



THE TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA
(Basic Level)



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The Teachings of the Buddha

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Namo taṣṣa Bhagavato Arahato
Sammāsambuddhassa.

**The Teachings
of
the Buddha
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INTRODUCTION

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*Myanmar Naing Ngan and Theravāda
Buddhism*

Since over one thousand years ago, the people of Myanmar have taken refuge in pure Theravāda Buddhism with firm confidence and conviction. The Theravāda Buddhism leads everyone to carry out his welfare and prosperity freely based on his own Kamma, wisdom and effort. On the other hand, it reminds and exhorts everyone to avoid evil conduct and evil speech which can cause harm to the human society. Moreover everyone must dutifully perform his duties related to the society, to the State and to the nation, including oneself, one's family and one's relatives.

The people of ancient Myanmar learned the basic education with respect to writing, reading and arithmetics and also the Buddha's Teachings at monastic schools and proceeded on (along) the journey of their life; they were not separated from the Buddha's Teachings, and so, they were able to lead their life to peaceful and prosperous goal. For this reason, Myanmar has existed under self-rule peacefully for many years.

The Decline of Buddhism

In 1885, Myanmar lost her independence and took a down-turn in her destiny. She remained under the colonial rule for about a hundred years. During this period the Theravāda Buddhism in Myanmar was on the decline as it lacked the support of the State, and the colonial government encouraged the spread of western culture and western religions.

Building a Modern Nation and Buddhism

The Union of Myanmar regained her independence and became a sovereign State in 1948, just after World War II. Since that time, the authorities concerned made every

CHAPTER (1)

The Daily Routine of a Buddhist

A Buddhist should be diligent to strive for daily religious tasks as compulsory duty. If we examine the term "Buddhist" in detail, we find as follows: The term "Buddha" means the supremely Self-Enlightened One through realization of the Four Noble Truths at the foot of the Bodhi-tree as he had fulfilled such perfections as dāna, sīla, etc., in his many births of saṃsāra.

Buddhism is the Teachings delivered by Buddha in 45 years of Buddhahood for the benefit of all beings -- men, devas and brahmas. "A Buddhist is one who takes refuge in the Buddha, in the Dhamma, in the Saṃgha, and practises according to the Teachings of the Buddha."

A Buddhist should not be a Buddhist for name sake only. He must practically abide by

the Teachings of the Buddha; only then will he be a real Buddhist. It is very hard indeed to be born a human being. Meritorious deeds such as charity, morality and meditation can be performed only in the human life. In the four miserable realms, these meritorious deeds cannot be performed, because beings there have to suffer miseries all the time. Also in the realms of devas and brahmas, it is not easy to do meritorious deeds, because they are intoxicated with various kinds of pleasure. Human life is mingled with sensual pleasure and miseries, and so only a human being can strive for his deliverance from the whirlpool of miseries called Saṃsāra. Now we have the golden chance to be born as human beings and to study, practise, and realise the Teachings of the Buddha. So we should earnestly strive to become a real Buddhist.

On becoming a real Buddhist, one must perform the following religious tasks daily with conviction and wisdom:-

- (a) Paying homage to the Buddha.
- (b) Observing the moral precepts.
- (c) Doing acts of charity,
- (d) Cultivating loving-kindness.

- (e) Striving for perpetuation and propagation of Buddha's Teachings.
- (f) Practising mindfulness on tranquility and insight meditation.
- (g) Sharing merit.

Paying homage to the Buddha means reflecting on and reciting the virtues of the Triple Gem--the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṃgha, and paying homage to them with five kinds of bodily contact. (Pañcapatiṭṭhita)

Observing the moral precepts means to observe the five or eight precepts prescribed for laymen to lead a good moral life.

Doing the act of charity means to offer something to the Buddha or other donees with righteous volition. Offering alms-food, pure water, flowers, perfumes, joss-sticks and light to the Buddha and the members of the Saṃgha are included in this charitable deed.

Cultivating loving-kindness means developing or sending loving-kindness, *Metā* towards all living beings.

Striving for the perpetuation and propagation of Buddha's Teachings means to make oneself and others firmly believe in the teachings of the Buddha that enable one to avoid demeritorious actions and to perform meritorious deeds. Participating in religious associations, supporting the Pariyatti--sāsanā and Paṭipatti-sāsanā, donation and distribution of books on Buddhism, teaching and discussing Buddhism among family members, neighbours and local people are included in this noble task.

Practising mindfulness on tranquility and insight meditation means to overcome the illusion of self (Sakkāyaditthi) and to see mind and matter in oneself and to contemplate their nature of impermanence, suffering and no-soul.

Sharing merits means to share the merit accrued from meritorious deeds of charity, morality and meditation by saying "May all living beings gain the benefit of merit equally with me."



CHAPTER (2)

The Life of Buddha in Brief

The Prophecy of the Buddha Dīpaṅkarā

Lord Buddha, the Sakyan Prince, the real refuge of all men, devas and brahmas, had fulfilled the ten perfections (Pāramī) since the life of Sumedhā. Four Asaṅkhyeyyas and one hundred-thousand world-cycles ago, the future Buddha named Sumedhā was the only son of a rich man at Amaravatī, the Royal City. He was born of a line of rich parents, both of whom were pure in morality and race.

Sumedhā's View on Life

The young man Sumedhā had acquired enough education when he reached the age of sixteen. His parents died since he was young. All of his wealth were guarded by his personal treasurer (financier). As he had come of age, the personal treasurer handed over all his wealth to him together with the lists of various things. When he saw his properties, he thought to

himself: "My parents, my grandparents and my great grandparents were only able to make great earnings and save them, but were unable to take them along with them. As for me, I shall take all the wealth along with me."

At that moment a deep understanding of life arose in him: "If there is heat, there must be cold; in the same way, if there is death, there must be deathlessness."

Then he opened his treasure-houses and gave all his possessions away. Afterwards he went forth to Himavantā and made himself an ascetic. Within seven days, he attained the supreme psychic power. He could travel in the air.

The five Stalks of Lotus-flowers given by Sumittā

It was the time of the golden occasion of welcoming the Buddha Dipaṅkarā to the great city of Rammāvati. The citizens of Rammāvati were repairing the road, eagerly waiting for the coming of Dipaṅkarā Buddha. While travelling through space, the ascetic Sumedhā saw the citizens being engaged cheerfully in road-reconstruction and city-decoration.

Wondering what was going on below, he came down and questioned them. They answered that they were repairing the road in order that the Buddha and his disciples could tread on it comfortably.

The ascetic Sumedhā felt greatly delighted and thought: "Oh! it's very hard to hear the word 'Buddha', and it is, indeed, harder to become a Buddha." He requested them to give him a chance to repair a part of the road.

Although the road-repairing could be finished quickly by his supernormal power, he used his own labour with the view that he would earn more merit by using his labour than by using his super-normal power. Before he finished repairing his portion of the road, the Buddha and his disciples came. To prevent the feet of the Buddha and his disciples from getting soiled, he prostrated himself on the mud to form a human-bridge. Among the welcoming people, there was a young woman named Sumittā. As soon as the young woman saw the ascetic, she was very happy and delighted. So, she gave five lotus-flowers to him leaving three lotus-flowers in her hands. The ascetic offered the flowers to the Buddha while lying on the muddy road.

The firm Determination and the bold Proclamation

On seeing the Buddha's noble glory, the young Sumedhā thought: "If I wish, I can even today become an Arahat who has eliminated all kilesās (defilements). Yet it is not appropriate for me to leave others wandering in saṃsāra although I have enough energy to save all beings. I will try to become a Buddha like the Buddha Dipaṅkarā. So he immediately decided with firm resolution to become a Buddha.

Afterwards, he made the following bold proclamations:-

Buddho bodeyyam = As I know the Four Noble Truths, so shall I make others know them;

Mutto moceyyam = As I am liberated from the bonds of life, so shall I make others be liberated likewise;

Tiṇṇo Tāreyyam = As I swim across the great whirlpool of saṃsāra, so shall I make others do the same.

The Buddha Dipaṅkarā, standing in front of Sumedhā prophesied as follows: "This young

ascetic, lying down as a bridge at the risk of his life, will become a Buddha like me in the future." On hearing this, the audience cheered and honoured Sumedhā. The Buddha did not tread on him, but passed by him. The disciples of the Buddha followed suit. The future Buddha, ascetic Sumedhā, having gained the prophecy made by the Dīpaṅkara Buddha, got up and sat crosslegged with great joy. When he reviewed ways and means to be a Buddha, he found the Ten Noble Perfections - i.e. charity, morality... etc. While he reflected on the Ten Perfections repeatedly, the earth shook violently as if cheering the Bodhisatta.

The Fulfilment of the Perfections

The ascetic Sumedhā, the Bodhisatta, fulfilled the Ten Perfections with unshakable effort throughout his uncountable existences.

The Fulfilment of the Perfection of Charity

Firstly, he fulfilled the perfection of charity, giving away his own properties, properties, both animate and inanimate to others. By the fulfilment of the perfection of charity, he did

not aspire to receive worldly pleasures, but to achieve the Supreme Enlightenment. He fulfilled the perfection of charity in many existences. Among them the lives of King Sivi and King Vessantarā are very well known. King Sivi, the Bodhisatta, was very earnest in giving charity, and so Sakka, the king of Devas, wanted to investigate his inclination. Thus, the Sakka, in the form of an old blind brahmin, asked for an eye of King Sivi. King Sivi took out both of his eyes and offered them to him willingly.

Also, the Bodhisatta, in the life of King Vessantarā, donated food, clothing and other utensils, that were valued at six hundred-thousand silver coins, in six pavilions daily. Once, the brahmins from Kalinga asked the king to donate to them the invaluable white elephant and the king offered it generously too. The people objected to the last donation, for the white elephant was regarded as a great honourable treasure to the country and to the people. Therefore, he had to leave his royal palace and live as an ascetic in the valley of Vankabā in the Himavanta together with his Queen Maddī Devī, his son Jāli and his daughter Kahnājina. During that time, the brahmin Jūjakā asked for his children and he offered them. He

also offered his wife Queen Maddī to the Sakka who disguised himself as a brahmin.

Thus, the Bodhisatta had donated not only his own properties but also his wife and children in the fulfilment of the perfection of charity throughout his past existences. Moreover, he had sacrificed his own limbs and even his own life without hesitation in many existences.

The Fulfilment of the Perfection of Morality

Controlling bodily and verbal actions in order to avoid demerits is called Morality or Precepts (Sīla). There are different kinds of Sīla -- five precepts, eight precepts, ..etc. The Bodhisatta fulfilled the perfection of morality in his many past lives. There is a well known example of Prince Alīnasattu who fulfilled the perfection of morality. The father of Prince Alīnasattu, while hunting in the forest, got to a banyan tree that was dominated by an ogre who had the right to catch and eat everybody who passed nearby. He returned home after giving a promise to the ogre that he would come back the next day to be eaten by the

ogre. When his son Alīnasattu learnt about that matter, the prince himself went to the ogre on behalf of his father. When the ogre saw the prince coming boldly, the ogre dared not kill him. Finally, the ogre listened to the teachings of the prince and became one who observed the five precepts. The Bodhisatta had already sacrificed his life to fulfil the perfection of charity. Why dared not he risk his life in fulfilling the perfection of morality ?

The Fulfilment of the Perfection of Renunciation

Leading an ascetic life and forsaking worldly sensual pleasures is called the fulfilment of the perfection of renunciation. There are many lives of the Bodhisatta in which he fulfilled the perfection of renunciation. Of them, the life of Prince Ayoghara is the most notable. After the birth of Prince Ayoghara, he had to live only in an iron cage due to the danger of ogres. He had to learn lessons there up to the age of sixteen. When he was sixteen, his father arranged to give him the throne and he was taken out of the cage. At that time, the prince thought to himself: "I had been in my

mother's womb for ten months and in the iron cage for sixteen years. Though I had escaped from them, I have not escaped from death yet." So, he relinquished the royal throne and went to the forest to lead an ascetic life.

The Fulfilment of the Perfection of Wisdom

In fulfilling the perfection of wisdom one has to seek the knowledge and develop wisdom first. Then one has to teach others what one has already learnt and perform meritorious deeds for the welfare of others with his knowledge. Such a deed is called the fulfilment of the perfection of wisdom. It is obvious that the Bodhisatta Mahosadha, in the fulfilment of the perfection of wisdom, performed public welfare-work by the power of his wisdom. King Cūḷanī Brahmadata planned to arrest one hundred kings of the Jambudīpa and kill them by poisoning their liquors. Mahosadha, the wise man, destroyed that plan by the power of his wisdom. Moreover, Mahosadha, by his wisdom, was able to settle the dispute between the two kings, Cūḷanī Brahmadata and Videharāja, to a peaceful situation without any casualty.

The Fulfilment of the Perfection of Effort

Every exertion for the welfare of all beings is called the fulfilment of the perfection of effort. The Bodhisatta never slackened his effort. Either for his own benefit or for others, he diligently put forth strenuous effort without hesitation. He never gave up anything out of idleness or sleepiness; he was always diligent regardless of heat or cold, early or late. In the life of Mahājanaka, the diligent effort of the Bodhisatta was notable. One day, Mahājanaka, together with seven hundred people, sailed in a ship for the sake of trading in other lands. While the ship was crossing the seas, it was violently struck by a storm. Although all men on board were desperate and did not attempt to survive the disaster, the Bodhisatta used all his strength and swam in the wide ocean for seven days. Then he not only escaped from the disaster with the help of the goddess Manimekhalā but also gained the throne of Mithilā. If he did not make any effort to swim, he would not meet anyone who would save him, and he would die like others.

The Fulfilment of the Perfection of Patience

Tolerance and forbearance arise out of a peaceful mind with the thought: "If I retaliate the ill-treatment done to me by a stupid person, I shall also be a stupid one." Such a practice is called the fulfilment of the perfection of patience. The Bodhisatta, for the welfare of all beings, fulfilled the perfection of patience in every existence. Regarding the fulfilment of the perfection of patience, the life of the great monkey-king is remarkable. While a brahmin, the future Devadatta, climbed up a tree, a branch broke, and he fell into a ravine. As the monkey saw him crying, the monkey took him out of the ravine. While the tired monkey was sleeping with his head upon the brahmin's lap, the stupid ungrateful brahmin mercilessly struck the monkey's head with a stone in order to have its flesh as his meal. So, the monkey woke up and suddenly ran up a tree. But the monkey still worried that the stupid brahmin might lose his way in the forest and die. As he dared not get down to the ground, he jumped from one tree to another, showing the brahmin the way to his home by the drops of blood shedding from his head.

The Fulfilment of the Perfection of Truthfulness

Telling the truth and keeping one's promise is called the perfection of truthfulness. The Bodhisatta did not tell lies; he kept his word as he promised others and he did as he said in order to fulfil the perfection of truthfulness.

The life of King Mahāsutasoma is remarkable in the fulfilment of the perfection of truthfulness. While the Bodhisatta became Mahāsutasoma, King Porisāda was expelled from his country, because he was found eating human flesh. He lived in a forest hunting human beings passing by. One day his sole was pierced by a sharp stump. In order to heal the wound, he made a pledge to the guardian deva of a banyan tree, saying: "Oh Deva, help me, please! If you heal my wound during one week, I will offer you as a sacrifice the blood from the throats of all Jambudīpa kings." Within one week his wound healed of its own accord, but he thought that it was cured by the guardian deva of the banyan tree. Thus he caught all Jambudīpa Kings to offer their blood as a sacrifice. King Sutasoma, just before being arrested, made a promise to a brahmin to listen to the Dhamma propounded by the brahmin.

So he requested Porisāda to let him fulfil his promise to the brahmin, promising that he would come back after listening to the Dhamma. Porisāda released him easily. After he had heard the Dhamma, though he knew that he would be killed, he came back to Porisāda without breaking his promise. Porisāda was surprised to see him again and asked why he was not afraid to die. King Sutasoma preached the Dhamma to Porisāda and thus Porisāda became a good man. So he released all the arrested kings. With the help of King Sutasoma, Porisāda regained his kingdom.

The Fulfilment of the Perfection of Resolution

The Pāli word, "Adhiṭṭhāna" means firm determination or resolution to perform the good deeds that have already been planned to be done. The Bodhisatta, in his many past existences, fulfilled the perfection of resolution. It is most obvious that the Bodhisatta fulfilled the perfection of resolution in the life of Prince Temiya. The Bodhisatta, in his previous existence before the life of Prince Temiya, had been born in niraya for some minor error in his judgement as a king in settling disputes

The one-month-old prince Temiya, lying under a white royal parasol, attained the knowledge of Jātūssara that could recall the previous existences. While he was gazing at the white parasol, he saw his life in hell. He was greatly shocked and afraid of becoming a king. So, the goddess of the white parasol, who had been his mother in a past life, knowing this intention, advised him thus. "My beloved son, Temiya, don't be afraid; if you don't want to be a king, pretend yourself to be a dumb and deaf person."

From that time onwards, he made up his mind to pretend to be a dumb and deaf person. So he did not speak and he did not listen to anyone. When he was sixteen, his father decided that he was not worthy of the royal throne and gave the order to expel him to the forest and kill him there. When he was about to be killed, he explained to his parents why he pretended to be deaf and dumb. Then he made himself a recluse.

The Fulfilment of the Perfection of Loving-kindness (Mettā)

Mettā means wishing for the well-being of others. One, who has cultivated loving-kindness, does not look at others' faults even

when he is insulted verbally or bodily. Viewing only the virtues of others, he goes on endeavouring for others' welfare.

To become a fully-enlightened Buddha, the Bodhisatta fulfilled the perfection of loving-kindness in his many past existences. In the life of the ascetic Suvāṇṇasāma, he lived in the forest and looked after his parents who were blinded by a venomous snake. He also loved with true loving-kindness harmless animals as well as wild beasts such as lions, tigers, leopards, etc. He cultivated loving-kindness firmly and never felt angry even towards the king, Pīliyakka, who shot him with a poisoned arrow, taking him to be a beast. Later, by the power of loving-kindness and truthfulness, the poison became ineffective and disappeared. Thus not only his life was saved but also his parents regained their eye-sight.

The Fulfilment of the Perfection of Equanimity

The Pāli word 'Upekkhā' means equilibrium of the mind, not having a bias on account of hatred or love. The life of Lomaharīsa was very famous in the fulfilment of the perfection

of equanimity. Lomahamsa, the Bodhisatta, when his parents died, gave all his properties in donation and went into a forest. Although he wished to become an ascetic, he did not have a desire to be praised by people. So he wandered around with a single set of clothing. He did not stay for a long time in a place where he was well treated and revered. When he reached a village, though he was jeered and mocked insolently by wicked children and drunkards, he was not angry with them. In a cemetery, he slept with his head on a skull. The wicked kids gathered, and insulted him by spitting and discharging excrement and urine on him. He neither got angry with the children nor blamed them, nor felt depressed. Some people offered him flowers, good food and drinks. But he did not feel affectionate towards them either. His attitude towards good and bad was indifferent. He steadfastly maintained an equilibrium of mind (Upekkhā) under any situation.

Ten Pāramīs and Thirty Pāramīs

When the above ten Pāramīs are multiplied by Pāramī (minor Perfection), Upapāramī (middle Perfection) and Paramattha Pāramī (major

perfection), there are altogether thirty kinds of Pāramī. For example, if material things are donated as the fulfilment of Pāramī, it is called Dāna Pāramī. If body-organs such as eye and kidney are given away, it is called Dāna Upapāramī. Moreover, if one's own life is offered to others, it is called Dāna Paramattha Pāramī.

The Bodhisatta, who constantly fulfilled the Ten Perfections through four Asaṅkhyeyyas and one lakh world systems, reached the zenith of his fulfilment in the life of King Vesantarā.

Three Noble Practices (Cariya)

The Bodhisatta, in fulfilling the perfections throughout his previous existences, practised the following three cariyas:-

(a) *Lokattha Cariya* = the noble practice aiming at the welfare of all beings;

(b) *Ñātattha Cariya* = the noble practice aiming at the welfare of his own relatives and race;

- (c) *Buddhattha Cariya*=the noble practice aiming at becoming the fully enlightened Buddha who can save beings from the sufferings of *Samsāra*.

The Fivefold Great Sacrifice

In the exercise of Ten perfections in his many past existences, the Bodhisatta made the following fivefold great sacrifice:-

- (1) the sacrifice of the most valuable treasure, royal kingdom and royal properties (*Dhanapariccāga*);
- (2) the sacrifice of sons and daughters (*Puttapariccāga*);
- (3) the sacrifice of one's wife (*Bhariyapariccāga*);
- (4) the sacrifice of one's limb (*Aṅgapariccāga*); and
- (5) the sacrifice of one's own life (*Jīvitapariccāga*).

The Bodhisatta fulfilled the perfections, the fivefold sacrifices and the three cariyas

throughout his past existences, in order to achieve only one reward, i.e. the Omniscience or *Sabbaññutañāṇa*. Indeed, the *Sabbaññutañāṇa* is so great that the *Tathāgatas* have to exert great effort for a very long duration in order to achieve it.

Incomparable Achievements Arise out of Incomparable Sacrifices

The Bodhisatta's sacrificial and selfless efforts, aiming at the reward of the Omniscience, are only for the welfare of all beings, but not for his own. Everyone should help others liberally for their welfare. As these perfections lead the whole society to peace and prosperity, he who fulfils the perfections can also achieve success as much as he does.

As a matter of fact, the Bodhisatta gave his life as a sacrifice for the welfare of the world selflessly and peerlessly. So he was endowed with everything needed in his final life. He is incomparable! He is supreme! He is peerless! We should follow the perfect example of the Buddha!

The Life of Prince Siddhattha, the Future Buddha

The Demise from the Abode of Devas

After being prophesied by Dipaṅkarā Buddha and the other twenty three Buddhas who appeared during four Asaṅkhyeyyas and one hundred thousand world cycles as well, the Bodhisatta fulfilled the Perfections. He had accumulated the ten Perfections completely by the time he was reborn as King Vessantara. And then he was reborn as Deva Setaketu in the abode of Tusitā. The Deva enjoyed the supreme divine bliss throughout his life. When the end of his life drew near, the Devas and the Brahmas from ten thousand universes gathered and approached him. They requested, "Dear Deva, it is the right time for you to become a Buddha. May you be reborn in the human abode."

The Five Great Observations

The Bodhisatta Deva did not consent to their request instantly; he first made the following five great observations:

(1) *Period (Kāla)*: The proper period for a Buddha to appear is when

the life-span of human beings is between one hundred thousand years and one hundred years.

(2) *Island-Continent (Dīpa)*: Among the four great island continents, only the Jambudīpa or the Southern Island-continent is the place where Buddhas appear.

(3) *Place (Desa)*: Even in the southern Island-continent, Buddhas appear only in Majjhima Desa--Middle Regions.

(4) *Clan (Kula)*: In Majjhima Desa, Buddhas came of only royal clan, khatthiya, or Brahmana clan.

(5) *The Mother's Life-span (Mātu āyupariccheda)*

The future mother of Buddha must possess good moral character and must have fulfilled the perfections for one hundred thousand worlds. Moreover, her life-span must be such that she dies on the seventh day after giving birth to the Bodhisatta.

The Birth of the Bodhisatta at Lumbini Park

The Deva Setaketu, after making the five great observations, agreed to be reborn in the human abode. Soon after he gave his promise, he passed away from the abode of Tusitā, and was duly conceived in the womb of Mahāmayā Devī, the chief queen of King Suddhodana. Right at the time of his conception there broke out a violent earthquake. The date of his conception was Thursday, the fullmoon day of Waso (about July) in the year 67 Mahā Era (624 B.C). While Mahāmayā Devī was sleeping in her royal chamber, having observed eight precepts she dreamed as follows:-

"The four Kings of Devas bathed her in Lake Anotatta in the Himavanta and dressed her in celestial costumes. Next she was put to sleep with her head towards the east in the golden mansion inside the silver mountain. At that time, she felt that a white elephant entered her womb through her right side."

The Three Bold Utterances

On the fullmoon day of Kason (about May), the royal mother, Mahāmayā Devī, set

out on a journey to Devadaha where her relatives lived. Now the ten-month gestation period had ended. Between Kapilavatthu and Devadaha, there was a grove of Sal trees known as Lumbini.

The Sal trees were in full bloom. The Bodhisatta was born while the royal mother was holding on to a branch of a fully blooming Sal tree. At that time, too, the earth quaked violently.

Devas and Brahmas paid homage to the Bodhisatta who had just been born. The Bodhisatta prince, standing on the ground, looked towards the ten directions. After taking seven steps northwards and standing erect firmly on the ground, he boldly proclaimed the following solemn utterances:-

(a) Aggohamasami Lokassa:

I am the foremost among the living beings of the world.

(b) Jetthohamasami Lokassa:

I am the greatest among the living beings of the world.

(c) Setthohamasami Lokassa:

I am the noblest among the living beings of the world.

Next, the royal mother, Mahāmāyā, returned to Kapilavatthu with her son, the Bodhisatta prince. The Bodhisatta was born on Friday, the fullmoon day of Kason (about May) in the year 69 Mahā Era (623 B.C). Mahāmāyā passed away on the seventh day after giving birth to her son and was reborn in the Tusitā realm.

Handing over the Throne to the Bodhisatta

The royal father King Suddhodana invited the brahmin prophets, who mastered the three Vedas, and asked them to examine the physical marks of the prince on the fifth day after he had been delivered. The seven Brahmins predicted: "If the prince leads the life of a householder, he will become a Universal Monarch; if he renounces the world he will become a Buddha." The youngest prophet Koṇḍañña, however, prophesied, "He will certainly become a Buddha." The prince was named Siddhattha as he could fulfil the desires of all living beings and bring about their prosperity as well. He belonged to the Gotama clan.

and looked after the prince on behalf of her elder sister.

At the age of sixteen, the prince had already learnt what a prince should do. King Suddhodana wanted his son to become a Universal Monarch. The King managed to construct the three grand, magnificent mansions called Ramma, Subha and Suramma as royal residence for the prince to sojourn during the three seasons in turn and he crowned the prince king so that the latter should not renounce the world and live in the forest.

The prince chose Yasodarā as his consort. She was the daughter of King Suppabuddha who was the brother of his late mother. He made her his chief queen and lived in the lap of great luxury at each of the three elegant palaces in accord with the three seasons.

Seeing the Four Great Omens

Prince Siddhattha, after enjoying the luxurious pleasures of a King for 13 years, came to the age of twenty-nine. He used to go to the royal garden together with his retinue. On his way to the royal garden, he saw the four great omens, namely an old man, a sick man, a dead

the age of twenty-nine. He used to go to the royal garden together with his retinue. On his way to the royal garden, he saw the four great omens, namely an old man, a sick man, a dead man and a recluse. Each of them was created by devas (gods) after an interval of four months. The royal father Siddhodana took measures to prevent the Bodhisatta from seeing these miserable sights with the help of his guards, because he was worried that the Bodhisatta might renounce the worldly life. So the Bodhisatta had never seen the aged, the sick, the dead and the recluse till then. When he saw the four great omens consecutively, he was shocked and remorseful. An idea flashed into his mind: "I shall also, one day, become old, sick and die." He could not bring himself to enjoy the luxury and pleasures of the palace. Therefore, he was determined: "I shall renounce the worldly pleasures today to become a recluse like the one I had seen." While he was staying in the royal garden, he was informed that his chief queen Yasodarā had given birth to a son and he was startled, thinking: "There appears one more fetter." And he decided, "I will renounce the world tonight."

He murmured: "This son will hinder me

from renouncing the world just like the Devil Rāhu seizing the moon." That is why the royal son was named Rāhulā.

Renunciation

When he got to the palace from the royal garden, he went to bed early, because he did not want to enjoy the royal entertainment as usual. The lady-attendants fell asleep in the light of scented oil-lamps. They were all asleep--some with their thighs or calves exposed, some with saliva oozing from the corners of their lips, some opening their mouths wide, some snoring and some rolling, turning and talking in their sleep. When the Bodhisatta woke up at midnight, he felt as if the sleeping lady-attendants were corpses and he himself were in a cemetery. So he decided to leave the palace at once.

The Deterrence of the Evil Māra and the Welcome of Devas and Brahmas

The Bodhisatta woke up Channa and ordered him to get the royal horse Kaṇḍaka saddled. Then he went to the royal chamber of Yasodarā as he wished to see his son.

Yasodarā with the son by her side was sleeping, embracing him warmly. Although he wanted to take his son into his hands, he turned back from the threshold of the chamber lest she would be awakened and be a disturbance to his renunciation.

The Bodhisatta, riding on Kaṇḍaka, left the palace along with Minister Channa. It was Monday, the fullmoon day of Waso, 97 Mahā Era (594 B.C). Thereupon, the evil Māra, standing in the sky, deterred him, saying: "On the seventh day from now, the Flying Wheel Treasure will appear and you will be the Universal Monarch who rules over the four island-continent. Do not renounce this world."

"Oh, Māra, I know that the Wheel Treasure will arise seven days later. I don't want the Universal Kingship. I will strive to become a Buddha." So saying he went on his journey. The devas and the brahmas who were looking forward to the appearance of the Buddha were delighted so much that they went together with the Bodhisatta, holding up beautiful, colourful torches, scattering flowers and sandalwood powder, singing and playing musical instruments.

The Lamentation of the Whole Palace

On reaching the other bank of Anomā river at dawn, the Bodhisatta took his hair-knot by one hand, and with a sword in the other, cut it off. The hair remained at that length, i.e. at two finger-breadth, until his death.

When he threw up the hair-knot into the sky, making a solemn resolution: "If I should certainly become a Buddha, may this hair stay in the sky", the hair did stay in the sky. Sakka, the king of devas, received it with a jewelled casket and took it to Tāvātimsa. Then he built the Cuḷāmani pagoda, enshrining the hair relic in it.

Next the Bodhisatta received the alms-bowl and the yellow robes offered by the Brahma Ghaṭikāra. Then, donning the robe, he took up the life of an ascetic. Brahma Ghaṭikāra took the royal dress of the Bodhisatta to the Brahma abode and built Dussa Cetiya, enshrining the dress. The Bodhisatta sent his minister Channa with the horse Kaṇḍaka back to the capital. Kaṇḍaka left his master in great despair. When it lost sight of its master, it could bear its grief no more and died. Channa continued his journey alone and reported the news to the king. On hearing the news, the whole palace burst into tears.

The Request of Bimbisāra

After becoming an ascetic, the Bodhisatta stayed in the mango grove called Anuppiya near Anoma river for seven days and then he proceeded to Rājagaha. When he went into the town for alms-food, the citizens looked admiringly at the splendid and graceful appearance of the Bodhisatta. On hearing the news, King Bimbisāra followed and pleaded with the Bodhisatta who was residing at the foot of Mount Pantava. The King pleaded with the Bodhisatta not to lead a homeless life as he was still very young. Moreover, the King admired and respected the Bodhisatta so much that he offered his kingship to the Bodhisatta. The Bodhisatta refused what he was offered. At last King Bimbisāra requested the Bodhisatta to come first to his country when he attained the Buddhahood.

PRACTISING AUSTERITIES

Devas Thought that Siddhattha was dead

The Bodhisatta left for the groves not far from the southern part of Rājagaha. He placed himself under the guidance of the two

ascetic leaders, Ājāra and Udaka, and practised for Jhāna (concentration). He soon gained the mundane jhanic ecstasy. Knowing his capability, the two ascetic leaders made him leader as themselves. But he did not accept their proposals. He decided that the power of his jhānic ecstasy was not the way to attain the omniscience. Thus he proceeded to the Uruvela grove.

In those days, there prevailed an ideology among the ascetics that one can attain enlightenment only by means of practising strenuous and severe austerities. Hence the Bodhisatta practised them in the Uruvela grove for six years. He took food very sparingly. He undertook the difficult practice very severely, having just a fruit for the whole day. Sometimes he took no food at all. His flesh and blood dried up because of the severe self-denial. The thirty-two special bodily marks disappeared and the bright golden complexion became gray also. The skin of the belly stuck to the spinal-cord. His sacred body was reduced to a skeleton. Indeed, he was nearly dying. The skin of the head wrinkled and withered like a little tender gourd dried up in the sun. As he was very frail, he fell down and fainted while walking with the contempla-

tion of breathing-out and breathing-in. Some devas thought that Siddhatthā was dead.

After having practised austerities for six years, he reflected that he would not be able to attain enlightenment unless he was healthy and strong. So he went round for alms again and followed the Middle Way (Majjhimapaṭipadā). Thus, his complexion became golden and bright again; and he became strong enough to practise the Middle Way. The thirty-two special bodily marks of the greatest man reappeared. The group of five ascetics--Koṇḍañña, Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahānāma and Assaji--had attended to the Bodhisatta while he was practising austerities for six long years. They were looking forward to hear the very first discourse when he attained Buddhahood. Nevertheless, when he partook of food again by going round for alms to sustain himself and followed the Middle Way, they became disappointed with him. So they departed from him and left for the Migadāya (Deer Park).

Sujāta's Offering of Milk-Rice

There was a market town called Senā near Urūvela Grove. Sujāta, the daughter of a wealthy man there, offered food in oblation to

the deva of a banyan tree on the fullmoon day of Kason yearly as all her wishes were fulfilled. On the fullmoon day of Kason of that year, Sujāta offered the gold cup with milk-rice in it to the Bodhisatta, who was sitting magnificently under the banyan tree. She thought that the guardian deva himself was sitting to receive her offering.

After the Bodhisatta had cleansed himself in the River Nerañjarā, he took forty-nine mouthfuls of milk-rice. After he had taken the food he placed the gold cup afloat in the river, making the solemn resolution: "If I shall become a Buddha today, may this gold cup float upstream." The gold cup floated upstream for eighty cubits and then sank down.

Vanquishing the Māra

Then the Bodhisatta stayed the whole day in the Sal grove near Nerañjarā, reflecting on the constituent parts of the body. In the evening, on the way to the Bodhi Tree, he accepted eight handfuls of grass offered by Sothiya, the grass-cutter. The Bodhisatta approached the Bodhi Tree from the east, went around the tree clockwise three times, and scattered the eight handfuls of grass at the foot of

the tree. Thereupon, the magnificent jewelled throne, 'Aparājita pallaṅka' appeared marvellously. He sat cross-legged on it, facing eastward with his back against the trunk of the Bodhi Tree.

Then he made the solemn resolution: "Let my flesh and blood dry up, and let only my skin, nerves and bones remain! Never shall I unfold this cross-legged position until I attain Buddhahood!" Then the Bodhisatta cultivated mindfulness of breathing-out and breathing-in and remained completely absorbed in the fourth jhānic ecstasy.

On seeing the Bodhisatta seated with firm and solemn resolution, Māra knew that the Bodhisatta would certainly attain Buddhahood on that day. So he disturbed and fought him, riding Girimekhalā elephant and leading numerous fighting forces armed with various weapons. Māra attacked the Bodhisatta incessantly by creating violent storms, by showering weapons and hot ash, etc., as if the world were going to be destroyed. The Bodhisatta, however, vanquished him by virtue of the power of Perfections which he had accomplished through four asankhyeyyas and one hundred-thousand worlds. The Bodhisatta repulsed successfully the force of Māra before the sun-set.

The Attainment of Buddhahood

Contemplating on mindfulness of breathing-out and breathing-in and remaining absorbed in the fourth Ānāpāna jhanic ecstasy, the Bodhisatta gained the Pubbenivāsānussatiñāṇa -- the power that recollects past existences of himself as well as of others -- during the first watch of the night. In the middle watch of the night, he attained Dibbacakkhuñāṇa -- the power of supernormal vision to see penetratively things, big or small, far or near fine or gross, like the divine eyes. In the last watch of the night, the Bodhisatta contemplated the "Law of Cause and Effect" and practised insight meditation. Then he fully realized the Four Noble Truths and attained Āsavekkhaya or Arahattamaggañāṇa -- the highest power which enables one to eradicate defilements absolutely.

As soon as the Bodhisatta gained the Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa, he also attained Omniscience, Sabbaññūta-ñāṇa, Full Enlightenment. He attained Buddhahood at the age of 35. It was Wednesday, the fullmoon day of Kason, in the year 103 Mahā Era (589 B.C) when he became the Enlightened One who was worthy of veneration of all living beings -- human beings, devas and brahmas -- and was incompar-

rable by gaining Omniscience. All devas and brahmas from the ten-thousand worlds came to pay obeisance to the Buddha delightfully and happily. The earth vehemently trembled and resounded with the roll of thunder bursting loudly in the sky. All flowering plants of the whole world bloomed out of season, as if they were paying homage to the Buddha.

The Attributes of Sabbaññuta-ñāṇa

The Buddha gained the great Omniscience, Sabbaññutañāṇa, in his last existence as he had accomplished the Ten Perfections, the Three Noble Practices and the five Great Sacrifices. By the power of Omniscience, the Buddha knew all things that should be known. He fully realized every phenomenon -- both the conditioned and the unconditioned.

Of all that should be known, the Buddha absolutely knew about each and everything from the beginning to the end. Here are the three attributes of the Omniscience:

- (1) Knowing all things to be known without exception,
- (2) Knowing the natural tendencies of the person who is going to hear the discourse, and

- (3) Knowing how to expound the discourse.

After achieving the supreme Enlightenment, the Buddha, rejoicing at his conquest, uttered the following Verse of Victory.

1. *Anekajāti saṃsāraṃ
sandhāvissaraṃ anihbisaraṃ
Gahakāraṃ gavesanta
dukkhā jāti punappunaraṃ*
2. *Gahakāraḍiṭṭho si
Puna geharaṃ na kāhasi
Sabbā te phāsukā bhaggā
gahakutaraṃ visaraṃkhitaraṃ
Visaraṃkhāragataraṃ cittaṃ
taṇhanaṃ khayaraṃ ajjhagā.*

1. Through many a birth I wandered in Samsāra, seeking, but not finding, the builder of the house. Sorrowful it is to be born again and again.

2. O! house--builder! Thou art seen. Thou shalt build no house again. All thy rafters are broken. Thy ridge-pole is shattered.

My mind has attained the unconditioned. Achieved is the end of craving.

The Six Heretics Who Claimed To Be Buddhas

The Buddha appeared as an incomparable Omniscient One in the world. There had been a rumour about the appearance of the Omniscient Buddha one thousand years beforehand.

There had also appeared many branches of knowledge including the system for identifying the features of the Greatest Man. The people were eager to see the Buddha, the Exalted One. At that time, there appeared many impostors who claimed themselves to be the Buddha. Among them were six prominent heretics who were roaming about with their followers proclaiming their own doctrines.

They were:

- (1) Pūrāṇa Kassapa,
- (2) Makkhali Gosāla,
- (3) Ajita Kesakambala,
- (4) Pakudha Kaccāyana,
- (5) Sañcaya Belaṅṅhaputta, and
- (6) Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta.

They were, in fact, just impostors who appeared prior to the enlightenment of the Real Buddha. So the wise did not accept them as

the real Buddhas. However, the ignorant majority went to them for refuge taking them to be the real Buddhas and got ensnared in their wrong views.

Seven Days Each at Seven Places

- (1) **Pallaṅka Sattāha**: - After attaining the Buddhahood, the Buddha remained seated on the throne under the Bodhi Tree enjoying the blissful peace of Phalasamāpatti for the whole week. (This seven-day period is called Pallaṅka Sattāha.)
- (2) **Animisa Sattāha** - After rising from the throne, the Buddha went to the place 48 cubits away to the north-east of the throne and stood there gazing back at the golden throne and the Bodhi Tree without closing his eyes for one whole week. (This seven-day period is called Animisa Sattāha.)
- (3) **Caṅkama Sattāha** - Next, he spent one whole week walking up and down a jewelled path which extended east

to west 60 cubits between the Bodhi Tree and the place where he had formerly stood. (This seven-day period is called Caṅkamaṣattāha.)

- (4) **Ratanāgara Sattāha** - After that the Buddha went to the jewelled chamber, known as Ratanāgara, which was created by devas at a place 40 cubits away from the Bodhi Tree. It was situated to the north-west of the Bodhi Tree. There the Buddha contemplated his most profound teaching-Abhidhammā. When he contemplated the final portion of the Abhidhammā, known as Mahāpaṭṭhāna, his mind became very pure and consequently his blood and complexion also became very clear. Thereupon, the six coloured rays brilliantly emanated from every part of his sacred body and spread through the whole universe. (This seven-day period is called Ratanāgara Sattāha.)
- (5) **Ajapāla Sattāha** - The Buddha then went to the Ajapāla banyan tree where the goatherds used to rest. The

banyan tree was situated, on the bank of the Nerañjarā River, 128 cubits away to the east of the Bodhi Tree. Under the banyan tree, the Buddha enjoyed the blissful peace of Phalasaṃpatti for seven days. During these days, the three daughters of Māra, who was in despair because he had lost the battle against the Bodhisatta, felt pity for their father. So they came to entice the Buddha in various seductive guises. As their enticing had no effect on the Buddha, they went away. (This seven-day period is called Ajapāla Sattāha.)

- (6) **Mucalinda Sattāha** - There was a *barrigatanis accutangula* tree, called Mucalinda, which was situated two hundred cubits away to the south-east of the Bodhi Tree. There was also a lake called Mucalinda near that tree. The Buddha went to the foot of that tree and enjoyed the bliss of Nibbāna by entering upon Phalasaṃpatti. At that time great showers of rain fell for seven

successive days and thus the weather was very cold. The Dragon King, Mucalinda, of the lake sheltered the Buddha by winding his body seven times around the Buddha's body and holding his head over the Buddha's head. (This seven-day period is called Mucalinda Sattāha.)

- (7) Rājāyatana Sattāha - Finally the Buddha went to *buchanania lalifolia* tree called Rajāyatana, which lay 160 cubits away from the Bodhi Tree. There he enjoyed the blissful peace of Nibbāna by entering upon Phalasaṃpatti for seven days. (This seven-day period is called Rājāyatana Sattāha)

Offering the First Alms-food

After the Rājāyatana Sattāha the Buddha ate myrobalan fruit offered by the Sakka and had a motion. He also cleaned his teeth and mouth by chewing liquorice wood, also offered by the Sakka, and washed his face with the pure water of Lake Anotatta. Indeed, he did not have any food during those 49 days.

The nutritive essence of milk-rice of Sujāta sustained him through that long period. His complexion was radiant and his face was calm and peaceful.

While the Buddha was staying under the Rājāyatana tree, the two merchant-brothers, Tapussa and Bhallika, citizens of Pokkharavati of Ukkalā Division, were on their way to Majjhima desa (Middle Region) with 500 carts loaded with goods. They were informed about the appearance of the Buddha by a deva who had been one of their relatives in their past existence. Thus they came to venerate the Buddha.

The merchant-brothers went to the Buddha and offered him rice-cake and honey. The Buddha blessed them and let them take refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma. They were the very first devotees to have taken refuge in the two Sacred Gems. Afterwards, they pleaded the Buddha to give them something to be worshipped for ever. Thus the Buddha touched his head with his right hand and gave them some hair. When they arrived back in Ukkalā, they built a shrine called Tikumba on the Siṅguttara Hill and enshrined the hair relics. It is traditionally believed that that shrine is the Shwedagon pagoda in Myanmar now.

Request to Expound the Dhamma

After staying at the seven places for seven days each, the Buddha went back to the Ajapāla banyan tree from Rājāyatana, contemplated the dhamma which he had gained and pondered thus: "I have already attained the Omniscience and have already done what is to be done at the foot of the Bodhi Tree for my own sake. But, in the life of Sumedhā, I proclaimed that:-

Buddho bodheyyam = As I know the Four Noble Truths, so shall I make others know them;

Mutto moceyyam = As I am free from the fetters binding me to existences, so shall I make others free from the fetters;

Tiṇṇo Tāreyyam = As I cross over the whirlpool of Samsara, so shall I make others cross over it.

In accordance with these proclamations, it is now the right time to expound the Dhamma.

But the Dhamma that I have realized is indeed profound, subtle and difficult to comprehend. All beings in the world will not be able to understand the dhamma as they are grossly overwhelmed by greed, anger and ignorance. It will be merely wearisome for me if I were to expound the dhamma. Reflecting thus, the Buddha became hesitant to teach the dhamma.

Knowing the Buddha's tendency, the Brahma named Sahampati, together with devas and brahmas, came and requested the Buddha to expound the Dhamma.

It is the nature of the Buddhas to teach the Dhamma only after being requested. To teach the Dhamma only after being requested makes the Dhamma more exalted. Moreover in those days the Brahma was regarded as the Buddha and venerated by the whole world. As the Brahma himself requested the Buddha to teach the dhamma, it became the most respectable and venerable Dhamma.

The Buddha himself actually knew, although the whole world was veiled with ignorance, that there were some persons who were wise enough to understand his Teachings and that they would lose the chance of being

liberated from the whirlpool of Samsarā if they did not hear the Teachings (the Dhamma).

Planning to Expound the First Discourse

After deciding to expound his teachings he looked with his Buddha's Eye to whom he should preach the Dhamma. His two former worldly teachers, Ājāra and Udaka, first appeared in his vision. However he came to realize that Ājāra passed away only seven days ago and Udaka only at the midnight of the previous day. Moreover, he found that they were in the Arūpa -- Brahma realm, where having no physical body they were incapable of listening to the Dhamma.

Then he continued to contemplate who would be able to understand his Teachings. He saw the group of five ascetics who had attended to him when he was meditating at Uruvela forest. They were now in Migadāya Forest near Bāranasi. So he went on foot to that forest which was eighteen yojanas (about 144 miles) away from the Bodhi Tree.

Turning the Wheel of Dhamma

He arrived at the Migadaya forest (a sanctuary for deer) on the evening of the fullmoon day of Waso. He made himself known as a Buddha to the five ascetics and expounded the very first discourse known as *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, which consists of the two extremes to be avoided, the Middle Path to be followed and the Four Noble Truths to be realized. After hearing that discourse, Venerable Koṇḍanna and the eighteen crores of devas and brahmas became sotāpannas (stream winners). There broke out a booming earth-quake -- a great rejoicing of the devas and the brahmas over the preaching of the discourse.

The Buddha preached this Sutta in the evening, when the sun had just set and the moon began to rise. It was Saturday, the fullmoon day of Waso (about May) in the year 103 Mahā Era (588 B.C). There came numerous devas and brahmas to listen to his Teachings. The flowers bloomed out of season. Thus the whole world was beautifully brilliant in the radiance of the celestial beings. Then the Buddha explained the Sutta in detail to the four ascetics who were not yet enlightened.

Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahānāma and Assaji practised in accordance with the Wheel of Dhamma for four days, from the first waning day to the fourth. And one after another, they entered the stream of Ariya Path. On the fifth waning day of Waso, the Buddha proceeded to preach "*Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta*" to the Group of Five Bhikkhus. At the end of this Sutta, they became arahats, eradicating all defilements.

Thenceforth, there arose the Order of Saṅgha in the world.

The Ordination of Yasa and His Friends

The Buddha observed the rains-retreat or rainy season retreat period together with the Group of Five Bhikkhus. At that time, in Bārāṇasī, a rich man and his wife, Sujāta, had a son called Yasa. He spent his life in ease and luxury. One day, he, however, felt disgusted at the sensual pleasure and left his house stealthily for Issipatana deer park at midnight. He arrived there before dawn and met the Buddha. The Buddha preached him some discourses. After hearing the dhamma he became a stream-winner. The rich man, Yasa's father, also came to the Buddha while searching for his son. The Buddha expounded the

dhamma to the rich man and he also became a stream-winner. And consequently, he was the very first layman to take refuge in the Three Gems (Tevācika).

Yasa, too, attained Arahatship when he heard the discourse preached to his father. The next day, the Buddha and Venerable Yasa went to his parents' house for alms-food. The Buddha expounded the discourse again and Yasa's mother and Yasa's wife became stream-winners as well. Thus they were the first laywomen to take refuge in the Triple Gems.

On hearing of Yasa's ordination, fifty-four of his friends reflected thus: "The Teachings which such a person as Yasa followed must not be an ordinary one." And so they went to the Buddha and they all were admitted into the order of bhikkhus.

The First Bhikkhus on Missionary Work

At that time there were sixty-one arahats, including the Buddha, in the world. Their cankers had already been extinguished. The Group of Five and fifty-five arahats led by Yasa were the 'Ehi-Bhikkhu' arahats, i.e., their layman appearances disappeared and they were transformed into monks when they were merely called by the Buddha, "come, bhikkhus!"

They spent the first rains-retreat period in Issipatana deer park, Bārānaśī. At the end of this period the Buddha sent for the sixty arahats and admonished them thus: "Oh, Bhikkhus! I've already been freed from the defilements and so have you all. Go forth in all directions expounding the Dhamma which is excellent in the beginning, in the middle and in the end for the welfare of men and devas out of compassion to the whole world. Not two of you must go together on the same journey.'

Afterwards the Buddha himself went to Uruvela grove to teach the Dhamma to one thousand ascetics led by the three Kassapa brothers, viz., Uruvela Kassapa, Nadi Kassapa and Gayā Kassapa.

While the Buddha was taking a rest at the foot of a certain tree on his way to Uruvela, he met the thirty Bhaddavaggiya brothers who were searching for a woman who had stolen their ornaments. They happened to come across the Buddha and asked the Buddha whether the Buddha had seen a woman passing by. Then the Buddha asked them in return thus: "Which is better-- searching for a lost woman or searching for oneself?" All the princes replied that searching for oneself is better. Then the Buddha

explained the Dhamma to them and they all became Stream-Winners. The Buddha ordained them as bhikkhus.

Converting the One Thousand Ascetics to the Right Way

Thereafter the Buddha proceeded to the Uruvela forest where the one thousand ascetics lived.

When he arrived there at sun-set, he asked the chief of the ascetics to let him spend the night at their fireplace. The chief Kassapa told him that a fierce dragon lived at the fireplace. The Buddha asked for permission three times and was allowed to spend the night there. Then the Buddha entered the fireplace. The dragon sent out flames towards the Buddha. The Buddha sent back stronger flames and subdued the dragon. He put the dragon in his alms-bowl and showed it to the chief Kassapa. Kassapa was surprised and he requested the Buddha to keep on staying there.

In the following night, Kassapa saw the four great devas; the celestial king Sakka and brahmas giving respect to the Buddha.

Nevertheless, the ascetic thought: "Gotama is mighty and powerful, but he has not attained arahatship as I have." Only after the Buddha had performed one thousand five hundred and six kinds of miraculous power, the ascetics respected and admired the Buddha. They requested the Buddha to ordain them as bhikkhus.

Next the Buddha went to the Gayāsisa together with one thousand bhikkhus. There he delivered the discourse of Ādittapariyāya Sutta which explains how the whole world or the whole body is in flames, i.e., being burnt by the fire of lust, greed, anger, ignorance, rebirth, ageing, death, grief, lamentation, bodily pain, distress of mind and agony. At the end of the discourse, they all attained Arahatsip.

The Buddha's Visit to Rājagaha

King Bimbisāra's Five Aspirations

According to the promise that the Buddha made to King Bimbisāra in his early days of renunciation, the Buddha, together with one thousand bhikkhus led by Kassapa brothers, went to Rājagaha on the fullmoon day of Pyāso (December-January). When they arrived at the large green Palmyra grove near Rājagaha, the

King and one hundred and twenty thousand people welcomed them heartily in great pomp and ceremony.

When the Buddha narrated the jātaka story of 'Mahānārada - kassapa' there, King Bimbisāra and one hundred and ten thousand people became Stream-winners and the remaining ten thousand people became established in the three Refuges.

King Bimbisāra, who had now become a stream -- winner, felt very happy and said to the Buddha: "Venerable Sir, I had five kinds of aspirations when I was a young prince. They all are now fulfilled and so I feel very happy."

The five kinds of aspirations of the King were:-

- (1) the wish to become an anointed king;
- (2) the wish that the Buddha would visit his country;
- (3) the wish to revere and attend to the Buddha when the latter visited his kingdom;
- (4) the wish that the Buddha would expound the dhamma; and
- (5) the wish to understand the dhamma taught to him.

The Great Donation of Veļuvana Monastery

Then King Bimbisāra became a lay-disciple of the Buddha and invited the Buddha and his one thousand bhikkhus for alms-food at his palace the next morning. Then he went back to his palace.

Next morning when the Buddha went to the palace to take alms-food, the crowd that came to pay homage to the Buddha was so big that Sakka (the king of Devas) himself had to assume the form of a young man and lead the way as a forerunner singing the Dhamma songs.

On reaching the palace, the King offered alms-food to the Buddha and the Order of Saṃgha. He also donated the great Veļuvana Garden as a monastic dwelling. As he poured donation water the earth quaked as if the main roots of Buddha's Teachings had been rooted.

Petas, the former Relatives of King Bimbisāra

That very night there were haunting sounds all over the palace of King Bimbisāra and so he could not sleep. Therefore he went

to the Buddha the next morning and told him what had happened.

The Buddha preached thus: 92 world cycles ago, during the time of Phussa Buddha. Bimbisāra and his relatives carried out the duties of offering alms-food to the Buddha and his Saṃgha Order. Those who did their duties well reached celestial abodes when they died. Those who stole and destroyed the properties of the Saṃgha had gone to niraya (hell) and became petas during the time of Kassapa Buddha. They saw that other petas were set free from being petas because they gained merits shared by their relatives when they had chances to say "Sādhu" There were none to share merits with the petas who were the former relatives of Bimbisāra. Therefore they supplicated to Kassapa Buddha that they did not know who would perform meritorious deeds and share merits with them.

Kassapa Buddha told them that during the time of Gotama Buddha, the supervisor of the former relatives petas would become King Bimbisāra who would share merits with them and so they would be free from their woeful lives of petas. And they were very happy with the anticipation of being set free.

Indeed, when King Bimbisāra offered alms-food to the bhikkhus led by the Buddha and donated the monastery, the petas were expecting anxiously to gain merits shared by the King. But the king failed to share merit with the petas who were his former relatives so they made frightening moanings the whole night.

The Buddha instructed the king to share merits to the dead or former relatives whenever he performed meritorious deeds. King Bimbisāra then invited the bhikkhus led by the Buddha to have alms-food at his palace on that day. The Buddha by his supernormal power showed the king the petas who were waiting in poor dresses with frightful appearances. After offering alms-food and sharing merits, they all were free from their peta-existences. On seeing them looking well attired and having ambrosia, he was very much pleased.

Then he offered robes, beddings and monastic dwellings, and shared merits again. The petas said 'sādhu' and received celestial clothings, beddings and celestial mansions. On seeing that, the King became more pleased than before.

With reference to that incident the Buddha preached *Tirokuṭṭa Sutta* and eighty-four

thousand beings attained Ariyahood, realizing the Four Noble Truths.

Upatissa, Kolita and their Heretic Master

When the Buddha went to Rājagaha, the heretic master Sañjaya had already established a school with a large number of followers. He was one of the six heretic masters who claimed themselves to be Buddhas.

The two close friends, Upatissa and Kolita, were the sons of rich brahmins. They went to the festival held annually on the top of a mountain together with their five hundred followers. While watching the performers and the audience, an idea flashed through their mind thus, "What pleasure is there in the performance? All are bound to die within one hundred years." They felt so apprehensive of death that they went to the heretic Sañjaya and became ascetics.

Within a few days, they came to know that there was no essence in the teachings of their master and his teaching would not lead to the deliverance from suffering. Therefore they decided to search for the way to deathlessness. They made a promise that the one who found it first would tell the other.

The Attraction of the Controlling Faculty

While the Buddha was in Rājagaha, the Venerable Assaji Thera, one of the five-ascetic groups, resided at the Veluvana monastery. One day as he went into the city of Rājagaha for alms-round, the ascetic Upatissa noticed his clear complexion and calm controlling faculty. Upatissa could approximately judge that he might be an arahat or an arahat-to-be who was working hard. He then followed the Venerable Assaji Thera. After the Thera had alms-food, Upatissa asked him about his teacher and his practice. Then the Venerable Assaji replied:-

*"Of things that proceed from a cause,
Their cause the Tathāgata has told;
And also their cessation: Thus teaches
the Great Ascetic."*

This verse sums up the profound philosophy of his teacher in the scientific truth of the law of cause and effect. On hearing the summary of the teachings, the ascetic Upatissa became a stream -- winner. According to his promise the ascetic Upatissa went to his friend Kolita and explained the discourse that he had heard. The ascetic Kolita also became a stream-winner then and there. The two ascetics

decided to go to the Veluvana monastery and to be ordained as bhikkhus in the presence of the Buddha.

The Two Chief Disciples of The Buddha

Before going to the Buddha, they went to their heretic master and told him to come along with them. But their master refused. They persuaded him three times to come along with them, saying "Sir, the Buddha has appeared in the world. The persons longing for the Buddha will go and pay homage to the Buddha. Don't let your life pass in vain." However, the master replied, "My disciples, I don't want to be a pupil after I have been a well-known teacher; let it be; in this world there are more foolish ones than wise ones; the wise will go to Gotama; but the foolish will come to me." Saying thus he kept on staying there.

When the two disciples departed from him, their followers followed suit. He felt great despair for having lost many disciples and vomitted blood as he had a broken heart.

Half of the five hundred disciples that followed Upatissa and Kotita felt so sad for their master that they came back to him.

When the two ascetics asked for the permission from the Buddha to be ordained as bhikkhus, the Buddha said "Come here, bhikkhus." They became bhikkhus simultaneously. Kolita became an arahat after seven days of his arrival and Upatissa after fifteen days. Upatissa became the right-hand chief disciple under the name of Sariputta who got the title of 'Etadagga'-'the Best One in Wisdom.' Kolita became the left-hand chief disciple under the name of Mahā Moggallāna who got the title of 'Etadagga'- the Best One in Supernatural power.

The Very First Congregation of the Saṅgha Order

On the fullmoon day of Tapotwe (about February), 1250 Ehi bhikkhu arahats, who were endowed with the higher psychic power, gathered together at the Veluvana monastery. That was the very first Congregation of the Saṅgha Order. At this congregation the Venerable Sāriputta was conferred the position of the Right-hand Chief Disciple of the Buddha and the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna, the Left-hand Chief Disciple of the Buddha. According to the tradition of the former Buddhas, the Buddha admonished the bhikkhus, reciting the three

verses beginning with "Khantī Paramam tāpo titikkhā, etc." meaning: "The best moral practice is patience and forbearance." in the assembly of the Saṅgha Order.

The Buddha's Journey To Kapilavattu

Sending the Ministers

The Buddha together with a great many of bhikkhu disciples was residing at the Veluvana Monastery in Rājagaha. As soon as King Suddhodhana heard that he sent a minister together with one thousand attendants to invite the Buddha to Kapilavattu.

When the king's heralds arrived there the Buddha was preaching the dhamma. They were listening to the dhamma behind the audience. At the end of the discourse they all became arahats. Neither did they convey their message to the Buddha nor did they reply the message to the King as they all were absorbed in the blissful peace of Nibbāna.

Not receiving any reply, the king sent another minister with one thousand attendants. They also became arahats like the previous ones and made no effort to reply any message to the king. In the same way, nine ministers

and their attendants became arahats. Finally, the king sent the most trustworthy minister, Kāludāyi, and one thousand attendants. He agreed to go on condition that he be allowed to enter the Order of Saṃgha. The king gave them his consent.

Inviting the Buddha

Kāludāyi and his followers also became arahats. He respectfully requested the Buddha to come and gratify his father as well as his relatives

It was the pleasant and peaceful month of Tabaung (March); the weather was neither too cold nor too hot; withered leaves fell from trees and leafy shoots sprang up, grains and crops had just been harvested; roads were smooth and even and good for travel. Colourful flowers were also blooming along the roads. Venerable Kāludāyi composed and uttered sixty-four lyric verses describing the natural beauty of the surroundings and requested the Buddha to go to Kapilavatthu.

On the first waning day of Tabaung, the Buddha together with twenty thousand arahats left Rājagaha for Kapilavatthu. The distance

between these two countries was sixty yojanas (480 miles) and they went one yojana a day. So it took them two months to reach Kapilavatthu. Venerable Kāludāyi made his journey in the air by his higher psychic power and let the king know the Buddha's itinerary. On seeing him, the King was very pleased and felt delighted.

The king offered alms-food to Venerable Kāludāyi. He said to the king: "The alms-food should be offered not only to me but also to the Buddha." On hearing that the king felt more pleased and delighted and offered alms-food for the Buddha. Venerable Kāludāyi, informing the king where the Buddha and his disciples were, took the alms-food offered by the king to the Buddha daily. On the first waning day of Kason (May), the Buddha and his disciples arrived at Kapilavatthu.

Inviting the Buddha to the Nigrodhārāma Monastery

King Suddhodhana and his relatives held discussion the Buddha and his disciples. They decided that the Prince Nigrodha's park was suitable for the Buddha and his disciples to reside because it had a good shade, enough

water, was tranquil and neither too near nor too far from the city. The relatives, being well-dressed and holding fragrant flowers, heartily welcomed the Buddha and his disciples. They then invited them to the monastery in the Nigrodha park in a grand ceremony.

Dispelling the Conceit of the Sakyan Princes

The Sakyan elders were reluctant to pay homage to the Buddha who was of the age of their nephews and sons. Therefore, they put the Sakyan princes nearer to the Buddha and they themselves sat at the back, without paying due respect to the Buddha.

The Buddha created the great jewelled walk in the sky to dispel the conceit of the Sakyan relatives and walked to and fro so as to display the miraculous powers of the Buddhas. The devas and brahmas from the ten thousand worlds came in a mass and paid homage to the Buddha. While walking, the brilliant rays of white colour were emitted from the body of the Buddha. The rays were so brilliant that the whole universe was illuminated splendidly. When the audience was beholding the Buddha with great awe and veneration, the six hues such as

the brown hues from such parts of body as hair and eyebrow, the red hues from the red parts of body such as lips, palms and sole, the yellow hues from the fair complexion and the white hues from the white parts of body such as forty teeth including four eyeteeth and so on, were emitted continuously.

While human beings, the devas and brahmas were admiring the six hues in surprise, the Buddha repeatedly emanated the twin miracles: the flow of water from his right eye and the blaze of flame from the left. On seeing these miracles, the Sakyan elders became humble and paid homage heartily to the Buddha. Even though they paid homage again and again, they were not fully satisfied yet.

Then King Suddhodana told the Buddha thus:

- (1) "Oh, Venerable Son! When I made you pay homage to my teacher, Kāladevīla recluse, on the very day when you were born, your two feet flew aloft and rested on the recluse's head. When I saw that I paid homage to you for the first time."
- (2) "On the day of the royal ploughing ceremony, you were put to sleep in the shade

of *Eugenia* tree. Though the time passed and the sun moved westward, the shade over you did not move at all. I found you sitting in meditation on breathing and well absorbed in the first Jhānic bliss. When I saw that I paid homage to you for the second time."

- (3) "Oh Venerable Son! I Now I come to behold your miraculous power which I have never seen before. And so I pay homage to you for the third time."

Narration of the Chronicle of the Buddhas

While the Buddha was displaying various kinds of miracles to his relatives, Venerable Sāriputta was residing at Mount Gijjhakuṭa near Rājagāṇa together with his five hundred disciples. Venerable Sāriputta observed, with his divine eye, the miracles displayed by the Buddha.

At that moment a strong desire occurred in his mind to request the Buddha to narrate his life story so that men, devas and brahmas would understand how hard it was to become a Buddha, how involved it was to fulfil the ten perfections and how great the Buddha's power

was. Then he went to the Buddha through space together with his five hundred disciples.

He paid homage to the Buddha and requested him to narrate the chronicle of the Buddhas. Complying to the request, the Buddha narrated the chronicle of the Buddhas as he walked up and down in the jewelled passage created in the sky. During the narration all the twenty-thousand bhikkhus together with Venerable Sāriputta and his disciples remained in the sky near the Buddha listening respectfully to the narration. At the end of the narration, ten million lakhs of devas and brahmas became Arahats and countless numbers of people became Stream-winners, Once-returners and No-returners.

After the discourse, the Buddha descended from the jewelled passage and resided at the holy place of the Buddha among his relatives. At that moment Pokkharavassa rain fell wetting only those who wanted to be soaked. The audience was surprised and talked about that amazing rain. In connection with this event, the Buddha narrated the jātaka story of Vessantara.

Going on Alms-round in Kapilavatthu

All the relatives returned home after hearing the discourse. Nobody invited the Buddha for alms-food in the next morning. Although King Suddhodana made a plan to offer the Buddha alms-food in his palace, he did not invite the Buddha. So in the next morning, the Buddha together with his disciples went round the city for collecting alms-food in the tradition of the former Buddhas. People looked in amazement and venerated the Buddha who was surrounded with six kinds of rays emanating from his body. Yasodarā, Rāhula's mother, was watching the Buddha from her chamber and she saw him begging for food from house to house. So she was overwhelmed with grief. She also held her son in her arms and pointed to the Buddha saying, "That is your father!"

Yasodarā immediately went to the King and informed him about the Buddha going on alms-round. The King quickly went to the Buddha and told him that it was not proper for a royal prince to beg for food from house to house. The Buddha said that it was the traditional practice of all the former Buddhas to go on alms-round from house to house for collecting alms-food. On hearing these words, the King

became a Stream-winner. Then he took the alms-bowl from the Buddha and invited the Buddha and his disciples to the palace for alms-food.

All the royal relatives, except Yasodarā, gathered together. The Buddha, sitting on the well-prepared seat, preached that the practice of collecting alms-food from house to house was the right livelihood which brought great benefit in the present as well as in future existences. On hearing this account, the king became a Sakadāgāmi (Once - returner) and the queen Mahāpajāpati Gotamī became a Stream-winner.

Going to Yasodarā's Chamber

After taking alms-food, the Buddha, followed by Venerable Sāriputta and Venerable Mahāmoggallāna, went to Yasodarā's Chamber. The king also followed them, carrying the Buddha's alms-bowl. When Yasodarā saw the Buddha coming, she told her attendants to wear brown-coloured dress dyed with the barks of tree and to welcome and pay homage to the Buddha. The Buddha sat on the well-prepared place and told the King not to make any disturbance to Yasodarā when she came to pay

homage to him. Coming swiftly out of her Chamber, she clasped his feet in her hands, and placed her forehead on his instep. Then she could not utter a word and paid homage heartily to the Buddha with tears. When the king saw that scene, he became so emotional that he could not conceal the virtues of Yasodharā and said to the Buddha:

"My Revered Son, when my daughter heard that you were wearing the brown-coloured robe, she wore the same dress too. When she heard that you were taking one meal a day, she also did the same. When she heard that you did not use the luxurious beds, she slept only on a couch made of flat ropes. When she heard that you avoided garlands and scents, she did so. When her relatives sent messages to say that they would maintain her, she did not even look at a single one and she lay all her affection on you".

At the end of the King's words, the Buddha narrated the story of Candakinnrī **Jātaka** in honour of Yasodarā's great affection and fidelity.

The Ordination of Younger Brother and Son

On the third day of Buddha's arrival at Kāpilavatthu, there were three ceremonies on the same day: the wedding ceremony of Prince Nanda and Janapadakalyānī; the consecration ceremony and the house warming ceremony. It was on the occasion of these three ceremonies that the Buddha visited the palace and took alms-food. After that the Buddha handed over his alms-bowl to the prince and gave the words of blessing. Then he went back to the monastery without taking his alms-bowl. The prince Nanda had to follow him carrying his alms-bowl. Janapadakalyānī appealed to the prince: "Please, come back quickly, my dear!" These words made Prince Nanda deeply moved. But he dared not return the alms-bowl to the Buddha. So he had to follow him unwillingly. When they reached the monastery Prince Nanda was ordained as a bhikkhu but he found no delight in bhikkhuhood. One day, the Buddha took him to the Tāvātimsa celestial realm. On the way they found a she-monkey in the forest. When they reached the Tāvātimsa celestial realm, the Buddha showed him beautiful angels. Then the Buddha asked him, "Who is more beautiful, Janapadakalyānī or the angels?" He answered,

"My Janapadakalyānī is just like the she-monkey which we found on the way." Then the Buddha asked whether he wished to get the angels. The prince gave a reply that he wanted to get them. The Buddha continued saying, "If you wish to get the angels, you should practise according to the Dhamma." Wishing to get the angels, Venerable Nanda kept on meditating and at last he became an arahat.

On the seventh day, when the Buddha went to the palace to take alms-food, Yasodarā made her seven-year-old son Rāhula well-dressed and sent him to the Buddha to ask for inheritance. The inheritance she meant was the four pots of gold lost on the day of the Bodhisatta's renunciation. These four pots of gold were included in the group of seven which appeared at the same time with the birth of the Bodhisatta. (The Group of seven here means Princess Yosodhayā, Prince Ānanda, minister Kāludāyī, Channa, the horse Kantaka, the Bodhi Tree and the four pots of gold. When the Buddha returned to the Nigrodhārāma monastery after having alms-food, Rāhula followed the Buddha grasping his robe and asking for the inheritance repeatedly. On reaching the monastery, the Buddha asked the Venerable Sāriputta to novitiate

Rāhula saying that he should be giving the spiritual inheritance instead of the material one.

Suddhodana's Worries about the Sakyan Dynasty

On hearing of the novitiation of his grandson, King Suddhodana became worried and went to the Buddha hastily. He said to the Buddha thus: "My Revered Son, according to the Brahmins' prophesy, I wished to see you as the Universal Monarch. However, when you gave up the throne and renounced the world, I felt deeply distressed."

"When Prince Nanda was born, the Brahmins predicted about him just as they did about you. So I was relieved and expected him to succeed me. But when you ordained him, I was down-hearted and terribly sorry again."

"Now, you have novitiated my dearest grandson, Rāhula, who will become the future Universal Monarch. Therefore, I cannot see my grandson enjoying the wealth of a Universal Monarch. The Sakyan Dynasty will be ruined," said the King in despair.

On the eighth day the King told the Buddha, "When one deva told me that you died

while practising meditation. I did not believe his words". The Buddha replied, "You did not accept the words concerning my death not only in the present time but also in some past existence". Emphasizing this fact, the Buddha narrated the story of Mahādhammapāla Jātaka. On hearing that, the king became a Non-returner. After that over one thousand Sakyan princes such as Bhaddiya, Anuruddhā, Ānanda, Bhagu, Kimila, Devadatta and the barber Upāli, etc., entered the order of bhikkhus, one group after another.

In the fifth year of his Enlightenment, five hundred Sakyan princesses led by Mahāpajāpati Gotami entered the order of bhikkhunīs. After that the other Sakyan princesses such as Yasodarā, Janapadakalyānī, Kisāgotamī, etc., followed suit. In this way, the Buddha's teaching flourished more and more with great momentum.

Anāthapiṇḍika and Visākha

During the life time of the Buddha, the population of Sāvatti, Kosala Country, was about seventy millions. Of these, fifty millions were Ariyas and the remaining twenty millions were worldlings. Anāthapiṇḍika and Visākha

were the two wellknown upholders of the Buddha's Teaching.

Anāthapiṇḍika, the Donor of Jetavana Monastery

Anāthapiṇḍika's family-name was Sudatta. He married Puñña Lakkhaṇā, the younger sister of Visāla, a wealthy man of Rājagaha. They had one son, Kāḷa, and three daughters: Mahā, Subhaddā, Cūḷasubhaddā and Sumanā. While the Buddha was spending the second rainy season at Rājagaha, Anāthapiṇḍika met the Buddha on his visit to Rājagaha. There he became a Stream-winner. He invited the Buddha to come and reside at Sāvatti.

Anāthapiṇḍika bought Prince Jeta's garden which cost eighteen crores. There he built a great monastery known as Jetavana. The construction of many buildings including the fragrant Chamber (gandhakuṭi) was carried out by one thousand workers in six months. He spent eighteen crores to construct that monastery. After the monastery had been constructed, he invited the Buddha and held the splendid ceremony of pouring donation water. That ceremony also cost eighteen crores. He offered alms-food to two thousand bhikkhus daily.

On every sabbath day, all his servants had to observe eight moral precepts. Even the sucklings were not allowed to suckle in the afternoon. Their mouths were sponged and they were given only electuary instead of milk. He donated altogether fifty-four crores for the welfare of the Buddha's Sāsana (Buddha's Teaching).

At the houses of Anāthapiṇḍika and Visākha accommodation for one thousand bhikkhus each and four kinds of material requisites were always kept ready to be offered to bhikkhus whenever necessary.

Visākha, the Donor of the Pubbārāma

Visākha was the daughter of Dhanañjaya, the wealthy man from Sāketa, and the granddaughter of Menḍaka. She attained Sotāpatti Fruition at the age of seven. She was married to Puṇṇavaḍḍhana, the son of wealthy Migāra. Her father gave her an immensely valuable gem-encrusted cloak as a wedding present. That cloak was made of pure gold weighing one thousand nikkhas and it cost nine crores. When it was put on, it reached down to her instep. Her father gave her jewels and other properties. After giving admonition to her, he let her follow her husband to Sāvatti.

Although her father-in-law formerly was a firm follower of the Nigaṇṭha ascetic, her effort led him to take refuge in the Buddha. Therefore, she came to be known as Migāramātā, mother of Migarā. She lived up to a hundred and twenty years; but nobody could find any sign of ageing in her, and she looked young for ever.

One day when Visākha went to the Jetavana Monastery to listen to the discourse of the Buddha, she took her cloak off at the entrance of the monastery and gave it to the maid to keep it. When they returned home after hearing the discourse, the maid left it at the monastery. The Venerable Ānanda found it and kept it. Visākha thought that her cloak should be donated to the bhikkhus. Although she decided to sell the bejewelled cloak, there was no one who could afford to buy it. So, she assessed the value of the cloak at nine crores. Then she had the Pubbārāma monastery built just as Anāthapiṇḍika built the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatti. It was on the eastern side of the city and had an area of fourteen acres. She paid nine crores for that patch of land. It took nine months to finish the construction which cost nine crores. She spent nine crores.

for the donation ceremony. Therefore, she donated altogether twenty-seven crores for the Buddha's Sāsana. On account of supporting Four Requisites to the Sāsana, Anāthapiṇḍika was conferred the position of "Etadagga", the most Generous Male-lay-devotees in charity, and Visākha, the position of "Etadagga", the Most Generous Female-lay-devotees in Charity.

The Buddha resided at the Jetavana monastery for nineteen years out of his forty-five years of Buddhahood. Therefore, most of his discourses were expounded at Jetavana. The Buddha resided at the Pubbārāma monastery for six years.

At whichever place he resided, the Buddha performed his daily routine-duties in five portions.

The Buddha's Daily Routine

"Buddho loke Samuppanno hitāya Sabbapāṇinam." For the welfare of all living beings, the Buddha appeared in this world. For his own sake, the Buddha could dwell in the blissful peace of Phalasaṃpatti. Nevertheless, he could not live thus; he was always striving for the well-being of all living beings without taking a rest. The great compassion of the

Buddha can be found clearly in his daily routine.

The Buddha, incessantly performed his daily duties in five portions:-early morning duty; afternoon duty; first watch of the night duty; middle watch of the night duty and last watch of the night duty.

(A) Early Morning Duty

At dawn, the Buddha got up, cleaned his face and limbs. Then he went back to his Fragrant Chamber and enjoyed the blissful peace of Phalasaṃpatti for a little moment. At the time for alms-round, the Buddha rearranged his robes and went on alms-round, sometimes alone and sometimes followed by his disciples. In his alms-round, he sometimes went with his supernatural power but sometimes in the natural way.

Wherever he went, the spikes, stumps and obstacles supernaturally disappeared out of his route and the rough and stony roads became automatically smooth and even too. Lay-devotees gathered together holding fragrant flowers to pay homage to the Buddha. They asked the Buddha to send his disciples for their alms-food as many as they could afford, i.e. ten bhikkhus or twenty bhikkhus or a hundred bhikkhus, etc....Then they carried the Buddha's

alms-bowl, prepared the place well and offered him alms-food. After taking alms-food, the Buddha observed the latent tendencies of the devotees, and preached the dhamma suitable to them. The Buddha returned to his monastery, sat at the prepared seat in the pavilion decorated with flowers and perfumes, and waited for his disciples who would return after their meals. When all the bhikkhus arrived, the Buddha went forth towards his chamber. This was his duty performed every early morning.

(B) Afternoon Duty

After finishing his morning duty, he kept on performing other duties. After sitting at the well-prepared place near his perfumed chamber, the Buddha washes his feet. While standing on the foot-washing slab, he admonished the bhikkhus, expounding the five Rare Occasions.

"Appamādena Bhikkhave
Sampādettha"

Oh, Bhikkhus! Strive on with diligence.

(1) *Buddhuppādo dullabho lokasamim*

Rare to appear is the Enlightened One in the world.

(2) *Manussattabhāvo dullabho*

Rare is it to be born as a human being.

(3) *Dullabhā Saddhāsampatti*

Rare is it to be endowed with the conviction in the three Gems, Karma and its result.

(4) *Pabbajitabhāvo dullabho*

Rare is it to attain the bhikkhuhood.

(5) *Saddhammassavanam dullabam*

Rare is it to hear the Teaching of the Buddha

After exhorting thus the Buddha gave instructions on the object of meditation suitable to the bhikkhus. Then the bhikkhus went forth towards their respective solitary places and practised meditation.

The Buddha, then, retired to his chamber and lay down on his right side for a little while if he wished. On rising, he surveyed the whole world whether there was any sentient being to be taught.

In the evening the lay-devotees from surrounding areas brought some drink, fragrant flowers and other offerings to him and waited to hear his discourse. Sitting at the noble place in the Dhamma pavilion, he expounded the dhamma appropriate to the time and the situation.

After the discourse the lay-devotees returned home.

(C) The Duty during the First Watch

If the Buddha wanted to bathe, he would do so after a day's duty. The attendant-bhikkhu prepared a suitable place for the Buddha in the precinct of his Chamber. After taking a bath, the Buddha donned his inner robe, fastened the girdle and draped his outer robe, putting the corner of it on his left shoulder. He stayed solitarily there for a moment.

After a while, the bhikkhus from here and there assembled to pay homage to the Buddha. The Buddha answered all their questions and expounded the Dhamma for the whole first watch of the night.

(D) The Duty during the Middle Watch

The middle watch was exclusively reserved for devas and brahmas from ten thousand worlds. They approached to hear the Dhamma and to put up questions which they had previously pondered. The Buddha spent the whole midnight by solving all their problems and perplexities. Some Suttas, such as Maṅgala Sutta and Parābhava Sutta, are those which

were expounded during that watch.

(E) The Duty during the Last Watch

The Buddha divided the last watch into three parts and performed his duty accordingly. The Buddha spent the first part by walking up and down in order to relieve his physical tiredness.

At the second part, the Buddha retired to his Perfumed Chamber and slept mindfully for a while.

At the last part, he rose from the lying posture and sat cross-legged. He surveyed the whole world to find out persons who had performed meritorious deeds, during the time of former Buddhas. Thus, the Buddha was occupied the whole day with his daily duties, scarcely taking a rest.

His Selfless Service and Supreme Wisdom

The Buddha performed his daily duties throughout the 45 years for the benefits of all sentient beings.

The Buddha surveyed the whole world once in the morning and once in the afternoon. If there was anyone to be taught the dhamma, he usually went there however far it might be.

The Buddha became the Supreme One who could render selfless services ever since he had attained the Arahattamaggañña, the highest spiritual power which enabled one to eradicate defilements absolutely.

The Buddha became the Exalted One, who could perform for the welfare of others since he had attained the Sabbaññutañña, the Omniscience which enabled one to know whom, what and how to preach.

The Buddha's Teachings

Throughout the 45 years of his Buddhahood, the Buddha was incessantly striving for the well-being of all sentient beings, day by day, either in season or out of season. In the same way, the bhikkhus went to places, far or near, and preached the Dhamma to living beings.

People from all walks of life...such as kings, brahmins, wealthy men, traders, farmers, etc... irrespective of social classes, races, religions and castes, took refuge in the Buddha. Kings such as King Suddhodana of Kapilavatthu, King Bimbisāra of Rājagaha, Magadha Kingdom, King Kosala of Kosala Kingdom, etc... Jatila, Upāli, Citta, Gosaka of Kosambi, Kukkuta and Pāvārika, adhered to the Buddha's Teach-

ing and supported the Teachings. Therefore, the Teaching of the Buddha spread and flourished well.

The Buddha, throughout his Missionary period of forty-five years, except the three months of rains-retreat, went to places of great distance, even two thousand yojanas afar, and dispelled the wrong views of all living beings. During the forty-five years, the Buddha spent his rain-retreat at the following places.

The Places Where The Buddha Spent the Rains-Retreat

Commencing from the very first day of attaining Buddhahood, on the fullmoon day of Kason (about May) in the year 103 Mahā Era (589 B.C.), the Buddha spent the rainy seasons (Vassa) at the following places:-

1st rainy season in the Deer Park at Isipatana, Sārāṇasī;

2nd, 3rd and 4th rainy season at Veļuvana Monastery, Rājagaha;

5th rainy season in Pinnacled Hall, Kutāgārasālā, at Great Forest Mahāvana, Vesālī;

6th rainy season at Makuļa Hill;

- 7th rainy season at Tāvatisa Celestial Realm;
- 8th rainy season at Bhesakaḷa Deer Park. Saṃsūmāra-giri, Bhagga Province;
- 9th rainy season at Kosambi;
- 10th rainy season at Pālileyka Grove;
- 11th rainy season at Nāḷikārāma Monastery. Nāḷaka Brahmin Village;
- 12th rainy season at the foot of Naḷeru Neem Tree, Veranḷa Province;
- 13th rainy season at Cāliya Hill;
- 14th rainy season at Jetavana Monastery. Sāvatti;
- 15th rainy season at Nigrodhārāma Monastery. Kapilavattu;
- 16th rainy season near Āḷavi;
- 17th rainy season at Veḷuvana Monastery. Rājagaha;
- 18th, 19th rainy season at Cāliya Hill;
- 20th rainy season at Veḷuvana Monastery. Rājagaha;
- 21th to 38th rainy season at Jetavana Monastery, Sāvatti;
- 39th to 44th rainy season at Pubbārāma Monastery, Sāvatti; and
- 45th rainy season at Veḷuva Village.

The Evil Ones Who attacked the Buddha

Throughout the forty-five years of his Buddhahood, the Buddha taught the Four Noble Truths. All his discourses are profound and subtle. Whereas sentient beings have their minds corrupted by greed (lobha), anger (dosa), ignorance (moha), wrong view (diṭṭhi) and conceit (māna), there appeared some opponents who made several attacks against the Buddha. Among them, Māra, the Evil One, who wanted others to enjoy sensual pleasures, stood in the forefront. He prevented the Bodhisatta from renouncing the world, and attaining the Buddhahood. Even when he had attained the Buddhahood, Māra prevented him from preaching any discourse. He also prevented the Buddha from preaching for a long time. Finally, he urged the Buddha to attain Mahāparinibbāna very early.

Apart from this, there were many such rivals as Brahmā Baka who firmly believed in immortal egoism; as Saccaka, wandering ascetic, who debated on the beliefs in a dialectical manner; and as the cruel ones like the murderer Aṅgulimāla, the ogre Āḷavaka and the Gigantic Dragon, Nandopananda, who were very powerful in their respective spheres, raising the

banner of anger (dosa) and conceit (māna). They all fought against the Buddha, but all of them were defeated at last.

Devadatta was a cousin of the Buddha. So he thought that he was the one who deserved all the favours granted by the Buddha. But the Buddha favoured others due to their accumulation of perfections (pāramīs). Thinking that the Buddha favoured others, he held a grudge against the Buddha. When greed (lobha), anger (dosa), conceit (māna) and jealousy (issā), overwhelm one, even a person who has attained psychic power, cannot see the truth, the natural law of kamma (Kammaniyāma).

Although Devadatta, with the help of King Ajātasatthu, repeatedly tried to kill the Buddha, he did not succeed. As a final assault he made the wild elephant, Nāḷāgiri, drunk so that it might trample the Buddha to death. But due to the incomparable power of the loving-kindness of the Buddha, his attempts were all in vain. But Devadatta did not reflect on the true situation and he himself pushed down a huge rock from the top of the Gijjhakuṣa Hill to kill the Buddha. Finally he organized five hundred young monks and declared himself the leader of the Saṅgha. How cruel and foolish he was! After committing many gross offences

successively, he felt remorseful. But his remorse could not save him. As he sowed, so he reaped.

When the Buddha appeared in the world, the leaders of heretics and their followers got less material gains and they reviled and attacked the Buddha. But they were also defeated by the virtue of ten perfections and supernormal power. They did not give up either and made the female wandering ascetics, Sundarī and Ciṅcamānavikā, accuse the Buddha of adultery in the midst of audience. By means of the accumulated perfections such as loving-kindness and patience, the Buddha won "eight glorious victories", overcoming all obstacles. In this world, there is no one who can overcome the Buddha. The Buddha is the peerless conqueror treading on the way of Dhamma. The followers of Dhamma have succeeded in everything.

The Four Competent Disciples

When the Evil Māra insistently asked the Buddha to realize Mahāparinibbāna, the Buddha said thus: "Oh Māra! I shall not pass away so long as my disciples, namely, bhikkhus, bhikkhunīs, male devotees and female devotees, are not yet well-versed in my Teach-

ing, not yet ... and not yet able to expound the doctrine to others."

The Buddha's Journey Before the Mahāparinibbāna

Throughout the forty-five years of his Buddhahood, from the time of fulfilling the Perfections till the Mahāparinibbāna, the Buddha delivered the Dhamma. All the facts with regard to the time, the place, the person to whom and what kind of dhamma the Buddha preached, and what kind of people the Buddha came across, were completely recorded in detail. This is the specific characteristic of the Buddha and his Teachings.

At the 44th rains-retreat period the Buddha resided at the Pubbārāma monastery in Sāvatti donated by Visākha. Then the Buddha and his disciples went to Rājagaha, the capital of Magadha. The Buddha and his disciples took up residence at the monastery on the Gijjhakūṭa Hill out of the eighteen monasteries in Rājagaha.

During that time, King Ajātasattu wanted to conquer the Vijjians without any bloodshed. The Buddha knew all about that and gave the discourse on the ways of prosperity for kings and for bhikkhus as well.

In his discourse, the Buddha repeatedly exhorted the bhikkhus to establish themselves in the threefold training, morality (sīla), concentration (samādhi) and wisdom (paññā), in order to be liberated from the round of suffering or saṃsāra. Indeed, the Buddha said so because the time for Mahāparinibbāna was drawing near.

Dhamma-assemblies At Nālandā and Pāṭali Villages

The Buddha left Gijjhakūṭa hill for Ambalaṭṭhika Grove and then proceeded to Nālandā, and stayed at the mango orchard of the rich man Pāvārika. There also, the Buddha again emphatically expounded only the threefold training (sikkhā).

Then the Buddha, accompanied by many bhikkhus, went to the Pāṭali village, which would become the capital of Māgadha later. He arrived there in the evening and the villagers warmly welcomed and invited him to their guest-house. The villagers prepared the guest-house by covering the floors with carpets, etc lighting up oil-lamps.

The Buddha sat at the well prepared place for him against the middle post of the guest house, facing eastwards. The bhikkhus sat

behind the Buddha and the lay-devotees sat before him. Then the Buddha expounded the dhamma to the devotees of Pāṭali village the following five disadvantages of immorality:-

- (1) great loss of wealth;
- (2) ill reputation;
- (3) being timid and dejected among the audience;
- (4) dying in bewilderment, and
- (5) being reborn in the four miserable existences after death.

And then the Buddha expounded the advantages of the fulfilment of moral virtue and those of donating dwelling places to bhikkhus nearly the whole night.

From Koṭi Village To Vesālī

Then the Buddha went to Koṭi village and expounded to the bhikkhus how the beings wandered about in the whirlpool of saṃsāra due to the lack of penetrative knowledge of the Four Noble Truths. And again he exhorted the bhikkhus to be endowed with three-fold training.

Then the Buddha went to the Nāṭika village and stayed at a brick hall. During that time so many bhikkhus and lay-devotees of that

village died consecutively that the Venerable Ānanda asked the Buddha about their next existences.

The Buddha said to Venerable Ānanda. "If the Tathāgata were to be asked about the next existence every time a person dies, it would only be tiresome for me. You must find out by yourself." Then the Buddha delivered a discourse on the Mirror of Dhamma thus: "One, having firm belief in the three gems: the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, and having observed five precepts, could be free from the four miserable existences and be assured of a good destination. The Buddha also exhorted the bhikkhus to be endowed with the threefold training (sikkhā).

Then the Buddha and his bhikkhus left Nāṭika village for Vesālī, and stayed at Ambapālī's mango grove. She invited the Buddha to accept her offering of alms-food on the next day.

Ambapālī was such a beautiful woman that the Buddha, in advance, admonished his followers and discoursed on the four foundations of mindfulness.

When the Licchavi princes, who came in pomp and ceremony, paid homage to the

Buddha, the Buddha said to his disciples, "Let those bhikkhus who have never seen the Tāvātimsa devas, have a good look at the assembly of the Licchavis." The Buddha said so because he saw the royal possessions of Licchavi princes would be ruined by King Ajātasattu very soon. The Buddha also instructed the disciples to contemplate on the characteristic of impermanence and said that the royal wealth and luxuries, like the water bubble, lasted just for a little moment. The Buddha again exhorted his bhikkhus to be endowed with the threefold training.

The Last Journey of the Buddha

While the Buddha was going to Veļuva Village from Vesāli, the time to enter the rains-retreat period was drawing near. The Buddha permitted his bhikkhus, except Venerable Ānanda, to go and spend their rains-retreat period in the vicinity of Vesāli.

Venerable Ānanda was the Buddha's close attendant who was so wise and intelligent that he could bear all the Buddha's Teachings in his mind without missing a word by his excellent power of mindfulness, wisdom and effort. At that time, he was only in the first stage of

Enlightenment; i.e. he was a Stream-winner (sotāpanna).

Mutual Concern Between the Buddha and his Disciples

While the Buddha was residing at the small village of Veļuva at his 45th rains-retreat period, he suffered from deadly serious illness. The Buddha thought that it would not be proper for him to pass away without telling and admonishing the bhikkhus. Therefore, the Buddha maintained his life by the power of experiencing the bliss of Arahatsip and he became healthy again. When Venerable Ānanda saw the Buddha in his deadly serious illness, he became shocked and was unable to practise meditation.

When the Buddha recovered from his illness, the Venerable Ānanda got somewhat relieved considering that the Buddha would not pass away without giving any special instruction to the Order of Bhikkhus. So he approached the Buddha and said, "Venerable Sir! Now I am relieved to see that the Buddha becomes healthy again." Then the Buddha replied: "Ānanda! Why does the Order of Bhikkhus still expect me to live longer. The

Tathāgata has already taught all the Teaching without a closed fist as a teacher. The Tathāgata has no desire that he alone should lead the Order of Bhikkhus; or that the Order of bhikkhus should depend on him alone. You yourselves must be your own refuge, you yourselves should depend on the island of Dhamma. but not on anything else.'

The Buddha did not confer any authority on any person nor take delight in personal worship. The Buddha had repeatedly reminded the bhikkhus to rely only on the Dhamma.

The Demise of the Two Chief Disciples

The time when the Buddha left Veḷuva Village for Jetavana monastery in Sāvatti was about the 8th waxing day of the month of Tazaungmon (about November). At that time most of the venerable ones such as Venerable Koṇḍañña, the Buddha's son Venerable Rāhulā, Yasodharā Theri, the Buddha's aunt Gotamī, etc, had already attained parinibbāna. The Buddha's right-hand disciple, Venerable Sāriputta, asked permission from the Buddha to attain parinibbāna. Then Venerable Sāriputta went to Nāḷaka Village in order to teach Dhamma to

his mother, Rūpasārī. She was not yet a devotee of the Buddha.

After converting his mother, he attained parinibbāna on the fullmoon day of Tazaungmon. Venerable Cunda, the young brother of Venerable Sāriputta, took the bowl, the robe and the relics of Venerable Sāriputta and offered them to the Buddha. When the Buddha praised the virtues of Sāriputta reciting five hundred verses, Venerable Ānanda could not help weeping severely. The Buddha consoled him by teaching the impermanence of conditioned things. A stupa was built in Sāvatti enshrining the Venerable Sāriputta's relics.

Then the Buddha went to Rājagaha. On the waning day of Tazaungmon, his left-hand chief disciple, Venerable Moggallāna, attained parinibbāna on the brown ruby-coloured stoneslab, Kāḷasilā, on Isigili hill in Rājagaha. A stupa was built at the entrance of the Veḷuvana monastery and the Buddha himself enshrined the Venerable Moggallāna's relics in that stupa.

The devas and the brahmas paid homage to the relics of the two chief disciples for the last time. As the two great disciples of the Teacher attained parinibbāna in the same year, it had been very tragic and regretful to the

worldlings for the two chief disciples of the Buddha had passed away in the same month.

On the full-moon day of Nattaw (about December), the Buddha, accompanied by the Bhikkhus, went to the city of Ukkacela in Vijji country. There, the Buddha looked at the gathering of bhikkhus who were silent and remorseful, in remembrance of the passing away of the two chief disciples, their two elder brothers and addressed them thus: "Oh Bhikkhus! whatsoever has arisen, all that must inevitably perish. Be ye islands unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge to yourselves. Seek no external refuge. Live with the Dhamma as your island. The Dhamma is your refuge." And then the Buddha expounded the doctrine of four foundations of mindfulness.

Releasing the Power of Sustaining Vitality

Then the Buddha went to the pleasant city of Vesālī, a beautiful land of many shrines and stupas. While residing at the Cāpāla Shrine, the Buddha told the Venerable Ānanda, "Ānanda, whosoever fully develops the four bases of Psychic Power, Iddhipāda, can live the maximum life-span, or even beyond the maximum

life-span. The Buddha said these words three times. But the Venerable Ānanda did not understand. So he did not beseech the Buddha in such words as, "Venerable Sir, may the Buddha live the maximum life-span for the welfare of the sentient beings!" Then the Buddha asked Ānanda to stay away.

At that time the evil Māra who knew all about that situation, approached the Buddha and persuaded him to attain parinibbāna. The Buddha replied thus: "You, evil Māra, don't worry about this matter. Three months from today, the Tathāgata will attain parinibbāna." The Buddha was eighty years old at that time. That means that he had lived four-fifths of the life-span. It is the traditions of all former Buddhas to attain Parinibbāna after they had lived four-fifths of their life-spans.

After that, the Buddha released the power of sustaining vitality. He did not make any further effort to live longer. No sooner did the Buddha release the power of sustaining vitality than the earth trembled violently and roarings of thunder burst forth continuously.

Venerable Ānanda asked the Buddha about the cause of the great earthquake and the roarings of thunder. On knowing the true

course of such a terrible earthquake, he appealed to the Buddha to live the whole of his life-span. The Buddha answered, "Ānanda, your request is too late. I have given you plain hints and intimations for three times; but you did not entreat me. This is your own fault, your own remissness."

When the Venerable Ānanda was attending the Buddha with a dejected mind, the Buddha consoled him, by admonishing him with the discourse on the separation from the beloved and the nature of arising and passing away of conditioned things.

Then the Buddha went to the pinnacled hall in the Mahāvana forest in Vesālī. While residing there, the Buddha made the Venerable Ānanda go and summon all the bhikkhus living in Vesālī to come and assemble at the pinnacled hall. Then the Buddha exhorted the bhikkhus to learn and practise the doctrines he had given so that the teachings would endure long and remain established for a long time.

Then the Buddha said to the bhikkhus thus: "O Bhikkhus, three months from this day, the Tathāgata will attain Mahāparinibbāna. The Tathāgata has only a little time to live. I shall have to depart from you. Vigilantly and mind-

fully strive to be endowed with morality (sīla), concentration (samādhi) and wisdom (paññā)!"

In the early morning of the next day, the Buddha went into Vesālī for alms-round. Before leaving Vesālī, the Buddha looked back towards Vesālī and said to Venerable Ānanda thus: "Ānanda, this is the last time for the Tathāgata to look at the city of Vesālī"

Then the Buddha went through the Villages of Bhaṇḍa, Hatthi, Amba and Jambu one after another and thence to the town of Bhoga. At Ananda Shrine of Bhoga town, the Buddha gave the discourse on the four Great Authorities, Mahā-padesa, and then he repeatedly reminded them to be endowed with threefold training.

Suffering from a Severe Attack of Dysentery

Then the Buddha together with a large company of bhikkhus left Bhoga for Pāvā, and stayed at the mango-grove of the goldsmith, Cunda. In the next morning, the Buddha accepted the alms-rice with tender pork offered by Cunda. And then the Buddha told Cunda not to offer it to the bhikkhus and to bury all

the remainings in the ground. On that day, the Buddha excruciatingly suffered from a severe attack of dysentery with the discharge of blood.

The Buddha had to suffer from the severe attack not because of the tender pork but because of the consequence of an evil deed in his past existence. He was able to resist the severe attack by taking this food. Thus, the Buddha said that the food offered by Sujātā on the day of his Full-Enlightenment and the food offered by Cunda were of equal benefit.

Even though he was suffering from severe dysentery with the discharge of blood, the Buddha went on his journey to Kusināra. It was the hot season and the heat of the sun in Kason (May) was terribly intense. The Buddha felt exhausted. When they got to a big tree near a small stream, the Buddha asked Venerable Ānanda to fold his double-layered robe and place it on the ground. He felt thirsty and asked Ānanda to get drinking water from the stream. Venerable Ānanda replied to him that five hundred carts had just crossed the stream and the water was so turbid and muddy that it would not be good to drink; and also asked him to drink and bathe only when they arrived at the Kakudhā River.

But the Buddha said, "Go and fetch the water". When Venerable Ānanda went and fetched it, he found the water clean, pure and cool. So he came to know that the supernormal glory of the Buddha was very great and marvellous.

And then, after taking a bath at the Kakudhā River, the Buddha donned the fine golden robe donated by Pakkusa, the Malla Prince. The golden hue of the robe matched well with the Buddha's clear and radiant complexion. That indeed was the last glorious and sublime image of the Buddha!

Then from the top of the Kakudhā river bank the Buddha went to the mango tree. He could not wait for Venerable Ānanda who was washing and wringing the robes, and he asked Venerable Cunda to spread his double-layered robe on the ground. He lay down on the robe.

Although the town of Kusināra was about three leagues (about 6 miles) away from Pāvā, the Buddha felt so weary that he had to stop and rest for twenty-five times on the way

The Last Day of the Buddha

The Buddha, the Supreme Being of the three worlds, went into the Sal Grove of the Malla princes which is situated at the road-bend leading to the entrance of Kusināra town. At the Sal Grove, the Buddha said thus:

"Ānanda, lay out the couch with its head to the north between the twin Sal trees. I am tired. I shall lie down". When the couch was ready, the Buddha lay down on his right side.

At that time the Sal trees completely burst forth in bloom out of season. The fragrant sal flowers scattered all over the body of the Buddha. Celestial flowers and sandalwood powder fell from the sky over the sacred body. Celestial musical sounds filled the air as a token of reverence to the Buddha. Many devas and brahmas from the ten thousand world systems gathered around the Buddha to pay their last homage to him.

The Buddha sent Venerable Ānanda to the Malla princes to report about the Parinibbāna of the Buddha.

When Venerable Ānanda appeared before the Malla princes, they were convening

the People's Assembly and when they heard the words of Ānanda, they were overwhelmed with great despair and they cried bitterly. They quickly gathered their families and went to pay homage to the Buddha group by group.

The Last Disciple of the Buddha

At that time Subhadda, a wandering ascetic, was in Kusināra and he heard that the Buddha would attain the Mahāparinibbāna in the last watch of that night. So he tried to approach the Buddha to ask some questions to dispel his doubts about the Doctrine. But Venerable Ānanda prevented him from seeing the Buddha three times. When the Buddha overheard the conversation between Venerable Ānanda and the wandering ascetic, the Buddha told Venerable Ānanda to allow Subhadda to see him.

The wandering ascetic Subhadda asked the Buddha whether the leaders of heretics such as Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhaligōsāla and so on, were real Buddhas as they had claimed. The Buddha told the ascetic to set aside that question and to listen to him.

"Subhadda, I shall expound the Doctrine to you. Listen to me and bear it well in mind.

In the Teachings in which the Noble Eightfold Path is not expounded, there cannot be found the first-stage Ariya, the second-stage Ariya, the third-stage Ariya and the fourth-stage Ariya (Noble Persons). In the Teaching in which the Noble Eightfold Path has been expounded, all the Four Ariyas can exist. In my Teaching the Noble Eightfold Path has been expounded. So in this Teaching only, the Four Noble persons can be found. All the other teachings, being void of Ariyas, are futile. So long as the bhikkhus live well practising the teachings themselves and teaching others righteously, the world will not be deplete of Arahats."

The wandering ascetic Subhadda was well satisfied with the clearcut exposition of the Buddha and requested to be ordained as a bhikkhu. After becoming a bhikkhu, he practised the Noble Eightfold Path and soon became an Arahāt. He was the last disciple to become an Arahāt in the presence of the Buddha. In fact the reason why the Buddha made the last journey of over six miles from Pāvā to Kusināra under the extreme hot weather, inspite of his severe illness, resting twenty-five times on the way, was threefold, namely, to straighten the view of Subhadda, to teach Mahāsudassana Sutta and to

have his relics distributed to eight kings peacefully by the brahmin Doṇa.

The Last Words of the Buddha

Then referring to his bhikkhu who had assembled silently, the Buddha said, "Ānanda, when the Tathāgata passes away, you may consider that you have no teacher. Don't consider this way. The Doctrine and the Discipline I have taught and laid down to all of you will be your teacher when I pass away."

And the Buddha added, "Bhikkhus, if any of you should happen to have any doubt or perplexity regarding the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, the Path, or the Practice, ask me now. Do not let yourselves feel regret later for not asking me. Do not hesitate to ask questions."

All the bhikkhus remained silent and no one asked any question.

This event finally proved beyond doubt that the Buddha's Discourses were true and genuine. Then the Buddha paused for a short moment and gave his last words to the bhikkhus as follows:

*"Handa dāni bhikkhave āmantayami vo
vayadhaminā saṅkhārā appamādena
sampādettha"*

"Oh Bhikkhus! These are my last words now. All conditioned and compounded things have the nature of decay and disintegration. With steadfast mindfulness, endeavour diligently for your own liberation."

The Buddha's Mahāparinibbāna

The whole Sal grove was in deep silence. The full moon of Kason (Vesākha) was about to set in the west and the small hours of the next day began. There was no more voice of the Buddha to be heard.

Some bhikkhus, men, devas and brahmas, who were Non-returners and Arahats paid their last homage to the Buddha, reflecting and contemplating the nature of Dhamma. Some bhikkhus, men, devas and brahmas, who were ordinary worldlings, Stream-winners, and Once-returners, wept and lamented silently.

The Buddha with his eyes closed, entered the First Jhāna; then the second Jhāna and so on till Nevasaññānāsaññiyā-yātana Jhāna. Then from that Jhāna, he came down step by step to the first Jhāna. And again from the first Jhāna he went up step by step to the fourth Jhāna and passed into Parinibbāna.

It was in the early summer morning past midnight of the full-moon day of Vesākha (Kason), on Tuesday, in the year 148 Mahā Era, that the Buddha attained Parinibbāna. At that moment the earth trembled violently and thunder-roars with flashes of lightning appeared in the sky. The whole world seemed to be plunged into deep darkness.

The Arrival of Venerable Mahākassapa

The Malla Princes of Kusinārā spent the whole week in paying homage and reverence to the sacred body of the Buddha with flowers, perfumes and musical performances. At that time Venerable Mahākassapa together with five hundred bhikkhus was on the way from Pāvā to Kusinārā. When they learnt of the Buddha's Parinibbāna, the bhikkhus who were not free from defilements wept vehemently. Then one of the bhikkhus, Subhadda, who had become a bhikkhu in his old age after leading a married life, said to other bhikkhus, "Friends, do not grieve and do not weep. Now we are free from the hands of the great Samaṇa Gotama who has oppressed us by saying, "This is proper for you; that is not proper for you! From now on, we can do what we like."

On hearing those words, Venerable Mahākassapa was struck with awe and he thought to himself: "Only seven days have passed since the Buddha's Parinibbāna. Now a great obstacle endangering the Buddha's Teaching has arisen. Before the enemy to the Teachings get stronger, the Buddha's Teachings should be kept well in order. Just like the scattering flowers which have not yet been made into a beautiful garland, so also the Buddha's Teachings given throughout the forty-five years have not yet been grouped into similarities and classified in systematic ways. It is proper that after the cremation of the Buddha's sacred body, these Teachings should be recited together in the Saṅgha Assembly as soon as possible."

The Malla princes moved the Buddha's body from the Sal grove to the royal place where the auspicious ceremony of wearing the top-knot (hair) was held by Malla Princes. And when they tried to kindle the funeral pyre, they were unable to set it on fire. On the seventh day Venerable Mahākassapa and his disciples arrived at the scene. They circled the funeral pyre three times with clasped hands raised to their forehead. Then they paid obeisance to the Buddha by touching the feet of the Buddha

with their forehead. At that very moment, the funeral pyre burst into flames spontaneously.

The Distribution of The Sacred Relics

After the spontaneous cremation of the Buddha's body, the relics left behind were collected and venerated in ceremony for a whole week. Meanwhile, the seven Kings from seven countries, such as Rājagaha, Vesālī, Kapilavatthu, etc., heard about the Parinibbāna of the Buddha and marched towards Kusinara with their respective armies in order to get their share of the relics. Due to the persuasion of the Brahmin Doṇa, who had been the revered teacher of the seven Kings and the Malla princes, the relics were divided into eight equal portions and distributed among the Malla princes and the eight kingdoms. These kings and princes enshrined the relics in Thūpas for public reverence in their respective countries.

The first Buddhist Council was held in Rājagaha by five hundred arahats headed by Mahā Kassapa under the sponsorship of King Ajātasattu. After the Council, Venerable Mahākassapa, foreseeing the danger to the Buddha's relics, advised King Ajātasattu to keep

them in safety in a single place in Rājagaha. Then employing his supernormal power, Venerable Mahākassapa collected all the relics and placed them in a safe place in Rājagaha.

When the third Buddhist Council was held in the year 235 Buddhist Era, the Great Emperor Āsoka asked the head of the Saṅgha, Venerable Mahāmoggaliputtatissa, the numerical extent of the Buddha's Teachings. The Mahā Thera answered that the Buddha's Teachings consist of 84000 dhammakhandhas (dhamma-groups). In veneration to the Buddha's Teachings, he ordered his ministers to build 84000 monasteries and 84000 thūpas in 84000 towns. The Mahā Thera obtained the Buddha's relics from Rājagaha and let the emperor enshrine them in the thūpas he had built.



CHAPTER (3)

Paying Homage

How to pay homage

When a Buddhist approaches to pay homage to the Buddha and members of the Saṅgha, he must take a suitable place putting his palms together on his forehead respectfully. The suitable place should be free from six faults of location; being too far; being too near; being at the front; being at the back; being at a high place; and being against the wind. Then he should respectfully say whatever he wishes. After that, he should pay homage to them and go back from them taking four or five steps backward and with joined-palms on his forehead, without turning his back to them.

Three modes of paying homage

- (a) Paying homage physically (kāyavandanā);
- (b) Paying homage verbally (vācīvandanā); and
- (c) Paying homage mentally (Manovandanā).

Paying homage physically

One who pays homage physically to the Buddha and the Saṅgha has to touch the ground or the floor with five parts of one's body. These five parts of body are; forehead, two hands and two knees. This is called the five-fold manner of touch.

Paying homage while standing

When a Buddhist meets the members of the Saṅgha on the way, he should stop, take off his head-wear and shoes. Then he should raise his joined-palms on to his forehead with his body leaning forwards.

Paying homage while sitting

A male-devotee should sit in a squatting posture and a female-devotee should sit with

limbs drawn together for paying homage by means of the fivefold manner of touch. While paying homage he or she should say as follows:

Buddham Pujemi = I pay homage to the Buddha.

Dhammad Pujemi = I pay homage to the Dhamma.

Saṅgham Pujemi = I pay homage to the Saṅgha.

The Programme for Performing Religious Activities

When the Buddhists in Myanmar perform the meritorious deeds such as giving charity, observing the precepts, etc, they first pay homage to the Saṅgha by reciting the formula of asking for permission to do so beginning with "Okāsa". At the end of the recitation, beginning with Okāsa, a member of the Saṅgha gives blessings so that the wishes of the devotees may be fulfilled.

Then the devotees ask for the five or eight precepts together with threefold refuges by reciting the Pāli word beginning with "Ahaṃ bhante". The member of the Saṅgha then

dictates the formulae of *Namotassa*, and *Saraṇagamana* Pāli words for paying homage to the Buddha.

After the devotees recite the above Pāli formulae, the member of the Saṅgha reminded them to keep the precepts well with mindfulness.

After that the devotees hand over the offertories to the Saṅgha. Then the member of the Saṅgha may deliver a short discourse on the benefits of giving charity and keeping precepts. He then administers the pouring of libation water and sharing merits.

The Formula of Asking Permission to pay Homage

Okāsa Okāsa Okāsa - Oh Venerable Sir: May I pay obeisance to thee! So as to be free from all my offences, accumulated from evil deeds done physically, verbally and mentally, I pay homage to the Three Gems: the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, once, twice, thrice with my joined-palms on my forehead very respectfully and humbly. Owing to my deeds of merit, may I always be free from the four Apāyas, the three Kappas, the eight Aṅghakkhaṇas,

the five Veras, the four Vipattis, the five Byasanas; and at the final existence may I attain Magga, Phala and Nibbāna!

The Meanings of the Formula of Asking Permission to pay Homage

- Okāsa = asking for permission
- Kiyakamma = physical action
- Vacikamma = verbal action
- Manokamma = mental action
- Sabba dosa = all offences

Ratanā

Ratanā means all animate and inanimate things which give delight and pleasure to one's mind.

All jewels including diamond, gold, silver, etc., give delight and pleasure to the mind of people in the world. So they are called mundane jewels (*Lokiya Ratanā*).

Similarly, the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha give delight and pleasure to the mind of human beings, devas and brahmas. So, they are called supramundane jewels (*Lokuttarā Ratanā*).

The Four Nether Worlds (Apāyas)

The four states which are devoid of happiness are called Apāya. There are four apāyas. They are:-

- (1) The Realm of intense continuous suffering (Niraya);
- (2) The State of animals; (Tiracchāna)
- (3) The Realm of ever hungry beings (Peta); and
- (4) The State of a kind of petas who live miserably in secluded places (Asurākāya).

Three Disasters

Kappa: destruction of the world; disaster.

Three disasters which arise when the world is overwhelmed by evil deeds are called three kappas.

They are:-

- (1) The disaster by famine
(*Dubbhikkhantara Kappa*);
- (2) The disaster by weapons
(*Satthantara Kappa*);
- (3) The disaster by epidemics
(*Rogantara Kappa*);

The Causes of the Disasters

- (1) The disaster by famine arises when human beings are overwhelmed by greed.
- (2) The disaster by weapons arises when human beings are overwhelmed by hatred.
- (3) The disaster by epidemic appears when human beings are overwhelmed by ignorance.

Eight Inopportune Times

- (1) Being born in Niraya,
- (2) Being born as animals (*Tiricchāna*),
- (3) Being born as petas (*Peta*),
- (4) Being born as Asaññatta-brahmas and Arūpa-brahmas. (As they have no faculty to hear the Dhamma, they cannot listen to the Noble Dhamma.)
- (5) Being born as a human being in the remote part of a country which cannot be reached by Buddha and his disciples. (*Paccantarika*)
- (6) Being born as a human being having the wrong view during the time of the Buddha and his Teachings.

- (7) Being born as a human being with no intelligence to understand the Teachings of the Buddha.
- (8) Being born as a human being with adequate intelligence to understand the Teachings of the Buddha but not in the time of the Buddha.

The Five Enemies (*Pañca Verāṇi*)

- (1) floods,
- (2) Conflagrations,
- (3) Bad rulers,
- (4) Thieves and robbers, and
- (5) Bad sons and daughters who are unworthy heirs. These five are called enemies because they can sometimes cause a great danger to unfortunate human beings.

Four Deficiencies (*Vipatti*)

Vipatti means the state of being short of what is needed. Four vipattis are:

- (1) Being born during the time of bad rulers; (*Kālavipatti*),
- (2) Being born in four miserable existences (*Gativipatti*),

- (3) Having physical deformities and disfigurements (*Upadhivipatti*), and
- (4) Lacking in right effort (*Payogavipatti*).

Five Kinds of Losses (*Byasana*)

Byasana means the ruination or misfortune.

Five byasanas are:

- (1) Loss of relatives (*Nāti-byasana*),
- (2) Loss of wealth (*Bhoga-byasana*),
- (3) Loss of health due to illness (*Roga-byasana*),
- (4) Loss of right view (*Diṭṭhi-byasana*),
- (5) Loss of morality (*Sila-byasana*).

Magga: *Magga* means the Path leading to Nibbāna.

There are four stages:

- (1) The Path of Stream-winner (*Sotapatti-magga*),
- (2) The Path of once-returner (*Sakadāgāmi-magga*),
- (3) The Path of Non-returner (*Anagāmi-magga*),
- (4) The Path of Arahant (*Arahatta-magga*).

Phala: Phala means the fruition that immediately follows the path. There are also four stages:

- (1) The fruition of Stream-winner (*Sotapatti-phala*),
- (2) The fruition of Once-returner (*Sākadāgāmi-phala*),
- (3) The fruition of Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-phala*),
- (4) The fruition of Arahant (*Arahattaphala*).

Nibbāna: Nibbāna is the extinction of fire of lust, hatred and delusion.

The Story of the Youth Āyuvaḍḍhana

While residing in a village monastery near Dighalaṅghika, the Buddha spoke this verse with reference to Āyuvaḍḍhanakumāra.

Once, there were two hermits who lived together practising religious austerities for forty-eight years. Later, one of the two left the hermit life and got married. After a son was born, the family visited the old hermit and paid obeisance to him. To the parents the hermit said, "May you live long." But he said nothing to the child. The parents were puzzled and

asked the hermit the reason for his silence towards the child. The hermit told them that the child would live only seven more days and that he did not know how to prevent his death. However he added that the Buddha might know how to do it.

So the parents took the child to the Buddha. When they paid obeisance to the Buddha, he also said "May you live long" to the parents only and not to the child. The Buddha also predicted the impending death of the child. To prevent his death, the parents were told to build a pavilion at the entrance to the house and put the child on a couch in the pavilion. Then some monks were sent there to recite the parittās (protective chants) for seven days. On the seventh day the Buddha himself came to that pavilion; the evil spirit Avaruddhaka was at the entrance, waiting for a chance to take the child away. But as more powerful devas arrived, the evil spirit had to step back and make room for them so that he had to stay at a place two leagues away from the child. That whole night recitation of parittās continued, thus protecting the child. The next day, the child was taken from the couch and made to pay obeisance to the Buddha. This time, the Buddha said "May you live long" to the child.

When asked how long the child would live, the Buddha replied that he would live up to one hundred and twenty years. So the child was named *Ayuvaddhana*.

When the child grew up, he went about the country with a company of five hundred fellow devotees. One day, they came to the *Jetavana Monastery* and the monks, recognizing him, asked the Buddha, "For beings, is there any means of gaining longevity?" To this question the Buddha answered, "By respecting and honouring the elders and those who are wise and virtuous, one would gain not only longevity, but also beauty, happiness and strength."

"The Story of a Monk who reviled an Ariya"

Once an elder monk and a young monk went for alms in a certain village. At the very first house they got a ladleful of warm gruel each. The elder monk was suffering from severe pain in the stomach. He thought: "This gruel is beneficial to me. I will drink it before it gets cold." And he sat down on a log brought by men for the purpose of making a door-post, and drank the gruel. The other monk, being disgusted with him, thought: "This old

man, being oppressed by excessive hunger, has done something we should be ashamed of". Having roamed around the village, the elder monk went back to the monastery and asked the young monk: "Friend, have you made a foothold in this religion?" "Yes, sir. I am a *Stream-winner*." "Friend, then do not try for the higher Path. You have reviled one who is free from cankers". The young monk apologized so that his fault was condoned.

All beings in the world have to live with the Buddha, the *Sangha*, noble persons, parents, teachers and those who are older and superior in virtues. One may offend them bodily, verbally or mentally. Whether one may commit the wrong action intentionally or not, one may encounter the evil consequences such as loss of properties, suffering from various diseases, etc., in this very life. Also in future existances, one may be reborn in woeful abodes repeatedly and one's chance to attain the celestial life and *Nibbana* may be blocked. Therefore one must be very careful not to offend noble persons and elders.

In order to deter the above evil consequences, the wise elders of past generations have adopted the formula of asking for

permission ("Okāsa") to be performed first among the religious activities

By reciting the Okāsa Formula in obeisance to noble persons and elders, all the evil consequences of intentional or unintentional offences may be eradicated, and good benefits will arise in this life as well as in future lives. Even if no offence has been done, one will gain wholesome Kammās by paying homage with Okāsa, and will enjoy the benefits of these Kammās.

Moral Precepts

Asking for the Five Precepts

"Ahaṃ bhante tisaraṇena saha pañcasīlaṃ dhammaṃ yācāmi anuggahaṃ katvā sīlaṃ detha me bhante.

Dutiyampi - Ahaṃ bante tisaraṇena saha pañcasīlaṃ dhammaṃ yācāmi anuggahaṃ katvā sīlaṃ detha me bhante."

Tatīyampi - Ahaṃ bante tisaraṇena saha pañcasīlaṃ dhammaṃ yācāmi anuggahaṃ katvā sīlaṃ detha me bhante."

Bhikkhu - Ya-mahaṃ vadāmi taṃ vedetha."

Lay devotees - Āma bhante.

Note : It is not necessary to recite 'Āma bhate" if one observes the precept in front of the Buddha image.

Meaning -

Venerable sir, I observe the five precepts together with the threefold refuge.

Venerable sir, please help me observe the five precepts out of compassion for me.

Bhikkhu - Repeat after me as I say.

Lay devotees - Yes, Venerable Sir.

The Formula of Paying Homage to the Buddha

In Pāli - Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato sammāsambuddhassa (three times)

Meaning - Veneration to the Exalted One, the One worthy of special veneration, and the perfectly self-enlightened One.

Taking three Refuges

In Pāli - Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Saṃghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dutiyampi *Buddham saraṇam gacchāmi*

Dutiyampi *Dhammam saraṇam gacchāmi*

Dutiyampi *Saṃgham saraṇam gacchāmi*

Tatīyampi *Buddham saraṇam gacchāmi*

Tatīyampi *Dhammam saraṇam gacchāmi*

Tatīyampi *Saṃgham saraṇam gacchāmi*

Bhikkhu - *Saraṇagamanam paripuṇṇam*

Lay devotees - *Āma bhante*

Meaning - I take refuge in the Buddha.
I take refuge in the Dhamma.
I take refuge in the Saṃgha.

For the second time I take refuge in the Buddha.

For the second time I take refuge in the Dhamma.

For the second time I take refuge in the Saṃgha.

For the third time I take refuge in the Buddha.

For the third time I take refuge in the Dhamma.

For the third time I take refuge in the Saṃgha.

Bhikkhu - you have now completed the act of taking three refuges.

Lay devotees - Yes, Venerable Sir.

Note : It is not necessary to recite "Āma bhante" if one takes the three refuges in front of the Buddha image.

Undertaking the Five Precepts *How to undertake and observe the five precepts (In Pali and English)*

In pāli

(1) *Pāṇātipātā veramaṇisikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*

(2) *Adinnādānā veramaṇisikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*

(3) *Kāmesumicchācārā veramaṇisikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*

(4) *Musāvādā Veramaṇisikkhāpadam Samādiyāmi.*

(5) *Surāmerayamajja pamā daṭṭhānā veramaṇisikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*

Meaning

(1) I observe the precept of abstaining from killing any living being.

- (2) I observe the precept of abstaining from taking what is not given by the owner.
- (3) I observe the precept of abstaining from committing sexual misconduct.
- (4) I observe the precept of abstaining from telling lies.
- (5) I observe the precept of abstaining from taking any intoxicant or drug that causes forgetfulness.

Bhikkhu ; Tisaraṇena saha pañcasīlam
dhammam sādhuṅgam kalyā
appamādena sampādeṭha.

Do observe the five precepts together with the Three Refuges with diligence and steadfast mindfulness.

Lay-devotees: Āma bhante.

Yes, Venerable Sir.

"Meaning of Saraṇagamana"

The Pāli word 'Saraṇagamana' means the solemn recognition of the Three Refuges as the holiest objects of worship because they can ward off danger, bring good benefits, eliminate suffering and deliver happiness.

Establishment and Disappearance of Saraṇagamana

One can establish Saraṇagamana by reciting "*Buddham saraṇam gacchāmi, Dhammam saraṇam gacchāmi, Saṅgham saraṇam gacchāmi*" in front of a monk, a Buddha image or a pagoda recognizing solemnly the Three Refuges as the holiest objects of worship. So long as one is alive or one is not converted to another system of belief, the Saraṇagamana will remain in oneself and it will ward off danger, bring good benefits, eliminate suffering and deliver happiness. When one dies or when one is converted to another system of belief, the Saraṇagamana completely disappears in one.

The Benefits of Saraṇagamana

- (1) Those who can maintain Saraṇagamana till death, will not be reborn in lower abodes when they die.
- (2) They will be reborn as human beings or celestial beings.
- (3) They will surpass others on the following ten points:
 1. in enjoying visible objects

2. in enjoying pleasant sounds
3. in enjoying sweet odours,
4. in enjoying good taste.
5. in enjoying pleasant contact.
6. in enjoying a long life.
7. in enjoying good appearance.
8. in enjoying happiness,
9. in enjoying power, and
10. in having a large number of companions.

In the world the Three Gems are the most superior. If one takes refuge in Three Gems, he will gain such advantages as long life, good appearance, etc. If one misconceives the Three Gems, he cannot attain Magga and Phala and he will be reborn in niraya.

The Story of Saranagamana Thera

In the time of Anomadassi Buddha, there lived a man who looked after his blind parents in the town of Candavati. He contemplated that all beings were being burned by the three fires of lust, anger and delusion and that a man who wished to perform meritorious deeds, should be able to liberate himself from these

fires. As he had to look after his blind parents, he could not become a monk. So, he undertook three refuges from Revered Nisabha who was the chief disciple of Anomadassi Buddha. He maintained the three refuges till the end of his life-span which lasted for 100 thousand years at that time.

He was then reborn in the Tāvātimsa celestial abode. He was born as the King of devas for 80 times as the universal monarch for 75 times, as ordinary human-king and ordinary deva-king for innumerable times. He was never reborn in the four lower abodes. In every existence he was honoured wherever he went; he had great intelligence and great retinue; he enjoyed great wealth; he possessed fair complexion and good appearance; he was loved by others; he had steady and good friends; his reputation spread in all directions. Finally, he was reborn as a rich-man's son in Savatthi. At the age of seven, he was playing with his companions when they happened to be in a monastery and met an arahat. That arahat admonished them kindly and let them undertake the three refuges. As soon as the rich man's son heard the word "Tisarāṇa", he recalled the saranagamana which he had maintained in the time of Anomadassi Buddha. At that moment, he attained arahatship.

The Story of a Wood-cutter and his son

It was the time under the reign of King Bimbisāra in Rājagaha. At that time there lived two boys, who were friends. One of them was the son of a holder of the right view while the other was the son of a holder of the wrong view.

They used to play a game of balls. The first boy always won the game, and the latter learnt that the former recited "*Nāmobuddhassa*" (I pay homage to the Buddha) whenever he threw the ball. So the second boy also recited "*Nāmobuddhassa*" most of the time.

One day the second boy accompanied his father who went into the wood to cut some firewood. On their return home in the evening, they stopped near a cemetery to have their meal. They also took off the yoke from the two oxen to enable them to graze nearby. But the two oxen went away without being noticed. As soon as they knew that the two oxen were missing, the wood-cutter went to look for them, leaving his son with the cart of fire-wood. The father entered the town, looking for his two oxen.

When he returned with the two oxen, it was too late for the city-gate was already closed. Therefore, the young boy had to spend the night alone under the cart. That night two ogres came by the cart as they looked for food. Of the two ogres, one was a right-viewer while the other was a wrong viewer. The wrong-viewed ogre wanted to eat the boy as soon as he saw the boy. The right-viewed ogre stopped him, but the latter went ahead pulling the leg of the boy. The boy was awakened and he suddenly cried out "*Nāmobuddhassa*" as he was used to saying it very often. The ogres got frightened and stepped back. The right-viewed ogre said that as they had done something wrong to the boy, they must look after the boy to undo their actions. As he looked after the boy, his friend went to the palace of Bimbisāra and brought some food with the royal bowl. The two ogres then fed the boy as if they were his parents. Then they left a written message on the royal bowl, and they went away at dawn.

In the morning the king's men noticed that the royal bowl was missing and they went around looking for it. When they found

it on the cart of the wood-cutter, they brought the bowl together with the boy to the king. The king saw the message on the bowl and realized that a strange event had happened. When the boy's parents arrived at the palace, the King took them to the Buddha. He presented the facts as he knew to the Buddha and asked the Exalted One what had happened. The Buddha told the King the whole story. The King realized that the boy's mindfulness of the Buddha had saved the boy from being eaten by the ogres. The Buddha explained the benefits of mindfulness on the virtues of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha to them. At the end of the explanation, the boy and his parents became Stream-winners.

The Consequences of Breaking the Five Precepts and the Benefits of Observing the Five Precepts

The Consequences of Killing Sentient Beings

Whosoever kills any living being will be reborn in one of the four lower abodes after death. Even when he is freed from there and is again reborn as a man, he will encounter the following evil consequences:-

- (1) Having physical deformities and disfigurements,
- (2) Being ugly,
- (3) Being pale and feeble,
- (4) Being dull and inactive,
- (5) Being easily frightened when confronted with danger,
- (6) Being killed by other or facing death in youth,
- (7) Suffering from many diseases,
- (8) Having few friends, and
- (9) Being separated from beloved ones.

On the other hand the one who abstains from killing sentient beings will enjoy the benefits which are the opposite of the above consequences.

The Consequences of Stealing

Stealing includes taking others' things without the permission of the owner, and taking others' properties by force or by cheating or by trick. Whosoever commits stealing will be reborn in one of the four lower abodes when he dies. Even when he is freed from there and is again reborn as a man, he will encounter the following evil consequences:-

- (1) Being poor.
- (2) Having to suffer bodily and mentally.
- (3) Being tortured by hunger and starvation.
- (4) Having unfulfilled wishes.
- (5) Having unstable and easily perishable fortune.
- (6) Having properties destroyed by the five enemies, namely flood, fire, thieves, bad inheritors and bad rulers.

On the other hand the one who abstains from stealing will enjoy the benefits which are the opposite of the above consequences.

The Consequences of Sexual Misconduct

Whosoever has sexual relation with any person other than one's spouse is said to have committed sexual misconduct. That person will be reborn in one of the lower abodes when he dies. Even if he is freed from there and is again reborn as a human being, he will encounter the following evil consequences:-

- (1) Being disgusted by others,
- (2) Having many enemies,

- (3) Lacking in wealth and prosperity,
- (4) Being deprived of happiness,
- (5) Being reborn as a woman,
- (6) Being reborn as a sexual pervert,
- (7) Being reborn in the inferior lineage,
- (8) Encountering disgrace,
- (9) Having physical deformities.
- (10) Being separated from beloved ones,
- (11) Being inflicted with the loss of wealth.

On the other hand, the one who abstains from sexual misconduct, will enjoy the benefits which are the opposite of the above consequences.

The Consequences of Telling Lies

Telling what is not true by gesture or by words with malicious intention is committing the action of falsehood. The gravity of that offence corresponds to the amount of harm done to others. The liar will have to suffer in the miserable realms after his death. If he were to be reborn in the human world he will be afflicted with the following defects:

- (1) poor pronunciation,
- (2) uneven teeth,
- (3) foul breath,
- (4) unhealthy complexion.

- (5) poor eyesight and poor hearing,
- (6) defective appearance,
- (7) lack of influence on others,
- (8) harshness of speech, and
- (9) restlessness of the mind.

On the other hand the one who abstains from telling lies will enjoy the benefits which are the opposite of the above consequences.

The Consequences of Indulging in Intoxicants

Intoxicants and narcotic drugs such as alcoholic, liquors, opium, cocaine and heroin are addictive. Consuming any of these leads to the drunkenness, forgetfulness and lack of common sense. These in turn lead to murder, lying and adultery, etc. Moreover the user of intoxicants or narcotic drugs will enjoy poor health, die young and will be reborn in woeful abodes.

Even when he is freed from there and is again reborn as a human being he will encounter the following evil consequences.

- (1) lack of intelligence,
- (2) being lazy.
- (3) lack of mindfulness.
- (4) being ungrateful.

- (5) lack of moral shame and moral dread;
- (6) insanity, and
- (7) tendency to commit all evil deeds.

On the other hand he who abstains from consuming intoxicants will enjoy the benefits which are the opposite of the above evil consequences.

The Stories Demonstrating the Evil Consequences of Breaking Precepts

The Story Illustrating the Consequences Of Killing Sentient Beings

Once upon a time a housewife went to the market to buy meat in order to feast a special guest. As she could not get meat from any palce, she killed a little sheep which was bred in her house. The guest and her husband were very satisfied with the meat. But when she died she was cast into hell where she had to suffer for a long time. After that she was born as an animal as many times as the number of hair on the little sheep she had killed. In every animal life she was killed being cut at the throat as she had killed the little sheep.

The Story Illustrating the Consequences of Stealing Others' Properties

Once upon a time, four women in Rājagaha amassed riches through malpractice of shortchanging and adulteration in selling their goods. They died in their prime of life and became petas, miserable beings, outside the city. At night they entered the city looking for scattered food remnants or saliva or phlegm spat out by human beings. As they went along one street after another they came to their former houses and saw their husbands enjoying with new wives. They felt so painful that they cried out, "We have been suffering miserably for having amassed wealth unlawfully while our husbands are enjoying to their heart's content with their new wives."

The Story Illustrating the Consequences of Committing Adultery

Ānanda, the younger brother of Gotama Buddha, fulfilled the ten perfections for a hundred thousand worlds. In one of his lives in this world, he became a rich goldsmith's son. In this life he associated with bad companions and committed adultery several times.

When he died he was cast into Roruva Hell where he was tortured for many years. After that he was born as a monkey who had its genital bitten off as soon as it was born. After that life, he was born as a goat and then as a calf which were castrated when they grew up. In the next existence he regained the human life but was born as a sexual pervert. After that he attained celestial existences as female deities for five existences thanks to his wholesome kamma, but he did not attain malehood because of the unwholesome kamma of committing adultery. Then he was born as Princess Rucā in the human realm. Only after that, he regained manhood.

The Story Illustrating the Consequences of Falsehood

In the time of Kasspa Buddha, in Kimila, there lived a male lay-devotee who was a Stream-winner. He did the meritorious deeds of planting trees, building bridges and monasteries, etc., with his five hundred followers who were of the same view. This group of lay-devotees went to the Buddha's monastery frequently to listen to the Dhamma. Their

wives also went to the monastery occasionally to listen to the Dhamma and to make offerings.

One day some drunkards saw them and were attracted by them. They argued among themselves as to who would be able to destroy the morality of those women. One of them said that he would be able to do so. This man tried to seduce the wife of the leader of the lay devotees in many ways and finally succeeded.

The drunkard who lost the bet informed the leader of the lay devotees about the matter. And the latter asked his wife whether she had committed adultery. She lied that what he had heard was not true. As her husband did not believe her, she pointed to a black dog nearby whose ears were cut off and swore: "If I have committed adultery with another man, may I be eaten by this black dog in the next life." Still, her husband did not believe her and he inquired her companions. Although her companions knew the truth, they also swore: "We do not know. If this is not true, may we become her slaves."

When they died, they all became miserable beings near the lake Kanṇamunda in the Himavanta Forest. Because of their meritorious deeds in their past lives, they enjoyed the celestial luxury in a very grand golden mansion

in the day time. But at night the leader of the group, in accordance with her swearing to her Stream-winner husband, she was eaten by a black dog. Her five hundred companions also became her servants as they had sworn in lie in their past lives. Moreover, although they could enjoy the luxury of devas they did not get married. They felt lonely and bored for being set apart from men.

Falsehood is the greatest demeritorious deed while truthfulness is the most beneficial meritorious deed.

The Story Illustrating the Consequences of Indulging in Intoxicants

Once the Bodhisatta was born in a wealthy family possessing eighty crores of silver coins. He performed the meritorious deeds of giving charity and keeping good morality. When he died, he was reborn as Sakka, the king of devas, in Tavatimsā.

His son squandered the wealth left behind by him indulging in intoxicants. When the son had used up the forty crores of silver coins, he dug up the forty crores buried under ground. He built a liquor house and led an easy life associating with drunkards and indulging in

intoxicants. When he was drunk, he let acrobats and dancers entertain them and presented one thousand silver coins to each.

Soon he had spent all the money and was reduced to a poor beggar. Finally he died miserably.

*The Story Illustrating
the Benefits of Keeping
the Five Precepts*

The Story of Dhammapāla

Once in a village in Kāsi Province, all the villagers gave charity, maintained good morality and observed the moral precepts on Uposatha days. Consequently they never died young; they usually died in their old age.

The son of the headman in that village went to study at Takkaṣilā City. While he was studying there, a young son of the professor died. The young Dhammapāla inquired why the professor's son died young. The others asked him: "Don't you know that everyone must die one day either in the early age or in the old age? Doesn't anyone die young in your village?" The young Dhammapāla replied, "Of course, they die, but they never die young."

When the professor heard the strange words of the young Dhammapāla, he was surprised and he wanted to find out what the young Dhammapāla said was true or not. So he left the youth to look over his pupils while he himself went to the Dhammapāla village, taking along some bones of a goat. On reaching there, he went to Dhammapāla's father, and, showing the bones, said, "Your son Dhammapāla had passed away and had been cremated. Here are his bones."

His father and other relatives replied, laughing: "These bones cannot be my son's. They must be the bones of a goat or a dog." "Although every man is subject to death at any age, why are you an exception to this rule?" asked the professor.

The headman explained thus: "Here in our village of Dhammapāla, all the villagers usually give charity and keep the precepts; we abstain from all evil deeds. Besides the youths usually obey the elders. We all perform voluntary work for the welfare of our community. Thus no one dies young in our village."

Then the professor paid obeisance to the headman and admitted: "Your son didn't die. It came here to inquire the truthfulness of your son's remark that no one dies young in this

village." The professor inquired about the meritorious deeds performed by the Dhammapāla villagers in further detail and returned home.

*The Pāli for Asking for the Eight Moral Precepts**

Lay devotee: Aham bhante tisanena saha aṭṭhaṅga samannāgatam uposatha sīlam dhammam yācāmi anuggaham katvā sīlam detha me bhante.

Dutiyampi aham bhante tisanena saha aṭṭhaṅga samannāgatam uposatha sīlam dhammam yācāmi anuggaham katavā sīlam detha me bhante.

Tatīyampi aham bhante tisanena saha ... me bhante.

Bhikkhu : ya' maham vadāmi tam vadetha.

Lay devotee : Āma bhante.

Note : If we ask for the eight uposatha precepts in front of the image of the Buddha, it is not necessary to recite "Āma bhante".

* the Eight Moral Precepts: the 8 moral precepts are also known as Uposatha Sila or Uposatha precepts. Some people also use the term "Sabbath precepts".

Meaning:

Venerable Sir, I observe the eight uposatha precepts together with the Three Refuges. Please grant me the eight Uposatha-precepts out of compassion.

Bhikkhu : I will recite the following. Do repeat after me.

Lay Devotee: Yes, Venerable Sir.

In Pāli : Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammasambuddhassa (To recite three times)

In English: Veneration to the Exalted One, the One worthy of special veneration and the Perfectly self-enlightened One.

Taking Three Refuges

In Pāli : Buddhā saraṇam gacchāmi.

Dhammā saraṇam gacchāmi.

Sanīham saraṇam gacchāmi.

Dutiyampi Buddhā saraṇam gacchāmi.

The Teachings of the Buddha

Dūtiyaṃ pi Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ
gacchāmi.

Dūtiyaṃ pi Saṃghaṃ saraṇaṃ
gacchāmi.

Tatiyaṃ pi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ
gacchāmi.

Tatiyaṃ pi Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ
gacchāmi.

Tatiyaṃ pi Saṃghaṃ saraṇaṃ
gacchāmi.

Bhikkhu : Tisaranagamanam paripunnam.

Lay devotee : Āma bhante.

In English - I take refuge in the Buddha.

I take refuge in the Dhamma.

I take refuge in the Saṃgha.

For the second time, I take refuge in the
Buddha.

For the second time, I take refuge in the
Dhamma.

For the second time, I take refuge in the
Saṃgha.

For the third time, I take refuge in the Buddha.

For the third time, I take refuge in the Dhamma.

For the third time, I take refuge in the
Saṃgha.

Bhikkhu : You have now completed the
act of taking refuge.

Lay devotee : Yes, Venerable Sir.

*Undertaking the Eight Moral Precepts**In Pāḷi:*

(1) Pāṇatipātā veramaṇisikkhāpadam
samādiyāmi.

(2) Adinnādānā veramaṇisikkhāpadam
samādiyāmi.

(3) Abrahmacariyā veramaṇisikkhāpadam
samādiyāmi.

(4) Musāvādā veramaṇisikkhāpadam
samādiyāmi.

(5) Surāmerayamajjapamādaṭṭhānā
veramaṇisikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

(6) Vikālabhojanā veramaṇisikkhāpadam
samādiyāmi.

(7) Nacca gīta vācīta visūka dassana
mālāgandha vilepana dhārana
maṇḍana vibhūsanatṭhānā veramaṇi-
sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

(8) Uccāsayana mahāsayanā veramaṇi-
sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

Meaning

- (1) I observe the precept of abstaining from killing any living being.
- (2) I observe the precept of abstaining from taking what is not given by the owner.
- (3) I observe the precept of abstaining from indulging in sexual conduct.
- (4) I observe the precept of abstaining from telling lies.
- (5) I observe the precept of abstaining from taking any intoxicant or drug which causes forgetfulness.
- (6) I observe the precept of abstaining from taking any food after mid-day.
- (7) I observe the precept of abstaining from enjoying dancing, singing, playing musical instruments which are obstacles to the Noble Practice and also abstaining from wearing flowers, using perfumes and beautifying with any cosmetics.
- (8) I observe the precept of abstaining from staying on any high or luxurious seat or bed.

In Pāli

Bhikkhu : Tisaraṇeṇa saha aṭṭhaṅgasamannāgataṃ uposathasilam dhammam sadhukam katvā appamādena sampādeṭha.

Lay devotee; Āma bhante.

Meaning

Bhikkhu : Do observe the Eight Uposatha-precepts together with the Three Refuges with diligence and steadfast mindfulness.

Lay devotee : Yes, Venerable Sir.

The Meaning of Abrahmacariya

In the observation of the five precepts, one has to abstain from sexual misconduct. In the observation of the eight moral precepts, one has to abstain from the ignoble practice (abrahmacariya) instead. The ignoble practice (abrahmacariya) means indulgence in sexual conduct between man and woman. 'Sexual conduct' is the English rendering of the myanmar word *Methun*, 'Methuna' in Pāli. 'Methuna' means 'the affair of two persons'. So any kind of sexual behaviour between any two persons is the "ignoble practice".

As to the sexual misconduct (kāmesumicchācāra), one may indulge in sex with one's own wife or husband. On the other hand, as to the ignoble practice (abrahmacariya), one is not permitted to have sex with one's own spouse and one has to abstain from any form of sexual enjoyment.

The Meaning of Vikālabhojana

Vikālabhojana means 'taking food at a wrong time'. Here, the time from 12 noon to sunrise of the next day is considered to be the wrong time for a person who observes the uposathasīla. He must not have any solid food such as rice, curry sandwich, cake, jam and fruits, etc. In order to drive away and relieve hunger and weakness he may take fruit juice made from mango, banana, lime, lemon, tamarind, plum, pineapple, or orange, jaggery, brown slab-sugar, molasses and sugar may be also taken by dissolving them in water. Electuary may be taken as medicine whenever required.

(7) *The Meaning of Nacca, gīta, etc.*

Nacca = dancing; making others dance.

gīta = singing; making others sing.

vādita = playing musical instruments;
making others play musical instruments.

visuka dassana = visuka + danssana.

visuka = what is contradictory
to the Noble Practice.

dassana = seeing or listening to
any entertainment.

One's precepts will not be broken if one sees the dancing or hears the singing by coincidence, without making any effort to do so.

mālā = various kinds of flowers

dhāraṇa = wearing or using

gaṇḍha = scented powder or scented
lotion

maṇḍana = applying

vilepana = dyeing or beautifying with
lip-stick, rouge, eyeshadow,
etc.

vibhūsaṇa = making the skin beautiful
and fragrant

ṭhāna = the cause of increasing
defilements

The person who observes the precepts should not beautify himself before observing the precepts.

(8) *The Meaning of Uccāsayana and Mahāsayana*

Uccāsayana = high places mean high couches or seats having legs longer than one cubit and a half, ie. 27 inches.

Mahāsayana = luxurious places mean the seat or bed stuffed with cotton, wool or kapok, carpet or fur longer than four finger-breadths (about two inches), carpets decorated with the pictures of tiger, lion, leopard and silk bedsheet. decorated with silver or gold embroidery

The Nine Uposatha Precepts

Undertaking the Nine Uposatha-Precepts

Some Buddhists, on uposatha days, observe the Nine Uposatha precepts instead of the Eight Uposatha precepts. In reality the Nine Uposatha precepts are the same as the Eight Uposatha precepts plus undertaking the meditation on loving-kindness, which is taken as the ninth precept. It is undertaken to enhance the benefits of observing the Uposatha precepts.

In Pāḷi

Ahaṃ bhante tisaraṇeṇa saha navaṅ-gasamaṇṇāgatam upāsathasīlam dhammaṃ yācāmi anuggaḥam katvā silam detha mebhante
 Dutiyaṃpi ahaṃ bhante - - - - detha mebhante.
 Tatiyaṃpi ahaṃ bhante - - - - detha mebhante.
Bhikkhu : Ya maham vadāmi tam vedetha.
Lay devotee : Āma bhante.

Meaning

Lay devotee : Venerable Sir, I observe the nine Uposatha-precepts together with the Three Gems. Please grant me the nine Uposatha-precepts out of compassion.

Bhikkhu : I will recite the followings. Do Repeat after me.

Lay devotee : Yes, Venerable Sir.

Formula for Paying Homage to the Buddha

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa. (Recite three times)

Buddham saraṇam gacchāmi.

Dhammam saraṇam gacchāmi.

Sangham saraṇam gacchāmi.

- Dutiyampi Buddham saraṇam gacchāmi.
 " Dhammam saraṇam gacchāmi.
 " Saṅgham saraṇam gacchāmi.
 Tatiyampi Buddham saraṇam gacchāmi.
 " Dhammam saraṇam gacchāmi.
 " Saṅgham saraṇam gacchāmi.

Bhikkhu : Tisaraṇa gaṇanam paripuṇṇam
Lay devotee : Āma bhante.

The Nine Precepts

In Pāli

- (1) Pānātipātā veramaṇisikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.
- (2) Adinuādānā veramaṇisikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.
- (3) Abrahmacariyā veramaṇisikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.
- (4) Musāvādā veramaṇisikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.
- (5) Surāmerayamajjapamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇisikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.
- (6) Vikālabhojanā veramaṇisikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.
- (7) Nacca gīta vādita visukkha dasana mālāgandha vilepana dhāraṇa maṇḍana vibhūsanatṭhanā veramaṇisikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

- (8) Uceāsayana mahāsayanā veramani sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.
- (9) Meltāsahagātena cetasā sabbapāṇabhūtesu pharivā viharanam samādiyāmi.

Meaning:

- (1) I observe the precept of abstaining from killing any living being.
- (2) I observe the precept of abstaining from taking what is not given by the owner.
- (3) I observe the precept of abstaining from indulging in sexual conduct.
- (4) I observe the precept of abstaining from telling lies.
- (5) I observe the precept of abstaining from taking any intoxicant or drug which causes forgetfulness.
- (6) I observe the precept of abstaining from taking any food after mid-day.
- (7) I observe the precept of abstaining from enjoying dancing, singing and playing musical instruments which are obstacles to the Noble Practice, and also abstaining from wearing flowers, using perfumes and beautifying with any cosmetics.

- (8) I observe the precept of abstaining from staying on any high or luxurious seat or bed.
- (9) I do establish the practice of cultivating loving-kindness on all living beings.

In Pāli

Bhikkhu : Tisaraṇena saha navaṅga sam-mannāgataṃ Uposathasīlaṃ dhammaṃ sadhukarṇ katvā appamādena Sampādetha.

Lay devotee : Āma bhaṅte.

Meaning :

Bhikkhu : Do observe the Nine Uposatha precepts together with the Three Refuges with diligence and steadfast mindfulness.

Lay devotee : Yes, Venerable Sir.

The Practice Of Cultivating Loving-kindness.

According to Navaka nipāta of Aṅguttara Nikāya, if one promises to observe the precept of cultivating loving-kindness towards all living beings in addition to the eight Uposatha precepts, one is said to observe the nine Uposatha

precepts. Loving-kindness (*mettā*), however, is not a precept like the eight Uposatha precepts. The reason is that one cannot send forth loving-kindness to others the whole day though one can refrain from taking the life of other creatures the whole day. Loving-kindness is something to be cultivated in one's own mind.

In the Buddha's time some persons observed the nine Uposatha precepts for radiating loving-kindness to others as it is very beneficial. It is generally accepted that if one diffuses loving-kindness to other sentient beings, without reciting "mettāsahagatena cetasā," after establishing the eight Uposatha precepts, he is said to undertake the nine Uposatha precepts.

The Uposatha precepts (Uposatha Sīla)

"Uposatha" itself is a combination of two words "upa" and "vāsatha." "Upa" means "fully engaged with the good practice like not taking other's life, etc; and "vāsatha" means living or dwelling. The Eight or Nine Uposatha precepts is called the Uposatha Precepts since the person who observes these precepts has to specially strive for full observance of these precepts.

In Buddhism, to keep Uposatha is to keep one's mind pure by repeatedly contemplating the virtues of the Buddha, the Dhamma or the Saṅgha in order to keep one's mind pure, i.e. free from defilements.

The Procedure of Observing Uposatha-precepts

- (1) On the day on which one is going to observe the Uposatha precepts, one should clean oneself, wear clean clothes and keep one's mind pure since the time one gets up from bed.
- (2) Neither should one use perfume and cosmetics nor wear flowers nor beautify oneself in advance. One must restrain from any kind of beautifying oneself which contradicts the Uposatha-precepts.
- (3) One should undertake the precepts as early in the day as possible.
- (4) After undertaking the precepts one should contemplate the virtues of the Buddha, the Dhamma or the Saṅgha or any kind of meditation at a quiet place.
- (5) If one cannot meditate for a long time, one should read or recite the Teachings of the Buddha.

- (6) One should listen to the discourse if there is someone to expound, or discuss the discourse.
- (7) At nightfall, one should feel delighted reflecting how one has spent the day observing Morality, and cultivating Concentration and Wisdom.

The Duration of Observing the Uposatha-precepts

One may undertake to abide by the precepts either for a certain period or for the whole life. One should at least keep observing the precepts from the time one has undertaken the precepts till the dawn of the next day.

The Stories Illustrating the Benefits of Observing the Uposatha-precepts

The Story of Gaṅgāmāla

Once upon a time, during the reign of King Brahmadaṭṭha in Bārānasi, there was a wealthy man called Suciparivāra, who possessed eighty crores of silver coins. That wealthy man and his wife kept the Uposatha precepts six days in a month. Every servant in their

house-hold also did the same. At that time, the Bodhisatta was born in a poor family, and when he grew up he worked for that wealthy man. On one Uposatha day, the Bodhisatta went to work as usual without knowing that it was an Uposatha day. When he came back at sunset, he found out that others were observing the Uposatha precepts. So he asked for permission from the wealthy man to allow him to observe the Uposatha precepts for the rest of the day. At night, he suffered from severe stomach pain due to flatulence since he kept the Uposatha precepts without taking any food for the whole day.

At dawn the pain became more severe and he fainted. In the meantime the king of Bārānasi happened to go round the town. The Bodhisatta saw the great wealth of the king and, longing to be a king, he passed away. Then he was conceived in the womb of the queen as the result of keeping the Uposatha precepts for a half-day. When he was born, he was named Udayakumāra. When he came of age he became a famous king of Bārānasi.

The Story of Uposathā

In the City of Sāketa, there was a female lay-devotee named Uposathā. She was endowed with conviction and morality. She supported the Saṅgha with four main requisites. She usually observed the Eight Uposatha-precepts on Uposatha days. She frequently listened to the discourses delivered by the Buddha and his disciples, practised meditation, and soon she became a Stream-winner. Moreover, she longed to live at the Nandavana Garden in Tavatimsā celestial abode since she came to know from some discourses that the Nandavana Garden was very pleasant and enjoyable. So she longed to be in that garden.

Because of this desire, she was reborn in Tavatimsā as a celestial maiden, named Uposathā, in the Nandavana Garden.

The Buddha said: "A person with morality, because he has a pure mind, will get his desire fulfilled whatever he sets his mind on." This is so because a moral person has a pure volition which, together with his strong will, will fulfil his desire whatever he wishes for.

The Five Advantages of Endowment in Morality

In the Mahāparinibbāna sutta, the Buddha expounded to the devotees of Pāṭali Village that a man of virtue can gain the five advantages that can be attained by a virtuous person as follows.

"Householders, five are the advantages of the fulfilment of virtue obtained by the virtuous. What are these five advantages? In this world, householders, one endowed with virtue, acquires much wealth chiefly as the result of non-negligence. This is the first advantage of the fulfilment of virtue by the virtuous. Again, householders, of one endowed with virtue, a good report is noised abroad. This is the second advantage of the fulfilment of virtue by the virtuous. Again, householders, to whatsoever assembly one endowed with virtue, goes, he enters boldly and unperturbed, whether it be an assembly of princes, an assembly of brahmins, an assembly of laymen, or an assembly of monks. This is the third advantage of the fulfilment of virtue by the virtuous. Again, householders, one endowed with virtue, dies undeluded. This is the fourth advantage of the fulfilment of virtue

by the virtuous. Again, householders, one endowed with virtue, on the dissolution of the body after death, reaches a happy destination, a celestial world. This is the fifth advantage of the fulfilment of virtue by the virtuous."

The Attributes of Ratanā

- A Ratanā is highly honoured and treasured,
- It is of infinite value,
- It is incomparable and supreme,
- It is difficult to be seen, to meet with and to gain,
- It is a useful requisit, for those noble ones who have accumulated a great deal of merit.

The Buddha Ratanā

- The Buddha is endowed with the nine supreme attributes; and those who happen to see and hear the Buddha's Teachings can gain knowledge and peace of mind; therefore the Buddha is highly honoured and adored by those who take refuge in him.

- The jewels like diamond, gold and silver, etc, are great in value. The owner of these jewels enjoys peace and happiness only in the present life whereas those who happen to see and take refuge in the Buddha, enjoy peace and happiness not only in the present life but also in future lives. So, the Buddha is the most valuable treasure.

As the ten jewels such as ruby, diamond, etc., are incomparable in value with other human utilities, so also the Buddha is incomparable with any other person in morality, concentration, and wisdom. Therefore, the Buddha is an incomparable treasure in the whole universe.

It is extremely difficult to come across the wheel treasure of the Universal Monarch and yet it is more extremely difficult to come across the fully-enlightened person known as the Buddha. So, the Buddha is the most difficult to see.

As the precious jewels like diamond and ruby are owned and utilized not by poor people but by rich people.

so also the Buddha-treasure can be revered and worshipped not by ordinary persons but by Noble ones who have accumulated a great deal of merit. Therefore, the Buddha is the most honourable, the most precious, the incomparable, the most rare and the most worthy (for the noble ones) treasure in the universe.

The Dhamma Ratanā

The Dhamma means the four Path-consciousness, the four Fruition-consciousness, Nibbāna and the Teachings of the Buddha.

- These Dhammas should be listened to, studied, practised and realized with great respect and adoration by those who wish to enjoy peace and happiness.

- It is so valuable that it cannot be appraised.

- It is incomparable and superior to any other worldly treasure.

- It is extremely difficult to come across and to listen to the Dhamma because the Dhamma appears only when the Buddha appears.

- The Dhamma can be listened to, practised and realised not by ordinary persons but by the Noble ones who have accumulated great merit. Therefore, the Dhamma is the most honourable, the most precious, the incomparable, the most rare and the most worthy treasure.

The Saṃgha Ratanā

The eight classes of noble bhikkhus are collectively known as the Saṃgha.

- The non-ariya bhikkhus (Sammuti Saṃgha) who have the same view and the same moral practice as the noble bhikkhus (Ariya Saṃgha) are also included in the Saṃgha.

1. The Saṃgha being endowed with nine supreme attributes, should be highly honoured and venerated.
2. The Saṃgha is peerless because it enables one who takes refuge in the saṃgha to achieve happiness and prosperity in the present existence as well as in future existences.
3. The Saṃgha is an incomparable treasure because the members of the saṃgha are

incomparable in morality, concentration and wisdom in the whole world.

4. The Saṃgha Ratanā is extremely difficult to come across because it comes into existence only when the Buddha arises in the world. Only those who have accumulated great merit can revere and take refuge in this Saṃgha Ratanā.

Therefore the Saṃgha is the most honourable, the most precious, the incomparable, the most rare and the most worthy treasure in the whole Universe.

The Virtues Of the Triple Gem

The Nine Supreme Virtues of the Buddha in Pāḷi

Itipi so bhagavā -

- Araham
- Sammāsambuddho
- Vijjācaranasampanno
- Sugato
- Lokavidū
- Anuttaropurisadammasārathi
- Satthā devamanussānam
- Buddho
- Bhagavā

The Brief Meaning of the Virtues

(1) *So Bhagavā itipi Arahant*

The Bhagāvā is known as Arahant because he is worthy of special veneration by all men, devas and brahmas.

(2) *So Bhagavā itipi Sammāsambuddho*

The Bhagāvā is known as Sammāsambuddho because he has fully realized all that should be known by himself.

(3) *So Bhagavā itipi Vijjācaraṇasampanno*

The Bhagāvā is known as Vijjācaraṇasampanno because he is proficient in supreme knowledge and in the practice of morality.

(4) *So Bhagavā itipi Sugato*

The Bhagāvā is known as Sugato because he speaks only what is true and beneficial.

(5) *So Bhagavā itipi Lokavidū*

The Bhagāvā is known as Lokavidū because he knows all the three Lokas, namely satta-loka, the animate world of living

beings, *saṅkhāra-loka*--the world of conditioned things, and *okāsa-loka*--the planes of existences.

(6) *So Bhagavā itipi Anuttaro purisadammasārathi*

The Bhagāvā is known as Anuttaro purisadammasārathi because he is incomparable in taming those who deserve to be tamed.

(7) *So Bhagavā itipi Satthā devamanussānam*

The Bhagāvā is known as Satthā-devamanussānam because he is the guiding teacher of all devas and men.

(8) *So Bhagavā itipi Buddhō*

The Bhagāvā is known as Buddhō because he himself is the Enlightened One, and he can enlighten others.

(9) *So Bhagavā itipi Bhagavā*

The Bhagāvā is known as Bhagavā because he is the most exalted One.

The Six Supreme Virtues of the Dhamma in Pāli

- Svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo
- Sandiṭṭhiko
- Akāliko
- Ehipassiko
- Opaneyyiko
- Paccattam veditabbo Viññūhi

The Brief Meanings of the Virtues

- (1) The Dhamma comprising the four Maggas, the four Phalas, Nibbāna and the Buddhist texts is well expounded by the Exalted One.
- (2) It can be seen and realized vividly by oneself if one practises the Dhamma.
- (3) It yields immediate results to those who practise the Dhamma and the Fruition-consciousness follows the Path-consciousness without delay.
- (4) It is so distinct and pure that it is worthy of inviting others to come and see it.
- (5) It is worthy of being perpetually borne in mind.
- (6) It can be experienced by the wise individually.

The Nine Supreme Virtues of the Saṅgha in Pāli

- Suppaṭipanno bhagavato Sāvakasam̃gho
- Ujuppaṭipanno bhagavato Sāvakasam̃gho
- Nāyappaṭipanno bhagavato Sāvakasam̃gho
- Sāmicippatipanno bhagavato Sāvakasam̃gho

Yadidam̃ cattāri purisayugāni aṭṭha-purisapuggalā

esā bhagavato Sāvakasam̃gho

- Āhuneyyo
- Pāhuneyyo
- Dakkhineyyo
- Añjalīkaraniyo
- Anuttaram̃ puññakkhetam̃ lokassa.

The brief Meaning of the Virtues

- (1) The disciples of the Exalted One practise well the threefold training of morality, concentration and wisdom.
- (2) The disciples of the Exalted One practise righteously the threefold training.

- (3) The disciples of the Exalted One practise to realize Nibbāna. They are endowed with righteous conduct leading to Nibbāna.
- (4) The disciples of the Exalted One practise to be worthy of veneration.
The disciples of the Exalted One, numbering four pairs of ariyas or eight noble persons are:
 - (5) worthy of receiving offerings brought even from afar;
 - (6) worthy of receiving offerings specially set aside for guests;
 - (7) worthy of receiving offerings offered with the belief that the offering will bear fruits in future existences;
 - (8) worthy of receiving reverential salutation of men, devas and brahmas;
 - (9) the incomparable fertile field for all to sow the seeds of merit.

Reflection on the Virtues of the Buddha (Buddhānussati)

Reflection on the virtues of the Buddha means contemplating repeatedly on any one of the nine supreme virtues of the Buddha without any recitation.

The Benefits of Reflecting on the Virtues of the Buddha

The person reflecting on the virtues of the Buddha can gain the following benefits:

- (1) Veneration to the Buddha with great respect;
- (2) Attainment of good mindfulness;
- (3) Development of wisdom;
- (4) Having the notion that one is living together with the Buddha;
- (5) Gaining much merit;
- (6) Gaining much joy and gladness;
- (7) Being devoid of fear even in the face of dreadful danger;
- (8) Avoiding evil deeds, because one feels one is in the presence of the Buddha;
- (9) Being worthy of veneration as sacred as the chamber of relics;
- (10) Being ashamed and frightened to commit evil deeds;
- (11) Attainment of good existences in future lives even if one does not attain the Path-consciousness and its fruition in the present life.

Note: Reflection on the virtues of the Dhamma and the Saṅgha can be undertaken as one reflects on the virtues of the Buddha, and similar benefits will be attained.

The Story of Lady Kālī

Here the story of lady Kālī should be stated to prove the immediate benefits due to the contemplation of the virtues of the Buddha.

There was a young lady named Kālī. She was the daughter of a rich man in Rājagaha-city. She was far gone with child at that time. On the fullmoon day of Wāso, the grand Asaḥā celebration was held in the whole city. In order to view the celebration from her balcony she went up to the upper terrace and stood in fresh air by the window. At that moment, the two leaders of celestial warriors named Sātagiri and Hemavata, together with their one thousand followers met in the sky above her house.

These two warriors were those who became disciples after the Mahā-parinibbāna of the Kassapa Buddha and they became well-versed in all three Piṭakas. So, they were very clever in making decisions on disputes of the Vinaya disciplinary rules. One day, they made a wrong and unfair decision in favour of their disciples.

When they passed away, they were reborn as the two leaders of celestial warriors due to the evil Kamma (Akusala Kamma). One of them, named Hemavata, lived in Mount Himalyas, and the other, named Sātagiri, lived in the Mount Sāta in the southern part of Majjhima-desa.

When they met at the Great Assembly of celestial beings held on Mt. Himalyas, they recognized each other and recalled their past existences. They made promise to inform each other any marvelous and extraordinary happenings that occurred in their own regions.

The Buddha preached the Dharmmacakka-ppavattana Sutta at the Deer Park on the fullmoon day of Wāso after attaining the Buddhahood. It was the day of special significance; therefore, marvelous and extraordinary happenings occurred in the whole Universe including Mt. Himalyas. Hemavata, who lived in Himalyas, went towards Majjhima-desa together with his five hundred followers to tell his friend, Sātagiri, about the wonders of Himalyas.

At that time Sātagiri together with his five hundred followers also went towards Himalyas to tell his friend Hemavata about the appearance of the Buddha. Then they met in the sky above the house of Kālī in Rājagaha.

Sātagiri said that the Buddha had appeared in the world and invited him to see the Buddha. But, Hemavata did not accept the invitation at once and inquired about the Buddha's virtues. So, Sātagiri explained to him about the virtues of the Buddha in detail.

On hearing their conversation, the lady Kālī was greatly delighted and thought; "Oh! the Buddha is indeed the one who is endowed with such supreme marvelous virtues!" As she was contemplating on the virtues of the Buddha, she felt extremely delighted and attained Sotāpatti-fruit.

Belief in Karma and its Result

Karma

'Karma' is a Pāli word meaning 'action'. There are three kinds of Karma or action;

- (a) Bodily action (kāyakarma);
- (b) Verbal action (vacīkarma) and
- (c) Mental action (Manokarma).

These three kinds of karma arise out of volitional activities. So, 'Volition' is another meaning of Karma.

The Knowledge of Kammasakatā

All living beings in the world have;

- Karma as their possession;
- Karma as their inheritance;
- Karma as their cause;
- Karma as their relatives;
- Karma as their refuge.

It is indeed karma that conditions all beings to be inferior or superior.

The knowledge that karma is one's own property is called Kammasakatā-nāṇa.

"How Karma Bears Results"

In Culakammavibanga Sutta, the Buddha explained the results of Karma as follows:

1. Those who are used to kill living beings have short lives.
2. Those who are used to abstain from killing living beings enjoy long lives.
3. Those who are used to torture others have many diseases.
4. Those who are used to abstain from torturing others enjoy good health.
5. Those who are used to be short-tempered are ugly.
6. Those who are used to be good-tempered are beautiful.

7. Those who are used to be jealous of others have little influence on others.
8. Those who are used to be free from jealousy have great influence on others.
9. Those who are not used to giving alms are born poor.
10. Those who are used to giving alms, are born rich.
11. Those who are used to be conceited and arrogant are born in the low lineage.
12. Those who are used to be humble and not arrogant are born in the high lineage.
13. Those who are used to inquire about good and evil are born intelligent.
14. Those who are not used to inquire good and evil are born without intelligence.

Wholesome Action (*Kusala Kamma*)

A meritorious action is a faultless and beneficial action. Faultless here means the absence of greed, hatred, delusion, envy,

jealousy, etc., in the mind while performing the meritorious deeds. A good man or person, as a result of his wholesome actions, achieves happiness not only in this present existence but also in future existences. The wholesome actions also consist of three kinds: bodily, verbal and mental actions.

Unwholesome Action (*Akusala Kamma*)

An unwholesome action is a blameworthy and immoral action producing evil results. An evil-doer, as a result of his unwholesome actions, suffers from various kinds of miseries not only in this present existence but also in future existences. The unwholesome actions also consist of three kinds: bodily, verbal and mental actions.

All beings have to enjoy or suffer according to good or bad actions done by them. No creator can change the results of *Kammic* actions. As a *Kamma* will produce its due result in its own way, *Kamma* and its result is called the law of *Kamma* (*Kamma-niyāma*).

"Good Conduct and Evil Conduct"**Ten kinds of evil conduct (Duccarita)**

Immoral actions or misconducts or evil conducts committed bodily, verbally, and mentally are called Duccarita (du=evil; carita=conduct).

Three kinds of bodily evil conduct

- (1) Killing living beings (Pānātipāta);
- (2) Taking other's properties that are not given either by his bodily gesture or speech (Adinnādāna);
- (3) Committing sexual misconduct (kāmesumicchācāra).

Four kinds of verbal evil conduct

- (1) Telling lies (Musāvāda);
- (2) Malicious talk or Setting one against the other (Pisunavācā);
- (3) Harsh and abusive speech (Pharusavācā);
- (4) Vain talk or conversation that is not beneficial to oneself nor to others (Samphappalāpa).

Three kinds of mental evil conduct

- (1) Covetousness (Abhijjā);
- (2) Ill-will (Byāpāda);
- (3) Wrong view (Micchādiṭṭhi)

These ten kinds of evil conduct are called "Akusalākammapatha", because they are the ten Paths that lead to lower abodes.

It is stated in the Buddhist texts that, of these ten kinds, wrong view is the most serious and blameworthy. Therefore it is very important to have a right view.

Ten kinds of good conduct (Sucarita)

Wholesome actions through deed, word and thought are called Sucarita (Su=good, carita=conduct).

Three kinds of bodily good conduct

- (1) Abstaining from killing any living being;
- (2) Abstaining from taking other's properties by means of bodily and verbal actions;
- (3) Abstaining from committing sexual misconduct.

Four kinds of verbal good conduct

- (1) Abstaining from telling lies;
- (2) Abstaining from slandering or talking ill of others;
- (3) Abstaining from using harsh speech;
- (4) Abstaining from idle talks.

Three kinds of Mental good conduct

- (1) *Ānabhijjā* = Abstaining from entertaining covetousness;
- (2) *Abyāpāda* = not having ill-will and evil desire;
- (3) *Sammāditṭhi* = right view.

Ten kinds of meritorious deeds

The following meritorious deeds, which are done in this present existence, are called 'Puññakriyāvattu'; they are:-

- (1) Generosity or Charity (*Dāna*);
- (2) Morality (*Sīla*);
- (3) Meditation (*Bhāvanā*);
- (4) Paying due respect to those who are worthy of it (*Apacāyana*);
- (5) Helping others in performing good deeds (*Veyyāvacca*);

- (6) Sharing merit (*Pattidāna*);
- (7) Rejoicing in others' meritorious deeds and saying "well-done!" when one sees, hears or knows them (*Pattānumodana*);
- (8) Listening well to the Doctrine (*Dhamma savana*);
- (9) Teaching the Doctrine (*Dhammadesanā*);
- (10) Straightening one's views (*Diṭṭhijukamma*)
(Having faith in Karma and its results).

Cultivating Loving-kindness**Permeating the Ten Directions with Loving-kindness**

- (1) May I be free from danger and enmity.
May I be always well and happy.
- (2) May my parents and teachers be always well and happy.
- (3) May all beings in my home be always well and happy.
- (4) May all devas in my home be always well and happy.
- (5) May all beings in my village be always well and happy.

- (6) May all beings in my town be always well and happy.
- (7) May all beings in my country be always well and happy.
- (8) May all beings in the east be always well and happy.
- (9) May all beings in the south be always well and happy.
- (10) May all beings in the west be always well and happy.
- (11) May all beings in the north be always well and happy.
- (12) May all beings in the south-east be always well and happy.
- (13) May all beings in the south-west be always well and happy.
- (14) May all beings in the north-west be always well and happy.
- (15) May all beings in the north-east be always well and happy.
- (16) May all beings in the upper direction be always well and happy.
- (17) May all beings in the lower direction be always well and happy.

(While reciting "my parents", concentrate your attention on your parents. So also, while reciting "all beings in the east" concentrate your mind on all sentient beings living in the east.)

Eleven Methods of Cultivating Loving-kindness according to Metta Sutta

Cultivating loving-kindness on all beings

- (1) May all beings be always well and happy;
May they be free from danger and enmity;
May they live peacefully.

Cultivating Loving-kindness in pairs

- (2) May all beings, who can be frightened (ie worldings), beings who are fearless, (ie arahats), be always well and happy;
May they be free from danger and enmity;
May they live peacefully.
- (3) May all beings, the visible and the invisible, be always well and happy;
May they be free from danger and enmity;
May they live peacefully.
- (4) May all beings, who are afar and who are near, be always well and happy;
May they be free from danger and enmity;

May they live peacefully.

- (5) May all beings, Arahats and Non-arahats, be always well and happy;

May they be free from danger and enmity;

May they live peacefully.

Cultivating Loving-kindness in groups of three

- (6) May all long, short and medium beings be always well and happy;

May they be free from danger and enmity;

May they live peacefully.

- (7) May all large, small and medium beings be always well and happy;

May they be free from danger and enmity;

May they live peacefully.

- (8) May all fat, thin and medium beings be always well and happy;

May they be free from danger and enmity;

May they live peacefully.

Cultivating Loving-kindness for the elimination of harmful thoughts

- (1) May all human beings be free from deceiving one another.
- (2) May all human beings be free from looking down upon one another.
- (3) May all human beings be free from causing miseries to one another.

The Four Sublime States

- (1) *Mercā* = Loving-kindness and benevolence for the welfare of all beings.
- (2) *Karuṇā* = compassion on seeing miserable beings and wishing them to be liberated from sufferings.
- (3) *Muditā* = sympathetic joy on seeing happy beings
- (4) *Upekkhā* = equanimity or equilibrium of mind without love or hatred towards all sentient beings

Living in the practice of generating one of these four amounts to living in a sublime state. So these four kinds of living are called "The Four Sublime States" (Brahmavihāra).

Mettā, Loving-kindness

Loving-kindness (*mettā*) is the opposite of hatred (*dōsa*). *Mettā* is the mental factor called *Adosa* (non-hatred), which wishes for the welfare of other beings, contemplating: "May all beings be happy; May they be free from danger."

Mettā is generally understood as "Love" in Myanmar. There are three kinds of love:-

- (1) mutual love between husband and wife (*Taṅhāpema*)
- (2) mutual love among the members of the family (*Gehassitapema*)
- (3) loving-kindness, or benevolence for the welfare (*mettā*)

The first two kinds of love are not *mettā*. They are lust, greed and craving.

Mettā is the pure form of love which can bring peace and prosperity to all beings.

How To Radiate Loving-kindness

Developing and transmitting repeatedly one's benevolence for the welfare of others is called *Mettā Bhāvanā*--cultivation of loving-kindness.

Cultivation of loving-kindness should begin with oneself. By doing so, one develops one's sympathetic consideration for others wishing them to be happy and free from danger as oneself. Loving-kindness should not be radiated to the dead because they are unable to accept it.

First of all, concentrate your mind on the form of the person whom you want to radiate loving-kindness, till you come to discern his figure, from head to toe, just as looking at his photograph. Then, radiate your loving-kindness to him while contemplating repeatedly thus: "May he be happy. May he be free from enmity". This is the method of radiating one's loving-kindness towards others.

According to the admonition of some prominent and reverend teachers in Myanmar, to be more effective in radiating loving-kindness, one should practice as follows:

- (1) First observe the moral precepts.
- (2) Sit cross-legged keeping the body upright. Place your palms one upon another facing upwards with the tips of your thumbs touching each other. Without drooping your head, sit still with steadfast mindfulness on the person to whom loving-kindness is being radiated.

- (3) Focus your mind on the person to whom you want to radiate loving-kindness visualising his personality. Then, contemplate in your mind, cultivate your loving-kindness repeatedly and earnestly thus; "May he be happy and free from enmity." for at least fifteen to thirty minutes.
- (4) When you can successfully radiate your loving-kindness to a particular person, you can radiate your loving-kindness in the same way to many people, to the whole village, to the whole country and even to the whole world.

When you are accustomed to that practice, it will not be difficult for you to radiate your loving-kindness to all beings in all directions.

The Benefits of Radiating Loving-kindness

The benefits of loving-kindness are greater than those attainable from the practices of charity and morality. The benefits produced by cultivating loving-kindness for just a short moment are greater than those obtained by offering one hundred pots of cooked rice

three times a day. A person who cultivates loving-kindness can enjoy eleven kinds of benefits according to the Teachings of the Buddha.

- (1) He enjoys a sound sleep.
- (2) He wakes up peacefully.
- (3) He does not have bad dreams.
- (4) He is loved by human beings.
- (5) He is loved by non-human beings.
- (6) He is guarded by devas.
- (7) He is unaffected by fire, poison and weapons.
- (8) He can develop concentration quickly.
- (9) His face is serene and cheerful.
- (10) He never dies in bewilderment.
- (11) He may be reborn in the brahma realm when he dies.

Making a Wish and Sharing Merits

After performing a meritorious deed, one should first make a wish and then share one's merit.

- (1) *Idam me puññam āsavakkhayamivaham hotu.*
- (2) *Idam me puññam nibbānassa paccayo hotu.*

- (3) *Addhā imāya paṭipattiya jāti, jarā,
byādhi maraṇamhā parimuccissāmi.*

Meaning

- (1) May this meritorious deed of mine lead me to the cessation of moral intoxicants.
- (2) May my deed of this merit be the support to Nibbāna.
- (3) Owing to this moral practice, may I really be free from rebirth, ageing, sickness and death.

Sharing of Merits

*Imam piṇṇabhāgam sabbasattānam dema
(Three Times)*

Meaning:

I share all of my merits with all sentient beings. I share all my merits with my parents, teachers, relatives, my guardian deva, the guardian deva of my home, the guardian deva of my village, the guardian deva of my town, the guardian deva of my country, the guardian deva of the earth, the king of death, the king of men, the king of devas, all devas and all petas.

May they all gain the merits of my meritorious deed as much as I do and may they all be happy and free from enmity.

May I call upon the guardian deva of the earth to bear witness.

May they all hear my words and rejoice in my meritorious deed!

Sādhu _ Sādhu _ Sādhu

Well-done, Well-done, Well-done

The Final Salutation to the Triple Gems

- (1) *Imāya dhammānu dhammapaṭipattiya
Buddham pūjemi*
- (2) *Imāya dhammānu dhammapaṭipattiya
Dhammam pūjemi*
- (3) *Imāya dhammānu dhammapaṭipattiya
Saṃgham pūjemi*

Meaning:

- (1) I pay homage to the Buddha by the practice of charity, morality, and meditation in conformity with the Nine Supramundane Dhammas.
- (2) I pay homage to the Dhamma by -----
-Dhammas.

- (3) I pay homage to the Saṃgha by -----
Dhammas.

Rejoicing In Others' Merit (Saying Sādhu)

The Buddhists usually share their merits with others whenever they have performed meritorious deeds. "Sharing one's merit with others is called "Pātidāna kusala" and "Rejoicing in others' merits" is known as "Pattānumodana kusala" in Pāli.

In Tirokuṭṭa Sutta, it is stated by the Buddha that: "if the deceased relatives are reborn as petas who can rejoice in others' merit, one should perform meritorious deeds for the sake of them, and share merit with them. If the petas can say "Sādhu", they will be freed from the miserable existences and they can receive celestial clothings, celestial mansions, celestial gardens and celestial utensils." In the Peta Vatthu also, it is mentioned that if a peta can rejoice in others' merits by saying "Sādhu", he will be immediately transformed into a deva.



CHAPTER (4)

Dispensing Charity

Every pious Buddhist more or less carries out the meritorious deeds of dispensing charity, observing morality and practising meditation. Out of these three, the Buddhists usually perform the charitable deeds daily. At every house of Buddhists, they offer food, water and flowers dedicated to the Triple Gems every morning. Moreover, with generous mindedness, they offer alms-food to the Saṃghas who go round from house to house for collecting alms-food, in procession or individually. In some towns, there are many hundreds of the members of Saṃghas going in procession for alms-food. The Buddhists heartily believe that the daily act of offering alms-food to the Saṃgha is the main cause for the perpetuation of the Buddha's Teaching. According to their wealth, they occasionally make other donations such as inviting the monks to their home and offering food, novitiating

their sons, donating the four material requisites to the saṅgha, etc. In fulfilling the ten perfections, the Bodhisattha performed the perfection of charity prior to the other perfections. Therefore, Dāna is the first of the Ten Perfections. The charity is the first item of ten meritorious deeds stated in the previous chapter. Therefore in this chapter, the notable facts concerning charity will be elaborated.

The Sense of Charity

Charity means donation or giving away one's own properties to others. There are three kinds of charity: giving material offerings (Āmisa dāna), giving sanctuary and protection to animals (Abhaya dāna) and giving doctrinal lectures (Dhamma dāna). In dispensing the charity, volition (cetanā) and the belief in kamma and its results (Saddhā) play important roles. In growing paddy, the good rains in the beginning, in the middle and in the later part of the rainy season can produce a good yield of rice. So also in performing the charity, the accomplishment of three steps of volition can produce great benefits to the donors. These three steps of volition are:-

- (1) Volition that arises before giving (Pubbacetanā);

- (2) Volition that arises while giving (Muñcacetanā); and
- (3) Volition that arises after giving (Aparacetanā).

It is very important to make the three-fold volition keen and pure, whenever we perform any act of charity.

The Advantages of Charity

Charity is praised by the Buddha in many ways. It is:-

- the stairway to celestial realms;
- the packet of provisions for the long journey of rebirths;
- the direct way to a good destination;
- the support to attain Magga, Phala and Nibbāna;
- the condition for becoming a ruler;
- capable of producing luxuries and wealth;
- capable of enjoying happiness;
- capable of self-protection;
- capable of civilising the uncivilized;
- capable of bringing success in everything; and
- the noblest auspiciousness.

Offering Alms-food

I offer alms-food and other eatables to the compassionate Buddha who is endowed with the infinite accumulation of glory, merit (through the ten perfections) and wisdom. Owing to my deed of this merit, may I realize Nibbāna as soon as possible.

The Benefits of offering Alms-food

If one does not have cooked rice to eat, he cannot live long. He will become ugly, sad, weak and stupid for lack of nutrition.

Taking alms-food (cooked rice) can make one live long. Moreover, he will be endowed with beauty, happiness, strength and wisdom.

Offering Water

I offer this pure and cool water to the compassionate Buddha who is endowed with the infinite accumulation of glory, merit (through the ten perfections) and wisdom. Owing to my deed of this merit, may I realize Nibbāna as soon as possible.

The Benefits of Offering Water

If one does not have water to drink, he cannot live long. He will become ugly, sad,

weak and stupid. If one does not bathe, he will not be clean and fresh. Therefore, the donors of water will be endowed with longevity, beauty, wealth, strength, wisdom, cleanliness, fame and great retinue. They will be free from thirst.

Offering Flowers and Fragrance

I offer these beautiful flowers and fragrance to the compassionate Buddha who is endowed with the infinite accumulation of glory, merit (through the ten perfections) and wisdom. Owing to my deed of this merit, may I attain Nibbāna as soon as possible.

Benefits of Offering Flowers and Fragrance

Owing to this donation, one can be reborn in the celestial realm or in the human existence for one lakh world cycles. And in his final existence, he will attain Magga, Phala and Nibbāna. There are many jātika stories describing the benefits of offering flowers and fragrance.

Offering Lights

I offer lights (electric lights) which can eliminate the darkness, to the compassionate

Buddha who is endowed with the infinite accumulation of glory, merit (through the ten perfections) and wisdom. Owing to my deed of this merit may I realize Nibbāna as soon as possible.

The Benefits of offering Lights

- One who offers lights to the Buddha can be repeatedly reborn in the celestial realms or in human existences. He will have bright and fair complexion. He will possess psychic power which can see through any wall or mountain or rock. He will attain Magga, Phala and Nibbāna in his final existence.

Note : It is important that you must donate, contemplating on the virtues of the Buddha.

Stories showing the Benefits of Charity

A Story showing the Benefits of Offering Alms-food

Ninety-four world cycles ago, there appeared Siddhattha Buddha. One day a man saw the Buddha on his alms round and noticed the fair complexion of the Buddha emanating yellow hues. On seeing thus the man

admired the Buddha and paid homage to him. He also invited the Buddha to his house and offered alms-food.

Because of his donation, that man was repeatedly reborn in celestial realms and human existences. He could continually enjoy both celestial and worldly pleasures. He was never reborn in the four miserable realms. In Gotama Buddha's time, he became a man of great wealth. When he came of age, he was ordained as a bhikkhu. Then he became an arahat.

A Story Showing the Benefits of offering Water

After the Padumuttara Buddha had attained Parinibbāna, the pious Buddhists offered pure water by pouring at the Bodhi Tree.

At that time one man also carried perfumed water in a beautifully decorated pot and offered it to the Bodhi Tree.

In his next existence, that man became a deva at the Tusitā celestial realm. He enjoyed celestial pleasures as well as royal pleasure in his many existences. In the Gotama Buddha's time, he became an Arahata named Gandhodakiya Thera.

A Story Showing the Benefits of Offering Flowers

Once the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna went to the celestial realm. When he reached there, he saw a great splendid mansion among the colourful flowers blooming not only in water but also on land.

One celestial maiden resided there together with her attendants. When the Mahā Thera saw her, he asked her about the meritorious deeds of her past existence.

The celestial maiden replied thus. "Once I was called Pesavaṭī and I lived in Nāḷaka village which is on the eastern side of Rājagaha City. One day I met the Venerable Sāriputta and with much reverence I donated him many a flower. Thereby I can live peacefully in this grand mansion".

A Story Showing the Benefits of Offering Lights

One man paid homage to the Padumuttara Buddha lighting five lamps around the foot of a Bodhi tree. Due to this good deed, when he died he was reborn either in celestial realms or in human existences continuously. He also

obtained the power of being able to see things from one hundred yojanās away through all obstacles.

That man became an Arahant named Pañcadīpaka Thera in Gotama Buddha's time.

So also, Sumaṅgala Buddha donated lights in his fulfilment of dāna pārami. Owing to this merit, bright hues were emitted from his body day in and day out. Those hues were brighter than those of the sun, the moon, stars and planets.

Offering Alms-food

Offering alms-food is one of the cherished practices followed by pious Buddhists. The purpose of daily offering of alms-food is to uphold the bhikkhus residing in the community, to learn and practise meditation without any anxiety and tiredness about their subsistence. Understanding this fact, the lay people organize themselves into groups to keep up the practice of offering alms-food to bhikkhus. Some groups or teams offer alms-food every day, some on a day which they can afford, some on every Uposathaday during the Buddhist Rains-retreat period.

The donors offer alms-food without discrimination as to person or sect or monastery. If they can afford, they also donate curry besides alms-food. Due to this meritorious deed the bhikkhus can devote themselves to learning and meditation free from anxiety about their subsistence. In this way, the bhikkhus from such towns as Pakokku and Mandalay can study the Buddhist scriptures continuously. For the lay people they can do the meritorious deed daily and so they can gain many benefits. Even on the eve of their donation they are so busy with collecting necessities in advance, cooking and performing religious activities that their minds inclining towards meritorious deeds get more and more developed.

At dawn, they feel delighted to offer alms-food to the bhikkhus. Therefore, the act of alms-giving shows the keenness of Myanmar Buddhists regarding religion. So also this act reveals the cooperation and attentiveness in meritorious deeds. When the ceremony which marks the end of weekly offerings during the Buddhist Rains-retro period is held, various offerings are hung on tree-shaped stands and they are then donated to bhikkhus.

Based on this alms-giving practice, activities are carried out for the welfare of the people of Myanmar and for the propagation of Buddha's Teachings. There arise friendship and unity among nationals. It is of vital importance to keep up the practice of offering alms-food because this practice brings long-term benefits not only to the donee bhikkhus but also to the lay donors.

Sappurisa dāna

The charity performed by the virtuous is called *Sappurisa dāna*. There are five kinds of *Sappurisa dāna*, namely:-

- (1) *Saddhādāna*,
- (2) *Sakkaccadāna*,
- (3) *Kāladāna*,
- (4) *Anuggahitadāna* and
- (5) *Anupahaccadāna*.

(1) *Saddhādāna*

The charity based on the belief in karma and its results is called *Saddhādāna*.

The person who dispenses this kind of charity will possess great wealth and very

beautiful complexion in whatever existence his charity ripens to produce benefits.

(2) *Sakkaccadāna*

Sakkaccadāna means donating the well-prepared offerings to the donees with much respect and reverence.

In whatever existence his charity ripens to produce benefits the person who dispenses that kind of charity will be wealthy, with his children, wife, slaves and employees who are obedient to him.

If one donates the offerings without proper respect, he will have no influence on his children, wife and slaves, in spite of being wealthy in his future existences.

(3) *Kāladāna*

The charity dispensed at an appropriate time is called Kāladāna.

In whatever existence his charity ripens to produce benefits, the person who dispenses that kind of charity will be very wealthy. He will have everything which he desires whenever necessary.

A person who does not dispense charity at an appropriate time will not gain what he desires when he needs, although he is wealthy.

(4) *Anuggahitadāna*

The charity dispensed with the mind not attached to the offering is called Anuggahitadāna.

In whatever existence his charity ripens to produce benefits the person who dispenses that kind of charity will be very wealthy.

He is inclined to enjoy worldly pleasures.

If a person dispenses charity with no intention to honour the donee, he is not inclined to enjoy his valuable properties.

(5) *Anupahaccadāna*

The charity that does not harm the donor himself nor anyone else is called Anupahaccadāna.

In whatever existence his charity ripens to produce benefits, the person who dispenses that kind of charity will be wealthy and will possess valuable property.

His wealth and possession will be unaffected by five kinds of danger, namely:

floods, conflagration, tyrants, thieves and unbeloved heirs.

If a person dispenses charity which is detrimental to himself or to others, his properties will be destroyed by the five kinds of danger although he is wealthy.

The Story Showing the Benefits of Sappurisa-dāna

In Bārānasi, there was a generous couple. Both of them took refuge in the Three Gems and they were endowed with conviction. They had only one son named Nandiya. He was also a generous one and used to donate offerings to bhikkhus out of conviction. When his parents passed away, he became a man of great generosity. He always placed cooked-rice-pots in front of his house not only for bhikkhus but also for beggars and travellers.

Later, he built a quadruple hall in the great monastery at Isipatana. Each room was furnished with great splendour.

After the construction he donated it to the Buddha and the Saṅgha. As soon as the donation water fell on the Buddha's hands, there arose a great celestial mansion in the Tāvātimsa celestial realm for Nandiya's use.

During one of the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna's visits to Tāvātimsa, he saw a new mansion which he had never seen before. So he asked the celestial beings whose mansion it was. They replied that it belonged to Nandiya, the lay devotee. When the deities saw the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna, they descended from the mansion and said, "We are the attendants of Nandiya. We feel very lonely because our master has not come yet. Please urge him to come here as soon as possible."

When the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna arrived back at the human world, he went to the Buddha and asked him thus; "Venerable Sir, for those who perform meritorious deeds do they have mansions and other riches prepared in the deva world even while they are still living in this world? The Buddha replied thus; "Moggallāna, why do you ask so? Have you not yourself seen the mansion and the riches waiting for Nandiya in the Tāvātimsa deva world?"

Nandiya made offerings out of belief in kamma and its results. He offered alms-food respectfully to the bhikkhus who went round for collecting alms-food to his house daily. He donated the necessary material requisites to

the bhikkhus occasionally. He also dispensed charity devoid of clinging and attachment to the offerings. When he made donations, he did not harm himself nor anyone else. He had the great monastery built at Isipatana and had it furnished well. Then he donated that monastery dedicated to the Buddha and the Order of bhikkhus. He donated things in accordance with the five attributes of Sappurisadāna. Owing to his meritorious deeds, the great celestial mansion and the celestial wealth appeared in advance in the Tāvātimsa celestial realm even before he died.



CHAPTER (5)

Activities in the Perpetuation and Propagation of the Sāsana

The brief History of the Great Councils

The Buddha attained Enlightenment in 589 B.C. At that time, he was thirty-five years old. Since then, throughout forty-five years he preached many discourses and disciplines diligently for the welfare of all beings regardless of cold, heat, tiredness, weariness, and ailment.

The Buddha left his last words thus: "Ānanda, the discourses and the disciplines I have taught and laid down to all of you will be your teacher when I am gone."

Therefore it is clearly noted that the Buddha will remain alive so long as the discourses and the disciplines are in existence. Of course, the discourses and the disciplines are called Sāsana, the Teachings of the Bud-

dha. The survival of the Sāsana depends on the existence of these discourses and disciplines. On the other hand, if they disappear, the Buddha and his Teachings will also disappear. When this happens, the whole world will be overwhelmed by the darkness of ignorance.

Therefore the bhikkhus, the Buddha's disciples, have been successively striving for the preservation of the discourses and the disciplines so that they are not soiled by mistakes and do not disappear. But there had arisen many obstacles endangering the Buddha's Teachings through the ages. The bhikkhus have never neglected those obstacles and they tried to overcome them. Then they also held the Great Councils to promote and propagate the Buddha's Teachings. The successive kings, governments and the people contributed to the accomplishment of the Great Councils.

The Buddha attained Mahāparinibbāna in 554 B.C. That year was counted as the first year of the Buddhist Era. Now, two thousand and five hundred years have passed since the demise of the Buddha. During this time, altogether six great councils of Theravāda Buddhism have been held. In these councils, many hundreds of Bhikkhus gathered together and

recited the Buddha's discourses and disciplines in unity to approve the Teachings of the Buddha. The discourses and the disciplines are recited strictly in accordance with the original text without any change, addition or modification.

The First Great Council

Three months after the demise of the Buddha the First Great Council was held in Sattapaṇṇi Cave Pavilion at Mount Vebhāra near the city of Rājagaha. Subhadda, who became a bhikkhu in his old age, disparaged the Buddha's Teachings on the seventh day after the Buddha had passed away. On hearing those insulting words, Venerable Mahākassapa decided to hold the First Great Council. Five hundred arahats, including Venerable Upāli and Venerable Ānanda, took part in that council. It started on the fifth waning day of Wagaung (August) and lasted seven months.

The Second Great Council

The Second Council was held at Vālukārāma monastery, near the city of Vesālī in 100 B.E. (443 B.C). It was held because

the bhikkhus of the Vajji clan from Vesāli preached and practised ten unlawful modifications in the Rules of the Order. The seven hundred arahats led by Venerable Yasa, Venerable Sabbakāmi and Venerable Revata took part in that council while King Kālāsoka of Vesāli and the people gave necessary supports to that council. It lasted eight months.

The Third Great Council

The Third Council was held at Āsokārāma Monastery in the city of Pāṭaliputta in 235 B.E (308 B.C) Sixty thousand ascetics infiltrated into the Saṃgha Order, polluted the Sāsana by their corrupt lives and heretical views. That is the main reason why the Third Council was held by one thousand arahats in order to protect the Sāsana.

Venerable Mahāmoggaliputta Tissa presided over the council. King Siridhammāsoka of Pāṭaliputta gave the necessary support to the council. It lasted nine months. After the Third Council, nine missions were sent to nine different places to propagate the Sāsana. The mission of five arahats to Suvannabhūmi, Myanmar, was led by Venerable Soṇa Thera and Venerable Uttara Thera.

The Fourth Great Council

The Fourth Council was held at Cave Āloka in Malaya district, Sri Lankā, in 450 B.E (94 B.C).

The people of Sri Lankā were hard hit by rebels, hunger and starvation for twelve years. So the Bhikkhus had to make strong efforts to maintain the Buddha's Teachings. The elder bhikkhus foresaw that if there would appear such danger in future, the bhikkhus would not be able to memorize the discourses and the disciplines by heart because of the declination of their power of mindfulness, concentration and wisdom. Therefore, they held the Fourth Great Council.

It was during the reign of King Vaṭṭagāmani that five hundred bhikkhus, led by Venerable Mahādhammarakkhita, inscribed the entire words of the Buddha's Teachings on palm leaves.

The heads and elders as well as the people of Malaya district gave all-round support to the council.

The Fourth Great Council continued for one year.

The Fifth Great Council

The Fifth Council was convened at Mandalay in Myanmar on the first waning day of Tazaungmone, 1232 Myanmar Era, 2415 B.E (November 1871). The scriptures inscribed on palm-leaves could not last for a long time. Besides there might be many variations in re-writing the scriptures from copy to copy. Therefore, the scriptures were inscribed on marble slabs in order to dispel these disadvantages.

Two thousand and four hundred bhikkhus led by Venerable Jāgarābhivamsa Thera (Tipitakadhara Mahādhammarājādhirājaguru) of Dakkhiṇārāma Monastery, Mandalay, convened to recite and approve the scriptures. King Mindon initiated and supported the Fifth Great Council to the end. The scriptures were first inscribed on seven hundred and twenty-nine marble slabs in the precinct of Lokamārajina Pagoda at the foot of Mandalay Hill. It took seven years, six months and fourteen days to finish this work. Then the bhikkhus recited to approve the inscriptions for five months and three days.

After the Fifth Great Council, the Pāli Texts were translated into Myanmar language, and the Doctrinal Order was promulgated to the whole country for purpose of purification and propagation of the Buddha's Teachings.

The Sixth Great Council

On the full-moon day of Kason, 1316 M.E. 2498 B.E (May, 1954), the Sixth Great Council was held in the Mahāpāsāṇa Great Cave, Kabā-Aye, Yangon, Myanmar.

The country of Myanmar had been one of the British Colonies for one hundred years and during this period the Buddha Sāsana had deteriorated to some extent. So the Sixth Great Council was held aiming at the purification and promotion of the Buddha Sāsana. Two thousand and five hundred bhikkhus from the five countries of Theravāda Buddhism participated in that council. Nyaung Yan Sayādaw, Venerable Revata (Abhidhajamahārattaguru), presided over it; the Mahāsi Sayādaw, Venerable Sobhaṇa (Aggamahāpaṇḍita), and the Mingun Sayādaw, Venerable Vicittasārābhivamsa (Tipitakadhara Dhamma-bhaṇḍhāgārika) took the leading roles in that council.

The doctrinal questions asked by the people of five Theravāda Buddhist countries: Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia, were solved. Twenty-five other countries also gave much help to that council.

At that Council, not only the canonical Pāli Texts of the Buddha but also the commentaries and sub-commentaries were re-examined.

In this way, Venerable Mahākassapa and the custodians of the Dhamma held the great councils up to six times and approved the words of the Buddha without any change and modification. The Teaching of the Buddha thus approved is called Theravāda Buddhism.

On the full moon day of Nayon, 1342 M.E (June 1980), the State Saṃgha Mahānāyaka Committee comprising all sects was initiated in order to purify, perpetuate and propagate the Theravāda Buddhism. Since then, the religious affairs have been carried out by the Saṃgha and the lay devotees of Myanmar hand in hand.

Under the patronage of the State Saṃgha Mahānāyaka Committee, various measures have been taken for perpetuation and promotion of the Buddha Sāsana and the moral development of the entire nation. The Pāli Texts were translated into English; two State Pariyatti Sāsana Universities were founded in Yangon and Mandalay with the contributions of the people. The lawful and the unlawful

doctrines were discriminated and the unlawful ones were crushed down. Missions were sent not only to the states and divisions of the country but also to foreign countries for the propagation of Sāsana.

This is the brief history of religious work carried out by successive Buddhist generations. Moreover, there are some other duties which should be carried out by every pious Buddhist whenever possible.

Missionary Works

Lecturing, rewriting and teaching the Buddha's discourses are important missionary works. Performing missionary works means encouraging others to follow the Buddha's Teachings which can be summed up as: *"to refrain from all evils, to do what is good, and to purify the mind."*

First of all, a missionary must cultivate loving-kindness towards all beings and help or teach them to dispel their wrong views which can bring evil consequences. Among the demeritorious action, the five heinous deeds of killing one's mother, killing one's father, killing an arahat, causing blood to settle on the body of the Buddha, and causing schism

in the Saṅgha Order are the worst. Even though the perpetrator of these deeds has done a great deal of meritorious deeds, they cannot help him. He will be cast into hell (the Niraya) immediately on his death. Only when he is released from the Niraya, his meritorious deeds of the past existence will bear him good fruits.

A person, who has held a wrong view, earns greater demerit than a person who has killed his parents. If a person who has committed one of the five heinous deed, were to fall to the Niraya when the world is about to be destroyed, he has the opportunity to be released from there at the time of the destruction of the world. But the staunch wrong-viewer has to be shuffled to the Niraya of another world which remains undestroyed if the time for his release is not yet due at the time of the dissolution of the world.

The missionary work can salvage one from such grave offence. Therefore, it should be considered how noble and beneficial the missionary work is. Everyone should participate in the missionary work and strive for the proliferation of the Truth.

In doing so, one should cultivate loving-kindness on all wrong believers. Imparting

the Buddha's Doctrine to others is one of the missionary works. The Buddha expounded that there is no other deed as meritorious as imparting the Buddha's Doctrine.

Every body has a chance to take part in the missionary work. We must try our best to make those who have not yet believed in the Buddha's Teaching come to believe in the Teaching, and those who have already believed in the Buddha's Teaching come to believe all the more. If it is possible, we should go to the border areas of our country where the Buddha's Teachings have not well developed. If we ourselves are unable to do so, we ought to give support to the persons who are serving for that purpose.

Making Others Take Refuge in the Three Gems

'Saraṇagamaṇā means taking refuge in the three Gems: the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. Each and every Buddhist must take refuge in the three Gems out of conviction.

How must we believe in the Three Gems?

We must believe that one can liberate oneself from four miserable existences as well as from the round of rebirths by taking refuge in the Buddha.

We must believe that the Dhamma can make all beings prosperous and liberate them from four miserable existences and the round of rebirths. So also we must believe that the Saṅgha can expound such Dhamma. Through these beliefs, we may come to know that the Three Gems are worthy of special veneration.

A person, who realizes the attributes of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha and has unshakable faith in them, can certainly be free from the four miserable realms in his next existences.

In the Buddha's time, there was a man of Sakyān clan named Saraṇāṇi who had taken refuge in the Three Gems for a long time. Once the Buddha spoke in praise of him:- "Saraṇāṇi Sākiya has taken refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha for a long time. How can he be reborn in the miserable realms?"

A person, who has unshakable faith in the Three Gems, and endowed with quick wit, ready wit and the knowledge of freedom from defilements, can attain arahatship in this very life. He is also free from the four miserable realms. Although a person, who has unshakable faith in the three Gems and endowed with

quick wit and ready wit, has not emancipated from defilements, he can be reborn in the Brahma realm if he has completely uprooted the lower five fetters. And he will become a Non-Returner (Anāgāmi) and will attain parinibbāna in the Brahma realm.

Moreover, if a person who has unshakable faith in the three Gems, but not endowed with quick wit, ready wit and the knowledge of freedom from defilements, can be a Once-Returner or a Stream-winner.

Even though a person has neither unshakable faith in the Three Gems, nor quick wit nor ready wit nor the knowledge of freedom from defilements, but if he possessed the Faculty of Conviction, believes in the Buddha and appreciates him, he can also be free from the four miserable realms. (Pathama Saraṇāṇisakka Sutta, Saraṇāṇi vagga, Sotapatti Saṅgyutta, Mahā-vagga Saṅgyutta).

The statement "one can be liberated from four miserable existences merely by the belief in the Buddha" is very encouraging indeed. It is very clear that a Buddhist who takes refuge in the Three Gems cannot be cast into the four miserable realms. Therefore, in Bahukāra Sutta, the Buddha said that the person leading others who have no faith in the Three Gems to take

refuge in the Triple Gems (to be Buddhists) is the incomparable benefactor.

Participating in Religious Associations

The strength of an association is greater than that of an individual. Performing religious and social affairs by a well-organized group can bring more success than by an individual.

Among the many different associations, the task of religious associations is subtle and profound. Therefore the members of these associations should have respectable physical, verbal and mental behaviours. Finding other's faults easily, saying words of blame on others, being narrow-minded and impatient are not the proper behaviours of the members of religious associations. They should cultivate loving-kindness, compassion and good-will towards others. Moreover, even though the others treat them wickedly and dishonestly, they should stand righteously. Only then they are able to carry out their activities more effectively.

In the Buddha's time, the people of Sāvatti used to make joint offerings to the Buddha. The Buddha said that the joint offering was very beneficial. A man, after hearing the discourse on charity, wanted to offer alms-food together with others to the Buddha and

his disciples. So he invited the Buddha and his disciples to take alms-food on the next day. Then he went from house to house asking the residents to share alms-giving and to donate rice, oil, bean, etc., according to their wishes. When he reached a rich man's house, that man was annoyed by his request. The rich man thought why he was asking others instead of donating as much as he could. Then the rich man asked the man to bring his bowl and gave rice and beans only as much as could be taken by three fingers. He also gave very little amounts of butter and molasses.

The promoter of charity took the rich men's offerings without mixing them with other. When the rich man saw that, he sent one of his servants to watch him.

At the cooking place, the promoter of charity put a little rice given by the rich man into various pots of alms-food, gruel and desserts so that the rich man may gain much merit. In the same way beans, butter and molasses were also put in all eatables. The servant reported what he had seen.

The rich man did not understand the man's intention. The next day with a knife concealed on his body, he went to the place where the Buddha and his disciples were taking

alms-food offered by the people. He intended to kill the man if he were disgraced in public.

After offering the food, the promoter of charity said to the Buddha thus: "Venerable Sir, this offering is a joint offering of all. In this joint offering some have given much and some have given little according to their own ability. May they all gain equal merit".

When the rich man heard those words, he realized that he was mistaken. So he pondered that if he did not confess his guilt, his head would be struck by thunder. He fell at the promoter's feet and begged for pardon. On seeing that, the Buddha enquired about the matter. So the promoter of charity explained the event in detail. The Buddha told the rich man not to think lightly of a good deed however small it may be. Then the Buddha gave a discourse on charity. At the end of the discourse the rich man attained Sotāpatti Fruition. It is a good example of joint offering.

Supporting the Learners of the Buddhist Literature

Laying down the foundations firmly is the basic need to build a great grand building. The long endurance of that building depends

on its foundations. In the great grand building of the Buddha Sāsana, the Pāli Texts are the basic foundations.

The genuine Pāli Texts of the Buddha's Teachings have already existed in Myanmar. But to maintain these Teachings, there must be teachers and learners of the Buddha's Doctrine. Therefore, it is essential to support them sufficiently with four material requisites such as robes and alms-food so that they may study the Buddha's Teachings without any worry. Lay devotees should support them with keen volition and conviction.

It is difficult for the lay devotees to learn these teachings extensively because they are faced daily with many difficulties in their social affairs. They have to follow the instructions given by the bhikkhus. So long as the laity support the bhikkhus with material requisites, the bhikkhus will in return teach the Dhamma to the laity, as the Myanmar saying goes: "The island and the reed growing on it are interdependent". Teaching and learning the Buddhist literature are of great basic importance for the perpetuation of the Sāsana. Only when one understands the Buddha's Teachings correctly, one can practise the Dhamma and realize the four Noble Truths.

If one observes at the culture, customs and tradition of a nation or a country, it is seen that they are under the influence of their respective religions.

The Myanmar culture, language, literature and tradition have the Buddha's Teachings as their base. They will fade out when the Buddhist Doctrines fade out. Knowing this fact, the successive governments have been holding the dhammācariya examinations, the pathamapyan examinations and the likes. Moreover, the bhikkhus and the nuns who passed these examinations have been awarded worthily by the government and the people. In addition, the examinations of Tipiṭakadhara and the five Nikāyas, the Visuddhimagga and the Abhidhammā exams for laity, and the basic examination of Buddhist culture for children have been held annually.

In some townships, there are various voluntary organizations, led by far-sighted wise men, which hold the examinations such as *Cetiyanḡana*, *Sakyasīha*, *Vinayādhika* and so on.

At present the government is conferring various titles and donating the four requisites to the Teachers of the Buddhist literature and the meditation teachers. In the same way, the

voluntary associations such as the Young Men Buddhist Association and Maṅgalābyūhā Association hold examinations on Auspiciousness and the Chronicle of the Buddha for the youth annually, and give prizes and scholarships to outstanding students.

As the Buddha's Teachings can enlarge the human knowledge and promote human culture, everyone should give full support to the teaching and learning of the Buddhist Literature.

Supporting Those Who Are Practising The Dhamma

It is the practical application of the Buddha's Teachings that every layman and bhikkhu must depend on for their liberation from miseries. That practice is also known as the Threefold Training, namely Morality (Sīla), Concentration (Samādhi) and Wisdom (Paññā). The basic requirement of the practice is the learning of the Buddha's Teachings and its result is the attainment of Magga, Phala and Nibbāna. One can attain Magga, Phala and Nibbāna only by practising according to the Buddha's Teachings. Those who have fully practised according to the Buddha's Teachings should

urge and teach others so that they also undertake the practice. So long as they are doing so, the practical application of the Buddha's Teachings will never fade away and the world will never be devoid of Noble Persons. The Buddha's Teachings will also perpetuate and flourish for ever.

When everyone follows the Buddha's Teachings, some of them will attain Magga, Phala and Nibbāna, and some will be able to reduce the defilements such as greed, anger and ignorance in their daily social affairs. And also the four factors of the Sublime States, namely, loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity, will be promoted. When the Four Sublime States are developed, the people will become mild and gentle in their physical and mental behaviour. When the people are devoid of greed and anger, there will be no theft nor robbery nor persecution. And the whole world will be overwhelmed by peace. It is the peaceful country that everyone aspires.

The Government of the Union of Myanmar is upholding the country to be a peaceful one by the practical application of the Buddha's Teachings. Therefore, it is necessary to support those who are practising the Dhamma

and those who are urging and teaching others to understand the practice.

Promotion and Propagation of the Buddhist Literature

Throughout the 45 years of his missionary period, the Buddha, who possessed the omniscient knowledge, gave discourses conducive to mundane and supramundane benefits.

The Arahats, such as Venerable Mahākassapa and Venerable Ānanda, held the Great Buddhist Councils successively in order to maintain those discourses and perpetuate the Buddha's Teachings for more than five thousand years.

The successive elder bhikkhus and the pious rulers have been striving for the purification and perpetuation of the Buddha's Teaching with great conviction and diligence.

Moreover, the elder bhikkhus have translated the Pāli texts into native languages and have written books on Buddhist Literature such as commentary and sub-commentary aiming at the quick and accurate understanding of the discourses in the Pāli-Texts. Modern learned writers have also written many books in

various aspects so that ordinary laymen can understand the Buddha's Teachings. With the help of these books every one can know how to practise the Doctrine easily and can attain Magga, Phala and Nibbāna.

The main resources for the promotion and propagation of the Buddhist Literature are the lecturers, the teachers, the writers and the compilers who have thorough knowledge of the Dhamma. The Buddhist Literature will well spread and the Buddha's Teachings will flourish so long as these learned persons are in existence lecturing and teaching the Dhamma and writing and compiling books on Dhamma.

Religious Activities At Home

Among the various activities for the promotion and propagation of Sāsana, the religious activities at home play an important role. A family is composed of parents and their children. The heads of a family are the parents and they are also responsible for the welfare of the whole family. They are also responsible for implementing religious activities within the family successfully. Therefore, the saying goes: "The meanness of the children falls on the heads of their parents". In Siṅgālovāda Sutta, the

Buddha mentioned the five duties of parents thus: "The parents should restrain their children from doing evil; they should encourage their children to do good; they should provide their children with education and professional training; they should provide their children with capital to start a business, and they should arrange suitable marriages for their children."

Since the time of conception the parents prepare everything well for their coming child. Being Buddhists, they recite the discourses of protection to protect their child from any danger or enmity. They also take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha for the welfare of their offspring. This practice has fully taken place since the Buddha's time. The mother of Bodhi Prince took refuge in the Three Gems not only for herself but also for her son conceived in her womb.

It is the good tradition of all Buddhists to introduce one's children to Buddhism as early as possible as the start of family religious activities. During the conception the mother usually takes refuge in the Three Gems and observes the five precepts in order to ward off any danger from the child by the virtues of her meritorious deeds. At the time of the delivery

of the child, *Angulimāla Sutta* is usually recited in order to give birth easily. When the woman in labour hears the *Sutta*, she remembers the virtues of the Three Gems. So she gets relief from the pain and the child can also be blessed with the good virtues of the Triple Gems.

When the naming ceremony is held, the parents invite the bhikkhus to donate offerings. They take refuge in the Three Gems and they listen to the discourses of protection recited by the bhikkhus for the benefit of the child. When the child grows old enough to speak, they teach him to recite "*Buddham saranam gacchami*" and so on. They give him the invaluable inheritance of Buddhism. When the child is clever enough to understand things to a certain extent, the parents, while embracing him, start teaching him the habit of paying homage to the Three Gems. They teach him to hold his palms together on his forehead and teach him to say: "I pay homage to the Buddha". This is the first physical conduct of a Buddhist. Parents are the first teachers of their children. Their teachings are strongly impressed on their children's memory. Good parents produce good children. Pure lineage, good char-

acter and religious and cultural traditions of the parents are valuable inheritance to their children.

King *Kākavaṇṇa Tissa*, the ruler of *Laṅkāḍīpa*, made his two sons (*Gāmani* and *Tissa*) take a vow before meal at the ceremony of feeding the first meal to them not to take any meal without offering it to the Three Gems. In this way he made the Teachings of the Buddha rooted in their hearts. Wise parents establish the spirit of Buddhism in the hearts of their children.

Then they make their children pay obeisance to the Buddha at least twice a day: once in the morning and once in the evening. They also teach them words of prayers and train them to pay obeisance to the five objects of infinite gratitude before going to bed and after getting up from bed. At bed time, they tell their children *jātakas* and stories on Buddhist culture. When the children ask questions, they give answers which the children can remember for ever.

The parents teach their children how to offer almsfood to the bhikkhus every morning. They also teach them how to offer food, water, flowers and lights to the Buddha. In this way

the religious activities in the family get more and more developed. When the children grow older, the parents teach them not to do evil, explaining the disadvantages of doing evil. And they encourage their children to do good, explaining the benefits of the good.

When the children are old enough to learn, they are sent to the monastery to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic, and also to learn Buddhist literature such as Maṅgala Sutta, Siṅgālovāda Sutta and Lokanīti. In this way, there is a progress of religious activities in the family owing to the piety, the devotion and the wise guidance of the parents.

Buddhism and Myanmar are inseparable and they are joined together permanently. The Buddha's Teachings are the invaluable guidance for the Myanmar cultural traditions. Because of this invaluable guidance Myanmar has been a well civilized country in the world for thousands of years. The nationality and the religious fervour are also well safeguarded.

The more successful the family religious activities are, the more lasting and the more developed the Buddha's Teaching will be. Therefore every Buddhist must try his best for

the success of the family religious activities which is the foundation for the perpetuation, promotion and propagation of the Buddha Sāsana.

Religious Activities in the Community

Performing religious activities in the community is one form of the important tasks for the perpetuation and propagation of the Sāsana. Wards and villages are made up of families. Groups of wards and villages form towns, districts, divisions, states and country. Thus, if the Buddha's Teachings can be established in each family and community, the Sāsana will flourish in the whole country.

When we follow the Buddha's Teachings, we shall gain happiness and success not only in the present life but also in the next existences. Moreover, in our final existence, we shall attain the ultimate peace of Nibbāna. It is very precious to be a Buddhist. To be able to enjoy such a precious life, ignorant persons and wrong viewers should be converted into wise persons and right viewers. In doing so, organizations should be formed in villages and townships and lectures and discussions should be

held extensively. According to the Buddha's advice, one should not only perform meritorious deeds but also urge others to do so.

Four types of persons are mentioned in the Buddhist literature as follows:-

- (1) A person who himself does meritorious deeds but does not urge others to do so;
- (2) A person who urges others to do meritorious deeds but he himself does not do so;
- (3) A person who does not himself do meritorious deeds nor urges others to do so;
- (4) A person who himself does meritorious deeds and urges others to do so.

Their different attitudes and activities bring different benefits to them. When they reap the benefits of their meritorious deeds in future existences:

- The first person enjoys great wealth but lacks companionship;
- The second person enjoys companionship but lacks wealth;
- The third person enjoys neither wealth nor companionship;
- The fourth person enjoys both wealth and companionship.

According to this discourse, it is obvious that a person, who himself does the meritorious deeds and urges others to do so, will enjoy the greatest benefits among the four types of persons. Therefore to lead the community to participate in religious activities is of great importance.

There are two main objectives in doing the religious activities in the community: (1) to bring peace and prosperity to the members of community not only in the present lives but also in future existences, and (2) to promote unity among the community.

To implement these objectives, the Myanmar nationals set up young women's associations, youth associations, etc., and unitedly participate in religious and social affairs for the welfare of the whole nation. It is necessary to have a religious hall in the community. So all Buddhists are responsible for building religious halls in their respective quarters.

On every Uposatha day, the members of the associations should urge everyone in the community to observe the moral precepts at the religious halls. There is a Myanmar saying: "We know the importance of drinking water and foot-wear when we travel in sum-

mer, and the value of charity and morality at the time of death."

The members of the community should meet regularly on Uposatha days at the religious halls to observe the moral precepts. They should collect donations in terms of money or kind from house to house occasionally, distribute part of the donations to monasteries in proportion to the number of bhikkhus and use part of the donations to prepare food for offering to the bhikkhus in the mornings.

The observers of the moral precepts should read or listen to the Dhamma on Uposatha days. In addition to daily offering of food to the bhikkhus, great special ceremonies for offering food and other requisites to the Buddha and the Sangha are usually held collectively and merrily. Occasional offering of the four requisites to bhikkhus by drawing lots, and annual ceremonies of conveying the twenty-eight Buddha images around the wards and villages are also held for the welfare of the community. The ceremonies of novitiation and ordination are also held in the community yearly. Donation ceremonies of Wazo robes at the beginning of the Buddhist lent and donation ceremonies of Kathina robes at the end of the Buddhist lent are also held merrily.

In order to propagate the Buddha's Teachings and to uplift the religious knowledge of the youth, training classes on Buddhist culture, on the Thirty-eight Blessings and on the Buddhist Abhidhamma are held regularly. Strenuous efforts are made to arouse the interest and inspire the students to come to these classes, and necessary arrangements are provided for the convenience of the learners to attend classes.

The organizers also make attempts to hold discussions and lectures on Dhamma. On the Myanmar New Year Day, at the cross-road of every ward and village, people collectively listen to the discourses on holy protection. They set free fish, birds and other animals, and pay respect to the aged.

Seasonal festivals such as the festival of pouring water at the foot of the Bodhi Tree in the month of Kason (May) are also held annually. Social services such as opening ceremonies of new community dwellings, birth-day ceremonies, wedding ceremonies and funeral rites are also performed collectively.

Being pious Buddhists, the Myanmar people make endeavours for the welfare of the community with conviction, devotion and compassion. These endeavours lead the community to peace, harmony and prosperity.

King Mindon, the founder of Mandalay and the sponsor of the fifth Great Saṅgha Council used to pronounce the royal edict of important rules to promulgate the religious duties of observing the five moral precepts, the thirty-eight blessings and the four sublime states on the fifth waxing day of every month to the whole country. The royal scroll mentioning the above pronouncement of the king was placed on the frontal globe of the royal elephant and conveyed around the city, beating the great drum carried by fifty persons. The King also established religious associations and religious halls.

That peace and happiness cannot be achieved by the physical progress alone has been demonstrated by the people of technically advanced countries. The moral progress is very essential to achieve true peace and happiness in life. The Buddha's Teaching can actually furnish the spiritual and moral progress to all human beings.

Therefore, every citizen should participate in the noble missionary work of propagating the Buddha's Sāsana in the community as well as in the whole country so that all the people are spiritually and morally developed to enjoy peace and happiness to the fullest extent.



CHAPTER (6)

Social Duties

(A) *The Duties as shown in Siṅgālovāda Sutta*

Siṅgālovāda Sutta means the discourse preached by the Buddha to a young man named Siṅgāla. In this sutta, the Buddha explained the social duties for all human beings and they include the duties of parents, the duties of sons and daughters etc. If one fails to observe these duties one encounters a declination in prosperity in addition to the misfortune of being reborn in woeful abodes after death. If one observes these duties, one enjoys prosperity and high dignity in the present life and one will be reborn in pleasant abodes after death. So, all human beings should observe these social duties with due respect and firm conviction. These duties are stated in brief as follows:-

Five Kinds of Duty for Sons and Daughters

1. Sons and daughters must attend closely to their parents in order to provide them with all the requisites in life.

2. They must carry out the social affairs of the business matters of their parents.
3. They must maintain their parents' properties, their parents' nationality, their parents' religious duties, and try to straighten their parents' religious view if they have a wrong view. They must also maintain the good name of their parents and their lineage.
4. They must obey their parents and make themselves worthy of the parents' heritage.
5. On their parents' death they should do good deeds in dedication to them and share the merits with them.

Five Kinds of Duty for Parents

1. Parents must prevent their sons and daughters from misconduct.
2. They must show their sons and daughters the way to good conduct.
3. They must make their sons and daughters learn arts and sciences.
4. They must give them in marriage to suitable persons.

5. They must give them their inheritance at the proper time.

Five Kinds of Duty of a Pupil

1. He must stand up and welcome his teacher when he sees the teacher coming.
2. He must attend upon his teacher.
3. He must obey the words of the teacher with proper attention and respect.
4. He must serve his teacher and supply his needs.
5. He must learn carefully and respectfully what is taught or instructed by his teacher.

Five Kinds of Duty of a Teacher

1. A teacher must teach his pupils good behaviour.
2. He must impart knowledge to him in such a manner that the pupil may thoroughly grasp the subject.
3. He must train his pupil without any discrimination.

4. He must entrust his pupil to a good teacher.
5. He must protect his pupils from danger.

Five Kinds of Duty of a Husband

1. A husband must be kind to and adore his wife.
2. He must not treat his wife in an insolent manner.
3. He must not engage in sexual misconduct with other women.
4. He must give her control and authority over domestic matters.
5. He must provide his wife with clothing and ornaments.

Five Kinds of Duty of a Wife

1. A wife must arrange chores of the household well and run it smoothly.
2. She must distribute gifts fairly between her relatives and her husband's relatives.
3. She must not engage in sexual misconduct with other men.

4. She must keep and maintain in an orderly manner all things that are handed over by her husband.
5. She must be skillful and diligent in all her housework.

Five Kinds of Duty of a Good Friend

1. A man must give his friends all necessary things as much as possible.
2. He must speak pleasantly to them.
3. He must do his best for the benefit of both his friends and himself.
4. He must treat them as his equal.
5. He must be true to his words and promises.

Five Kinds of Duty of a Beneficiary

1. A beneficiary must protect his friend when his friend is inebriated.
2. He must guard over his friend's properties when he is inebriated.
3. He must be a refuge for his friend when the latter is in trouble.

4. He must not forsake his friend when he is in distress.
5. He must help his descendants.

Five Kinds of Duty of a Master

1. A master should make his employees work in accordance with their capability and strength.
2. He must provide his employees with food and pay them sufficiently.
3. He must give them medical treatment when they are ill and sick.
4. On receiving delicious food, he must share it with his employees.
5. He must allow them to work at appointed times and let them enjoy leisure at other times for rest and relaxation.

Five Kinds of Duty of a Servant

1. A servant must rise before the master.
2. He must go to sleep after his master.
3. He must take only what is given to him by his master.
4. He must try his best in his master's work.

5. He must always speak of the virtues of his master.

Five Kinds of Duty of Laymen

1. A layman must minister to the bhikkhus with affection in action.
2. He must minister to the bhikkhus with affection in speech.
3. He must show them affection in thought, wishing them well at all times.
4. He must always keep his house open to the bhikkhus.
5. He must provide them with material requisites.

Six Kinds of Duty of Bhikkhus

1. A bhikkhu must restrain his lay disciples from doing evil deeds.
2. He must exhort them to do good deeds.
3. He must protect them with loving-kindness.
4. He must preach them what they have never heard before.
5. He must explain to them what they have already heard before.

6. He must show them the way to the realm of devas.

Six Kinds of Duty of a Leader

1. He must be more industrious than others.
2. He must be vigilant in order to lead others.
3. He must be kind to his subordinates.
4. He must forebear and forgive others.
5. He must be considerate and reasonable whatever he does.
6. He must be wise and foresighted in doing things.

(B) Thirty eight kinds of Blessings

Before the Buddha preached the Maṅgala Sutta, a certain rumour concerning maṅgala had arisen among men and devas twelve years in advance. They pondered what is maṅgala. And so, there were many divergence of opinions; some said seeing pleasant objects was Maṅgala, some said hearing pleasant sound was Maṅgala, some said smelling sweet odour was Maṅgala, etc. This

controversy spread from men to the devas and brahmās.

On one occasion the Exalted One was dwelling at the Jetavana monastery of Anāthapiṇḍika in Sāvatti. Then in the middle watch of the night, a certain deva of extremely attractive appearance approached the Buddha, illuminating the entire Jetavana monastery.

Having approached the Buddha and having made obeisance to the Exalted One, he stood in a suitable place. Thus standing, the deva addressed the Bhagavā in verse: "Many devas and human beings, longing for their well being, pondered what is Maṅgala: Oh! the Exalted One, please tell us what the highest blessing is." Then, the Buddha expounded the following thirty eight factors of blessing.

Maṅgala Sutta in Pāli

prelude

- yam maṅgalam dvādasahi cintayimisu
sadevakā sotthānam ādhigacchanti
aṭṭha tim sañca maṅgalāni.
- Desitam devadevena sabbapāpa
vināsanam sabbaloka hitatthāya
maṅgalam tam bhaṇāma he.

Introduction

- (a) Evaṃ me sutam.
- (b) Ekam samayam bhagavā Sāvattiyam viharati Jetavane anāthapiṇḍi kassa ārāme.
- (c) Atha kho añatarā devatā abhikkantāya rattiyā abhikkanta vaṇṇā kevalakappam jetavanam obāsetvā. Yena bhagavā upasaṅkamtivā bhagavantam abhivā detvā ekamantam aṭṭhāsī.
- (d) Ekamantam thitā kho sādevatā bhagavantam ghāthāya aṭṭhabāsī.

Discourse

- Bahū devā manussāca maṅgalāni acintayum ākaṅ khamānā soṭṭhānam byūhi maṅgala muttamam.
- Asevanāsa bālānam paṇḍitānañca sevānā pūjāca pūjaneyyānam etam maṅgala muttamam.
- Patirūpadesavāso ca pubbeca katapuññatā attasammā paṇḍhica etam maṅgala muttamam.
- Bahusaccāna sippaṅca vinayo ca susikkhito subhāsītā ca yā vācā etam maṅgala muttamam.

- Mātāpitu upaṭṭhānam putta dārassa saṅgaho anākulā ca kammantā etam maṅgala muttamam.
- Dānañca dhammacariyāca nātakānañca saṅghaho anavajjāni kammāni etam maṅgala muttamam.
- Āratī viratipāpā majjapānā ca saṅyamo appamādo ca dhammesu etam maṅgala muttamam.
- Gāravo ca nivāto ca santuṭṭhi ca kataññutā kalena dhammassavanam etam maṅgala muttamam.
- Khantī ca sovacassatā samaññan ca dassanam kālenadhamma sākacchā etam maṅgala muttamam.
- Tapo ca brahmacariyāca ariyasaccāna dassanam nibbāna sacchikiriyāca etam maṅgala muttamam.

- Phuphassa lokadhammehi
cittam yassa na kampati
asokam virajam khemam
etam mangala muttamam.

Conclusion

- Etādisāni katvāna sabbattha maparājita
sabbattha sotthim gacchanti tam te sam
mangala muttamam.

Explanation

prelude

- Devas and men for twelve full years,
pondered over things auspicious, but
failed to discover the thirty eight fac-
tors of Auspiciousness.

The Buddha, greater than all devas, has taught things auspicious which remove all evil, which are for the good of the whole world. Let us now recite those factors of Auspiciousness.

Introduction

- On one occasion the Exalted One was dwelling at the Jetavana monastery of Anāthapiṇḍika in Sāvatti.
- Then, soon after the middle watch of the night, a certain deva of extremely

attractive appearance approached the Buddha, illuminating the entire Jetavana monastery.

Having approached the Buddha and having made obeisance to the Exalted One, he stood at a suitable place.

Thus standing, the deva addressed the Bhagavā in verse:

"Many devas and human beings, longing for their well-being, pondered what constitutes Auspiciousness; O! tell us what is the highest Auspiciousness?"

Then, the Buddha expounded these following thirty eight rules of conduct.

Explanation of each blessing

1. *Asevanāca bālānam:* Not to associate with the foolish is the highest blessing. Here, a foolish person is one who thinks, speaks and commits evil deeds in order to destroy the benefits of others.
2. *Paṇḍitānañca sevā:* To associate only with the wise is the highest blessing. Here a wise person is one who thinks, speaks and performs good

deeds in order to gain the benefits and prosperity for oneself and others.

3. *Pūjā ca pūjaneyyānari* : To honour those who are worthy of honour is the highest blessing. Here those persons are the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṃgha, parents, teachers, elders and those who are higher in prestige. Honouring is of two kinds:- honouring by giving material gifts (*Amisapūjā*) and honouring by dhamma gift (*dhamma puju*).
4. *Patirūpadesavaṣo ca* : To dwell in a suitable locality is the highest blessing. Here a suitable locality is a place where the Buddha's teachings exist and flourish well and which enables one to gain merit, wisdom and property.
5. *Pubbe ca Katapuññatā* : To have done meritorious deeds in the past is the highest blessing.
6. *Attasammā pañidhi ca* : To set oneself in the right course is the highest blessing. Here setting oneself in the right course means making oneself en-

dowed with morality, conviction, generosity and so on.

7. *Bāhusaccañca* : To have a wide general knowledge in mundane and supramundane levels is the highest blessing.
8. *Sippañca* : Being skillful in the technology and handicrafts is the highest blessing.
9. *Vinaya ca susikkhito* : Learning and abiding by the rules of conduct and disciplines laid down by the Buddha for lay devotees and monks is the highest blessing.
10. *Subhāsītā ca yā vā cā* : Speaking what is true, pleasant and beneficial to others is the highest blessing.
11. *Mātāpitu upaṭṭhānam* : To attend closely to one's parents is the highest blessing. Here attending closely on one's parents means ministering to all the needs of one's parents performing their duties towards them, making them happy and healthy.

12. *Puttadārassa saṅgaho* : To take care of one's wife and children is a noble blessing.
13. *Anākulā ca Kammantā* : To perform a faultless work at a proper time and under proper circumstances is a noble blessing. A faultless work means an action which does not harm one's benefits as well as others' benefits.
14. *Dānañca* : Performing acts of charity is the highest blessing.
15. *Dhammacariyā ca* : To live righteously performing the ten kinds of meritorious deeds is a noble blessing.
16. *Nātakānañ ca saṅgaho* : To support one's paternal and maternal relatives with food, clothings, money, etc, or with encouraging words and good advice is a noble blessing.
17. *Anavajjani Kammāni* : To perform a blameless action associated with the welfare of oneself and others such as keeping the sabbath precepts, planting trees and gardens, performing social work, etc, is a noble blessing.
18. *Āratī (pāpā)* : To resolve mentally to refrain from committing all evils, knowing

- well the evil consequences of evil conduct is a noble blessing.
19. *Viratī (pāpā)* : To refrain from committing three bodily evil deeds and four verbal evil deeds is a noble blessing.
 20. *Majjapānāca samiyamo* : To abstain from any intoxicating drink or drug such as alcohol, opium, cocaine, marijuana, heroin, etc, is a noble blessing.
 21. *Appamādo ca dhammesu* : Not to be negligent in doing good deeds, namely to give away in charity (*Dāna*), to keep the moral precepts (*Sīla*) and to practise meditation (*bhāvanā*) is a noble blessing.
 22. *Gāraṇa ca* : To pay respect to those who are worthy of respect is a noble blessing. The persons who are worthy of respect are the Buddha, the disciples of the Buddha (monks), and parents, teachers, uncles, aunts, elder brothers and sisters and those persons who are older or higher in status than oneself. One shows them respect by making way for them, by bending slightly forward on passing in front of them, by offering them

one's seat when travelling in a bus or train, by sitting in a lower place than theirs, and by holding things respectfully in offering them to the elders.

23. **Nivātoca** : To be humble and modest without pride and conceit is a noble blessing. To be humble means not only showing a respectful behaviour but also being humble in one's physical, verbal and mental actions.
24. **Santuṭṭhī ca** : To be contented with whatever one possesses presently, although one must strive and work hard honestly and steadily, is a noble blessing.
25. **Kataññutā** : To acknowledge other's gratitude and repay one's debt of gratitude is a blessing.
26. **Kālena dhamma savanamī** : To listen to the dhamma which can lead one to prosperity in the present life as well as in future lives is a noble blessing.
27. **Khanṭīca** : To forgive the insult caused by others and be patient without bearing a grudge is a noble blessing.

28. **Sovacassatā** : To obey readily the advice given by elders and learned persons without any complaint or argument is a noble blessing.
29. **Samañānañca dassanamī** : To see noble persons who have purified or are trying to purify their minds from all defilements produces tranquillity and wholesome attitude in one's mind. So it is a noble blessing.
30. **Kālena dhammasākacchā** : Discussion of the Dhamma with learned persons at the proper time can lead one to prosperity in the present as well as in the future and it will enrich one's knowledge, straighten one's view and clarify one's mind. So it is a noble blessing.
31. **Tapo ca** : To practise austerity by controlling one's sense faculties in order to scorch all defilements is a noble blessing.
32. **Brahmacariyañca** : To undertake the noble practice such as observing the eight precepts and developing concentration and insight knowledge in order to realize the Four Noble Truths is a noble blessing.

33. Ariyāsaccāna dassanaṃ: To realize the Four Noble Truths with four Path-consciousnesses stage by stage is a noble blessing.
34. Nibbāna sacchikiriyā ca: To realize Nibbāna and enjoy the highest bliss with their respective Fruition-consciousness by the four types of Noble persons (Ariyas) is a noble blessing.
35. Phuthassa lokadhammehi cittaṃ yassa nā kampati : To stand steadfastly with an unshaken mind when one is confronted with the ups and downs of life associated with the eight worldly conditions is a noble blessing.
- The eight worldly conditions are (lābha) gain, (alābha) loss, (yassa) fame, (ayassa) dishonour, (pāsanna) praise, (ninda) blame, (sukha) well being and (dukkha) misery.
36. Asokaṇi: To be free from all worries is a noble blessing.
37. Virajāṇi: To have a mind free from the dust of all defilements such as greed (lobha), hatred (dosa) and ignorance (moha) is a noble blessing.

38. Khemaṇi : To possess a peaceful mind free from all dangers of defilements is a noble blessing.

Conclusion

Whoever abides by and follows the thirty eight rules of blessing overcomes all difficulties and oppositions in life and will gain success and prosperity in the present life as well as in future lives. These 38 rules of conduct according to the discourse of Blessings are called the highest Auspiciousness because they bring success and prosperity to all who follow them.

(c) The Causes of Downfall according to Parābhava Sutta

Introduction

After hearing the discourse on Maṅgala Sutta and realizing the Thirty Eight Blessings, the devas wanted to know the causes of downfall for individuals. So they informed the king of Devas about their desire. On the next day, the king sent a deva to supplicate the Buddha to preach a discourse on the causes of downfall. Therefore, the Buddha delivered the Parābhava Sutta as follows:

Causes of Downfall

1. To respect and abide by the ten kinds of good conduct (sucarita) is the cause of one's prosperity; to scorn and disobey the ten kinds of good conduct is the cause of one's downfall.
2. To be fond of and to associate with ignoble persons, to dislike and to dissociate with the noble persons are the causes of one's downfall.
3. To indulge in excessive sleep, to indulge in idle company, to be lacking in effort, to be lazy, and to have a quick temper are the causes of one's downfall.
4. Not to support and attend upon old parents although one has the ability to support and attend upon them is the cause of one's downfall.
5. To deceive monks or other donees with false promise is a cause of one's downfall.
6. To enjoy one's great fortune only for one's benefit without sharing it with others is a cause of one's downfall.
7. To be proud of one's birth, wealth and lineage and to despise and disrespect

one's own kinsmen is a cause of one's downfall.

8. To indulge in womanizing, drinking and to squander whatever one possesses are the causes of one's downfall.
9. To indulge in sexual misconduct with courtesans and others' spouses is a cause of one's downfall.
10. To marry a young person in spite of one's old age is a cause of one's downfall.
11. To give authority to a person who indulges excessively in food and dress and who is also a spendthrift is a cause of one's downfall.
12. To aspire to possess something or some position which is out of one's reach or ability is a cause of one's downfall.

Conclusion

A wise person, reflecting on these causes of deterioration carefully, shapes the course of his life to be free from these bad causes and attain peace and prosperity in the present life as well as in future lives.

(D) The Causes of becoming a Wretch according to Vasala Sutta

On one occasion the Buddha was staying at the monastery of Anāthapiṇḍika in Jeta's Grove. One day while he was going for alms-round, he arrived at the house of a brahmin named Aggika bhāradvāja.

At that moment the brahmin was preparing for fire oblation, and when he saw the Buddha coming to his house he shouted angrily in harsh words thus: "Stop there, wretched mendicant, stop there wretched mendicant!"

The Buddha stopped and said gently to the brahmin: "Do you know, O! brahmin, who a wretch is and the causes that make one a wretch?"

The brahmin answered that he didn't know them and requested the Buddha to explain them to him. Therefore, the Buddha delivered the Vasala Sutta which explains the meaning of a wretch and causes of becoming a wretch.

1. One, who is hot-tempered, grudging, ungrateful, holding a wrong view, and deceitful in order to hide his fault, is a wretch.
2. One, who has no pity for living beings and kills them oneself or makes others kill them, is a wretch.

3. One, who besieges and destroys villages and towns is a wretch.
4. One, who does not pay back the loan owed to others, is a wretch.
5. One, who steals others' properties, is a wretch.
6. One, who kills and robs others is a wretch.
7. One, who bears false witness, is a wretch.
8. One, who commits sexual misconduct with other's spouses, is a wretch.
9. One who does not support and attend to ones's parents is a wretch.
10. One, who tortures one's parents, brothers, sisters and relatives bodily and verbally, is a wretch.
11. One, who when asked a reasonable and beneficial question, gives a detrimental answer or a crooked answer deliberately hiding the true facts, is a wretch.
12. One, who keeps in secret the evil deeds committed by oneself, is a wretch.
13. One who enjoys the generoustreatment offered by others in warm welcome but fails to return the same treatment to others when they visit one's house, is a wretch.

14. One, who gives many lame excuses and refuses to donate to donees after inviting them for donation, is a wretch.
15. One, who speaks harshly without donating anything when bhikkhus come for alms food, is a wretch.
16. One, who tricks others with false speech in order to gain something from them, is a wretch.
17. One, who praises oneself and despises others, is a wretch.
18. One, who provokes others to quarrel, who neither donates anything by oneself nor appreciates others' donation, who is mean, pretentious, and has no shame and fear to do evil, is a wretch.
19. One, who abuses the Buddha, his disciples and other noble sages, is a wretch.
20. One, who claims himself to be an Arahat although one is not an Arahat, is the meanest wretch.

Four Types of Honouring (Sangaha)

Honouring or socially assisting others as a token of benevolence is called Sangaha. Only if the people practise the four ways of honouring

others, will there be peace and happiness in the world. These benevolent practices play an important role in social dealings.

1. *Dāna* : Honouring others by providing them with material requisites.
2. *Peyyavajja* : Honouring others with sweet, pleasing words suitable to the time and the occasion.
3. *Arthacariyā* : Honouring others by giving the necessary assistance so that they can accomplish their purpose.
4. *Samānattatā* : Honouring others by treating them socially as one's equal.

Four Factors of Endowments (Sampadā)

On one occasion in the Buddha's time, a man, son of Koliya, named Dighajānu, said to the Buddha who dwelled in the market town of Koliya: "Reverend sir, we, the worldlings, are living together with our families, using various perfumes, and taking delight in jewels like gold and silver. Please deliver a discourse, pointing a way how we can gain wealth and happiness in the present life

as well as in future lives. The Buddha delivered the discourse on "Sampadā." "Sampadā" means the qualities with which one must be endowed in order to gain wealth and happiness. This "Sampadā" consists of the four qualities described below:-

1. *Uṭṭhānasampadā* : active and diligent exertion in business undertaking;
2. *Ārakkhasampadā* : the ability to manage wisely what one has earned;
3. *Kalyāṇamitta sampadā* : the ability to associate with a wide circle of good friends.
4. *Samajjivita sampadā* : the ability to live within one's means, i.e, not spending more than what one has earned by lawful means.

Explanation

1. *Uṭṭhānasampadā* : In this world everybody has to make a living by any suitable means of livelihood. One can be a vagrant without working in any occupation. One must be skilful, diligent and wise in making decisions and in the administration of the business one is undertaking

These three qualities: skill, diligence, and wisdom make up *Uṭṭhānasampadā* endowment;

2. *Ārakkhasampadā* : The wealth and properties, that one has acquired lawfully by active and diligent exertion in business undertaking, must be managed wisely and protected from five kinds of danger: flood, conflagrations, bad rulers, thieves and robbers, and bad sons and daughters who are unworthy heirs. This wise management and protection of the wealth and properties that one has acquired lawfully is called *Ārakkhasampadā* endowment.

3. *Kalyāṇamittasampadā* : One must associate with good friends endowed with good qualities such as conviction and morality. One must also associate with those who have achieved success in their business. Only when one associates with such good companions can one

imitate them and strive to achieve the good qualities that they possess in order to attain good morality, conviction, business management, etc. This is called *Kalyānamittasampadā* endowment.

4. *Samajīvita sampada* : One must keep a systematic account showing, receipts and expenditures. One should divide the net income into four portions. One should use one portion for consumption, another portion for saving, and the remaining two portions for investment. The ability to live within one's means and not spending more than what one has earned by lawful means is called *Samajīvitasampadā*.

CHAPTER (7)

Basic Abhidhammā

The Meaning of Abhidhamma

The word Abhidhamma means the highest teaching of the Buddha. It deals with four ultimate realities (*paramattha*) which comprise consciousness (*Citta*), mental concomitants (*Cetasika*), matter (*Rupa*), and extinction of craving (*Nibbāna*).

The Definition of Citta

The Pāli word "citta" means knowing an object. It means knowing visible objects, knowing audible objects, knowing odourous objects, knowing tangible objects and knowing cognizable objects.

Classification of Consciousness

There are four classes of consciousness, namely:

- (i). Consciousness pertaining to the Sensuous-sphere,
- (ii). Consciousness pertaining to the Form-sphere,

- (iii). Consciousness pertaining to the Formless-sphere,
- (iv). Supramundane consciousness.

1. Fifty-four Kinds of Sensual Consciousness (*kāmāvacara citta*)

Kāmāvacara citta is the consciousness which arises mostly in the sensuous realm. It is divided as follows:-

- (a) Twelve types of Unwholesome Consciousness (*Akusala citta*)
- (b) Eighteen types of Rootless Consciousness (*Ahetuka citta*)
- (c) Twenty four types of Sublime Consciousness (*Kāmasobhaṇa citta*)
- (a) The twelve types of unwholesome consciousness (*Akusala citta*) are:-
 - eight types of consciousness rooted in greed;
 - two types of consciousness rooted in anger; and
 - two types of consciousness rooted in ignorance.

(b) The consciousness which is unrooted in *lobha* (greed), *dosa* (anger), and *moha* (ignorance) is called *Ahetuka Citta* (unrooted consciousness). The eighteen types of rootless consciousness are:-

- seven types of unwholesome resultant consciousness (*Akusala vipāka citta*);
- eight types of rootless wholesome resultant Consciousness (*Ahetuka kusala vipāka citta*); and
- three types of rootless functional consciousness (*Ahetuka kiriya citta*).
- (c) 24 types of Sublime Consciousness are divided into three categories. They are-
 - eight types of wholesome consciousness (*Mahākusala citta*);
 - eight types of wholesome resultant consciousness (*Mahā vipāka citta*); and
 - eight types of wholesome functional consciousness (*Mahā kiriya citta*).

2. Fifteen Types of Form sphere Consciousness (*Rūpāvacara Citta*)

The consciousness which arises mostly in the realm of celestial beings who have form is *Rūpāvacara citta*. It is divided into three types:-

- five types of form-sphere wholesome consciousness (*Rūpāvacara kusala citta*);
- five types of form-sphere resultant consciousness (*Rūpāvacara vipāka citta*); and

- five types of form-sphere functional consciousness (Rūpāvacara kiriyā citta).

3. *Twelve Types of Formless Sphere Consciousness (Arūpāvacara Citta)*

The consciousness which arises mostly in the realm of celestial beings who are formless is Arūpāvacara Citta. It is divided into three types:

- four types of Arūpāvacara kusala citta;
- four types of Arūpāvacara kusala citta; and
- four types of Arūpāvacara kusala citta.

4. *Eight types of Supramundane Consciousness (Lokuttara citta) and Forty types of Lokuttara Citta*

The consciousness that enables one to transcend this world of mind and body is called the Supramundane consciousness. It arises only in the eight noble persons. It is divided into eight types in brief and forty types in detail:

- four types of Path consciousness; and
- four types of Fruition consciousness.

In detail, the supramundane consciousness can be divided into forty types: twenty types of path consciousness and twenty types of Fruition consciousness. Multiplying each (supramundane) consciousness by five Jhāna factors, the supramundane consciousness, amounts to 40.

As the form-sphere consciousness is treated as first Jhāna consciousness, second Jhāna consciousness, and so on, so also can the supramundane consciousness. The Formless-Sphere consciousness is included in the fifth Jhāna.

Summary

The Consciousness is divided into 89 types in brief and 121 types in detail.

The 89 types of consciousness are:

- 54 types of Sensual consciousness;
- 15 types of Form sphere consciousness;
- 12 types of Formless sphere consciousness; and
- 8 types of Supramundane consciousness (in brief).

The 121 types of consciousness are:

- 54 types of Sensual consciousness;
- 15 types of Form sphere consciousness;
- 12 types of Formless sphere consciousness; and
- 40 types of Supramundane consciousness (in detail).

The Definition of Cetasika

Cetasika is the phenomenon which is associated with the mind or consciousness. There are 52 mental states which are called Cetasika or mental concomitants. The cetasikas -

- (1) arise together with consciousness,
- (2) perish together with it,
- (3) have an identical object with it, and
- (4) have a common basis with it.

No consciousness exists apart from its concomitants. Both consciousness and its respective concomitants arise and perish simultaneously. But here are some material qualities that arise and perish simultaneously with the consciousness. In order to exclude them, the third property of having a common object has been attributed. That which possesses these three characteristics must necessarily be endowed with the fourth property-having a common basis.

Fifty-two Types of Mental States

- (1) *Seven types of mental states common to all consciousness*

(Universal - 7):-

1. Contact (phassa);
2. Feeling, sensation (Vedanā);
3. Perception (Saññā);
4. Volition (Cetanā);
5. One-pointedness of mind (Ekaggatā);
6. Faculty of vitality (Jīvitindriya); and
7. Attention (Manasikāra)

These 7 mental states are called universal as they arise together with the consciousness whenever it arises.

(2) *Six types of Particular Mental States*

(Particular - 6):-

1. Initial application (Vitakka);
2. Sustained application (Vicāra);
3. Resolution; decision (Adhimokkha);
4. Effort, endeavour, energy (Viriya);
5. Joy, delightful satisfaction (Pīti); and
6. The wish to do, the desire to act (Chanda).

These 6 mental states are called particular as they are found only in certain classes of consciousness.

Thus these 13 mental states should be understood as Aññasamāna because they may be

the moral or immoral according to the type of common consciousness in which they are found.

(3) *Fourteen Types of Unwholesome Mental States*

1. Moha = ignorance; delusion;
2. Ahīrika = shamelessness;
3. Anottappa = fearlessness;
4. Uddhacca = Restlessness; distraction of mind;
5. Lobha = greed; attachment;
6. Diṭṭhi = misbelief;
7. Māna = conceit;
8. Dosa = anger; hatred;
9. Issā = jealousy;
10. Macchariya = stinginess;
11. Kukkucca = remorse;
12. Thina = sloth;
13. Middha = torpor;
14. Vicikicchā = doubt; scepticism; vacillation; uncertainty.

(4) *Twenty five types of Sobhaṇacetāsika which participate in doing good deeds.*

(a) Nineteen types of Sobhaṇa-sādhāraṇa cetāsika, which participate in doing every good deed.

(Beautiful 19):

1. Saddhā = conviction; confidence;
2. Sati = mindfulness;
3. Hīri = moral shame;
4. Ottappa = moral dread;
5. Alobha = absence of attachment;
6. Adosa = absence of anger; loving-kindness;
7. Tatramajjhataṭā = keeping mental state in equanimity;
8. Kāyapassaddhi = tranquility of mental states;
9. Citta passaddhi = tranquility of Consciousness;
10. Kāyalahutā = lightness of mental states;
11. Cittalahutā = lightness of consciousness;
12. Kāya mudutā = softness of mental states;
13. Citta mudutā = softness of consciousness;
14. Kāya Kāmmaññatā = preparedness of mental states;
15. Citta kammaññatā = preparedness of mind;
16. Kāyapāguññatā = adaptability of mental states;

17. Citta pāguṇṇatā = adaptability of consciousness;
18. Kāyujukatā = straightness of mental states; and
19. Cittujukatā = straightness of consciousness.

These nineteen mental states are called wholesome mental states because they arise together with all wholesome consciousnesses.

(b) Three Abstinenes

1. Sammāvācā (Right Speech) = abstaining from the four kinds of evil speech;
2. Sammākammanta (Right Action) = abstaining from the three kinds of evil action; and
3. Sammā-ājīva (Right livelihood) = abstaining from wrong livelihood.

These three mental states are called "Abstinenes" because they arise together with the consciousness refraining from evil deeds.

(c) Two Illimitables

1. Karuṇā = compassion; and
2. Muditā = sympathetic joy

These two mental states are called illimitables (Appamaññācetasika) because the object of these two mental states is the infinite number of beings. They are also called Brahmavihāra, sublime modes of living. Of course, there are four modes of sublime living; Mettā, Karuṇā, Muditā, and Uppekkhā. Mettā is represented by Adosa and Uppekkhā is represented by Tatrāmajjhataṭā. Hence, only two are mentioned here.

(d) Wisdom

Paññindriya = faculty of wisdom

Nineteen beautifuls, three abstenes, two illimitables and wisdom, are called wholesome mental states because they arise together with only wholesome consciousness.

Summary

There are altogether fifty two types of mental states--common thirteen, unwholesome fourteen and wholesome twenty five.

Important Mental States (cetasikas)

Cetanā

Cetanā is the stimulating force (urging, exhortation) to do evil or good deeds. If one's cetanā or volition is strong, his consciousness is serious in doing anything. If one's cetanā or volition force is weak, his consciousness is mild in doing anything.

Volition is also called "Kamma" because it is the main source of every action whether good or bad.

Viriya

Viriya means effort, endeavour or energy. To do every action diligently without hesitation, is the nature of Viriya. Great and grand deeds cannot be accomplished without Viriya.

Chanda

Chanda is the desire to do something good or bad. Great and grand tasks cannot be introduced without chanda.

Moha

Moha means ignorance or delusion or bewilderment, not knowing something as they truly are. It clouds the true nature of an object. When one is overwhelmed by moha, one cannot discriminate right from wrong. He may think what is right to be wrong and what is wrong to be right. The characteristic of concealing the true nature of mind and matter and the four noble truths is the nature of moha.

Ahīrika

Ahīrika is shamelessness to do evil deeds. The persons having this nature think that "to do

evil deeds" is the highest prestige for them.

Anottappa

Anottappa means fearlessness to do evil deeds. To do evil deeds regardless of their evil consequences is the nature of Anottappa.

Lobha

Lobha means attachment to the enjoyment of sensual pleasure. There is an old Myanmar saying, "The more one gets, the more one needs." The desire to attain Nibbāna, the desire to attain the Path-consciousness, the desire to be qualified in knowledge, the desire to give charity to the poor are not lobha, but they are chanda.

Māyā (deceit)

Māyā means concealing one's offences by deceiving others. Māyā is a kind of Lobha.

Sātheya (pretension)

Sātheya means the pretension as if one were a man having great and grand prestige or he were a gentle one, a wise one, a noble one. Also sātheya is a kind of lobha.

Diṭṭhi (Micchā diṭṭhi) wrong view

Diṭṭhi means not believing in Kamma and its result by viewing thus: good results do not arise although good deeds are done, evil results do not arise although the evil deeds are done.

Dosa

Dosa means hatred or anger. Despair, unhappiness, fear, ill-will and peevishness describe the nature of *dosa*.

Issā

Issā means jealousy or envy. It has the characteristic of envying others' success and prosperity.

Macchariya

Macchariya means stinginess, meanness, niggardliness. Being unwilling to let others have the same prosperity or the same dignity or the same authority that one possesses.

Saddhā

Saddhā means well established conviction in the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha and Kamma and its results. It can purify the mind from its stains.

Sati

Sati means mindfulness, or heedfulness, or awareness of arising and passing away of mind and matter.

Hīri, Ottappa

Hīri means moral shame to do evil. *Ottappa* means moral dread to do evil. These two are called the two guardian principles of the world. Unless these two dhamma exist in the world, there will prevail no morality of conduct.

Alobha

Alobha means absence of greed, or detachment. Giving one's properties to others is the nature of *Alobha*.

Adosa

Adosa means the absence of hatred. It is loving-kindness, forbearance or forgiveness. Wishing for the well-beings of others is the nature of *Adosa*.

Amoha

Amoha means absence of ignorance, delusion, bewilderment. Capability of realizing right as right and wrong as wrong is the nature of *Amoha*.

3. *Twenty-eight kinds of Matter*

There are twenty-eight kinds of matter. Of these, four are essential elements known as **Mahā bhūta-rūpa** and the rest are dependent elements known as **Upādā rūpa**.

1. *Four Essential Elements (Mahābhūta-rūpa)*

They are:-

Pathavī = the element of extension with the characteristics of hardness and softness;

Āpo = the element of cohesion with characteristics of fluidity and cohesiveness;

Tejo = the element of kinetic energy with the characteristics of heat and cold;

Vāyo = the element of motion with the characteristics of pushing and supporting.

2. *Five Sensitive Elements (Pasāda Rūpa)*

1. Cakkhupasāda = the sensitive element in the eye;

2. Sotapasāda = the sensitive element in the ear;

3. Ghānapasāda = the sensitive element in the nose;

4. Jivhāpasāda = the sensitive element in the tongue; and

5. Kāyapasāda = the sensitive element in the body.

3. *Seven Sense Elements*

1. Rūpāramana = visible element;

2. Saddhāramana = audible elements;

3. Gandhāramana = odorous element;

4. Rassāramana = taste element;

5. phoṭhabbāramana = tangible element.
(pathavī, tejo, vāyo)

4. *Two Sex Elements (Bhāva rūpa)*

1. Feminine sex element (Itthibhāva rūpa) and

2. Masculine sex element (Pumbhāva rūpa).

5. *One Heart Element (Hadaya rūpa)*

1. Heart element (hadaya - vatthu).

6. *Physical Vital Element (Jivita-rūpa)*

Physical vital element (jivitarūpa)

7. Nutritious Element (*Āhāra-rūpa*)

Nutritious element (*Kabalikāra-āhāra*)

1. Limiting Element or Space Element (*Pariccheda rūpa; Ākāsadhātu*)

2. Two Animating Elements (*Viññātti rūpa*)

1. Bodily animating element (*Kāyā-viññatti*),
2. verbally-animating element (*vacī-viññatti*)

3. Five Mutable Elements (*Vikārarūpa*)

1. The element of lightness = *lahutā*,
 2. The element of softness = *mudutā*, and
 3. The element of adaptability = *kammaññatā*
- 4,5. Two animating elements make up the remaining two mutable elements.

4. Four Characteristic Elements

These four elements are:-

- (1) Initial arising element (*Upacayarūpa*),
- (2) Continuous arising element (*Santati*),
- (3) Decaying element (*Jaratārūpa*),
- (4) Dissolving element (*Aniccatārūpa*).

Conditioned Elements (*Nippanna rūpā*)

The four essential elements, the five sensitive elements, the seven sense elements (to be counted as four essential elements), the two sex elements, the heart element, the physical vital element and the nutritious element are called conditioned elements (*Nippannarūpa*), because these eighteen elements are conditioned by *Kamma* (volitional action), *Citta* (consciousness), *Utu* (heat) and *Āhāra* (nutriment).

Unconditioned Elements (*Anipphanna rūpa*)

The limiting element, the five mutable elements and the four characteristic elements are called unconditioned elements (*Anipphannarūpa*), because these ten elements are not conditioned by *Kamma* (volitional action), *Citta* (consciousness), *Utu* (heat) and *Āhāra* (nutriment).

Five Aggregates of Existence (*Five Khandha*.)

An individual is made up of consciousness (*Citta*), mental states (*Cetasikas*) and matter (*Rūpa*). The combination of consciousness and mental states is called mind (*nāma*), because they are inclined towards the senses as they can be aware of the senses.

Again mind and matter can be divided into five aggregates of existence. They are:-

- (1) Physical aggregate = the combination (Rupakkhandhā) of 28 kinds of matter;
- (2) The aggregate of sensation = the combination (Vedanakkhandhā) of all sensations;
- (3) The aggregate of perception = the combination (Saññākkhandhā) of all perceptions;
- (4) The aggregate of volitional activities = the combination (Saṅkhārakkhandhā) of all mental states except sensation and perception; and
- (5) The aggregate of consciousness = the combination (Viññānakkhandhā) of all consciousness.

4. Extinction of Craving (Nibbāna)

Nibbāna is the fourth ultimate reality that really exists in nature. It is the extinction of craving. This implies that Nibbāna is free from all defilements.

Since the defilements are the cause of all miseries, all miseries will cease when all defile-

ments are extinguished. So, when all defilements and miseries cease to exist, there will be ever lasting perfect peace, which is Nibbāna. To realize Nibbāna is the aim of all Buddhists.

CHAPTER (8)

Moral Culture

Every country or every race has its own moral culture which is the characteristic of that country or that race. As for Myanmar, it has its own culture which is based on Buddhism. This chapter is concerned with Buddhist moral manners, namely: courtesy (Polite manners), gentleness in speech (Verbal politeness) and good thought (Mental politeness)

Polite Manners

- (1) When one visits a certain pagoda or a certain monastery, one should wear proper dress. One must take off one's hat, umbrella and any footwear before one enters the precinct of a pagoda or a monastery.
- (2) One should not behave improperly in the precinct of a pagoda or a monastery or in the presence of an image of the Buddha or a monk.
- (3) When one takes a seat near Buddhist monks or the virtuous or the aged, one must take a suitable place free from six faults of location:

- being too far, being too near, being at the front, being at the back, being at a high place and being against the wind.
- (4) When one passes by Buddhist monks, the virtuous or the aged or passes through an audience, one should go slowly slightly bending forward and bowing one's head.
 - (5) When one gives something to someone or takes something from someone, one should give or take with one's two hands even though it may be a small thing.
 - (6) When one pays homage to Buddhist monks, parents or teachers, one should touch the floor or the ground with one's two knees, two hands and forehead.
 - (7) When one comes across Buddhist monks on the way, one should stand aside and pay obeisance to them taking off one's hat, umbrella, footwear and putting two palms together on the forehead.
 - (8) When one goes away from the presence of Buddhist monks, teachers, parents and the aged, one should take four or five steps backward with joined-palms and turn to one's desired direction.
 - (9) When one comes across Buddhist monks, teachers, parents and the aged on a narrow

path, one should stop and give way for them to pass. One should not jostle against them nor overtake them.

- (10) One should generously offer one's seat to Buddhist monks, the aged, the infirm, and nuns while travelling by train or in a bus or in a boat.
- (11) While Buddhist monks, teachers and parents are taking rest or sleeping, one should not disturb them in any way.
- (12) If necessary, one should help Buddhist monks, nuns, the aged and the infirm by carrying their packages on the way.
- (13) When one listens to the Dhamma, one should take off one's hat in honour of the virtues of Dhamma. If one wears Myanmar turban, one should expose one's hair. Even if one listens to the discourse from a tape recorder, one should put it on a high place. One should sit kneeling, joining one's two palms together in the meditation posture.
- (14) One should place the Buddha's image, the Buddha's picture and the Buddhist scriptures on a high and noble place. If one wants to hold them, one should pay homage to them with joined-palms first. One should not put them down on the floor nor take them under one's arms.

- (15) One should not greet Buddhist monks and nuns by shaking their hands nor gesture to them. One should greet them respectfully with joined-palms.
- (16) A woman should not rearrange her garment nor beautify herself before Buddhist monks or the virtuous or the aged.
- (17) A woman should not go to Buddhist monks and the aged in unsuitable dress which does not conform with tradition.
- (18) A woman should not go to a Buddhist monk while he is in his private room. If it is necessary to go to a monk, she should take a man along with her.
- (19) A woman should not pay homage to a Buddhist monk by spreading her hair on the ground nor by touching the monk's feet with her hand.
- (20) When one meets others on the way, one should greet them either with joined palms or with a bow or with a smile respectfully.
- (21) When one wants to approach the bhikkhus, teachers, parents and the aged, one should make one's body clean in advance.
- (22) One should not spit nor blow the nose carelessly at public places such as the pagoda platform, the pre-cinct of the monastery, the

hospital, the school and so on.

- (23) One should not cough nor sneeze turning to someone. If one wants to do so, one should go out of the audience or clear it by blowing into a handkerchief. If one wants to fart, one should go away from the audience.
- (24) While someone is having a meal, one should not hawk nor blow his nose in a place where the former can hear or see.

Verbal Politeness

- (1) The Buddha should be addressed respectfully by the term: "The supreme Buddha" or "The Enlightened One"; not by the term "Gotama" (or) "Buddha."
- (2) One should not say that a shrine, an image of the Buddha, a Buddhist monk or a nun is "beautiful" or "pretty." One should use the words 'Sublime', 'glorious' or "Venerable" instead.
- (3) If one is to say words of approval or denial while speaking with Buddhist monks and novices, one should reply respectfully and humbly: 'Certainly, Venerable Sir', "No, Venerable Sir.", and with parents and teachers: "Yes Sir" (or) "No Sir."

(4) If one wants to address an elderly Buddhist monk or a learned one, one should address him as "Sayadaw" or "Ashinpay." For a young Buddhist monk and a novice, one uses the term "Koyin."

- (5) Moreover, an elderly Buddhist monk or a learned one should not be addressed by his name. He should be addressed by his birth-place or residential place such as "Venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw", "Venerable Bago Sayadaw", and so on.
- (6) A Buddhist monk or a novice would address an old man or a youth as "Dagāgyi or Dagālay"; and an old woman or a young woman as "Dagāmagyi" or "Dagāmalay."

Mental Politeness

- (1) One should not wish to get others' properties in an improper way.
- (2) One should not breed a malicious mind to destroy others' properties and virtues.
- (3) When one comes across someone, old or young, one should cultivate one's (mettā) loving-kindness towards them thus: "May he be well and happy."

- (4) Believing the law of Kamma and its results, one should cultivate a sympathetic mind towards all.
- (5) One should not be jealous of superior ones, nor should one humiliate inferior ones, nor should one compete with companions of the same status.

The Civilized Terms Concerning Alms-food

- (1) When Buddhist monks and novices go around for alms-food, it should be called "collecting alms-food." If one cannot offer alms-food, one should apologise, "Would you mind going ahead?"
- (2) If one wants to offer some food and drink to a Buddhist monk or a novice, one should give them to him with two hands respectfully.

When one behaves according to the above rules, one will obtain merit and auspiciousness. One will be well-known as a civilized one in this existence. Moreover, one will enjoy bliss, happiness and pleasure in future existences.

The people of Myanmar, abiding by the Buddhist Teachings, are polite in behaviour, speech and thought. They can live peacefully through many generations.

CHAPTER (9)

The Pāli Alphabet

In Myanmar and Roman Characters

8-Vowels

a	ā	i	ī	u	ū	e	o
အ	အာ	ဇ	ဇိ	ဉ	ဉီ	ဧ	ဧဝ

Vowel Final Form

-	-ာ	-ိ	ိ	ီ	ု	ူ	ေ	ော	ေိ
---	----	----	---	---	---	---	---	----	----

33 Consonants

25 Group Letters

	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
<i>Ka-group</i>	k	kh	g	gh	ñ
	က	ခ	ဂ	ဂှ	ဇ
<i>Ca-group</i>	c	ch	j	jh	ñ
	စ	ဆ	ဇ	ဇှ	ဉ
<i>Ta-group</i>	t	th	d	dh	ñ
	တ	ထ	ဒ	ဒှ	ဏ

	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Ta-group	t	th	d	dh	n
	တ	ထ	ဒ	ဓ	န
Pa-group	p	ph	b	bh	m
	ပ	ဖ	ဗ	ဗ	မ

8 Non-group Letters

Non-group	y	r	l	v	s
	ယ	ရ	လ	ဝ	ဆ
		ဟ	ဣ	မ္	
		ဗ	ဧ	အံ	

4 Consonant Clusters

Some consonant clusters can be formed by putting four consonants, y=ယ, r=ရ, v=ဝ and h=ဟ, after some consonants as follows:

ky	khy	gy	py	phy	by	my	ty	dy
ကျ	ကျှ	ဂျ	ပျ	ဖျ	ဗျ	မျ	တျ	သျ
kr	chr	gr	pr	dr	br	mr	tr	dr
ကြ	ကျှ	ဂြ	ပြ	ဌ	ဗြ	မြ	တြ	သြ
kv	khv	tv	dv					
ကျ	ကျှ	တု	ဒု					
nh	nh	nh	mh	lh	yh	vh		
ဣ	ဣ	ဣ	ဣ	ဣ	ဣ	ဣ		

Only one Final Consonant (m)

In Pāli language, there is only one final consonant(m) which follows three short vowels:

am = အံ	im = အိ	um = အု
မင်္ဂလာ	တာဝတိံသ	ဒါတုံ
maṅgala	Tāvātimsa	dātum

Eleven Syllables

A consonant or consonant-cluster can be formed into eleven syllables as follows:-

ka	kā	ki	kī	ku	kū
က	ကာ	ကိ	ကီ	ကု	ကူ
ke	ko	kam	kim	kum	
ကေ	ကော	ကံ	ကိံ	ကုံ	
kha	khā	khi	khī	khu	khū
ခ	ခါ	ခိ	ခီ	ခု	ခု
khe	kho	kham	khim	khum	
ခေ	ခေါ	ခံ	ခိံ	ခုံ	
la	lā	li	lī	lu	lū
လ	လာ	လိ	လီ	လု	လူ
le	lo	lam	lim	lum	
လေ	လော	လံ	လိံ	လုံ	

kya	kyā	khi	kyī	kyu	kyū	kye
ကျ	ကျာ	ကျိ	ကျီ	ကျု	ကျူ	ကျေ
kyo	kyam̄	kyim̄	kyum̄			
ကျော	ကျံ	ကျိမ်	ကျမ်			
kra	krā	kri	krī	kru	krū	
ကြ	ကြာ	ကြိ	ကြီ	ကြု	ကြူ	
kre	kro	kram̄	krim̄	krum̄		
ကြော	ကြံ	ကြိမ်	ကြိမ်	ကြမ်		
kva	kvā	kvi	kvī			
ကွ	ကွာ	ကွိ	ကွီ			
kve	---	kvam̄	kvim̄	kvum̄		
ကွော		ကွံ	ကွိမ်	ကွမ်		
hma	hmā	hmi	hmī	hmu	hmū	hme
မှ	မှာ	မှိ	မှီ	မှု	မှူ	မှေ
hmo	hman̄	hmim̄	hmum̄			
မှော	မှံ	မှိမ်	မှိမ်			

Conjunct-Consonants

In the poly-syllabic words, there may be two consonants between two vowels. The two consonants are called Conjunct-Consonants or Double Consonants. Conjunct-Consonants are generally written one over another in Myanmar script and one after another in Romanised Pāli --

က = kk , ကွ = kkh , ဂ = gg .
 ဂ္ဂ = ggh . ----- , ယယဗ္ဗ = mm etc

How to Pair two Consonants

In order to pair the two consonants twenty five group-Consonants are divided into five series: Ka-series, ca-series, ṭa-series, ta-series, and pa-series. Each series must be subdivided into three groups: voiceless letters (Aghosa Akkharas), voiced - letters (Ghosa Akkharas) and Nasal-letters (Nāsika Akkharas). In each series, the first and the second letters are voiceless the third and the fourth letters are voiced and the fifth letters are nasal.

In voiceless and voiced groups, the first and the third letters are Non-aspirate letters (Sithila Akkharas) and the second and the fourth letters are Aspirate letters (Dhanita Akkharas).

The first and the third Non-aspirate letters and the fifth nasal letters can be paired between themselves as conjunct-consonants. The first and the third Non-aspirate letters can be paired to the second and the fourth Aspirate letters to form conjunct-consonants. The fifth letters can be paired to the former four letters in its series.

ka-vagga cakka yakkha vagga byaggha ---

ကော ယက္ခ ဝဂ္ဂ ဗျတ္တ

caṅkama kankhā maṅgalā saṅgha ---

ဇာဏမ ကင်္ခါ မင်္ဂလာ သမ္ဗ

ca-vaggasacca maccha majja majjhima Paññā

သစ္စ မစ္ဆ မဇ္ဇ မဇ္ဈိမ ပညာ

Pañca puñcha vañña vañña

ပဉ္စ ပုဉ္စ ဝဉ္ဇာ ဝဉ္ဇာ

ta-vagga vaṭṭa ditṭha adda vuddha āciṅṅa

ဝဋ္ဌ ဒိဋ္ဌ အဋ္ဌ ဝုဋ္ဌ အာဇိဋ္ဌ

kaṅṅa kaṅṅa khaṅṅa -----

ကကော ကတ္တ ခတ္တ -----

ta-vagga citta hattha sadda saddhā anna

စိတ္တ တတ္ထ သဒ္ဓ သဒ္ဓါ အန

danṭa gantha vandana khandha

ဒန္တ ဂန္ထ ဝန္ဓနာ ဝန္ဓ

Pa.vagga sippa puppha dibba

သိပ္ပ ပုပ္ဖ ဒိဋ္ဌ

dubbhikkha kamma

ဒုဗ္ဗက္ခ ကမ္မ

sampanna samphapphalasa

သမ္ပန္န သမ္ပပ္ပလာပ

udumbara kumbhaṅṅa

ဥဒုမ္မရာ ကုမ္ဘဏ

Conjunct-Consonant in Non-group-letters

Four Non-group letters - y, l, s and h can be paired to form conjunct-consonants.

e.g. uyyāna dullabha phassa mayha

ဥယျာန ဒုလ္လာဘ ဖဿ မယ

dalha bahvābadha

ဒဠ ဝဟ္မာဘဓ

Note: The above mentioned four consonat clusters may be considered as Conjunct-Consonants though they disobey the conjunct-consonant rules in pairing letters.

There are some irregular conjunct - consonants.

eg. pañha, tañhā, nhāna, tumha

ပဉ္စ တဏှာ နှာန တမ္ပ

brahma yasmā

ဗြဟ္မာ ယဿာ

Namo tassa Bhagavato Arahato
Sammāsambudhassa

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Conjunct-Consonant Reading

In conjunct consonants, the first consonant must be considered as final consonant. But in Pāli language the final consonants are mute i.e. they are not pronounced as in English and German. The final consonants change the sounds of the front vowels.

In order to make correct pronunciation the final Consonants must be divided into two classes, - namely Nasal finals and Stop finals. ṅ, ñ, ṇ, ṅ, m, y, l, should be noted as Nasal - finals and the rest are considered as stop-finals. The Nasal-finals and the stop-finals changed the front vowels into long sounds and stop-sounds respectively:

(1) The final consonants change the final vowel 'a', into '- at' and '- an.'

ဓက္က ယက္ခ မဂ္ဂ အနဂ္ဂ အင်္ဂ အယျက
sakka yakkha magga anaggaṅga anga ayyaka
သစ္စ ဂစ္ဆမိ မဇ္ဇိ မဇ္ဈိမ ပညာ သလ္လာပ
sacca gacchāmi majja majjhima paññā sallāpa

(2)The final consonants change the front vowel.

'i -' into '-it' and '-in'

ဒိဋ္ဌ ဒိဋ္ဌာ တိဋ္ဌ တိဋ္ဌာ တိဋ္ဌာ မိဒ္ဓ
diṭṭha khiddhā tiṇṇa citta titttha midda

ဒိဋ္ဌာ ဒိဋ္ဌာနိက
dinna niyyānika

(3)The final consonants change the front vowel

'u' into '-ut' and '-un.'

သုပ္ပ ပုပ္ပ ဒုပ္ပ ဒုပ္ပိက္ခ
suppa puppha dubbaca dubbhikkha
ကုမ္ဘ ဥယျာန ဒုလ္လာဘ
kumbha ayyāna dullabha

Note

There are no finals which can change the vowel (a) into -et, -in sound in Roman script. So all ka-group finals are read -at, -an in Roman script.

ဦးသဇ္ဇန ဦးပညာဇောတ
U sajjana U Paññājota

(2)the ca-group finals change the front vowel (a) into '-it', '-in' sound in Myanmar script and '-at', '-an' sound in Roman script

သစ္စာ မစ္စ အဇ္ဇ လဇ္ဇိ မဇ္ဈိမ သညာ
saccā maccha ajja lajjī majjhima saññā



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