyya Jātaka and the Ekarāja Jātaka runs like the Mahā Sīlava Jātaka of the **Ekaka Nipāta**. For the full story read the Mahā Sīlava Jātaka.

What is peculiar to the Ekarāja Jātaka is this: While King of Bārāṇasī was sitting in great state with his ministers in the courtyard, King Dubbhiseṇa of Kosala had him tied and caged and then hung upside down above a doorstep in the palace. Having developed *mettā* with the robber king as the object of his contemplation, Brahmadaṭṭa attained *jhānas* and *abhiññānas*. He managed to release himself from bondage and sat cross-legged in the sky. Dubbhiseṇa's body became burning hot and the heat was so intense that he rolled from side to side on the ground, grumbling: “It's so hot; it's so hot.” Then he asked his ministers: “Why has this happened to me?” The ministers replied: “O King, you suffer very painfully like this because you have wrongly arrested and suspended upside-down the virtuous and innocent King.” “In that case, go and quickly release him.” Under this order, the royal servants promptly went where the King Brahmadaṭṭa was and saw him sitting cross-legged in the sky. So they turned back and reported the matter to King Dubbhiseṇa.

The Buddha's Mettā

Once while members of the Sangha headed by the Buddha were travelling to Kusinara, Malla princes made an agreement among themselves that any one of them who did not extend his welcome to the congregation would be punished. Accordingly, a Malla prince, Roja by name, who was a friend of Ānanda while he was a layman, extended his welcome with other Malla princes to the congregation. Thereupon Ānanda said admiringly to Roja that it was a great opportunity to do so as the congregation was under the Buddha's headship. Roja replied that he did so not because he had faith in the Triple Gem but

because of the agreement made among themselves. Finding Roja's reply unpleasant, Ānanda approached the Buddha and told him of it. He also requested the Buddha to make Roja's mind more pliant. The Buddha then directed His thoughts of *mettā* exclusively to Roja, who could not remain still in his residence and like a calf which has been separated from its mother, went to the monastery where the Buddha was staying. With genuine faith in the Buddha arising in him, he paid homage to the Buddha and listened to His sermon, as a result of which he became a *sotāpanna*.

At another time, too, when members of the Sangha, with the Buddha at its head, entered the city of Rājagaha and went on alms-round. Devadatta, after consulting King Ajātasattu, sent Nālāgīri the Elephant, who was in must, to attack the Buddha. The Buddha overcame the elephant by suffusing him with *mettā*. Then the citizens of Rājagaha recited with joy the following verse:

*Daṇḍen'eke damayanti ankusāhi kasāhi ca
adaṇḍena asatthena nāgo danto mahesinā.*

Some cattle-trainers, elephant-trainers and horse-trainers tame (their respective animals) by beating or hurting them with a goad or a whip.

However the mad elephant Nālāgīri has been tamed by the Buddha without any stick or any weapon.

(j) The Perfection of Equanimity (Upekkhā-Pāramī)

Meaning of Upekkhā

A literal translation of the Pāli word 'upekkhā' would be 'taking up a balanced view' which means maintenance of a neutral position between the two extremes of sorrow and happiness. Traditional Myanmar scholars rendered it as 'indifference'.

If the meaning of this rendering is not well thought of, one is liable to misinterpret it as 'being inattentive', 'being negligent'. But *upekkhā* is not remaining inattentive or negligent. *Upekkhā* pays attention to objects but only in a balanced manner with the feeling of neutrality when encountering objects of sorrow or objects of happiness.

Development of Upekkhā

Development of *upekkhā* is the same as that of *mettā* mentioned in the **Paṭisambhidāmagga**. As mentioned above, the methods to be adopted in developing *mettā* are 528 because there are four basic modes. On the other hand, in developing *upekkhā* there is only one mode which is *kammassakā* meaning 'all beings have deeds, *kamma* (done by them) as their own property.' Therefore, the methods in this case form one fourth of 528 which is 132.

As in developing *mettā*, there are twelve categories of beings: five *anodhisa* (unspecified) and seven *odhisa* (specified). Since there is just one mode of it, we have twelve methods only that are to be adopted before applying them to the ten directions:

- (1) **sabbe sattā kammassakā** (all beings have kamma as their own property);
- (2) **sabbe paṇā kammassakā** (all living things have kamma as their own property);
- (3) **sabbe bhūstā kammassakā** (all existing creatures have kamma as their own property);
- (4) **sabbe puggalā kammassakā** (all persons or individuals have kamma as their own property);
- (5) **sabbe attabhāvapariyāpannā kammassakā** (all those who have come to individual existences bodies have kamma as their own property);
- (6) **sabbā itthiyo kammassakā** (all women have kamma as their own property);
- (7) **sabbe purisā kammassakā** (all men have kamma as their own property);
- (8) **sabbe ariyā kammassakā** (all noble ones have kamma as their own property);

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- (9) **sabbe anariyā kammassakā** (all persons who have not yet attained the state of ariyas have kamma as their own property);
- (10) **sabbe devā kammassakā** (all devas have kamma as their own property);
- (11) **sabbe manussā kammassakā** (all humans have kamma as their own property); and
- (12) **sabbe vinipātikā kammassakā** (all *petas* belonging to miserable states have kamma as their own property).

When these twelve are applied to the ten directions the result is 120. To these are added twelve methods which have no reference to any direction and the total number of methods becomes 132. Any one of these suitable methods may be used in developing *upekkhā* but it should not be taken that the other methods are inapplicable.

To make it clearer: As in the case of *mettā*, one may develop *upekkhā* by using other terms for beings and persons if one so desires. The word ‘*kammassakā*’ may also be replaced by other Pāli terms of the same meaning, which are mentioned in the Abhinha Sutta, Nīvarana Vagga, Pañcaka Nipāta of the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**. There it is said: *sabbe sattā kammassakā, kammadāyādā, kammayoni, kammabandhū, kammaṭṭissaraṇā*.

- (1) **kammassakā**, ‘having kamma as one’s property’;
- (2) **kammadāyādā**, ‘having kamma as one’s heritage’;
- (3) **kammayonī**, ‘having kamma as one’s origin’;
- (4) **kammabandhū**, ‘having kamma as one’s own friend’;
- (5) **kammaṭṭissaraṇā**, ‘having kamma as one’s refuge’.

Since all these five Pāli terms have one and the same significance, one may develop *upekkhā* by substituting ‘*sabbe sattā kammassakā*’ with any of the following four expressions that pleases one or that is understood well by one.

*sabbe sattā kammadāyādā,
sabbe sattā kammayoni,
sabbe sattā kammabandhū,
sabbe sattā kammaṭṭissaraṇā.*

A Point to consider

In this connection, a point to consider is this: It is clear that *mettā* is a Perfection to be fulfilled for the welfare of beings and thus deserves to be considered as a noble Perfection. On the other hand, though *upekkhā* is a Perfection to be fulfilled, it is a mental disposition which holds that “happiness or suffering is one’s lot in life; if one is possessed of good deeds for happiness, one will be happy; if one is possessed of bad deeds for suffering, one will suffer. I can do nothing to alter the *kamma* of others.” Is it not difficult to call such an attitude noble? Will it be wrong if one says that *upekkhā* is an attitude of mind which does not care for the welfare of beings and which remains apathetic towards them? It is therefore, necessary to consider why *upekkhā* is ranked as an exalted virtue of Perfection.

In both secular and spiritual matters, it is natural that something which is difficult to get is of great value and something which is easy to get is of little value. It is, therefore, a common knowledge that in the world, easily available materials, such as pebbles and sand are cheap, whereas gold, silver, rubies and other gems, which are hard to come by, are precious.

Similarly in spiritual matters, greed, hate and other unwholesome mental states are likely to arise easily; accordingly they are of little worth. It requires no special exertion to let them arise. As a matter of fact, what is difficult is to prevent them from arising in an uncontrollable manner. They are indeed like useless weeds. On the other hand, *dāna*, *sīla* and other wholesome deeds cannot happen without putting forth necessary efforts; they do not take place automatically. One of such meritorious deeds is development of genuine *mettā* which is superior to *dāna* and *sīla*. This genuine loving-kindness is indeed difficult to be developed.

There are three types of persons: *verī-puggala*, *majjhata-puggala* and *piya-puggala*, a foe, neither a foe nor a friend and a friend respectively. It is difficult to develop *mettā* directed towards a *verī-puggala* (foe), not so difficult towards a *majjhata-puggala* (neither a foe nor a friend); on the contrary, it is easy to direct *mettā* towards a *piya-puggala* (friend). *Mettā* that has as its object neither a *verī* nor a *majjhata* but only a *piya-puggala* is *mettā* of no value, no matter how often it is developed, because it is just a performance of an easy task.

If one desires to fulfil *mettā pāramī* properly, one should develop *mettā* directed towards oneself first. Since such a development is in one's own interest, *mettā* arises easily and fully without fail. This *mettā* which is complete as it is developed for one's own self should serve as an example. Hence *mettā* should be directed towards oneself first.

When *mettā* is directed towards a *verī*, a *majjhata* and a *piya*, one should do so all alike without any discrimination, in the same manner one has done towards oneself. Could it be easily done? No, it could not be. Indeed it is difficult to develop *mettā* even towards a friend the way one does towards oneself, let alone towards a foe or a neutral person, as has been instructed by the Buddha, *attasamaṃ pemaṃ n'atthi*, there is no person like oneself that one loves. Only when *mettā*, which is so difficult to develop towards a friend, can be developed not only towards a friend but also towards the other two persons on a par with oneself and without the slightest difference, can it become genuine *mettā* of *pāramī* stature.

This suggests how difficult it is to develop genuine *mettā* and how great its value is. On account of the development of this form of *mettā*, as has been stated above, Suvanna Sāma was loved by wild beasts like tigers, lions, etc. It is even more difficult to develop *upekkhā* as a fulfilment of Perfection than to develop *mettā* for the same purpose.

It is not easy to develop *upekkhā* even towards a neutral person of the three types. People would say: "I remain equanimous with regard to him now" or "In this matter I adopt the attitude of *kammassakā*," and so on. As such a saying signifies unconcern and disinterest, *upekkhā* appears to be of little importance. In reality *upekkhā* presupposes paying attention to and taking interest in the object of contemplation (but as a neutral observer).

As it is easy to develop *mettā* towards a friend, so it is easy to develop *upekkhā* towards a neutral person. Because one does not love or hate him, it is easy to keep one's attitude towards him balanced without any desire to see him happy or to see him suffer. But it is more difficult to develop *upekkhā*, towards a foe. Because, if one hates him, one rejoices easily when he declines and one envies him when he prospers. It is hard to prevent both mental states from arising; when either of them sets in, even in the slightest manner one fails to maintain *upekkhā*.

It is still more difficult to develop *upekkhā* towards a friend than towards a foe. Because one is already attached to a friend one is delighted when he prospers or distressed when misfortune befalls him. It is difficult to prevent both delight and distress from arising in oneself.

Only when one maintains equanimity with the same attitude towards all three types of persons as towards oneself without any of the above-mentioned difficulties can development of *upekkhā* be possible. As long as there is partiality in one's attitude towards these three types of persons *upekkhā* is far from successful.

As has been said, development of *upekkhā* is not an attitude of unconcern or neglect; on the contrary, it does pay attention to and takes interest (in the object of contemplation). In doing so, one says to oneself: "Nothing can be done to make beings including myself happy or unhappy. Those who are possessed of good *kamma* will be happy and those who are possessed of bad *kamma* will be unhappy. Since their happiness and unhappiness are related to their past deeds, nothing could be done about them." Only profound reflection in this vivid manner, with living beings as objects of contemplation, constitutes genuine *upekkhā*. Since it involves neither anxiety nor uneasiness, it is noble, serene and calm. The more it goes beyond *mettā*, the higher its spiritual standard is.

Like *mettā*, *upekkhā* is one of the forty subjects of *samatha* meditation and one of the Ten Perfections. One who desires to meditate on *upekkhā* according to *samatha* method does so

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only for the highest *jhāna* and not for the lower ones. Those who are slow to grasp, reach the highest stage of *jhāna* only by acquiring them five times. For them, the Buddha has taught fivefold *jhāna* which is called *pañcaka* method (method of five). The *jhāna* acquired for the first time by them is the first *jhāna*, that acquired for the second time is the second *jhāna* and so on up to the fifth *jhāna*. In this way, there are five *jhāna* for the dull.

The intelligent, however, reached the highest *jhāna* after acquiring them four times. For them, the Buddha has taught fourfold *jhāna* which is known as *catukka* method (method of four). The *jhāna* acquiring for the first time is the first *jhāna*, and so on. In this way there are four *jhāna* for the intelligent.

Those who have not attained any *jhāna* in either of these two ways should not try to meditate yet on *upekkhā* for the highest stage of *jhāna*. *Upekkhā*, as a subject for meditation, belongs to the fifth *jhāna* in the *pañcaka* method and to the fourth *jhāna* in the *catukka* method. The dull can meditate on *upekkhā* only when they have attained the fourth *jhāna* and the intelligent only after acquiring the first three *jhāna*, by means of other *samatha* subjects. Because, as has been said, *upekkhā* is subtle, serene and noble and thus belongs to the highest *jhāna* and not to the lower ones.

Mettā on the other hand belongs to the lower four or three *jhāna*. This indicates the fact that *upekkhā* is superior to *mettā*. If *upekkhā* is not intended as a subject for meditation but intended as a Perfection to be fulfilled, it can be developed at any time.

Mahā Lomahaṃsa Cariya

With regard to the Perfection of Equanimity, the story of the Bodhisatta's hair-raising, severe efforts in fulfilling *Upekkhā Pāramī* will be reproduced from the **Cariya Piṭaka Commentary**.

Once the Bodhisatta was born in a family of wealth and rank. When the time came for his education, he went to a well-known teacher. After completing it, he returned to his parents to look after them. On their death, his relatives urged him to protect and increase the riches that he had inherited.

However, the Bodhisatta had developed fear of all realms of existence and his fear was based on the nature of impermanence of all conditioned things. He also had perceived the loathsomeness of the body and had no desire at all to be entangled in the thicket of defilements associated with household life. In fact, his desire to get out of the world of sensuality had long been growing. Accordingly, he wanted to renounce the world after abandoning his great wealth. "But because of sounds of praise, my renunciation will make me famous," he thought to himself. Since he disliked fame, gain and honour shown to him, he did not renounce the world. In order to test himself whether he could unshakably stand the vicissitude of life, such as gaining and not gaining (wealth), etc. wearing the usual clothes, he left the house. His special desire was to fulfil the highest form of *Upekkhā Pāramī* by enduring ill-treatment of others. Leading a noble life of austerities, he was thought by people to be a feeble-minded eccentric, one who never showed anger to others. Regarded as a person to be treated not with respect but with impudence, he roamed about villages and towns, big and small, spending just one night at each place. But he stayed longer wherever he was shown the greatest insolence. When his clothes were worn out, he tried to cover himself with whatever remnant was left. And when that piece was torn away, he did not accept any garment from anybody but tried to cover himself with anything available and kept moving.

After living such a life for a long time, he arrived at a village. The village children there were of aggressive nature. Some kids, belonging to widows and associates of ruling class, were unsteady, conceited, fickle-minded, garrulous, indulging in loose talk. They wandered around, always playing practical jokes on others. When they saw aged and poor people walking, they followed them and threw ashes on their backs. They tried to place ketaki leaves under the old people's arm-pits (just to make them feel uncomfortable). When the old people turned round to look at them, they mimicked their movements and manners by bending their backs, curving their legs, pretending to be dumb, etc., and had great fun

laughing among themselves.

When the Bodhisatta saw the unruly children, he thought: “Now I have found a good means of support for fulfilment of Perfection of Equanimity,” and stayed in the village. Seeing him, the mischievous kids tried to make fun of him, who, pretending as though he could no longer endure them and as though he was afraid of them, ran away. Still the kids followed him wherever he went.

The Bodhisatta, on the run, reached a cemetery and thought to himself: “This is a place where no one will prevent these mischievous youngsters from doing harm. I have now a chance to fulfil *Upekkhā Pāramī* to a great extent.” He went into the cemetery and slept there using a skull as a pillow. Getting an opportunity to indulge in devilry, the foolish kids went where the Bodhisatta was sleeping and insulted him in various ways, spitting phlegm and saliva on him and doing other evil things and went away. In this way, they ill-treated the Bodhisatta everyday.

Seeing these wrong acts done by the wicked children, some wise people stopped them. With the knowledge that “This indeed is a holy ascetic of great power”, they all paid obeisance to him with utmost reverence.

The Bodhisatta kept the same attitude towards both the foolish kids and the wise people. He showed no affection to the latter who honoured him nor aversion to the former who insulted him. Instead, he took a neutral stance between affection and aversion with regard to both parties. In this way, he fulfilled the Perfection of Equanimity.

(Though this story is called Mahā Lomahaṃsa Jātaka, the name Mahā Lomahaṃsa was not that of the Bodhisatta. It just refers to the effect on those who come to know of how the Bodhisatta had practised; the horrible story could make their hair stand on end; hence the story's name Mahā Lomahaṃsa).

Fulfilment of Upekkhā

Extinction of hate and love is fulfilment of *upekkhā*. (*Upekkhā pāramī* signifies stilling of these two mental states. There is no Perfection of Equanimity unless both are calmed.)

In special affairs, staying in a negligent mood without taking interest in anything leads to the impairment of *upekkhā*. Such an attitude cannot be called *upekkhā*. It is only unawareness which is wrongly thought to be so.

Real *upekkhā* is not indifference or unawareness. It sees both good and evil which lead to happiness and suffering respectively. But he who observes *upekkhā* reflects clearly: “I am not concerned with these matters of happiness and suffering; they are the results of their own good and evil deeds.”

In the **Netti Commentary** it is stated: “Extreme absent-mindedness appearing as indifference with regard to various sense objects either good or bad is deceptive. (Delusion (*moha*), disguised as *upekkhā* is deceptive.) Reluctance to perform deeds of merit also tends to deceive by assuming the appearance of the sublime mode of doing *upekkhā*. Indolence (*kosajjha*), for doing good deeds is also likely to pretend to be *upekkhā*.) Therefore, one should take care of oneself not to be deceived by either delusion or indolence that is apt to behave like *upekkhā*.

Essence of Upekkhā

Upekkhā in ultimate sense is a separate entity. It is a mental concomitant (*cetasika*) called *tatramajjhataṭṭā* (central position thereof). But all the mental concomitants of *tatramajjhataṭṭā* cannot collectively be called **Upekkhā Pāramī**. *Tatramajjhataṭṭā* is a mental concomitant that is associated with all *sobhana cittas* (‘beautiful’ consciousness); it accompanies each arising of *sobhana citta*. *Tatramajjhataṭṭā* which can be regarded as genuine *Upekkhā Pāramī* pays attention to beings and reflects: “Happiness and suffering of beings are conditioned by their *kammas* in which nobody can intervene. They have *kamma* as their own property and cause.” *Tatramajjhataṭṭā* that arises out of contemplation, not of beings but of the Three Gems, alms-giving and observance of the precepts cannot constitute *Upekkhā Pāramī*.

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

When equanimity is maintained, contemplating happiness and suffering of beings, *tatramajjhataṭā* does not arise alone but all associated consciousness and mental concomitants appear with it. Though the object of *tatramajjhataṭā* and the object of its associates are one and the same, equanimity, with regard to happiness and suffering of beings, is its main function. Therefore, this *tatramajjhataṭā* is designated *Upekkhā Pāramī*. Its associated consciousness and mental concomitants also come to be included in *Upekkhā Pāramī*; *tatramajjhataṭā* plays the leading role and this is the only difference between it and its associates.

Ten Kinds of Upekkhā

There are other kinds of *upekkhā* that cannot be included in **Upekkhā Pāramī** though each of them is an ultimate reality. The **Visuddhimagga** and the **Atthasalini** enumerate ten such *upekkhā*:

1. **Chalang'upekkhā**,
2. **Brahmavihār'upekkhā**,
3. **Bojjhaṅg'upekkhā**,
4. **Viriya'upekkhā**,
5. **Saṅkhār'upekkhā**,
6. **Vedan'upekkhā**,
7. **Vipassan'upekkhā**,
8. **Tatramajjhataṭ'upekkhā**,
9. **Jhāna'upekkhā**, and
10. **Parisuddh'upekkhā**.

1. There are six sense objects, good and bad, that appear at the six sense-doors. Arahats are not delighted when the sense objects are desirable and not dejected when these are undesirable. Always being endowed with mindfulness and comprehension they take them in with equanimity, maintaining their natural purity of their mind. This kind of mental equipoise is called **Chalang'upekkhā**. (That is, *upekkhā* with six factors, namely, six sense-doors and six-objects.)
2. Equanimity, which views that happiness and suffering of beings occur according to their kamma, is **Brahmavihār'upekkhā**. (Equanimity with sublime living. **Upekkhā Pāramī** is this kind of *upekkhā*.)
3. When efforts are made to attain the Path and the Fruition, if some factors are weak and other strong, the weaker ones are to be strengthened and the stronger are to be suppressed; but when these factors of the Path reached the status of *Bojjhaṅgas* (Constituents of Enlightenment), their associated factors are of equal strength. *Upekkhā* observed equally on these elements is called **Bojjhaṅg'upekkhā**.
4. In making efforts to attain the Path and the Fruition, energy extended for just the required amount, neither more nor less, is **Viriya'upekkhā**.
5. In making efforts for the attainment of concentration, Path and Fruition states, remaining detached from *saṅkhāra-dhammas* (conditioned things), such as *nivaraṇas* (hindrances), etc., that are to be eradicated by means of the first *jhāna*, etc. is called **Saṅkhār'upekkhā**. (This *Saṅkhār'upekkhā* arises when the Vipassanā wisdom matures. Before its maturity, one needs making efforts to eradicate *saṅkhāra-dhammas*. But once the maturity is acquired, it is no longer necessary to make special efforts to eradicate them. Only an attitude of indifference is needed for the purpose.)
6. Feeling experienced neutrally without delight or dejection when in taking in a sense object is **Vedan'upekkhā**.
7. Maintaining a mental equilibrium in developing insight into the nature of impermanence and other characteristics of the aggregates is called **Vipassan'upekkhā**. (A brief meaning of 'Vipassanā' may be given here in this connection. 'Vi' means 'special' and 'passana', 'seeing'. Hence 'Vipassanā' is 'Insight'. Perceiving that there are concrete things, such as men, women and so on, is an ordinary knowledge, common to all. It is an understanding based on perception but not a special understanding based on profound wisdom. Vipassanā Insight is: "In reality there are no such things as 'I' or 'he'. What is termed 'I' or 'he' is just an aggregate of matter and mind that is subject to destruction and dissolution. These aggregates are

continuously decaying without interruption. There is no sign of impairment only because every decaying object is being endlessly replaced by a newly conditioned thing.”)

8. *Upekkhā* observed without making efforts to maintain neutrality on these correlated *dhammas* that are well balanced in their respective functions is called **Tatramajjhattat'upekkhā**.
9. In developing *jhāna*, remaining indifferent to the sublime bliss that appears at the third *jhāna* is called **Jhān'upekkhā**. (It is the *upekkhā* that is acquired only at the final *jhāna*.)
10. Being purified of all opposing factors and requiring no effort in pacifying them is called **Parisuddh'upekkhā**. (It is the equanimity at the fourth *jhāna* stage which is free of all opposing factors.)

Of these ten, the six, namely, Chalang'upekkhā, Brahmavihār'upekkhā, Bojjhaṅg'upekkhā, Tatramajjhattat'upekkhā, Jhān'upekkhā and Parisuddh'upekkhā, are the same in their ultimate sense. They are all Tatramajjhattatā cetasikas.

Why are they then enumerated as six kinds? Because they differ from one another in their time of arising. A simile is given in the above-quoted Commentaries to explain this point. A man, in his childhood, is called *kumāra* (boy); when he becomes older, he is called *yuva* (youth); again, when he becomes older, he is called *vuddha* (adult), *senapati* (general), *raja* (king), etc. A man is thus called differently according to the stages in his life.

To make it clearer: Their distinctions are due to the differences in their functions which are as follows:

- (1) As has been stated before, to contemplate all six sense objects, good and bad, with equanimity is the Function of **Chalang'upekkhā**.
- (2) To contemplate happiness and suffering of beings with equanimity is the function of **Brahmavihār'upekkhā**.
- (3) In striving to achieve the *jhānas*, Path and Fruition states, to contemplate with equanimity the hindrances that are to be removed is the function of **Bojjhaṅg'upekkhā**.
- (4) To develop energy neither more nor less than what is required is the function of **Viriya'upekkhā**.
- (5) To contemplate with equanimity all correlated factors without encouraging or suppressing is the function of **Saṅkhār'upekkhā**.
- (6) To contemplate sensations with equanimity is the function of **Vedan'upekkhā**.
- (7) To contemplate with equanimity the three characteristics (*anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*) is the function of **Vipassan'upekkhā**.
- (8) To contemplate with equanimity the associated factors which are well balanced is the function of **Tatramajjhattat'upekkhā**.
- (9) To contemplate with equanimity even the most sublime bliss of *jhānas* is the function of **Jhān'upekkhā**.
- (10) To contemplate with equanimity which is purified of all opposing factors is the function of **Parisuddh'upekkhā**.

Thus, not only the differences of functions but those of sense objects should be noted. **Viriya'upekkhā** is *vīriya cetasika* and **Vedan'upekkhā** is *vedanā cetasika*: these two *upekkhās* are quite separate from other *cetasikas* in terms of *Dhamma*. **Saṅkhār'upekkhā** and **Viriya'upekkhā** are both *paññā cetasikas*. But they have two different functions as follows:

Contemplating without making special efforts on the three characteristics of conditioned things (*sankhāra*) is **Vipassan'upekkhā**; equanimity, when contemplating without fear of the conditioned things (*sankhāra*), is **Saṅkhar'upekkhā**.

Upekkhā as A Perfection and The Ten Upekkhās

THE ANUDĪPANĪ

The list of these ten *upekkhās* mentioned by the Commentators do not directly include *Pāramī Upekkhā*, *upekkhā* as a Perfection. One might, therefore, anxious to know: Is the exclusion due to the fact that *upekkhā* as a Perfection is not associated with any of the ten or is it an oversight on the part of the Commentators? It could not be said that the Commentators were so negligent as to leave it out from their list. It is to be taken that *Pāramī Upekkhā* is contained in **Brahmavihār'upekkhā**.

However, some are of the opinion that *Brahmavihār'upekkhā* and *Pāramī Upekkhā* are two different things. According to them, taking up one and the same attitude towards one's foe and friend alike is **Pāramī Upekkhā**; taking up one and the same attitude towards happiness and suffering of beings with the thought that these two conditions are the result of their own deeds is **Brahmavihār'upekkhā**.

That is to say, *Pāramī Upekkhā* contemplating happiness and suffering of beings is not *Pāramī Upekkhā* but *Brahmavihār'upekkhā*.

However, the nature of *Upekkhā Pāramī* is explained in the *Buddhavaṃsa* thus:

*Tath'eva tvam pi sukhadukkhe
tulābhūto sadā bhava
upekkhāpāramitāṃ gantvā
sambodhiṃ pāpuṇissati.*

In this verse, 'sukhadukkhe tulābhūto' means 'in happiness and suffering, be like the scales of a balance.'

Thus contemplation of happiness and suffering is taught as the basis of *Upekkhā Pāramī* also in the Mahā Lomahansa Cariya of the **Cariya Piṭaka**. It is said:

*Ye me dukkham upadahanti
ye ca denti sukhāṃ mama
sabbesaṃ samako homi.*

There, also on the basis of those two stages in life, it is taught, "Some people do harm while others give comfort. My attitude towards all of them is the same." "*Sukhadukkhe tulābhūto yasesu ca* — whether in happiness and suffering, or in fame and disgrace, I am like the scales of a balance."

In the **Atthasālini** and the **Pāṭha Jātaka Commentary** mentioned above, explanations are given also on the basis of those two mental states: happiness and suffering. "Though the village boys' ill-treatment (spitting of phlegm, etc.) should normally cause suffering and the villagers' honouring him with flowers, scents, etc. should normally cause happiness, the Bodhisatta viewed both with a balanced attitude of mind. The Bodhisatta's *upekkhā* that did not deviate from that balanced position was the supreme Perfection of Equanimity, **Paramattha Upekkhā Pāramī**."

Besides, when the **Visuddhi-magga** and the **Atthasālini** explain the characteristics, etc. of **Brahmavihār'upekkhā** it is said thus: *Sattesu majjhatakaralakkhana upekkhā* — "*upekkhā* has the characteristics of viewing things with equanimity". *Satta* (beings), here is used as a general term; it means those who offend and those who show kindness towards oneself, or those who are happy and those who are suffering. Therefore, taking up a neutral attitude towards one's foe and friend alike is clearly *Brahmavihār'upekkhā*. Therefore, it clearly means also that *Pāramī Upekkhā* is included in *Brahmavihār'upekkhā*.

Chapter 1. The Story of Sataketu Deva, The Future Buddha

Ref: The Uproar announcing The Appearance of Buddha

Five Kolāhalas

Kolāhala means a verbal agitation started by a few persons who say: "Thus will it happen", before the predicted event actually takes place. It arises among people who are

brought together and speak of the impending matter in same language and in same voice.

That is to say, *kolāhala* exactly is an uproar created with excitement by people at large, as an omen before the actual occurrence of something. It does not mean a nonsensical commotion that prevails in towns and villages, falsely predicting an impossible incident such as “Prince Setkya is about to come back!”²²

There are five *kolāhalas* in this world:

(1) Kappa-kolāhala

The *kolāhala* that warns people of the dissolution of the world is **kappa-kolāhala**. When the time for the destruction of the world is drawing near, the deities named Lokavyūha of the realm of sensual pleasures (*kāmāvacara*-devas), wearing red garments, letting their hair down, wiping the tears off their faces, roam in a distressed manner about roads and highways used by people, and cry aloud to human beings at all places, a hundred years ahead of the event:

“Friends, a hundred years from today, the world will dissolve! The great oceans will dry up! The great earth, Mount Meru and all will burn and disintegrate (if the world is to be destroyed by fire), will go under floods and disintegrate (if it is to be destroyed by water), will expose itself to violent storms and disintegrate (if it is to be destroyed by the winds)! There will be the destruction of the world extending from this great earth with Mount Meru and the oceans up to the abode of Brahmās! Friends, develop loving-kindness (*mettā*), develop compassion (*karuṇā*), develop altruistic joy (*muditā*), develop equanimity (*upekkhā*) which form the conduct of Brahmas! Attend and serve your parents respectfully! Be awake to good deeds! Do not be careless!”

The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as **kappa-kolāhala**.

(2) Cattkavatti-kolāhala

The *kolāhala* that arises in the world of human beings proclaiming that “a Universal Monarch will appear” who rules over the human realm including the four great island-continent and their satellite smaller islands, two thousand in all, is called ‘**Cakkavatti-kolāhala**’. The guardian deities of the world (*lokapāla*), these *kāmāvacara*-devas, knowing in advance of the appearance of a Universal Monarch, roam about public roads and highways and cry aloud to human beings at all places, a hundred years ahead of the event:

“Friends, a hundred years from today, a Universal Monarch will emerge in this world!”

The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as **Cakkavatti-kolāhala**.

(3) Buddha-kolāhala

The *kolāhala* predicting in the world of human beings that “a Buddha will arise” is called **Buddha-kolāhala**. The Brahmās of the Suddhāvāsa abode, knowing in advance of the advent of an Omniscient Buddha and wearing Brahmā clothing, ornaments and crowns, happily

22. The name is spelt “Tsakyamen” by Burney, British Resident at Ava (In-wa) during the reign of King Bagyidaw (1819-37). Tsakyamen or Prince Setkya, as the only son, was Heir-apparent. He was executed, according to the British, by Bagyidaw's brother, King Tharrawaddy, who usurped the throne in 1837, and the execution took place in April 1838. But tradition has it that Queen Mai Nu, Bagyidaw's wife and the Prince's step mother, was instrumental in the execution. No matter who did it, it was true that the people's feelings were “those of regret and indignation.” (History of the British Residency in Burma 1826-1840 by W.S.Desai, p.335).

The latter version is dramatized and popularized by theatrical troupes which thereby enhanced the people's sympathy towards the unfortunate Prince. Those, who did not believe that the prince actually was killed, entertained the hope that he would re-appear some day. But there has been no sign of the return of the Prince.

The word “*setkya*” being the derivative of the Sanakrit *cakra* (Pāli, *cakka*) should not be confused with Cakravartin (Pāli, *Cakkavattī*), ‘Universal Monarch’.

roam about public roads and highways and cry aloud to human beings at all places, a thousand years ahead of the event:

“Friends, a thousand years from today, an Omniscient Buddha will evidently come into being in this world!”

The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as **Buddha-kolāhala**.

(Herein, the statement meaning that the **Buddha-kolāhala** occurs a thousand years ahead of the arrival of a Buddha should be noted in accordance with the life span of the appearing Buddhas. It should not be noted as a statement made regardless of their life spans. Reason: The Bodhisattas, such as Prince Dīpaṅkarā, Prince Kondañña, Prince Maṅgala, etc., who had appeared in a period of long life span, after descending to the human world and enjoying kingly pleasures as human beings for ten thousand years or so, renounced the world, practised *dukkara-cariya* and became Buddhas. The *Buddha-kolahala* originates in the celestial world, and on account of that *kolāhala*, devas and Brahmās in the ten thousand world-systems approach the Bodhisatta Deva to make the request. Only after getting his consent, do Suddhāvāsa Brahmās roam the human abode and make the announcement. Thus, more than one thousand years, or even more than five thousand years, maybe nine or ten thousand years, after the prevalence of *Buddha-kolāhala*, the long-lived Buddhas appeared. Therefore, it should not be noted that the aforesaid statement that “*Buddha-kolāhala* lasts for a thousand years” is made with regard to all Buddhas; the statement should be taken to have been made only with regard to a short-lived Buddha such as Buddha Gotama.)

(4) Maṅgala-kolāhala

Undecided as to the exact meaning of Maṅgala (auspiciousness), people gather and define the word each in his own way, saying: “This is called Maṅgala!”, “This is called Maṅgala!”, which gives rise to a tumult voicing: “They say it is Maṅgala.” Such a tumultuous voice is called Maṅgala-kolāhala. Suddhāvāsa Brahmās knowing in advance that the Buddha will give a discourse on Maṅgala and being aware of the thought of people who yearn for the truth about auspiciousness, roam about public roads and highways and cry aloud to human beings at all places, twelve years before the Buddha’s delivery of the Discourse:

“Friends, twelve years from today, the Buddha will teach the Doctrine of Maṅgala!”

The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as **Maṅgala-kolāhala**.

(5) Moneyya-kolāhala

The *kolāhala* concerning the ascetic practice of *moneyya* is called **Moneyya-kolāhala** (An elaboration on the *Moneyya* Practice is made in the section on Nālaka Thera as part of the History of Elders in the Sangha Jewel.) Suddhāvāsa Brahmās, knowing in advance that a *bhikkhu* in the human world will approach the Buddha to ask about *moneyya* asceticism, similarly roam about public roads and highways and cry aloud to human beings at all places, seven years before the Buddha’s Teaching:

“Friends, seven years from today, a *bhikkhu* will approach the Buddha and ask *Moneyya Dhamma!*”

The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as **Moneyya-kolāhala**.

These are the five *kolāhalas*. Explanations of these five are given in the Aṭṭhakathās of the Buddhavaṃsa, Jātaka, Kosala Saṃyutta, Khuddaka-Pāṭha, Sutta-Nipāta and also in the Jinālaṅkāra.

Ref: The Request made to The Bodhisatta Deva

Five predicting Signs (*pubba-nimittas*) signalling The Approaching Death of Devas.

The Five Pubba-nimittas are:

- (1) Withering of celestial flowers
- (2) Dirtiness of celestial costumes and ornaments
- (3) Sweating from armpits
- (4) Deterioration of physical beauty
- (5) Displeasure in living in celestial residences

(1) **Withering of celestial flowers:** That is to say drying of divine blossoms that have appeared as decorations since the day the beings are reborn as deities. These flowers, that appear on their bodies simultaneously with their birth as devas, never wither during their life span but remain fresh throughout. The flowers begin to wither only when there are seven days left for them to live, according to human reckoning. (The flowers belonging to the Bodhisatta Deva Setaketu did not go dry even once throughout the length of his life of devas living in Tusitā abode, i.e., over the period of fifty-seven crores and six million years of terrestrial calculations. They started withering seven days of the humans before his passing away.)

(2) **Dirtiness of celestial costumes and ornaments:** As in the previous case, celestial costumes and ornaments never become dirty normally; only when it is seven days before the devas' death do they show terrible dirtiness.

(3) **Sweating from armpits:** In the celestial realm, unlike in the human abode, there is absolutely no such change of weather condition as intense heat or intense cold. Only seven days prior to death, beads of sweat come out and flow down from various parts of their bodies (especially from the armpits).

(4) **Deterioration of physical beauty:** Such signs of old age as missing teeth, greying hair, wrinkled skin and the like that also betray decaying states of physical beauty never happen to them. Female deities always remain to be sixteen-year old and male deities twenty-year old. Though they are perpetually tender and youthful with fresh, brilliant, beautifying colours, there sets in deterioration of the bodies, that have become weary and wretched as the time for their passing away is coming nearer.

(5) **Displeasure in living in celestial residences:** They never know unhappiness while living in celestial mansions throughout their divine lives. It is only when they are about to fall from their divine state that they lose delight and become displeased with life in divine residences.

Five Pubba-nimittas do not occur to Every Deity

Though the five **pubba-nimittas** occur to dying deities as has been said above, it should not be understood that they do so to each and every divine being. Just as in the human world such omens as the falling of a meteor, the quake of the earth, the eclipse of the moon or of the sun, and the like manifest with regard to great and powerful kings, ministers, etc. even so in the celestial world these *pubba-nimittas* happen only with reference to highly glorious male and female deities. They never occur to those deities of insignificant power.

As good or bad things predicted by the omens that occur in the human abode are understood only by learned interpreters, so the events, whether good or bad, forecast by those omens occurring in the celestial realm are comprehended by wise devas, not by unwise ones.

When the omens occur to deities of inconsiderable merit, they become greatly frightened, wondering: "Who knows where shall I be reborn?" Those of considerable merit do not feel so at all, knowing that "We shall enjoy further bliss in higher divine existences because of the merit that accrue from our act of generosity, from our observance of morality and from our practice of meditation." (Exposition of the Mahāpadāna-Sutta, **Sutta-Mahāvagga Aṭṭhakathā**.)

Ref: The Conception of The Bodhisatta

It may be questioned as to why did Mother Queen Maya conceive the Bodhisatta only in the third period of the second stage of life. The answer is: The sensual desire in an existing being in the first stage is usually strong. Therefore, women who become pregnant at that stage are unable to look after their pregnancy. Many are those who cannot take care of it. Such an inability causes several forms of injury to the pregnancy.

The middle stage, which is the second of the equally divided three periods, may be subdivided into three equal portions. When a woman reaches the third portion, her womb is clean and pure. A baby conceived in such a clean and pure womb is healthy, free from diseases.

The mother of a Bodhisatta in his last existence enjoys pleasure at her first stage, and it is customary that she dies after giving birth to him during the length of the third portion of the middle stage. (It is also a phenomenal law that she dies seven days after the birth of the Bodhisatta. She dies not because she is in labour. As a matter of fact, the (Bodhisatta) deva descends only when he has seen that his would-be mother has ten months and seven days more to live, after she begins to conceive, as has been mentioned in the account of the Bodhisatta Deva's five great investigations. Taking this into consideration, it is clear that her death is not caused by childbirth; it should undoubtedly be held that the mother dies only because her time is up.) (**Dīgha Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā**, etc.)

Ref: Queen Mahā-Māyā's Journey from Kapilavatthu to Devadaha²³

In the story of Queen Mahā-Māyā's visit from Kapilavatthu to Devadaha, it is written in the **Jināttha Pakāsanī** as follows:

“having cleaned and levelled the road of five *yojanas* long between Devadaha and Kapilavatthu, like a hardened plain ground. . .”

In the **Tathāgata-Udāna Dīpanī** however, the following is mentioned:

“having had the journey of thirty *yojanas* from Kapilavatthu to Devadaha, repaired by digging, enlarging and filling the potholes so as to make it agreeable...”

The two writings are different.

In this Chronicle of Buddhas, however, we follow the **Aṭṭhakathās** of the **Buddhavaṃsa** and **Jātaka** where the distance between the two kingdoms, Kapilavatthu and Devadaha, is not given; these Commentaries simply describe the mending and levelling of the road.

The vehicle taken by Queen Mahā-Māyā is said in this work to be a golden palanquin in accordance with the same Commentaries. (It should not be wondered how the palanquin was carried by a thousand men, because, as in the case of the statement that “the Bodhisatta was suckled by two hundred and forty wet-nurses”, it is possible that they carried it in turn, or, it was probable that the palanquin was pulled by them simultaneously with long ropes of cloth.)

In the first volume of the **Tathāgata Udāna Dīpanī**, etc., it is unusually and elaborately written as follows:

“The whole journey of thirty *yojanas* was mended, improved and decorated extensively and magnificently. The Queen rode the stately chariot drawn by eight horses of white lotus colour and of Valīhaka Sindhī breed. King Suddhodāna was together with her, for he was accompanying her up to the distance on half a *yojana*, there, he saw her off and turned back after she had given him respect and he had said words of encouragement. The white horses merrily drew the chariot thinking “this service of ours by taking Queen Mahā Māyā with the Bodhisatta in her womb will bring us merit leading to Nibbāna.”

The **Aṭṭhakathās** of the **Buddhavaṃsa** and **Jātaka** as well as the **Jināṅkāra Tīkā** do not make such an account. All they tell us is that the journey was made in a golden palanquin;

23. This subtitle too is not given in the original work. It is the translators'.

hence this treatise of the Chronicle is in accordance with the **Aṭṭhakathās** and **Tikas**.

The Sala Grove of Lumbinī

With reference to the Sala Grove of Lumbinī, two version: one from the **Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā** and the other from the **Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā**, have been reproduced in this work. The clause reading in the second passage, “hovering around and enjoying the nectar themselves and carrying it for others as well” in brackets, is in agreement with the Ngakhon Sayadaw's writing. It seems that the Commentary in the Sayadaw's possession contains "*anubhuttasañjarāhi*". In the Commentaries, whether older or the Chaṭṭha-Saṅgāyanā edition, there is "*anubhuttapañjarāhi*". Dictionaries give “cage” as the meaning of *pañjara* of the Commentaries. Hence “cage” is not agreeable.

Again, “*parabhata-madhukara-vadhūhi*” is translated “with female bees carrying (the nectar) for others as well.” Though “*parabhata*” has “cuckoo” as its meaning in the **Abhidhamma**, that meaning does not fit in here; it finds no place in this case. Therefore, the Ngakhon Sayadaw has appropriately said “carrying for others” in his translation.

When a rational interpretation is thought of, one recalls the distribution of work among bees: (1) there are (female) bees bringing all available kinds of nectar from the four directions, (2) female bees that are waiting at the hive and are able to turn the nectar of different tastes into honey of sweet taste.

Here in this **Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā**, it seems that the female (worker) bees are meant. Therefore, “*parabhata-madhukara-vadhūhi*” should be translated “Liquefying female bees able to make honey out of different kinds of nectar brought by other (nectar-carrying) bees”: And it will be acceptable only if its paraphrase be given as follows:

“Liquefying female bees that can make honey of sweet taste from various types of nectar brought by nectar-bearing bees after flying around and around over trees big and small.”

Ref: The Birth of The Bodhisatta²⁴

With reference to the birth of the Bodhisatta, the **Tathāgata Udāna Dīpanī** and other Myanmar treatises on **Buddhavaṃsa** say to the effect that “When the time for Queen Mahā-Māyā's delivery of the son was drawing very close, did her younger sister, Pajāpati Gotamī, extended help to her by supporting her on the left side? She gave birth by being aided by her attendants all around.” In the **Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā**, **Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā** and the **Jinalankāra Tika**, however, it is said that when the time for child-birth was nearer as she felt the force in the womb as the impetus for her delivery, those who were with her set up screens and stayed away from her. While they were thus staying aloof, the Queen gave birth to the Bodhisatta. This work follows the account given in the said Commentaries.

The statement that the two streams of water, warm and cold, enabled (the mother and the child) to adjust the temperature of body immediately after the birth is made according to the exposition in the **Mahāpadāna Sutta**, **Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā** and **Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā**.

What is particularly said in the **Sutta Mahāvagga Aṭṭhakathā** is this: “Of the two water streams, the cold one falls into the gold jar and the warm into the silver. These two streams, that had fallen from the sky, are mentioned to say that they were meant for the son and the mother, who were not dirtied by any impurity on earth, to drink and to play with exclusively of others. Apart from the warm and cold water from the sky, there was the water fetched by gold and silver pots, the water from *hamsa* lakes, etc. Water for them was indeed unlimited, it was plentiful. This should particularly be noted.

Ref: The Story of Kāladevila The Hermit

(The name of this hermit is given as Devala in the Sinhalese version. In the Myanmar version it is shown as Devila). The account of Devila will be reproduced from the **Sutta Nipāta Aṭṭhakathā**, Volume II:

24. This subtitle is not given in the original work. It is the translators'.

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This Devila the Hermit was the *purohita* (foremost adviser) of King Sīhahanu, King of Kapilavatthu and father of King Suddhodāna. Because of his dark complexion, the brahmin hermit was also called Asita. He was the King's instructor and counsellor who served King Sīhahanu by giving him advice so as to enable him to carry all undertakings through, be they political, administrative or otherwise that confronted him.

During the reign of King Sīhahanu, he was tutor and guardian to Prince Suddhodāna who was simply, a crown prince and unconsecrated as yet. Devila taught him various royal manners and palace customs and educated him in statecraft and trained him in all skills.

When Prince Suddhodāna ascended the throne and was consecrated after King Sīhahanu, it was also the former royal teacher who again became advisor to King Suddhodāna.

After his ascension to the throne and his consecration, King Suddhodāna did not show profound respect to his teacher as he had done when he was a young prince. During court meetings, he merely raised his joined hands in adoration, according to the tradition of consecrated Sakyan kings.

As he no longer received the King's special reverence as before, his birth as a brahmin and his pride as a teacher generated displeasure and dissatisfaction. Unhappy and disgusted with his obligations to attend the palace, he sought the King's permission to become an ascetic.

Knowing his teacher's firm decision, Suddhodāna requested: "You may become an ascetic. But after becoming an ascetic, please do not go far away. Kindly stay ever in my garden for my convenience in seeing you." After giving his consent, saying: "Very well, let it be so," and having made himself an ascetic and receiving the King's favourable treatment, he stayed in the royal garden. Repeatedly engaging himself in meditation on *kaṣiṇa* device for mental concentration, he gained the five mundane psychic powers. After his acquisition of these powers, he usually had his meal each day at King Suddhodāna's palace, and visited the Himalaya, Catu-Mahārājā abode, Tāvātimsa abode, and other places, where he spent his daytime.

All this is about Kāladevila the Hermit otherwise named Asita.

Ref: A Brief History of The Royal Lineage of The Bodhisatta

In connection with the Bodhisatta's investigation into his family (*kula olokana*), a history of Sakyan kings should be noted in brief as follows. Such a note means recognition of the attribute of the Bodhisatta's high birth (*jātimahatta-guṇa*).

In the first intermediate (*antara*) period of incalculably long aeon of evolution (*vivaṭṭatthāyī asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*), the first king of the people, in the beginning of the world, was our Bodhisatta. He was originally named Manu.

The Bodhisatta Manu was more handsome, more pleasant to look at, more respectable, glorious and virtuous than other inhabitants of the world of the earliest age.

In that primeval age, people were of very pure morality at first. Later on, there appeared people who committed crimes, such as theft, etc. In order to be able to live free from these dangers and in peace, other earliest men of the world discussed among themselves and decided unanimously to elect someone who would govern them justly.

They also agreed that Bodhisatta Manu was the best to govern, for he was endowed with all the required qualifications. Then they approached him and made a request that he be their righteous ruler.

As Manu fulfilled his administrative duties, the people who were under his administration honoured him by paying their taxes, a kind of fee for his ruling performance, which amounted to one tenth of their crops.

The Acquisition of Three Epithets

The people unanimously recognized the Bodhisatta, showing no objection at all, as one who would govern them with righteousness, for which honour in the form of taxes was due. Therefore, he acquired the epithet **Mahāsammata**.

He saw to it that there were no disputes, quarrels, etc. over ownership of farmlands. (If there be any) the noble Manu had the power to decide and pass his judgement. This earned him the epithet **Khattiya**.

As he endeared himself to the people by observing upright kingly duties towards them, he won the third: **Rājā**.

In this *bhadda-kappa*, it was Bodhisatta Manu who was the first among monarchs to gain these three titles: *Mahāsammata*, *Khattiya* and *Rājā*.

As the sun possesses a thousand rays and gives beings light, sight and forms, so Bodhisatta Manu, like the eye of these primeval people and endowed with of many noble attributes, came out shiningly, as if he were their second sun, and was also designated by lineage *Ādiccavaṃsa* (Descendant of the Sun).

(Herein, with reference to the *Mahāsammata* of the primeval time, and also with reference to the present and fourth *antara-kappa* of the sixty-four divisions of *Vivattathāyī* state of *asaṅkheyya* aeons, forming one-fourth of this *bhadda-kappa*, learned authors write differently. Thus, in “The Glass Palace Chronicle” compiled by well-versed monks and ministers who met and discussed for three years in the “Glass Palace” during the reign of King Bagyidaw²⁵, the fourth founder of the city of Ratanapura, and in the **Kappa Vinicchaya Pāṭha Nissaya**, written in settlement of controversies, by the Mohtā Thathanabaing Sayadaw, entitled “Sujātābhisirīdhajadhipatipavara Mahādhamma-Rajādhirājaguru”, at the request of King Mindon²⁶, the Convenor of the Fifth Council, it has been decided, giving ample strong evidence from the Texts, Commentaries and Sub-Commentaries, that there was only one Bodhisatta Mahāsammata and that the present *Antara-kappa* is the fourth one.

(Particularly in the **Kappavinicchaya** there are special sections (*visesa kaṇḍa*) which systematically contain questions and answers (*codanā* and *sodanā*) giving decisions on such topics of controversies as the eleven *antara-kappas*, eleven *Mahāsammatas*, the twelfth *anttara-kappa*, the nineteenth *anttara-kappa*, and the rest with discussions so elaborate and with evidence so strong that doubtful persons, both monks and laymen, are likely to become free of doubts.

(In enumerating the kings in succession (*rājakkama*) such as Mahāsammata, etc. some commentaries and treatises are slightly different: these are the Commentary on the Ambaṭṭha Sutta of the **Sutta Silakkhandha Vagga** and its new **Tika**, the Commentary on them Cetīya Jātaka of the **Aṭṭhaka Nipāta** the Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā, the **Mahāvamsa**, **Dīpavamsa**, and **Rājavamsas**. What is shown below is based chiefly on the **Mahāvamsa** and the **Mahāsutakārī Maghadeva Lankā**.

- (1) First, Manu the Mahāsammata,
- (2) his son King Roca,
- (3) his son King Vara-roca,
- (4) his son King Kaḷyāna,
- (5) his son King Vara-Kaḷyāna,
- (6) his son King Uposatha,
- (7) his son King Mandhātu (Bodhisatta),
- (8) his son King Vara,
- (9) his son King Upavara,
- (10) his son King Cetīya,
- (11) his son King Mucala,

25. He reigned from 1819 to 1839.

26. Bagyidaw's younger nephew and Tharrawaddy's younger son, the second last king of the Konbaung Dynasty, his reigning years being 1853-78.

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- (12) his son King Mahāmucala,
- (13) his son King Mucalinda,
- (14) his son King Sāgara,
- (15) his son King Sāgara-deva,
- (16) his son King Bharata,
- (17) his son King Aṅgira,
- (18) his son King Ruci,
- (19) his son King Suruci (also called Mahāruci),
- (20) his son King Patāpa,
- (21) his son King Mahāpatāpa,
- (22) his son King Panāda,
- (23) his son King Mahāpanāda,
- (24) his son King Sudassana,
- (25) his son King Mahāsudassana,
- (26) his son King Neru,
- (27) his son King Mahā Neru, and
- (28) his son King Accima

- (a) These twenty-eight kings were of long lives of *asankhyeyya* years. The twenty-seven kings after Mahāsammata were his descendants. Some of these twenty-eight kings reigned in Kusavatī City, others in Rājagaha and still others in Mithilā.
- (b) King Accima, son of the last of the twenty-eight kings, founded Kusavati City again and reigned there; his descendants were exactly one hundred. (The **Dīpavaṃsa** says that they lived in Kapilavatthu.)

[Then the author gives an extract from the **Mahā Sutakārī Māgha-Deva Laṅkā** enumerating the kings listed in (a) and (b) and this makes one hundred and twenty-eight kings.]

- (c) Of the hundred kings descended from King Accima, the last was named King Arindama. His son founded the city of Ayujjhapura and reigned. He and his descendants in that city numbered fifty-six.
- (d) The last of these fifty-six kings was named Duppasaha. His son founded Bārāṇasī and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were sixty.
- (e) The last of these sixty kings was named Ajita. His son founded Kambala. He and his descendants in that city were eighty-four thousand.
- (f) The last of these eighty-four thousand kings was named Brahmadata. His son founded Hatthipura and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were thirty-six. [Here comes another extract from the same Laṅkā that enumerates the kings in (c), (d), (e), and (f) amounting to 84,152.]
- (g) The last of these thirty-six kings was named Kambalavaṃsa. He founded Ekacakkhu and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were thirty-two.
- (h) The last of these thirty-two kings was named Purindeva (Surindeva or Munindeva in other versions). His son founded Vajiramutti and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were twenty-eight.
- (i) The last of these twenty-eight kings was named Sādhina. His son founded Mathura and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were twenty-two.
- (j) The last of these twenty-two kings was named Dhammagutta. His son founded Ariṭṭhapura and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were eighteen.
- (k) The last of these eighteen kings was named Sippi. His son founded Indapattha-nagara

and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were twenty-two.

[Another extract comes here from the same *Laṅkā* combining the paragraphs (g) to (k) and making one hundred and seventeen kings in all.]

- (l) The last of these one hundred and seventeen kings was named Brahma Deva. His son also reigned in Ekacakkhu. He and his descendants in that city were fifteen.
- (m) The last of these fifteen kings was named Baladatta. His son founded Kosambī and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were fourteen.
- (n) The last of these fourteen kings was named Hatthi-Deva. His son founded Kannagocchi and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were nine.
- (o) The last of these nine kings was named Nara-Deva. His son founded Rocana and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were seven.
- (p) The last of these seven kings was named Mahinda. His son founded Campā and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were twelve.

[Another extract is taken from the *Laṅkā* combining the above five paragraphs and giving the total number of kings which is fifty-seven.]

- (q) The last of these fifty-seven kings mentioned in the above five paragraphs was named Nāga-deva. His son founded Mithilā and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were twenty-five.
- (r) The last of these twenty-five kings was named Samuddadatta. His son reigned back in Rājagaha. He and his descendants in that city were twenty-five.
- (s) The last of these twenty-five kings was named Tidhaṅkara. His son founded Takkasila and reigned; he and his descendants in that city were twelve.
- (t) The last of these twelve kings was named Tālissara. His son founded Kusināra and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were also twelve.
- (u) The last of these twelve kings was named Purinda. His son founded Tāmalitthiya and reigned. He and his descendants in that city were twelve.

[Another extract from the same *Laṅkā* counting up the kings in the above five paragraphs and gives eighty-three as the total number of kings thereof.]

- (v) Of these eighty-three kings in the above five paragraphs, the last was named Sāgara-Deva. His son was Māgha-Deva (Magghadeva). He and his descendants reigned in Mithilā until their number became eighty-four thousand.
- (w) The last of these eighty-four thousand kings was named Nimi, the Bodhisatta. His son was named Kaḷārajanaka, whose son was named Samaṅkara, whose son was named Asoca (or Asoka). Their descendants totalling 84,003 again founded Bārāṇasī and reigned there.
- (x) The last of these 84,003 kings was named Sīhappati.

- (1) King Sīhappati's son was King Vijitasena,
- (2) Vijitasena's son was King Dhammasena,
- (3) Dhammasena's son was King Nāgasena,
- (4) Nāgasena's son was King Samiddha,
- (5) Samiddha's son was King Disampati,
- (6) Disampati's son was King Reṇu,
- (7) Reṇu's son was King Kusa,
- (8) Kusa's son was King Mahākusa,
- (9) Mahākusa's son was King Navaraṭṭha,
- (10) Navaraṭṭha's son was King Dasaraṭṭha,
- (11) Dasaraṭṭha's son was King Rāma,

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- (12) Rāma's son was King Vilāraṭṭha,
- (13) Vilāraṭṭha's son was King Cittaraṃsi,
- (14) Cittaraṃsi's son was King Ambaraṃsi,
- (15) Ambaraṃsi's son was King Sujātā, and
- (16) Sujātā's son was King Okkāka.

These sixteen kings continued to reign in Bārāṇasī.

There were 252,556 descendants from Mahāsammata, the Bodhisatta of the earliest aeon, down to King Okkāka.

[The author here gives the final extract from the **Māgha-Deva Laṅkā**, which sums up the 84,003 kings contained in (w), the sixteen kings contained in (x) and those counted elsewhere, and arrives at the total number of 252,556 beginning with the Mahāsammata and ending with King Okkāka].

(Herein, since the exposition of the Ambaṭṭha Sutta in the **Sīlakkandha Atthakathā** and that of the Muni Sutta in the **Sutta Nīpāta Atthakathā** state that “after the eighty-four thousand kings belonging to the lineage of Māgha-Deva, there occurred three successive rulers, all bearing the name Okkāka” and that “the third Okkāka had five queens, each with five hundred lady attendants”, it should be taken that the Sakyan princes were the descendants of Okkāka III, and that the last of the 252,556 kings was this very person, Okkāka III.)

The Story of King Okkāka

The wives of King Okkāka, the last of the 252,556 kings, were five: Hatthā, Cittā, Jantu, Jālinī, and Visākhā. Each of them had five hundred ladies-in-waiting.

(The King was called Okkāka because when he spoke there emanated from his mouth the light as if from a shooting star, so explains the exposition of the Ambaṭṭha Sutta. It is note-worthy that in Myanmar history as well, such remarkable men as King Kyansittha, King Manūhā (of Thaton) emitted from their mouths the brilliant light of insignia or of a shooting star or some other particular rays of light.

(It should not be taken for certain that King Okkāka's city was Bārāṇasī. As the commentary on the Ambaṭṭha Sutta again says that his daughter Princess Piyā and King Rāma of Bārāṇasī joined in marriage, Okkāka's (the third Okkāka's) could be any city but Bārāṇasī).

Of the five queens, the eldest one, Hatthā, gave birth to five sons namely, Ukkāmukha, Karakaṇḍu, Hatthinika, Sinisūra and five daughters, namely, Piyā, Suppiyā, Ānanda, Vijitā, Vijitasenā.

When Queen Hatthā died after giving birth to her children, King Okkāka III made a young, pleasant princess of great beauty his chief queen: a son named Jantu was born of her. On the fifth day after his birth, he was dressed in pretty ornaments and was shown to the King. The King was so delighted that he granted a boon to the queen, saying: “Take anything you like!”

After discussing with her relatives, the Queen asked that the little son Jantu be made king. The King refused to comply and scolded her: “You wicked one, down with you! You just want harm to my sons!” On every favourable occasion the Queen tried to please the King and said: “Your Majesty, a monarch should not turn what he has said (a promise) into a lie. You should keep your word.” So saying she repeatedly demanded that kingship be bestowed upon her son. The King was then compelled to summon his older sons, Ukkāmukha and others and said with great sorrow:

“Dear sons, I happened to have given Jantu's mother a boon on seeing your little brother. Now Jantu's mother has a burning desire to have her son made heir to the throne. Leaving aside my state elephant, state horse, and state chariot, take as many elephants, horses and chariots as you want and go and stay away from this city until I die. Come back after my death and take over the kingdom.”

After saying thus, the King sent his sons away together with eight ministers.

Ukkāmukha and other elder brothers felt painful and wept bitterly. They also did obeisance to their royal father and said: “Dear father, please forgive our faults if any.” They also asked court ladies for forgiveness. The five sisters requested the King, saying: “Dear father, let us go along with our brothers,” and together they went out of the city. They were taken along the journey by their brothers who, being accompanied by the eight ministers and troops of fourfold army²⁷ departed from the city. A large number of men followed the princes, thinking: “These senior royal sons will definitely come back and reign on the death of their father. We shall start attending upon them even now.”

The size of the following grew from one *yojana* on the first day to two *yojanas* on the second day, and three *yojanas* on the third. This caused them to discuss among themselves: “The strength of our troops is so great. If we only wish to fight and occupy the countries around here with such power, no kings or states would dare to put up resistance. But what is the use of taking other kingdoms by force and through violence. There is indeed no profit at all! This Jambudīpa is huge and immense. We shall find a new city in a free forest region.” After agreeing thus, they all headed for the Himalaya and searched for a site to build a city.

The Founding of Kapilavatthu

At that time, our future Buddha was a wealthy brahmin, born of a family which possessed highly substantial riches and named Kapila. Renouncing his wealth, he went forth as an ascetic and was staying in a leaf-hut that he built near a lake of clear waters, in a teak forest by the side of a Himalayan mountain.

Learned in the science of earth (the study of signs of the soil), called Bhāmijāla, Kapila the Hermit and future Buddha knew the advantages and disadvantages that were in store throughout the region of eighty cubits underground and eighty cubits aboveground. Around the site on which Kapila's leaf-hut was built, the grass, trees and bushes grew, turning in the right direction, with their trunk-like sprouts stemmed from them facing to the east. Besides, when beasts of prey, such as lions and tigers, gave chase to deer and pigs which were their food, or when snakes and cats gave chase to frogs and rats respectively and reached that spot, they could not pursue and catch, instead they all turned back running away, for they were threatened and shown hostility by their own respective preys. Seeing all this, Kapila came to note that “This is the best of all sites where enemies are conquered.”

When the princes led by Ukkāmukha was searching for a suitable site for their proposed city, they came to the hermit's leaf-hut. Asked by the hermit about their purpose, they told him of their plan. Knowing of the matter, Kapila the Hermit and future Buddha took pity on them and said:

“Princes, the city founded on this site of my hermitage would be the best of all cities throughout Jambudīpa. Among men born in this city, one will emerge able enough to overwhelm all others, numbering even hundreds or thousands. Therefore, construct a new city on this land of my hermitage. Build a palace on this spot of my residence. If I were to tell you of its pre-eminence, even a low-born son deriving support from this land will become somebody praised for his power of a Universal Monarch.”

When the princes asked: “Venerable Hermit, is not this place still used and occupied by you?” Kapila replied: “Do not bother yourselves, thinking that this place is still in use by me. Build a hermitage for me somewhere on an outlying spot, and set up a city with your residences here as I have pointed out to you. And name the city Kapilavatthu.”

As has been directed by Kapila the Hermit, the four princes headed by Ukkāmukha, and their ministers and troops established a city together with royal palaces and mansions; they also named the city Kapilavatthu and settled there.

27. An army consisting of four divisions: elephants. chariots. horses and foot soldiers.

The Beginning of The Sakyas

While they were thus settling at Kapilavatthu, the princes grew old enough to get married. Then the ministers deliberated among themselves saying: “Sirs, these princes have come of age. If they were near their father King Okkāka III, he would have made these princes and princesses marry. Now the responsibility has come upon us.” After their deliberations they consulted the princes.

The princes said: “O ministers, there are no princesses here who are equal to us by birth. Nor are there princes of matching class for our sisters. If those of unequal birth marry one another, their offsprings will become impure either from their paternal side or from their maternal side. This will thus bring them a destructive mixture of castes (*jāṭisambheda*). Accordingly, let us put the eldest sister of us, nine children, in the place of our mother and let the remaining ones of us, four brothers and four sisters, join in marriage so as to avoid such corruption of lineage.” Thus agreeing among themselves they selected their eldest sister Princess Piyā to be their mother and married their sisters, making four pairs of husband and wife lest their birth should get impure.

In course of time, each of the four couples of Okkāka’s sons and daughters thrived with issue. When the King heard of the founding of Kapilavatthu by his children, led by Prince Ukkamukha, of their marriages not with members of a different family but among themselves and of the prosperity of these brother-and-sister couples born of same parents, the King was so delighted that he spoke out in praise of his children in the midst of his ministers and others:

“*Sakyā vata bho kumārā*”

Able indeed are my sons and daughters, O men!

“*Paramā sakyā vata bho kumārā*”

Lofty and able indeed are my sons and daughters.

As the king used the expression ‘*sakyā vata* — able indeed’, in praising them, it was after this very expression *sakyā* meaning ‘able’ that the name *Sakyā*, or *Sākiya* was given to the descendants of the brothers and sisters led by Ukkamukha and it has come to be known well.

The Founding of Koliya

At one time thereafter, the eldest sister, who was most senior to the brother and sister householders, was afflicted with leprosy. There appeared on her body some boils like the flowers of *sālimuggala* or *parijāta*.

Thereupon the princely brothers considered and discussed among themselves thus: “If we were to stay and eat with our sister, who has been stricken with such a horrible skin disease, we would be infected too.” One day, they pretended to go for amusement in the garden taking their eldest sister Piyā in a chariot. When they came to a forest glade, they had a square ditch dug huge enough to move therein indifferent postures of lying, sitting, standing and walking. In the underground chamber of the ditch, they stored all kinds of food and drink and placed their sister in it. They also covered the square ditch with wooden planks to protect her from dangers and made grooves along the edges of the planks which served as a roof covered with earth, before they went home to Kapilavatthu.

At about the same time, the King of Bārāṇasī, named Rāma, was suffering from leprosy too and his female attendants and other courtiers and retinue became disgusted and horrified. He was, therefore, alarmed and entered a forest after handing over his kingdom to his eldest son. He made a shelter of leaves for himself. Because of his eating fruit and roots, his skin disease soon vanished and he assumed golden complexion. While roaming from place to place, he came across a tree with a gigantic trunk with a hollow in it. He created a large room, sixteen cubits in size, in that tree. He had the main door for entrance, windows and a ladder fixed. It was like a small palace chamber where he had already lived.

At night, Rāma made a fire in a huge pan and noted the cries of deer, boars and the like by their direction before he slept. In the morning, he went in that direction to find pieces of the flesh of deer, boars, etc. They were leftovers from the food of lions, leopards, tigers and so on.

He simply collected and cooked them for his food and lived in this manner.

One day, a tiger, getting the odour of the princess's body that came out from her underground dwelling, which was not far from Rāma's place, scratched the wooden roof and tried to burst open it. The princess was so frightened that she screamed aloud. It was nearing daybreak and Rāma was then sitting after making a fire in the pan. On hearing the scream and knowing that "this indeed is a women's", he rushed to the ditch as the day broke and asked: "Who is it that is living in this underground dwelling?" and when he heard the reply: "I am a woman," he asked further: "What is your lineage?" "Sir, I am a daughter of King Okkāka." "Come out," said the King. "Sir, I am not able to come out." "Why?" "Sir, I have leprosy." The King then asked all about the matter and knowing that the princess did not come out because she was proud of her aristocratic birth, the King let her know of his being a potentate himself by saying: "I too belong to the ruling class." He took out the princess from the underground chamber by means of a ladder and brought her to his place. He gave her the same medicinal drugs that he had taken himself. The princess took them and her affliction abated. She became golden in complexion. By mutual consent, the two lived together as husband and wife.

In due course the King's consort, Piyā, gave birth sixteen times to twin sons and thus had thirty-two boys in all. When they grew up, their father King Rāma sent them away for princely education.

One day, a hunter from the King's native Bārāṇasī, while coming to that forest near the Himalaya in search of treasures, encountered Rāma. Recognizing him, the hunter said: "Lord, I know you very well." The King, therefore, enquired all about his kingdom and while he was doing so, the thirty-two sons returned. Seeing the boys, the hunter asked: "Great King, who are these boys?" "They are my sons," said the King. After asking a further question, he came to know of their maternal relatives and thought: "I have now got some information to give the ruler of Bārāṇasī as my gift." So thinking, he returned to the city and told the whole story.

The present King of Bārāṇasī, who was Rāma's own son, was delighted and in order to bring back his father, visited him, accompanied by his fourfold army. He saluted his father very respectfully and made a request: "Dear father, kindly accept kingship of Bārāṇasī." "Dear son," replied Rāma, "I have no more desire to become King of Bārāṇasī. I will not return to the city. Instead, remove this tree and build residences and a new city for me here, at this very place of the great *kola* tree." At his command, his son, King of Bārāṇasī founded the new city.

As the new city was founded after removing the *kola* tree on his father's site, it was named *Koliya*. Since it was founded on the route frequented by tigers, it was also called *Vyagghapajja*. Having thus given the city both names, the son, King of Bārāṇasī, paid respect to his father, King Rāma and returned home.

As King Rāma and his consort Piyā were residing in the new city of Koliya, Piyā one day told his sons who had now attained manhood:

"Dear sons, your uncles, Sakyan princes, were reigning in the city of Kapilavatthu.

The daughters of your uncles dressed themselves and had their hair-dos in this manner; their gait and deportment is like this. When they approach bathing places to bathe, catch hold of the princess you like and bring them over here."

In accordance with the mother's instructions, the Princes went to the bathing places of the daughters of their uncles, Sakyan princes, at Kapilavatthu and after observing them and choosing from among them, each brought a princess of his liking, after identifying himself and taking her at the moment she let her hair to dry.

On hearing the matter, the Sakyan princes said among themselves: "Dear folks, let it be so. These Koliya Princes are scions of our elder sister, thus they are our nephews, our

close relatives.” So saying thus they did not blame them; as they were pleased, they just kept silent.

From the marriages between the Sakkas and the Kalians, the lineage came down without any break to the lifetime of the Buddha.

In this way, the growth of the Sakyian descendants took place in purity and worthiness, as they mixed with their own relatives. Since there was no interruption from the time of King Okkāka, the founding head of the Sakyans, down to the time of Prince Siddhattha, the future Buddha, they went down in history with good reputation as “*Asambhinna-Khattiya* (unbroken aristocratic)” lineage.

The Founding of Devadaha

The Sakyian princes living in Kapilavatthu used to go to a big, pleasant and beautiful lake in order to amuse themselves in water. Because it was the lake of royal sports, it came to be known as Devadaha (‘*Deva*’ implying Sakyian princes as recognized lords and ‘*daha*’ meaning a lake for watery games).

Later on, those Sakyian princes, who came to the lake for amusements, did not return to Kapilavatthu but built royal lodges near the lake. In due course, the area prospered and became a city by itself, earning the name Devadaha after the lake.

The Sakyans residing in that city were also named Devadaha Sakyans after the city.

(Based on the exposition of the Devadaha Sutta, **Upariṇṇāsa Aṭṭhakathā**).

The Descendants of Ukkāmukha The Sakyian King

The rulers belonging to Kapilavatthu are as follows:

- (1) Its founder, King Ukkāmukha (when the King spoke a brilliant light. sign of authority, came out from his mouth like his father King Okkāka),
- (2) his son King Nipuṇa,
- (3) his son King Candimā,
- (4) his son King Candamukha,
- (5) his son King Sivi,
- (6) his son King Siñjaya,
- (7) his son King Vessantara, the Bodhisatta,
- (8) his son King Jāli.
- (9) his son King Sīhavaṇa,
- (10) his son King Sihassara.

These ten Sakyian kings and King Sīhassara’s descendants down to Jeyyasena, eighty-two thousand in all, ruled successively in Kapilavatthu of the Sakyian Kingdom.

The last of these eighty-two thousand and ten Kings, Jeyyasena, had a son and daughter, Sīhahanu and Yasodharā respectively.

At that time King Ukkāsakka and Queen Yasavatī of Devadaha (also) had a son and daughter, Añjana and Kañcana respectively.

From the marriage of Prince Sīhahanu, son of King Jeyyasena of Kapilavatthu, and Princess Kañcana, daughter of Ukkāsakka of Devadaha, were five sons and two daughters, totalling seven children were born. The five sons were (1) Suddhodāna, (2) Amitodana, (3) Dhotodana, (4) Sakkodana, (5) Sukkodana (Mention is made according to the exposition of *Sammāparibbājanīya Sutta*, **Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā**, Vol. 2.) The two daughters were (1) Princess Amitta and (2) Princess Pālītā.

From the marriage of Prince Añjana, son of King Ukkāsakka of Devadaha, and Princess Yasodharā, daughter of King Jeyyasena of Kapilavatthu, were two sons and two daughters, totalling four children. (Herein, the name of King Añjana is also mentioned as Mahā Suppabuddha.) The two sons were Prince Suppabuddha and Prince Dandapāni. The

daughters were (1) Siri Mahā Māyā and (2) Princess Pajāpati Gotamī.

Prince Suddhodāna, son of Sīhahanu, was married to the two daughters of King Añjana: Princess Siri Mahā Māyā and Princess Pajāpati Gotamī. The elder sister, Siri Mahā Māyā, gave birth to Prince Siddhattha and the younger sister, Pajāpati Gotamī, gave birth to Princess Rūpanadā and Prince Nanda.

On the authority of this brief statement, there were ten kings descended from King Ukkāmukha, founder of Kapilavatthu.

There were eighty-two thousand kings descended from King Sīnassara, down to Jeyyasena.

Then came King Jeyyasena's son King Sīhahanu.

- (1) his son King Suddhodāna, and
- (2) his son Prince Siddhattha, the future Buddha.

Summing up all these three groups, there were 82,013 rulers, all being *asabhinna* Sakyan Kings and reigning in the city of Kapilavatthu. (This is a condensation of the series of kings in Kapilavatthu.)

If the number 82,013 of this line from King Ukkāmukha to Prince Siddhattha the Bodhisatta is added to the aforesaid number 252,556 of the rulers from the primeval Mahāsammata to Okkāka, the result will be 334,569.

[Here the author gives an extract from the **Mahā Sutakārī Māgha-Deva Laṅkā** Second Part (1) Section on history, vv.32-33.]

From the marriage of Prince Suppabuddha, son of King Añjana, and Princess Amittā, daughter of King Sīhahanu, were born Princess Bhadda Kañcanā or Yasodharā and Prince Devadatta.

From the marriage of Prince Siddhattha, the future Buddha, son of King Suddhodāna of Kapilavatthu and Queen Siri Mahā Māyā, and Princess Bhadda-Kañcanā or Yasodharā, daughter of King Suppabuddha of Devadaha and Queen Amitta, was born Prince Rāhula.

(Prince Siddhattha, the future Buddha, had only one son, Prince Rāhula. In the minor Chronicles there is some fabrication that Siddhattha's lesser wives gave birth to other sons. But there is no trace of such a statement in all other works of Buddhist-literature. Let us all, therefore, hold that there was only one son and that one son was none other than Rāhula.)

The Abolishing of The Era by King Añjana, Grandfather of The Buddha

King Añjana of Devadaha, the Buddha's grandfather (and Siri Mahā Māyā's father) abolished Goza Era, which was current in his time. He abrogated 8649 years, the new moon, Saturday, of the month of Phagguna (February-March) inclusive, (i.e. as required by astrology he did away with that era); and for its replacement he introduced another era commencing from the first waxing moon, Sunday, of the month of Citta (March-April), (He founded a new era to be used from that time onwards.) That era is referred to as Mahā Era in later times.

Such an account of abrogation of an era is a worldly tradition preserved in historical works. There is neither occurrence of repellation of an era nor use of such a term as *Sakkarāj* and such an expression as *Koza* or (*ioza*) in the books approved in Buddhist Councils. All this is stated only in secular treatises of astrology and history. These ways of calculation and expression contained in those mundane astrological and historical works have been borrowed by successive learned scholars throughout the Bagan Period, Pinya Period, and so on in Myanmar for the benefit of convenience in recording the number of years and the date of an event.

Orthography of Sakkarāj, Sakarāj and Koza, Goza

Much has been written about the orthography of Sakkarāj, Sakarāj and Koza, Goza by Monywa Zetawun Sayadaw in his **Samanta-cakkhu Dīpanī** Vol. 2. The Sayadaw's opinion in this connection is seen as follows:

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Many ways of writing these terms have been met with. They are useful only for recording and calculating years. Any incorrect spelling in no way affect supramundane matters; any correct spelling would not help gain release from *samsāra* as it is no sense object in acquiring insight and right view. For these reasons, it is rational to hold that each form of orthography has its own merit.

Such a decisive statement is very satisfactory.

In short, **Sakkarāj** is so called because, as a system of chronological notation to be reckoned from a certain date, it is founded by kings who are able to protect the people; **Sakarāj** is so called because such a founding was accomplished by a *Saka* king. *Koza* or *Goza* signifies a period of time marked by the movements of the sun and the moon. (*Sakkarāj* comes from *Sakkaraj*, ‘*sakka*’ meaning ‘able’ and ‘*rājā*’, ‘king’; hence *Sakkarāj*, an era founded by a king who is able to give protection to his subjects. *Sakarāj* derives from *Sakarājā*, ‘*Saka*’ being the name of a people and ‘*rājā*’, ‘king’; hence *Sakarājā* an era introduced by a *Saka* king. As for *Koza* and *Goza*, ‘*ko*’ is a term for the sun and ‘*go*’ a word for both the sun and the moon; ‘*za*’ is used in the sense of ‘going about’. The time spent in making a complete round of the Zodiac by the sun and the moon is called a year of *Koza* or *Goza*. It is also written as *Gocar*.)

The Terms Kali-yug and Sakkarāj

In the expression saying “such and such year *Kali-yug Sakkarāj*” by putting *Kali-yug* as an adjective before *Sakkarāj*, *Kali-yug* and *Sakkarāj* are different in meaning. The expression means “the year of a certain era, in the length of time began with *Kali-yug*.” This will be explained briefly:

Of the pair of evolution and devolution aeons called *Antara-kappa*, an evolution aeon consists of four ages: *Kata-yuga*, *Treta-yuga*, *Dvāpara-yuga* and *Kali-yuga*. There are waxing and waning periods of these four *yugas*. When these periods complete sixty times, an evolution aeon comes to an end. The same is true of a devolving aeon, say mundane treatises. Of the four *yugas*, the first one, *Kata-yuga*, has 1,728,000 years. Then comes *Treta-yuga* which has 1,296,000 years. It is followed by *Dvāpara-yuga* of 864,000 years. Finally follows *Kali-yuga* of 432,000 years. (Note that, if the years of the *Kali-yuga* are double, the result is the years of the *Dvāpara-yuga*; if tripled, the years of the *Treta-yuga*; if quadrupled, the years of the *Kata-yuga*.) The total number of these four *yugas* is 4,320,000.

During the *Kata-yuga* years, all four quarters of beings (the whole lot of people) observe righteousness as though living things stand on four legs. During the *Treta-yuga*, three quarters of them observe righteousness as though they stand on three legs, one quarter does not. During the *Dvāpara-yuga* (one half or) two quarters do so and (the other half or) the other two quarters do not. During the *Kali-yuga* only one quarter does so and three quarters do not.

Our Teacher, Gotama the Buddha, rose in the 2,570th years of *Kali-yuga*, states Gotama Purāṇa. In the first Kaṇḍa (Chapter) it says:

*Kalerārbhato suñña satta pañcaduke gate
samvacchare babhuva ve Dhammavido Gotamabhidho.*

Two thousand five hundred and seventy years after the commencement of *Kali-yuga*, there appeared Gotama who comprehended the Dhamma.

If one desires to know the present *sāsana* year and the present *Kali-yuga*, take the present year (Myanmar Era) and add 1,182 years; the answer is the year of the past *Sāsana* Era.

To get the *Kali-yuga* year take the present *sāsana* year and add 2,570; the total is the present *Kali-yuga* year.

In short, when one writes “in the year so and so *Kali-yuga Sakkarāj*”, one's idea is the year so and so of *Sakkarāj* in the age of *Kali-yuga*. The *Kali-yuga* lasts 432,000 years as has been said before. *Sakkarāj* is the calculation of years as determined by royal

promulgation.

(Again, an extract is given by the author from the **Mahāsula Kārī Maghā Deva Laṅkā** concerning the four *yugas* and the rise of the Buddha in the year 2,570 of *Kali-yuga*.)

Ref: 28. The Mark of The Voice having Eight Qualities as A Brahmā

The Sweetness of The Voice of The Karavika Bird and The Story of Asandhimittā

King Dhammāsoka's wife, Asandhimittā, asked the Sangha (with reference to the sweetness of the Buddha's voice): "Is there any one in this world whose voice is similar to the Buddha's?" The answer given by the Sangha was: "There is the voice of a *karavika* bird which is like the Buddha's." Again, the Queen asked: "Where do these birds live?" The Sangha replied: "They live in the Himavanta."

The Queen then said to King Asoka: "I would like to see a *karavika* bird, Lord." The King sent a golden cage with the command: "A *karavika* bird shall come in to this cage!" The cage flew and stopped before a *karavika* bird. Considering: "This cage came with the command of the King, I am not in a position to remain here against the King's command," the bird entered the cage, which flew back and stood in the King's presence.

Although they now had the bird, nobody was able to make it cry. The King asked: "O men, how could we make it cry?" The ministers replied: "These *karavika* birds cry, Great King, when they see their fellow birds." Asoka accordingly had mirrors placed around the bird.

When the bird saw its own image in the mirrors, thinking that his relations had come, it uttered a sweet cry slowly and pleasantly like the music note that came out from a ruby flute. As if intoxicated by the *karavika* bird-king's voice, Queen Asandhimitta and the citizens of Pāṭaliputta were wildly pleased. They revelled as though they were to start dancing.

Then the Queen reflected: "Even the voice of this *karavika* bird, which is just an animal, is so sweet. What would be the voice of the Buddha, highest in glory, like? There could have been no limit to its sweetness!"

Visualizing the Buddha, the Queen became filled with joy (*pīti*). Without giving up that joy, she developed Vipassanā Insight, stage by stage, and together with her seven hundred ladies-in-waiting, she attained *soṭāpatti* fruition.

Ref: Explanations of The Thirty-two Major Marks, Chapter One

Causal Deeds for The Thirty-two Marks

Since it is said in the **Jinālaṅkāra Ṭikā** that only the explanation that deals with the four points, namely, (1) *kamma*, (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*, (3) *lakkhaṇa*, and (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*, of each of the aforesaid thirty-two marks of a Great Man is a well-defined one, the meaning of each of these four points will be briefly given first.

Of these four points, (1) *kamma* means the element of meritorious deed done in the past with an intention to attain of Buddhahood, bringing about the major mark concerned; (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka* means the power or ability of the mark that appears in accordance with the *kamma*; (3) *lakkhaṇa* means any of the thirty-two major marks, such as level soles, the hundred and eight sole-figures, etc. acquired in the present life on account of the relevant past meritorious deeds; (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa* means the remote or subsequent effect of the past meritorious deeds which cause the appearance of the mark.

(For example, the Bodhisatta accumulates merit during his former lives, so firmly and resolutely that nobody else can check and destroy them. On account of that accumulation of merit, he enjoys divine bliss which excel others in the ten respects. When he is reborn as a human being, he wins the mark of his level feet resembling golden footwear. As he has won that mark, he is able to stand up and walk on steadfastly; nobody else, whether a human or a deva or Brahmā, can move him or make him unsteady. The merits also give him the subsequent effect: he is unshaken by such internal defiling enemies as greed, hate

and delusion and also by two external kinds: those who oppose him openly and those who do so but not openly.)

Herein, the aggregate of his past meritorious deeds done so firmly and resolutely that nobody else can check and destroy them is (1) *kamma*. The state of the level soles of the feet marking his acts of merit is (3) *lakkhaṇa*. His ability to stand up and walk on steadfastly as the immediate effect of his meritorious acts is (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The ability inherent in the mark, forming the effect, agrees thus with the power inherent in the meritorious act serving as the cause; such corresponding nature is called *kamma-sarikkhaka* (the nature of agreement with *kamma*). Just as carrying a vessel full of water means carrying the water in it, even so, speaking of a sign with power signifies speaking of that very power. Therefore, the exposition of *lakkhaṇa* and the exposition of *kamma-sarikkhaka* are found similar to each other in the commentary on the Lakkhaṇa Sutta in the **Pāthika-vagga Aṭṭhakathā**. The undisturbed and determined effort, put in performing good works in the past existences, brings the Bodhisatta not only the mark of the level soles but, as if it were not enough, also brings him the remote and subsequent effect, which is the ability to remain unharmed and undisturbed by his foes within and without; this subsequent and remote effect is (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(Now with reference to the Bodhisatta's major signs, those causal deeds of the past and other things will be described briefly as stated in the Lakkhaṇa Sutta, Text or otherwise, in a language easy to read and note.)

(1) The Level Soles

The Bodhisatta had performed extraordinary acts of merit in his numerous past existences, so firmly and resolutely that nobody else could check and destroy them. On account of those meritorious acts, he enjoyed divine bliss in the deva-world, excelling other devas in ten respects: longevity, beauty, happiness, authority, retinue, abundance of divine sense objects, such as sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Reborn again in the human world, he acquired the major mark of “the level soles of feet like golden Footwear.” Because he was endowed with that mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch (*Cakkavatti*) possessing the seven treasures and ruling the four continents as he did in the life of Mahasudassana Cakkavatti. As the subsequent effect, he would also have enjoyed the immunity from harm done to him by any human foes. On renouncing the world, as in his last existence as Prince Siddhattha, he attained Omniscience and became a Perfectly Self-Enlightened One, Chief of the Three Worlds. As the subsequent effect, his benefits could not be stopped, harmed or endangered by the hostilities brought by internal defiling enemies, such as greed, hate and delusion, and by external ones, be he an ascetic, a brahmin, a deva, a *māra* or a Brahmā, who opposed him openly or not openly.

(Here the author reproduces for the readers to learn by heart the verses composed by one Sayadaw U Ghosita of Mandalay South. The theme of the prayer is the thirty-two signs of a Great Man. Here the verses describe the first sign. Each of the remaining verses similarly follows a paragraph in prose by the author.)

(2) The Hundred and Eight Circles with Figures on The Soles

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta rendered service for the welfare of beings. He had driven away fear from those who were frightened. He had performed *dāna* together with supplementary gifts. (For example, when he gave away robes and garments in particular, he also offered alms-food as supplementary gifts to the recipients; he also gave them seats, honoured them with flowers and perfumes and provided them with drink. Thereafter he took upon himself the precepts and expressed his wish to attain the boon of Omniscience. Then only did he distribute the robes and garments most respectfully. In this way the Bodhisatta gave the main gift with extra ones.) As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss which surpassed other devas in the ten respects, as has been mentioned above. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 2 major mark of “the figures in circles on the soles of his feet”. Because he was endowed with that mark,

had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and would also have won great suite of retinue consisting of brahmins, men of wealth, etc. On renouncing the world, as in his last birth as Prince Siddhattha, he became an Omniscient Buddha and his great retinue was composed of monks, nuns, male and female lay devotees, devas, humans, *asuras*, *nāgas* and *gandhabbas*.

Herein, such meritorious act of *dāna* completed with additional gifts in his numerous past existences was (1) *kamma*. The perfection in all respects of the sole-figures as if they were indicating, “Let devas and humans know that the Bodhisatta had performed meritorious act of *dāna* completed with additional gifts” was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The sole mark was (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The great suite was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(3) The Projecting Heels, Long Fingers and Toes and Tire Upright Body

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from taking life. Never had he caught hold of a weapon with intent to kill. He had lived with loving-kindness and compassion, providing safeguard for the wellbeing of all others. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss which surpassed that of other devas in ten respect. Reborn a human being, he acquired the three major marks: the No. 3 mark of “the projecting heels”, the No. 4 mark of “the long and tapering fingers and toes”, and the No. 15 mark of “the upright body” like that of a Brahmā. Because he was endowed with these three marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and he would have lived long till the end of his life span as no one could do harm to his life (or kill him). On renouncing the world, as in his last birth as Prince Siddhattha, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he lived long until he had covered four-fifths of his life span as no one, be he an ascetic, a brahmin, a deva, a *māra*, or a Brahmā could threaten his life (or could kill him).

The Four Inviolable Assets of A Buddha

There are four assets of a Buddha that cannot be violated by others. They are:

- (1) the four requisites meant for and brought to Him,
- (2) His life,
- (3) His marks, and
- (4) His rays

— *Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā*. Vol. 2 —

or,

- (1) The material gain of the four requisites brought to Him,
- (2) His life,
- (3) His eighty minor marks and his body rays, (the light of the moon, of the sun and of devas and Brahmās could not outshine or disturb the rays from his body), and
- (4) His Omniscience.

— *Vinaya Pārājika-kaṇḍa Aṭṭhakathā*, Vol.1 —

The Kamma, Kamma-sarikkhaka, etc, of The Aforesaid Mark

With reference to the above three marks, (1) *kamma* was the abstention from the wrong doing of killing, (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka* was the ability of the length and shape of the heels, fingers and toes and the uprightness of the body. To make it more explicit: those, who are bent on killing, approach their victim by tiptoeing lest the sound of their footsteps should be heard. Consequently, when they become human beings again, some of them have their feet curved inwardly like a bow; some of them have their feet curved outwardly; some of their feet with a curve in each sole; some have bandy toes; and others bandy heels; as if all those deformed shapes were to disclose, saying: “Let people know about our act of killing that involves tiptoeing.” But the Bodhisatta had the mark of long heels as if they were to disclose saying: “Let people know about my non-commission of killing that involved

tiptoeing.” Similarly, those, who desire to kill, approach their victim by bending their bodies, lest they should be seen by others. Consequently, when they become human beings again, some are hunchbacked, some are squat, some are crippled, as if all these deformed shapes were to disclose, saying: “Let people know about my commission of killing that involves body bending.” The Bodhisatta, however, had an upright body like that of a Brahmā, a mark of a Great Man, as if it were to disclose, saying: “Let people know about my non-commission of killing that involves body-bending.” Similarly, those, who desire to kill, catch hold of a weapon, say a club, and put their victim to death. Consequently, when they become human beings again, they have shorts hands, curved fingers, or have no visible fingers, as they look conjoined with one another and level with the palms as if they were to disclose, saying: “Let people know about their evil.” In contrast with them, the Bodhisatta had a long and beautiful fingers, a mark of a Great Man, as if it were to indicate, saying: “Let devas and humans know” that he had no experience of killing with a club in the grip of his hand. The ability of those marks to assure his long life was *kamma-sarikkhaka*. These three major marks, i.e. the projection of the heels, the length of the fingers and toes, and the straightness of the body, are (3) *lakkhaṇa*. His life lived to the full span was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(4) The Fullness of The Flesh at Seven Places of The Body

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta gave delicious food, such as cakes, meals, butter-oil, milk-rice, etc. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 16 major mark of “the fullness of the flesh at the seven places of his body”, namely, the two insteps, the two backs of the palms, the two shoulders and the neck. Because he was endowed with that mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he received plenty of delicious food, both solid and liquid, to eat.

Herein, such a meritorious act of offering choice food over the period of a hundred thousand aeons was (1) *kamma*. The occurrence of the fullness of the flesh at the seven places of the body, as if it were to disclose, saying: “Let devas and humans know” that the Bodhisatta had done the meritorious deeds of giving choice food, etc. in his past lives and its being the cause of abundant gains in that very life was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The fullness of the flesh at the seven places of the body was (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The acquisition of much choice food was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(5) The Soft Hands and Feet and Their Likeness of A Net

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta helped many with the four objects of support (*saṅgha vatthu*)²⁸. Those who are pleased with the gifts, which he had helped them by giving (*dāna*); those who were in need of a pleasant speech, which he had helped them with sweet words (*piyavācā*), another *saṅgha vatthu*; those who desired a beneficial talk, he had helped them with a beneficial talk or action (*atthacariyā*), a (third) *saṅgha vatthu*, by advising them: “This should be done.”, “This should not be done.”, “A man of this nature should be associated with.”, “A man of this nature should not be associated with.”, and so on. Those, who were happy to be treated on equal terms whether in weal or in woe, he had helped them with a sense of equality (*samānattatā*), a (fourth) *saṅgha vatthu*. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 5 major mark of “the soft hands and feet” as well as the No. 6 major mark of “their having likeness of a golden net”.

Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he had a suite at his service, as if it were properly held and collectively placed

28. Objects of support (*saṅgha vatthu*): refer to Chapter VII: What are the factors for accomplishing the *Paramis*: (a) extinction of self-love Previously it is translated ways of gaining friendship, pg 89, *ibid*.

in his hand.

Herein, such meritorious acts of helping many through the fourfold *saṅgaha vatthu* in his numerous past existences were (1) *kamma*. Those, who used not to do so, have rough hands and feet and uneven fingers and toes. The Bodhisatta, however, had soft and tender hands and feet; his fingers and toes were even like that of a golden net in order to let devas and humans know of his help given to many through the fourfold *saṅgaha vatthu* in his past lives. The quality of the softness of the hands and feet and also of the evenness of the fingers and toes was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The quality of the soft hands and feet and of the even fingers and toes was (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The gain of the suite properly held and collectively placed, so to speak, in his hand was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(6) The High Ankles and The Curling-up Body Hair

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from frivolous talks. He had given religious talks which are beneficial here as well as hereafter. He had made only Dhamma-speeches concerning the ten acts of merit leading to emancipation from *saṃsāra*. By delivering to a large number of people religious sermons that would raise them to higher stages of prosperity with the ten deeds of merit, he had given the gift of Dhamma. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 7 major mark of “the slightly higher dust-free ankles” and the No. 4 major mark of “the body-hair with its tips curling upwards”. Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and would be superior to others. On renouncing the world, as in his life as Prince Siddhattha, he became an Omniscient Buddha and reached the top, excelling all other beings in pre-eminence.

Herein, such a meritorious act of delivering Dhamma-sermons that lead to higher stages was (1) *kamma*. Those, who used not to do so, have low ankles and stooping downy hair, as if they were to disclose, saying: “Let people know” about their failure to speak of the Dhamma. The Bodhisatta, however, was endowed with these two marks, namely, the high ankles and the curling up body-hair, as if they were to disclose, saying: “Let devas and humans know” that he had given discourses that would raise them to higher spiritual positions. Therefore, the ability of these two marks to indicate thus was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The two marks were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The Bodhisatta's being above all others in rank was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(7) The Eni-like Round Legs

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta seriously and promptly taught his close pupils who had come to him for education. He had taught them in such a way that they might learn and train quickly and without trouble; he had instructed them in different arts and crafts, in various modes of moral conduct (*carāṇa*), such as the Five Precepts, the Ten Precepts and the *Pātimokkha* as well as on the doctrines such as *Kammasakatā* (the truth that everybody has kamma as his or her own property). In his teaching, he had never held back anything for his own sake. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 8 major mark of “the legs round and full, lengthy and comely, like those of an antelope called enī (or like husk of paddy)”.

Because he was endowed with this mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and he would have obtained all royal paraphernalia both animate and inanimate. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he possessed the requisites of a monk fully and rapidly.

Herein, such a meritorious act of serious and prompt teaching of arts and crafts, etc. in his numerous past existences were (1) *kamma*. Those who did not teach their pupils seriously and promptly but used to waste their time by asking them to wait upon them respectfully, or by sending them on errands, and thus making them weary, have their calves which are bulging at the back of the leg as though the muscles were cut off on the other side. In contrast, the Bodhisatta's calves were high and round as if they were to disclose,

saying: “Let devas and humans know about his serious and prompt teaching, which is without holding back anything for his own sake. The ability of that particular mark to disclose thus was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The calves of that beauty were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The rapid possession of the appropriate requisites was (4) *lakkhaṇānisam̐sa*.

(8) The Smooth Skin

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta approached wise ascetics and brahmins and discussed with them questioning: “Venerable Sirs, what is merit?”, “What is demerit?”, “What is faulty?”, “What is not faulty?”, “What should be followed?”, “What should not be followed?”, “What when done leads to lasting sorrow?” and “What when done leads to lasting happiness?” As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 12 major mark of “the smooth skin”. Because he was endowed with this mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and a great wise man. Among those, who enjoy sensual pleasures, there would have been none equal to him or higher than him in wisdom. On renouncing the world, as in his last birth as Prince Siddhattha, he became an Omniscient Buddha with great wisdom. He possessed *puthu-paññā*, knowledge of the aggregates, the sense-spheres, the elements, etc; *hāsa-paññā*, knowledge born together with zest and joy, *javana-paññā*, knowledge of swift occurrence; *tikkha-paññā*, knowledge that quickly eradicates defilements; and *nibbedhika-paññā*, knowledge that penetrates the impenetrable mass of greed, hate and delusion; as the subsequent effect, he was endowed with intelligence higher than that of others.

(Here the author's analysis of this particular major mark as to its *kamma*, etc. is missing. But it may not be difficult for the reader to make his or her own.)

(9) The Yellow and Bright Complexion Like Gold

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta showed very little anger. If there were in him anger at all, he quickly quenched it. He also display little anxiety. Though someone should speak to him angrily, he was absolutely free of hate, anger, aversion, disturbance or grudge. Besides, he donated fine clothing, robes and coverlets to people. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 11 major mark of “the yellow, bright skin like that of pure gold of *siṅgī-nikkha*”. Because he was endowed with that mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he quickly obtained fine clothings, robes and coverlets.

Herein, such a state of his being free of anger and such acts of distribution fine clothings, robes and coverlets in his numerous past existences were (1) *kamma*. The complexion of a person in anger lacks serenity; his or her face is terribly ugly. There is no adornment like clothing in the world. Therefore, those who used to show anger and not used to give clothings, robes and coverlets are not good looking, as if they were to disclose their former ills. The face of one who does not lose temper is beautiful; his or her complexion is serene. There are four ways for beings to acquire beauty and splendour:

- (1) giving alms-food in the past existences,
- (2) giving clothing in the past existences,
- (3) giving service by cleaning with a broom, and
- (4) showing no anger.

All these four requirements, the Bodhisatta had fulfilled in his countless former lives. He therefore, acquired the No. 11 major mark of the yellow skin. Therefore, the bright yellow complexion comparable with the colour of *siṅgī-nikkha* gold and which, so to speak, informed devas and humans of his fulfilment of the four requirements was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The golden skin was (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The gain of fine clothing etc. was (4) *lakkhaṇānisam̐sa*.

(10) The Male Organ concealed in A Sheath

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta brought about reunion in amity to those relatives and friends who had been long separated; he had created harmony between estranged mother and son, between estranged father and son, among estranged brothers, between estranged brothers and sisters and among estranged sisters. He rejoiced in the harmony thus caused by him. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 10 major mark of “the male organ concealed in a sheath”, like that of a Chaddanta Elephant King. Because he was endowed with that mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and would have begot thousands of brave scions who were able to crush enemy forces. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and gathered thousands of sons in his noble disciples who were capable of crushing enemy forces of defilements.

Herein, his meritorious performance of bringing about unity among relatives in the numerous past existences was (1) *kamma*. When kinsmen are united, one overlooks another's fault. Even when they are at quarrel, they do not like let others know of the wrong done by a man of their blood. If one were to say: “This is his fault,” they would rise up and refute, “Who has seen that? Who has heard of that? There is nobody among us who would have done such a misdeed!” In this way, they all would give cover to his fault. It may be said that the Bodhisatta had disregarded such a fault and thereby brought about unity to his kith and kin. Therefore, the male organ in a sheath that was indicative to other of his past deed of bringing unity to his relatives by preventing their fault from being seen so that they may live in happiness was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The male organ thus concealed in a sheath was (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The gaining of thousands of son-like noble disciples was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(11) The Symmetrically Proportioned Body and The Long Palms that could touch The Knees without stooping

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta gave honour to members of his retinue after personally scrutinizing their virtues and qualities. Only when he had known their qualifications did he show his appreciation to them according to their merit, deciding: “This man deserves this much of reward.” “This man is worthy of this amount of reward.” The Bodhisatta honoured a man fairly and honestly according to what he deserved. As a result, corresponding to such act of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 19 major mark of “the symmetrically proportioned body (round and beautiful) like the circular spread of a banyan tree” and the No. 9 major mark of the “long palms which can touch the knees while standing without stooping.” Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch; and he would have had abundance of bliss and wealth, such as gems, gold, silver, useful objects, treasure-houses and granaries. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he owned abundance of the wealth of the pious: faith (*saddhā*), morality (*sīla*), knowledge (*suti*), sacrifice (*cāga*), wisdom (*paññā*), shame (*hirī*) and dread (*ottappa*) of doing evil.

Herein, his honour shown according to one's value was (1) *kamma*. The equal length of his stretched out arms and height and the equal measurement of the upper part and the lower part of his body in accordance with his performance were (2) *kamma-sarikkha*. His body like a round banyan tree, and its upper and lower parts being of equal measurement were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. His abundance of sevenfold wealth of the pious was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(12) The Well-developed Body, The Back without The Spinal Furrow in The Middle and The Round Neck

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta wished for the welfare of the multitude. He had wished for the safety of the people's four modes of happiness. He had done a lot of contemplation: “How could these beings prosper through *saddhā*?”, “How could they prosper through *sīla*, observing the Five Precepts or the Ten Precepts?”, “How could they

prosper through *suta*, following the advice of the wise and pious?"; "How could they prosper through *cāga*, giving up (what they own)?"; "How could they prosper through *paññā*, the truth and knowledge that all beings have their *kamma* as their own property?"; "How could they progress in terms of wealth and paddy, field and land, bipeds and quadrupeds, children and wives, servants and employees, relatives and friends?" As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the three major marks, namely, the No. 17 mark of "the full and well-developed body like a lion's front portion", the No. 18 mark of "the well-developed back of the body extending from the waist to the neck like a golden plank without any trace of the spinal furrow", the No. 20 mark of "the proportionate and round neck". Because he was endowed with these three major marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and he would have obtained royal paraphernalia and his blissful life would never have diminished. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and his mundane and supra-mundane virtues, such as *saddhā*, *sīla*, *suta*, *cāga*, *paññā*, etc., never decreased.

Herein, his wish for the welfare of the multitude was (1) *kamma*. The fullness, roundness and development of the body, of the back and of the neck as if they were indicative of his wish for the prosperity of others was (2) *kamma-sarikhaka*; the fullness, round and development of the body, the back and the neck were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The non-decrease of his wealth both mundane and supra-mundane was (4) *kammānisaṃsa*.

(13) The Seven Thousand Capillaries at The Throat

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta had never hurt other beings with his hands, with a stone, a stick, a sword or with any other weapon. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 21 major mark of "the seven thousand capillaries occurring at the throat and diffusing throughout the body the taste of the food, be it as small as a grain of sesame." Because he was endowed with this major mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and his ailments were few and far between.

Herein, his meritorious performance of refraining from hurting beings was (1) *kamma*. He who has been hit by another with hands, etc. will have bruise and blood clot on the spot his body which has been hit, from which suppuration and more suffering would occur. As for the Bodhisatta, as if they were clearly indicative of his past, observance of non-violence towards others, an act of merit that would result in good health, he acquired the mark of the capillaries at the throat. Such an irregularity of the capillaries for taste lying upright was (2) *kamma-sarikhaka*; the upright capillaries at his throat were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. His good health was (4) *kammānisaṃsa*.

The capillaries distribute the taste all over his body, even if it is of the food as tiny as a grain of sesame. His digestive power was neither too high nor too low but just right to digest whatever is eaten: Therefore, the Bodhisatta's health was better than that of others.

(14) The Clear Blue Eyes and The Soft Eyelashes

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta had never angrily looked at others with his eyes protruding like those of a lobster. Never had he, in anger, looked sideways at another person. When that person angrily looked at him, he simply closed his eyes. Only when that person looked the other way round did he glance at him or her with a loving and sober heart but never with a hateful one. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 29 major mark of "the very clear blue eyes" and the No. 30 mark of "the soft and tender eyelashes, like a newly born calf." Because he was endowed with these marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he was looked upon by beings, as such devas, humans and Brahmās, lovingly and trustingly.

Herein, his viewing of other beings with loving eyes in the countless past existences was

(1) *kamma*. Those angry ones, who look sideways or frown at somebody else, have their eyes set in that manner. Those, who look at others in an affectionate and respectful manner, have their eyes serene in five ways of beauty. The Bodhisatta was endowed with the eyes, blue and clear; the eyelashes, soft and curling up, as if they were indicative of his affectionate, respectful glances in the past: all this was (2) *kamma-sarikhaka*. The extremely clear blue eyes and the extremely soft curling-up eyelashes were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The love and respect shown to him by other beings was (4) *kammānisamsa*.

(15) The Thin Layer of Flesh on The Forehead

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta led group performance of good physical practices, good verbal practices, good mental practises, alms-giving, moral observances, fasting, service to parents, etc. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No.32 major mark of “the thin layer of flesh that appeared by nature, like a gold headband on the forehead.” Because he was endowed with this mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he gained a large number of beings as his followers or he became leader of them all.

Herein, his meritorious act of giving leadership to others in the group performance of good deeds was (1) *kamma*. He who gives leadership to a performance of good deeds, such as giving in charity, etc. never wears a sad face in the gathering, instead, he moves about among the people with his head upright without fear but with joy and satisfaction. He also has a large number of followers. The Bodhisatta, in his many previous births, had given guidance in doing all acts of merit. In order to make devas and humans know of this, the Bodhisatta was born with the thin layer of flesh on his forehead (or the full round head); therefore, the ability of the thin layer of flesh (or, the full round head) to let others know of those past meritorious act was (2) *kamma-sarikhaka*, The thin layer of flesh (or, of the full round head) was (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The large numbers of beings immediately following after him was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(16) The Body-hair and The Hair between The Two Eyebrows

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from telling lies (*musāvāda*); he had told what was true; (with no insertion of falsehood,) his first truthful words had agreed with his last; he had been of firm speech; he had spoken reliable words which people trust and referred to. As a result, corresponding to such act of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 13 major mark of “the body hair, each in one pore of the skin” and the No. 31 major mark of “the hair between the two eyebrows”. Because he was endowed with these two major marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he had his wishes fulfilled by many.

Herein, his meritorious act of speaking only what was true in his numerous past existences was (1) *kamma*. The ability of his body-hair, each growing in one pore of the skin and of his hair that strangely grew between the eyebrows to disclose his acts of speaking the truth was (2) *kamma-sarikhaka*. The body hair and the hair between the eyebrows were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The fulfilment of his wishes by many was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamsa*.

(17) The Forty Teeth and Their State of touching One Another

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from any mischievous speech that would cease friendship among people; he had brought harmony to those who were separated; he had helped maintain unity of those who were united; he had taken delight in unity among friends; he had been very pleased to see or hear of those in unity; he had spoken only what would create unity of friends, As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 23 major mark of “the teeth numbering exactly forty” and the No. 25 major mark of “the teeth touching one another with no space in between.” Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On

renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he gained followers whose unity could not be destroyed by others.

Herein, his abstention, in his numerous past lives, from mischievous talks (*pisuṇa-vācā*) and his speech that would create unity were (1) *kamma*. Those who used to speak mischievous words, have no complete set of forty teeth, and they have their teeth with gaps, for they destroy unity of others and separate them. The Bodhisatta, however, had forty teeth and they were touching one another as if to tell devas and humans of his abstention from mischievous words in his countless former lives in *saṃsāra*. Therefore, the ability of his teeth to be indicative of his said abstention was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The complete set of forty teeth and the absence of gaps in them possessing the very ability were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. His gaining of followers whose unity could not be destroyed by others was (4) *lakkhaṇānisamāsa*.

(18) The Long Tongue and The Voice with Qualities like A Brahmā's

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from speaking harsh and abusive words; he had spoken only what was polite, faultless, pleasing and appealing to the hearts of many. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 27 major mark of "the long, flat and tender tongue" and the No. 28 major mark of "the voice having eight qualities like a Brahmā's." Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and his words were effective, influential and authoritative.

Herein, his abstention from harsh and abusive words (*pharusa-vācā*) and his speaking only sweet, pleasant and polite words in his numerous past existences in *saṃsāra* were (1) *kamma*. Those who used to indulge in harsh and abusive terms have their tongues faulty with thickness, droopiness and a slit so that others may know of their indulgence in bad language by twisting their tongues. The Bodhisatta, however, had the primary benefit of having his tongue long, flat and tender so that devas and humans might know that he had never uttered such bad language but had spoken what was sweet, pleasant and polite. Those, who used to speak abusive language, have their voice cracked, rough or faulty in other ways so that many might know of their swearing in a cracked, rough voice. The Bodhisatta had the benefits of having a voice of eight qualities, as if they were to tell "Let devas and human know" of his abstention in his numerous past existences in *saṃsāra* from cursing, a cause for a cracked, rough voice. Therefore, the length, flatness and tenderness of the tongue and the completeness of his tongue with the eight qualities were (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The long, flat and tender tongue and the voice complete with the eight qualities were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The obedience shown to his word by devas and humans and his verbal effectiveness, influence and authority were (4) *lakkhaṇānisamāsa*.

(19) The Lion-like Chin

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from frivolous talks that were like unsuccessful paddy lacking substance. He had spoken what was right and suitable for the occasion; he had talked beneficially, truthfully, and with reference to the Dhamma, and advised in accordance with discipline. He had uttered solemnly what was meaningful with evidence as in judicial proceedings, worthy of keeping in the casket-like hearts of all hearers. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the No. 22 major mark of the "well developed chin (suggestive of his imminent smile) like that of a lion." Because he was endowed with this major mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he was invulnerable to attacks by his enemies within and without.

Herein, his abstention from frivolous talks (*sampha-palapa*) was (1) *kamma*. Those, who used to talk about foolish things, have their chins concave, crooked or in any other unseemly shape so that many might know that they had spoken insubstantial language with their jaws moving. The Bodhisatta, however, had well developed jaws so that devas and

humans might know of his abstention from frivolous talks and of his practice of speaking only what was fruitful. Therefore, the ability of the development of the jaws to disclose his practice of speaking, in the past, what was fruitful was (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The developed jaws with that ability was (3) *lakkhaṇa*. His invulnerability against any of his enemies whether within or without was (4) *lakkhaṇānisam̐sa*.

(20) The Proportionately Set Teeth and The Four White Pointed Teeth

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from wrong livelihood but had earned his living by clean trade; he had avoided various dishonest method, such as deceptive scales, deceptive baskets, deceptive coins; such as being unethical by taking bribes, immoral persuasion by cheating; convincing others with imitations; such as violence by cutting hands and legs, by taking life, by binding, plundering, destroying towns and villages. As a result, corresponding to such acts of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the two major marks: the No. 24 mark of “the proportionate set of teeth” and the No. 26 mark of “the four pointed teeth as white and brilliant as the morning star”. Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an Omniscient Buddha and he gained hosts of followers and attendants.

Herein, his pure livelihood in his numerous past existences was (1) *kamma*. Those, who used to have impure livelihood, possess no proportionately set teeth, upper or lower, inside or outside; and their four pointed teeth are dirty so that many might know of their misdeeds. The Bodhisatta, however, had even teeth and four pointed ones, which were very brilliantly white as if they were to disclose, saying: “Let devas and humans know” of his pure livelihood, maintained throughout his countless past existences in *saṃsāra*. Therefore, the evenness of his teeth and the brilliant whiteness of the four pointed teeth that disclosed his purity of livelihood in his countless past lives in *saṃsāra* were (2) *kamma-sarikkhaka*. The even teeth and the white pointed ones were (3) *lakkhaṇa*. The hosts of followers and attendants were (4) *lakkhaṇānisam̐sa*.

(Here is given the Sayadaw U Ghesita's last verse-prayer with reference to the forty teeth and the four pointed ones, followed by the concluding stanza. Also for the benefit of the reader in Myanmar: a shorter poetical, composition about the 32 Major Marks and the Buddha's past kamma as their causes, by the Mahā Visuddhārāma Sayadaw is added. This, too, we propose to leave untranslated.)

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SYNOPSIS of the original six volumes, eight books of the Great Chronicle of Buddhas.

Volume One Part One (Chapter I to VI): SUMEDHA the future Buddha, His Renunciation, the Prophecy, Reflections on Perfections, elaborate expositions on Pāramīs.

Volume One Part Two (Chapter VII to IX): Chronicle of Twenty-four Buddhas Dīpaṅkarā Buddha to Kassapa Buddha; future Buddha Gotama receiving Prophecy.

Volume Two (Chapter 1 to Chapter 15): Beginning of Buddha Ratana: From Conception of the Bodhisatta to attainment of Buddhahood, and events during the 1st rains-retreat.

Volume Three (Chapter 16 to 27): Events from the 2nd rains-retreat to the 9th.

Volume Four (Chapter 28 to Chapter 37): Events from the 9th rains-retreat to the 20th.

Volume Five (Chapter 38 to Chapter 42): Events from 21st rains-retreat to Parinibbāna of the Buddha. End of Buddha Ratana. One chapter on Dhamma Ratana

Volume Six Part One (Chapter 43): Sangha Ratana begins: Stories of Foremost Bhikkhus. Theras from the Venerable Sāriputta to the Venerable Mogharāja.

Volume Six Part Two (Chapter 44 to Chapter 45): Sangha Ratana continues: Stories of Foremost Bhikkhunīs. Therīs from Mahāpajāpati Gotamī to Siṅgālakamātu. Stories of Foremost lay male disciples and lay female disciples. Epilogue.

In 1954, the then Prime Minister of Myanmar, U Nu, requested the Late Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṃsa, Venerable Mingun Sayadaw, to compile the Mahābuddhavaṃsa, being the Myanmar exposition on the lives of the Buddhas as related mainly in the Buddhavaṃsapāḷi Text of the Khuddakanikaya. This compilation entitled “The Great Chronicle of Buddhas”, resulting in six volumes in eight books, commenced in 1956 and ended in 1969. The work, being the author’s magnum opus and a colossal contribution to Myanmar Buddhist literature, has been received with enthusiastic acclaim by members of the Saṅgha and the laity alike.

This Chronicle made its appearance in commemoration of the convening of the Sixth Buddhist Council. It was subsequently translated into English by Myanmar scholars for the benefit of the English speaking readers. In this present Edition, the six volumes have been combined into two books.

The Chronicle vividly describes, for the benefits of those who are virtuous devotees of Buddhism, how the Buddha, the true friend of the three classes of beings, had performed unique, meritorious deeds beginning from His existence as the Hermit Sumedha. Sumedha met Buddha Dīpaṅkara and obtained assurance from the Buddha that he would, in time to come, gain Supreme Enlightenment as Buddha Gotama (which is during our present cycle). In his quest for Enlightenment in the cycle of births and deaths, the Bodhisatta met the past twenty-four Buddhas which are described in detail. This book will appeal not only to the casual reader but also to the intellectual student of Buddhism.