

# THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

*The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom*

## Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

The Canon of Discourses - Commentaries (Sutta  
Piṭaka - Aṭṭhakathā)

1. The Collection of the Long Discourses - Commentaries  
(1. Dīgha Nikāya - Aṭṭhakathā)
2. Commentary on the Great Chapter (2. Mahāvaggaṭṭhakathā)
3. Commentary on the Great Discourse on the Final Nibbāna  
(3. Mahāparinibbānasuttavaṇṇanā)

[DN 16, PTS 2.72-2.168]



PaliVerse

# 1. The Collection of the Long Discourses - Commentaries

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## 2. Commentary on the Great Chapter

### 3. Explanation of the Great Discourse on the Final Nibbāna

**131.** "Thus have I heard" - this is the Discourse on the Great Final Nibbāna. Herein, this is the progressive word-by-word explanation - "On the Vulture's Peak" - vultures dwelt on its peaks, or its peak resembles a vulture, thus it is the Vulture's Peak; on that Vulture's Peak. "Wished to march against" means wishing to go for the purpose of vanquishing. "The Vajjis" means the Vajji kings. "So mighty" means endowed with such great royal power; by this he spoke of their state of unity. "So powerful" means endowed with such great majesty; by this he spoke of their accomplished training in elephant craft and other skills, with reference to which it was said - "These Licchavi youths are indeed trained, these Licchavi youths are indeed well-trained, inasmuch as they will shoot an arrow through a fine keyhole, shaft after shaft, without missing." "I shall cut off" means I shall destroy. "I shall destroy" means I shall annihilate, I shall cause to disappear. "Calamity and disaster" - herein, "not prosperity" is calamity; this is the name for decline. That which scatters and disperses welfare and happiness is disaster; this is the name for loss of relatives and so on. "I shall bring upon" means I shall cause to reach.

Thus, it is said, he speaks only this talk of war while standing, sitting, and so on, and commands the army thus: "Be prepared to march." Why? It is said that in dependence on a certain port village on the Ganges, for half a yojana was Ajātasattu's command, and for half a yojana was the Licchavis'. But here the meaning is that this was the place where their commands held sway. And there too, from the foot of the mountain, very costly goods come down. Having heard that - While Ajātasattu was still making arrangements saying "I shall go today, I shall go tomorrow," the Licchavi kings, united and joyful, having gone ahead first, take everything. Ajātasattu, having come afterwards, having known that occurrence, goes away angered. They do the same thing the following year too. Then he, having become strongly resentful, at that time did thus.

Then he thought - "War with a group is indeed weighty; there is not even a single wasted blow; but one who acts having consulted with a single wise person is without fault; and there is no wise person equal to the Teacher; and the Teacher dwells in a neighbouring monastery not far away; come, let me send someone and ask. If there will be any benefit in my going, the Teacher will remain silent; but if there is no benefit, he will say 'What is the purpose of the king going there?'" He sent the brahmin Vassakāra. The brahmin, having gone, reported this matter to the Blessed One. Therefore it was said - "Then the king, etc. I shall bring upon them."

### Explanation of the Conditions Preventing the Decline of Kings

**134.** "Fanning the Blessed One" means the Elder, standing at the head of the duty, fans the Blessed One; but for the Blessed One there is neither cold nor heat. The

Blessed One, having heard the brahmin's words, without having consulted with him, wishing to consult with the Elder, spoke beginning with "What have you heard, Ānanda." "Assemble frequently" means whether assembling three times a day or assembling now and then, it is indeed assembling frequently. "Have frequent assemblies" means those who do not come to a stop thinking "We assembled yesterday too, we assembled the day before too, for what purpose again have we assembled today?" are indeed called those who have frequent assemblies. "As long as" means for however long a time. "Only growth is to be expected for the Vajjis, Ānanda, not decline" - for those who do not assemble frequently do not hear messages that have come from the various directions, and therefore - they do not know "such and such a village boundary or market town boundary is in turmoil, at such and such a place thieves have arisen," and the thieves too, having known "the kings are heedless," striking at villages, market towns, and so on, destroy the country. Thus there is decline for the kings. But those who assemble frequently hear this and that news, and thereupon, having sent forces, they crush the enemies, and the thieves too - having broken apart, flee, thinking "The kings are diligent; it is not possible for us to roam about in bands." Thus there is growth for the kings. Therefore it was said - "Only growth is to be expected for the Vajjis, Ānanda, not decline." Therein, "to be expected" means to be desired; the meaning is that it should be seen thus: "It will certainly be."

In the passage beginning with "in unity," when the assembly drum has been sounded - those who make excuses saying "Today I have a task, I have a ceremony" do not assemble in unity. But those who, just upon hearing the sound of the drum, even while eating, even while adorning themselves, even while putting on garments, whether half-eaten, or half-adorned, or still putting on a garment, come to assemble - they assemble in unity. But those who, having assembled, having deliberated, having consulted, having done what was to be done, do not rise together as one - they do not rise in unity. For when they rise thus, those who leave first think thus - "We heard only the external discussion; now the discussion for judgment will take place." But those who rise together as one rise in unity. Furthermore - having heard "In such and such places the village boundaries or market town boundaries are in turmoil, thieves have arisen" - when it is said "Who will go and carry out this crushing of the enemies?" - those who go saying "I first, I first" also rise in unity. But when one's enterprise is sinking, the remaining kings, sending their sons and brothers and supporting his enterprise, and without saying to a visiting king "Let him go to so-and-so's house, let him go to so-and-so's house" but all treating him kindly together, and when for one a ceremony or an illness or any other such happiness or suffering has arisen, all going there in the spirit of friendship - they perform their Vajji duties in unity.

In the passage beginning with "what has not been established," those who cause to be collected a toll or a tax or a fine not previously made are those who establish what has not been established. But those who do not cause to be collected what has come down by ancient tradition are those who abolish what has been established. Those who, having seized one shown as "a thief," without investigating, instruct with cutting and breaking punishments, do not proceed having undertaken the ancient Vajji principles. When they establish what has not been established, people oppressed by new tolls and the like - having entered the borderland thinking "We are exceedingly

troubled; who will dwell in their realm?" and having become thieves or allies of thieves, strike at the country. When they abolish what has been established, not collecting the tolls and the like that have come down by tradition, the treasury declines. Thereupon the elephants, horses, army, harem, and the rest, not receiving their regular allowance, decline in strength and power. They are neither capable of war nor capable of service. When they do not proceed having undertaken the ancient Vajji principles, the people in their realm - having become angry thinking "They made our son, father, and brother, who was not a thief at all, into a thief, and cut and broke him," having entered the borderland and having become thieves or allies of thieves, strike at the country. Thus there is decline for the kings. But when they establish what has been established, people, glad and delighted thinking "The kings are doing only what has come down by tradition," accomplish their activities such as farming and trading. When they do not abolish what has been established, collecting the tolls and the like that have come down by tradition, the treasury grows. Thereupon the elephants, horses, army, harem, and the rest, receiving their regular allowance, accomplished in strength and power, are both capable of war and capable of service.

"The ancient Vajji principle": here, formerly, it is said, the Vajji kings, when someone was brought before them accused as "this is a thief," without saying "seize him, he is a thief," would hand him over to the ministers of judgment. They, having investigated, if he is not a thief, release him. If a thief, without themselves saying anything, they hand him over to the judges. They too, if not a thief, release him. If a thief, they hand him over to the bearers of the law texts. They too, having investigated, if not a thief, release him. If a thief, they hand him over to the eight-clan elders. They too, having done likewise, hand him to the general; the general to the viceroy; the viceroy to the king; the king, having investigated, if not a thief, releases him. But if he is a thief, he has the book of tradition read out. Therein - "By whomever such and such a deed was done, for him such and such is the punishment" - thus it is written. The king, having compared his deed with that, imposes a befitting punishment. Thus, for those who proceed having undertaken this ancient Vajji principle, people do not grumble, thinking "The kings act according to the ancient tradition; there is no fault in them, the fault is ours alone," and being diligent, they carry out their activities. Thus there is growth for the kings. Therefore it was said - "Only growth is to be expected for the Vajjis, Ānanda, not decline."

"Honour": whatever honour they show to them, they do it well indeed. "Respect": they act having established an attitude of respect. "Revere": they hold them dear with reverence. "Venerate": they show humbleness. "Think them worth listening to": going to attend upon them two or three times a day, they think their words worth hearing and worth believing. Therein, those who do not show honour and so on to the elder kings, and do not go to attend upon them for the purpose of exhortation, they, abandoned by them, not being admonished, devoted to amusement, decline from the kingship. But those who proceed in that way, to them the elder kings - "This should be done, this should not be done" - thus they explain the ancient tradition. Even when a battle is reached - "Thus one should advance, thus one should withdraw" - they show the strategy. They, being admonished by them, proceeding according to the exhortation, are able to maintain the royal tradition. Therefore it was said - "Only growth is to be expected for the Vajjis, Ānanda, not decline."

"Women of good families": housewives of good families. "Girls of good families": their unmarried daughters. "Forcibly abduct": here, whether "okkassā" or "pasayhā," this is a name for the manner of using force. Some also read "ukkassā." Therein, "okkassā" means having dragged away, having pulled. "Pasayhā" means having overpowered, having overwhelmed - this is the meaning of the word. For when they act thus, people in the realm - "Even the mothers of our sons in our homes, even the daughters raised by wiping away spittle and mucus and so on from their mouths - these kings take them by force and make them dwell in their own houses" - thus angered, entering the borderlands, becoming thieves or allies of thieves, they attack the country. But when they do not act thus, people in the realm, living at ease, carrying out their own activities, increase the royal treasury. Thus here the conditions for growth and decline should be understood.

"The Vajji shrines of the Vajjis" means the demon shrines that received the name "shrines" in the sense of being respected in the Vajji country of the Vajji kings. "Inner" means situated within the city. "Outer" means situated outside the city. "Formerly given" means given before. "Formerly made" means made before. "Will not neglect" means they will carry on without neglecting, just as it has been going on. For when they neglect the righteous offerings, the deities do not arrange protection well; even though unable to generate unarisen suffering, they increase arisen diseases such as consumption, headaches, and so on; and when battle is reached, they are not allies. But for those who do not neglect, they arrange protection well; even though unable to produce unarisen happiness, they destroy arisen diseases such as consumption, headaches, and so on; and at the head of the battlefield they are allies. Thus here growth and decline should be understood.

"Righteous protection, shelter, and guard" - here, protection itself is shelter in the sense of obstruction, so that what is undesired does not come about. Guard is in the sense of safeguarding, so that what is desired does not perish. Therein, surrounding those gone forth with an army and guarding them is not called righteous protection, shelter, and guard. But when they do not cut trees in the grove near the monastery, hunters do not carry out killing, and they do not catch fish in the ponds - such conduct is called righteous protection, shelter, and guard. "So that those who have not come" - by this, he asks about the course of consciousness, meaning their continuity of consciousness was thus disposed.

Therein, those who do not wish for the coming of Worthy Ones who have not come are faithless and without confidence. And when those gone forth have arrived, they do not go out to meet them, having gone they do not visit them, they do not offer friendly welcome, they do not ask questions, they do not listen to the Teaching, they do not give gifts, they do not listen to the thanksgiving, and they do not arrange a dwelling place. Then disrepute arises about them - "Such and such a king is faithless, without confidence; when those gone forth have arrived, he does not go out to meet them, etc. he does not arrange a dwelling place." Having heard that, those gone forth do not go by the gate of his city, and even if going, they do not enter the city. Thus there is indeed non-coming of Worthy Ones who have not come. Even for those who have come, when there is no comfortable dwelling, even those who came not knowing - "We came having thought 'We shall dwell here,' but with this manner of these kings, who would dwell here?" - having departed, they go away. Thus, when

those who have not come do not come, and those who have come dwell in discomfort, that region becomes a non-residence for those gone forth. From that there is no protection by deities; when there is no protection by deities, non-human spirits gain opportunity. Non-human spirits, being abundant, produce unarisen disease; and there is no coming of merit based on seeing, asking questions of, and so on, the virtuous ones. But conversely, there is the arising of the bright side, which is the opposite of the aforesaid dark side. Thus here growth and decline should be understood.

**135.** "Ekamidāhan" - the Blessed One said this for the purpose of making known the fact that he had previously taught this group of seven for the Vajjis. Therein, "in the Sārandada shrine" means in the monastery so named. When a Buddha had not yet arisen, it is said, there was a shrine there that was the dwelling place of the demon Sārandada. Then here they had a monastery built for the Blessed One, and because it was built at the Sārandada shrine, it came to be reckoned as "the Sārandada shrine" itself.

"Cannot be overcome" means cannot be done, cannot be taken - this is the meaning. "Yadidaṃ" is merely a particle. "Yuddhassa" is the genitive case used in the instrumental sense; the meaning is that they cannot be taken by face-to-face war. "Except by persuasion" means setting aside persuasion. Persuasion means - "Enough of contention, let us now be united" - sending elephants, horses, chariots, gold, silver, and so on, and thereby winning them over. For thus, having won them over, it is possible to take them solely through trust - this is the meaning. "Except by breaking their alliance" means setting aside the breaking of their alliance. By this he shows that by creating mutual dissension too it is possible to take them. This the brahmin said having obtained a method from the Blessed One's talk.

But did the Blessed One not know that the brahmin would obtain a method from this talk? Yes, he knew. Knowing, why did he speak? Out of compassion. For thus it occurred to him - "Even without my speaking, having gone within a few days he will take them all; but having spoken, while breaking their unity, he will take them in three years. Even that much life is better, for while living that long they will make merit that serves as their support."

"Having delighted in" means having delighted in with the mind. "Having given thanks" means having given thanks by speech, saying "How well spoken is this by the venerable Gotama." "Departed" means he went to the presence of the king. Thereupon the king - asked him "What, teacher, did the Blessed One say?" He said "According to the word of the ascetic Gotama, the Vajjis cannot be taken by anyone; however, by persuasion or by breaking their alliance it is possible." Thereupon the king - asked "By persuasion our elephants, horses, and so on will perish; I shall take them by dissension alone. What shall we do?" "If so, great king, you should raise a discussion in the assembly concerning the Vajjis. Then I - having said 'What have you to do with them, great king? Let these kings live by their own possessions, doing farming, trading, and so on,' shall depart. Then you - should say 'Why indeed does this brahmin obstruct the discussion that has arisen concerning the Vajjis?' And during the daytime I shall send them a present; having had that too seized, you too, having laid blame upon me, without doing imprisonment, beating, and so on, merely having me shaven-headed, have me expelled from the city. Then I - shall say 'The



wall and the moat in your city were built by me; I know the weak places and the shallow and deep places; before long now I shall set things straight.' Having heard that, you - should say 'Let him go.'"The king did everything.

The Licchavis, having heard of his departure -said "The brahmin is fraudulent; do not allow him to cross the Ganges." Therein, by some - when it was said "Because he spoke referring to us, it seems, he was thus treated," they said "If so, fellow, let him come." He, having gone and having seen the Licchavis, when asked "For what purpose have you come?" reported that incident. The Licchavis - having said "It is not proper to impose such a heavy punishment for a trifling matter" - asked "What is your office there?" "I am a minister of judgment." Let that same be your office. He conducts judgment more excellently; the princes learn crafts in his presence.

He, having become one whose qualities were established, one day, having taken one Licchavi aside, having gone to one side - asked "Are the boys ploughing?" Yes, they are ploughing. Having yoked two oxen? Yes, having yoked two oxen. Having said this much, he turned back. Then another, regarding him - having asked "What did the teacher say?" and not believing what was said by him, thinking "This one does not tell me the truth," broke with him. The brahmin, on another day, having led one Licchavi aside - having asked "With what vegetables did you eat?" turned back. Another too, having asked him and not believing, broke with him in the same way. The brahmin, on yet another day, having led one Licchavi aside - asked "You are extremely destitute, it seems?" When asked "Who says thus?" - "The Licchavi named so-and-so." Having led yet another aside - asked "You, it seems, are of a timid nature?" "Who says thus?" "The Licchavi named so-and-so." Thus, telling one what was never said by another, within three years, having divided those kings against one another so that two would not go by the same road, he had the assembly drum beaten. The Licchavis - having said "Let the lords assemble, let the heroes assemble," did not assemble.

The brahmin - sent a message to the king: "Now is the time, let him come quickly." The king, having merely heard, had the war drum beaten and set forth. The Vesālikans, having heard - had the drum beaten: "We shall not allow the king to cross the Ganges." Having heard that too - having said "Let the hero kings go" and so on, they did not assemble. They had the drum beaten: "We shall not allow entry into the city; we shall stand having closed the gates." Not even one assembled. Having entered through the gates just as they were open, having brought calamity and disaster upon all, he departed.

### Explanation of the Conditions Preventing the Decline of Monks

**136.** In the passage beginning with "Then the Blessed One, soon after the departure," "having assembled" means having sent those possessing supernormal power to the distant monasteries and having gone himself to the nearby monasteries - "Assemble, venerable ones; the Blessed One wishes an assembly of you" - thus having assembled them. "Preventing decline" means causing non-decline; the meaning is being the cause of growth. "I will teach the conditions" means as if raising up a thousand moons and a thousand suns, as if lighting a thousand oil lamps inside a four-walled house, having made them well known, I will speak.

Therein, "assemble frequently" - this is exactly the same as what was said regarding the seven conditions for the Vajjis. And here too, those who do not assemble

frequently do not hear messages that have come from the various directions. Thereupon - They do not know such things as "the monastery boundary at such and such a place is in confusion, the Observance and invitation ceremonies have come to a standstill, at such and such a place monks are engaging in medical practice, messenger work, and so on, they are much given to asking and earn their livelihood by giving flowers and so on," and evil monks too, having known "the community of monks is heedless," having gathered in groups, cause the Dispensation to decline. But those who have assembled frequently hear this and that news; thereupon, having sent the community of monks, they straighten out the boundary, they cause the Observance, invitation ceremonies, and so on to proceed, having sent those practising the noble lineage to the place where those of wrong livelihood are abundant, they cause the noble lineage to be taught, they cause refutation of evil monks to be carried out by experts in monastic discipline, and the evil monks too, having broken apart, flee, thinking "The community of monks is diligent; it is not possible for us to roam about in bands." Thus here decline and growth should be understood.

In the passage beginning with "in unity," for the purpose of tending a shrine, or for the purpose of roofing the Bodhi tree house or the Observance hall, or out of the wish to establish an agreement, or out of the wish to give an exhortation - when the drum or the bell has been struck saying "Let the monastic community assemble" - those who make excuses saying "I have robe-making work, my bowl needs to be fired, I have new construction work" do not assemble in unity. But having set aside all that work - those who assemble all at once saying "I earlier, I earlier" assemble in unity. But those who, having assembled, having deliberated, having consulted, having done what was to be done, do not rise together as one, do not rise in unity. For when they rise thus, those who leave first think thus - "We heard only the external discussion; now the discussion for judgment will take place." But those who rise all at once rise in unity. Furthermore, having heard "At such and such a place the monastery boundary is in confusion, the Observance and invitation ceremonies have come to a standstill, at such and such a place evil monks who engage in medical practice and so on are abundant" - when it is said "Who will go and carry out their refutation?" - those who go saying "I first, I first" also rise in unity.

But having seen a visiting monk - without saying "Go to this residential cell, go to that residential cell, who is this one?" all performing the duty, and having seen one with worn-out bowl and robes, seeking a bowl and robes for him by way of the duty of going for alms, and seeking medicine for the sick for one who is ill, and for a helpless sick person - without saying "Go to such and such a residential cell, go to such and such a residential cell," tending him in their own residential cells, and when there is one text that is declining, having supported a wise monk and having him raise up that text - they perform the Community duties in unity.

In the passage beginning with "what has not been established," those who formulate a new unlawful agreement or training rule establish what has not been established, like the monks at Sāvatthī in the case of the old rug. Those who explain the Dispensation contrary to the Teaching and contrary to the monastic discipline abolish what has been established, like the Vesālian Vajjiputtakas when the Blessed One had attained final Nibbāna a hundred years earlier. But those who deliberately transgress



the lesser and minor offences do not proceed having accepted the training rules as they were established, like Assaji and Punabbasuka. But those who do not formulate a new agreement or training rule, who explain the Dispensation according to the Teaching and monastic discipline, who do not abolish the lesser and minor training rules, do not establish what has not been established, do not abolish what has been established, and proceed having accepted the training rules as they were established, like the Venerable Upasena, and like the Venerable Yasa Kākaṇḍakaputta.

"Let the Community hear me, friends. There are training rules of ours that have gone among householders; even householders know, 'This is allowable for you ascetics, disciples of the Sakyan, this is not allowable for you.' If indeed we abolish the lesser and minor training rules, there will be those who will say - 'The training rule was laid down by the ascetic Gotama for disciples like smoke for a time. As long as their Teacher remained, they trained in the training rules. Since their Teacher attained final Nibbāna, now they do not train in the training rules.' If it is the proper time for the Community, the Community should not establish what has not been established, should not abolish what has been established, should proceed having accepted the training rules as they were established" -

And like the Venerable Mahākassapa establishing this text. "Only growth" means only growth in virtues such as morality and so on, not decline.

"Elders" means those who have attained firmness, endowed with the virtues that make one an elder. "They know many nights" - thus "of long standing." "Long is the going forth of these" - thus "long gone forth." "Standing in the place of a father to the Community" - thus "fathers of the Community." "Leaders of the Community" means because of standing in the place of a father, they guide the Community, being forerunners, keeping them engaged in the three trainings.

Those who do not show honour and so on to them, who do not go to attend upon them two or three times for the purpose of exhortation, they too do not give them exhortation, do not speak the traditional talk, do not have them trained in the essential exposition of the Teaching. They, abandoned by them, decline from virtues such as morality and so on, the aggregates of the Teaching, the seven noble treasures, and such qualities. But those who show honour and so on to them, who go to attend upon them, they too give them exhortation. "Thus you should step forward, thus you should step back, thus you should look ahead, thus you should look around, thus you should bend, thus you should stretch, thus you should wear the double robe, bowl and robes" - thus they speak the traditional talk, they have them trained in the essential exposition of the Teaching, they instruct with the thirteen ascetic practices and the ten subjects of talk. They, standing firm in their exhortation, growing in virtues such as morality and so on, reach the goal of asceticism. Thus here decline and growth should be understood.

"The giving of rebirth is rebirth" (punabbhavadānaṃ punabbhavo), "rebirth is its nature" (punabbhavo sīlamassa) - thus "leading to rebirth" (ponobbhavikā); the meaning is "giving rebirth" (punabbhavadāyikā); therefore "of that which leads to rebirth" (ponobbhavikāya). "Do not come under the control" - here, those who, for the sake of the four requisites, follow step by step after their supporters, wandering from

village to village, they are said to come under the control of that craving; the others are said not to come under its control. Therein the decline and growth are obvious indeed.

"In forest lodgings" means beyond five hundred bow-lengths. "With longing" means with craving, with attachment. For in lodgings near a village, even having attained meditative absorption, as soon as one has emerged from it, one hears the sounds of women, men, girls, and so on, by which even the distinction one has attained simply declines. But in the forest, having slept and just upon awakening, one hears the sounds of lions, tigers, peacocks, and so on, by which, having obtained the rapture of the forest, meditating on that very thing, one becomes established in the highest fruition. Thus the Blessed One praises one who merely sleeps in the forest over a monk who sits having attained meditative absorption in a lodging near a village. Therefore, dependent on that very reason - He said "they will have longing for forest lodgings."

"Will individually establish mindfulness" means by oneself one will establish mindfulness within oneself. "Well-behaved" means of amiable nature. Here too, residents who do not wish for the coming of fellow monks in the holy life are faithless, without confidence. They do not perform going out to meet arriving monks, receiving their bowls and robes, preparing seats, taking up fans, and so on; then disrepute arises about them - "The monks dwelling in such-and-such a monastery are faithless, without confidence, they do not perform duties and counter-duties for those who have entered the monastery." Having heard that, those gone forth, even when going by the monastery gate, do not enter the monastery. Thus for those who have not come, there is indeed non-coming. But for those who have come, when there is no comfortable dwelling, even those who came not knowing - "We came having thought 'We shall dwell here,' but with this manner of these residents, who would dwell here?" - having departed, they go away. Thus that monastery becomes as if a non-residence for other monks. Then the residents, not obtaining the sight of virtuous ones, do not obtain the removal of uncertainty, or a teacher of proper conduct, or the sweet hearing of the Teaching; for them there is neither the grasping of the Teaching not yet grasped, nor the rehearsing of what has been grasped. Thus for them there is only decline, not growth.

But those who wish for the coming of fellow monks in the holy life are faithful and devoted; having performed going out to meet and so on for the fellow monks in the holy life who have come, they prepare and give lodging, they take them on the alms round, they dispel uncertainty, and they obtain the sweet hearing of the Teaching. Then their reputation arises - "The monks of such-and-such a monastery are thus faithful, devoted, dutiful, and hospitable." Having heard that, monks come even from afar; the residents perform their duties for them, having come near, they pay homage to a visiting monk who is more senior and sit down, and near one who is more junior they take a seat and sit down. Having sat down - "Will you stay in this monastery or will you go?" they ask. When "I shall go" is said - Having said "The lodging is suitable, almsfood is easily obtained" and so on, they do not let them go. If he is an expert in monastic discipline, in his presence they recite the monastic discipline. If he is an expert in discourses and so on, in his presence they recite this and that teaching. Standing firm in the exhortation of the visiting elders, they attain

arahantship together with the analytical knowledges. The visitors are those who say "We came thinking we would stay for one or two days, but because of the pleasant communal life with these monks, we shall stay for ten or twelve years." Thus here decline and growth should be understood.

**137.** In the second group of seven, "activity is the delight of these" - thus "delighting in activity." "Devoted to activity" - thus "devoted to activity." "Engaged in delight in activity" means connected with, employed in, engaged in. Therein, "activity" refers to the various work that has to be done. That is: examining robes, making robes, patching, needle cases, bowl bags, loose bands, waistbands, water strainers, stands, footstands, making brooms and so on. For a certain person doing these things spends the whole day doing just these things. It is with reference to that that this rejection is made. But whoever does these things only at the time for doing them, takes up recitation at the time for recitation, recites at the time for recitation, performs the duty of the shrine courtyard at the time for the shrine courtyard duty, and gives attention at the time for attention, he is not called one who delights in activity.

"Not delighting in useless talk" - here, whoever spends both day and night just engaging in conversation and chat by way of the beauty of women, the beauty of men, and so on, and does not make an end of such talk, this one is called one who delights in useless talk. But whoever expounds the Teaching night and day, and answers questions, this one is of little talk indeed, one who makes an end of talk indeed. Why? "When you have gathered together, monks, there are two things to be done - either a talk on the Teaching or noble silence" - because this was said.

"Not delighting in sleep" - here, whoever, whether walking, sitting, or lying down, overcome by sloth and torpor, just sleeps, this one is called one who delights in sleep. But one whose consciousness descends into the life-continuum due to illness of the material body, this one is not one who delights in sleep. Therefore he said - "I directly know, Aggivessana, that in the last month of summer, after the meal, having returned from the alms round, having prepared the double robe folded in four, I enter sleep on my right side, mindful and fully aware."

"Not delighting in company" - here, whoever dwells in company thus: a second to one, a third to two, a fourth to three, and does not find gratification alone, this one delights in company. But whoever finds gratification alone in the four postures, this one should be understood as not one who delights in company.

"Not having evil desires" - here, those who are immoral, endowed with the desire for esteem for qualities they do not possess, are called those having evil desires.

Regarding "not having evil friends and so on" - "evil are the friends of these" - thus "evil friends." "Evil are the companions of these, because of going together in the four postures" - thus "evil companions." Because of being slanting towards, sloping towards, and inclining towards those, "inclined towards evil" - thus "inclined towards evil."

"Trifling" means inferior, small, insignificant. "Midway" means in between here, without having attained arahantship. "Stopping" means the state of being finished - "this much is enough" - drawing back, the state of having completed one's task. This is what is meant - "As long as they will not come to a stop with merely the purity of

morality, or merely with insight, or merely with meditative absorption, or merely with the state of a stream-enterer, or merely with the state of a once-returner, or merely with the state of a non-returner, so long only growth is to be expected for the monks, not decline."

**138.** In the third set of seven, "having faith" means accomplished in faith. Therein, faith is fourfold: faith through tradition, faith through achievement, faith through confidence, and faith through conviction. Therein, faith through tradition belongs to omniscient Bodhisattas. Faith through achievement belongs to noble persons. But when "the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Community" is said, the confidence that arises is faith through confidence. But believing by way of settling upon and planning is faith through conviction. Both kinds are intended here. For one endowed with that faith is liberated-by-faith, like the Elder Vakkali. For he always performs the duty of the shrine courtyard or the duty of the Bodhi tree courtyard. He fulfils all duties such as duties to the preceptor and duties to the teacher. "Modest" means those whose minds are engaged with shame characterised by abhorrence of evil. "Scrupulous" means endowed with moral fear characterised by dread of evil.

"Very learned" - here, however, there are two kinds of very learned: very learned in the Scriptures and very learned in penetration. "The Scriptures" means the three Canons. "Penetration" means penetration of the truths. But in this instance, the Scriptures are intended. That by which much is learnt, he is very learned. And this one is fourfold: one very learned for release from guidance, one very learned as an attendant, one very learned as an exhorter of nuns, and one very learned in everything. Therein, the three kinds of very learned should be understood according to the method stated in the Exhortation Chapter of the Samantapāsādikā, the commentary on the Vinaya. But those very learned in everything are like the Elder Ānanda. They are intended here.

"Putting forth strenuous energy" means those whose bodily and mental energy is aroused. Therein, those who, having dispelled bodily company, are solitary in the four postures by way of the eight grounds for arousing energy, for them bodily energy is said to be aroused. Those who, having dispelled mental company, are solitary by way of the eight attainments, who do not allow a mental defilement arisen while walking to reach standing, who do not allow a mental defilement arisen while standing to reach sitting, who do not allow a mental defilement arisen while sitting to reach lying down, who restrain mental defilements in the very posture in which they have arisen, for them mental energy is said to be aroused.

"Mindful" means remembering and recollecting what was done long ago and so on, like the Elder Mahāgatimbaya Abhaya, the Elder Dīghabhāṇaka Abhaya, and the Elder Tipiṭaka Cūḷābhaya. It is said that the Elder Mahāgatimbaya Abhaya, on the fifth day after his birth, seeing a crow stretching its beak towards the auspicious milk-rice, made the sound "hum̐ hum̐." Then he, in the time of being an elder monk - When asked by monks "From when, venerable sir, do you remember?" he said "From the sound made on the fifth day after birth, friends."

On the ninth day after the birth of the Elder Dīghabhāṇaka Abhaya, his mother bent down thinking "I shall kiss him," and her topknot came loose. Thereupon, jasmine flowers the size of a water-vessel fell upon the child's chest and caused pain. He, in

the time of being an elder monk - When asked "From when, venerable sir, do you remember?" - He said "From the ninth day after birth."

The Elder Tipiṭaka Cūḷābhaya - "Having had three gates closed in Anurādhapura and having made the people exit by one gate - having asked 'What is your name? What is your name?' to be able to recall their names in the evening without asking again - said 'It is possible, friends.' With reference to such monks - 'mindful' was said.

"Wise" means endowed with wisdom that comprehends the rise and fall of the five aggregates. Moreover, by these two terms, right mindfulness and insight wisdom, which are the requisites of insight for monks practising insight, have been spoken of.

**139.** In the fourth group of seven, mindfulness itself as an enlightenment factor is the enlightenment factor of mindfulness. This same method applies everywhere. Therein, the enlightenment factor of mindfulness has the characteristic of establishing, the enlightenment factor of investigation of phenomena has the characteristic of investigation, the enlightenment factor of energy has the characteristic of exertion, the enlightenment factor of rapture has the characteristic of pervading, the enlightenment factor of tranquillity has the characteristic of peace, the enlightenment factor of concentration has the characteristic of non-distraction, the enlightenment factor of equanimity has the characteristic of reflection. "Will develop" means: producing the enlightenment factor of mindfulness by four causes, producing the enlightenment factor of investigation of phenomena by six causes, producing the enlightenment factor of energy by nine causes, producing the enlightenment factor of rapture by ten causes, producing the enlightenment factor of tranquillity by seven causes, producing the enlightenment factor of concentration by ten causes, producing the enlightenment factor of equanimity by five causes - they will increase; this is the meaning. By this he spoke of the enlightenment factors associated with insight, path and fruition, being a mixture of mundane and supramundane.

**140.** In the fifth group of seven, "perception of impermanence" means perception arisen together with the observation of impermanence. In the case of the perception of non-self and so on too, the same method applies. These seven are also mundane insight. By virtue of the passage "this is peaceful, this is sublime, that is to say, the stilling of all activities, dispassion, cessation," two of them should be understood as also being supramundane.

**141.** In the set of six, "bodily action of friendliness" means bodily action to be done with a mind of friendliness. The same method applies in the case of verbal action and mental action too. But these, though they have come in terms of monks, are also found among laymen. For monks, the fulfilment of the fundamentals of conduct with a mind of friendliness is called bodily action of friendliness. For laymen, going for the purpose of paying homage at a shrine, for the purpose of paying homage at a Bodhi tree, for the purpose of inviting the monastic community, going out to meet a monk who has entered the village for almsfood upon seeing him, receiving his bowl, preparing a seat, following after - such and the like is called bodily action of friendliness.

For monks, the laying down of training rules for the regulation of conduct with a mind of friendliness, the teaching of meditation subjects, the proclamation of the Teaching, even the word of the Buddha in the three Canons - this is called verbal action of

friendliness. For laymen, at the time of such speech as "Let us go for the purpose of paying homage at a shrine, let us go for the purpose of paying homage at a Bodhi tree, we shall listen to the Teaching, we shall make offerings of lamps, garlands, and flowers, we shall proceed having undertaken the three kinds of good conduct, we shall give ticket meals and the like, we shall give the rains-retreat offering, today we shall give the four requisites to the monastic community, having invited the monastic community prepare solid foods and the like, prepare seats, set out drinking water, go out to meet the monastic community and bring them, have them sit on the prepared seats, with desire arisen and enthusiasm arisen perform service" and so on - this is called verbal action of friendliness.

For monks, having risen right early, attending to one's toilet, and having performed the duties of the shrine courtyard and so on, having sat down on a secluded seat, the thought "May the monks in this monastery be happy, free from enmity, free from affliction" - this is called mental action of friendliness. For laymen, the thought "May the venerable ones be happy, free from enmity, free from affliction" - this is called mental action of friendliness.

"Both openly and in private" means face to face and in one's absence. Therein, going as a companion to juniors in robe-making and the like is called bodily action of friendliness face to face. But towards elders, all proper duties consisting of washing the feet, paying homage, fanning, and giving and so on is called bodily action of friendliness face to face. By both, putting away wooden articles and other goods that have been badly placed by them, without showing contempt towards them, as if they were badly placed by oneself - this is called bodily action of friendliness in one's absence.

Speaking thus with praise, "The Elder Deva, the Elder Tissa" - this is called verbal action of friendliness face to face. But when one who is not in the monastery is asked about, words of endearment such as "Where is our Elder Deva? Where is our Elder Tissa? When indeed will he come?" - this is called verbal action of friendliness in one's absence.

But opening one's eyes softened with the affection of friendliness and looking with a serene face - this is called mental action of friendliness face to face. Giving attention thus, "May the Elder Deva, the Elder Tissa be healthy, free from illness" - this is called mental action of friendliness in one's absence.

"Gains" means requisites obtained such as robes and so on. "Righteous" means arisen by the practice of the alms round in accordance with the Teaching, impartially, having avoided wrong livelihood consisting of scheming and the like. "Even as little as what is contained in the bowl" means at the lowest limit, what is included in the bowl, what has gone inside the bowl, even as little as two or three ladles of almsfood. "One who shares without reservation" - here there are two kinds of reservation: Reservation regarding material things and reservation regarding persons. Therein - Dividing with the thought "I will give this much, I will not give this much" - this is called reservation regarding material things. But dividing with the thought "I will give to so-and-so, I will not give to so-and-so" - this is called reservation regarding persons. One who, without making either of those two, consumes without reservation - this is called one who shares without reservation.



"One who shares in common with virtuous fellows in the holy life" - here, this is the characteristic of one who shares in common: whatever superior thing is obtained, that he does not give to laymen by way of seeking gain with gain, nor does he consume it himself, and when accepting - Having taken it thinking "Let it be shared in common with the monastic community," having struck the bell, he regards it as belonging to the monastic community, to be consumed.

But who fulfils this principle of cordiality, and who does not fulfil it? First of all, an immoral person does not fulfil it. For the virtuous do not accept what belongs to him. But one of pure morality fulfils it without breaking the duty. Herein, this is the duty - For whoever, having designated specifically, gives to his mother or father or teachers and preceptors and the like, he gives what should be given, but the principle of cordiality does not apply to him; it is called the tending of impediments. For the principle of cordiality is fitting only for one who is free from impediments. But by one giving specifically designated gifts, it should be given to the sick, to attendants of the sick, to visitors, to travellers, and also to a newly ordained one who does not know how to take up the double robe and bowl. Having given to these, from the remainder, beginning from the elder's seat, without giving a little, whatever amount each one takes, that much should be given to him. When there is nothing left over, having again walked for almsfood, beginning from the elder's seat, whatever is superior, having given that, the remainder should be consumed. From the word "with the virtuous," it is also fitting not to give to an immoral person.

But this principle of cordiality is easily fulfilled by a well-trained assembly, not by an untrained assembly. For in a well-trained assembly, whoever obtains from elsewhere does not take. Even one not obtaining from elsewhere takes only what is appropriate in measure, not in excess. But this principle of cordiality, even for one who thus goes for almsfood again and again and gives whatever is received, is fulfilled in twelve years, not less than that. If indeed in the twelfth year, the one fulfilling the principle of cordiality, having placed a bowl full of almsfood in the hall with sitting accommodation, goes to bathe, and the senior monk of the Community asks "Whose is this bowl?", when it is said "It belongs to the one fulfilling the principle of cordiality," saying "Bring it here," he examines all the almsfood, and having eaten, places the empty bowl down; then that monk, having seen the empty bowl, produces displeasure thinking "They consumed mine without leaving anything over," the principle of cordiality is broken, and it must be fulfilled again for twelve years. For this is similar to the probation for those of other sects; once a breach has occurred, it must be fulfilled again. But whoever - Produces pleasure thinking "It is a gain for me indeed, it is well-gained for me indeed, that my fellows in the holy life consume what is in my bowl without even asking" - for him it is called fulfilled.

But for one who has thus fulfilled the principle of cordiality, there is indeed neither jealousy nor stinginess. He is dear to human beings, and requisites are easily obtained; what is in his bowl, even when being given away, is not exhausted; when goods are to be distributed, he receives the best goods; when danger or famine has arrived, deities take up zealous effort.

Herein are these stories - The Elder Tissa, a resident of Senagiri, it is said, dwelt in dependence on the village of Mahāgiri. Fifty great elders, going to Nāgadīpa for the purpose of paying homage at the shrine, having walked for almsfood in the hill village

and not having obtained anything, departed. But the elder, while entering, having seen them, asked - "Have you obtained anything, venerable sirs?" "We went about, friend." He, having known their state of not having obtained, said - "Venerable sirs, stay right here until I come back." "We, friend, fifty persons, did not obtain even enough to moisten the bowl." "Venerable sirs, residents are competent; even when not obtaining, they know the alms-round route and its share." The elders waited. The elder entered the village. At the very first house, a great female lay follower, having prepared a meal of milk-rice, stood looking out for the elder. Then, as soon as the elder arrived at the door, having filled the bowl, she gave it. He, having taken it, having gone to the presence of the elders, said to the senior monk of the Community, "Take it, venerable sirs." The elder - "We, being so many, did not obtain anything, yet this one has quickly taken and come back - what could this be?" - looked at the faces of the rest. The elder, having understood by the very manner of looking, beginning from "Venerable sirs, this is almsfood obtained righteously and impartially; take it without remorse," having given to all as much as they wished, himself too ate as much as he wished.

Then, at the conclusion of the meal, the elders asked him - "When, friend, did you penetrate the supramundane state?" "There is no supramundane state for me, venerable sirs." "Are you an obtainer of meditative absorption, friend?" "That too, venerable sirs, I do not have." "Is it not a wonder, friend?" "The principle of cordiality has been fulfilled by me, venerable sirs. From the time of the fulfilment of that principle, even if there are a hundred thousand monks, what is in the bowl is not exhausted." Having heard this - They said, "Good, good, good person, this is befitting for you." This, for now - Is the story here regarding "what is in the bowl is not exhausted."

Now this same elder, having gone to the place of giving at the great offering of Giribhaṇḍa at Cetiyaṭṭhāṇa, asked "What is the finest article at this place?" "Two cloaks, venerable sir." "Those will come to me." Having heard that, the minister informed the king - "One young monk speaks thus." Having said "Such is the young one's thought, but fine cloaks are fitting for the great elders," he set them aside thinking "I shall give them to the great elders." When he was giving to the Community of monks standing in succession, even though those cloaks were placed on top, they would not come to hand. Others did come to hand. Others came to hand. But at the time of giving to the young monk, they came to hand. He, having dropped them into his hands, having looked at the minister's face, having caused the young monk to sit down, having given the gift, having dismissed the Community, having sat down near the young monk - said "Venerable sir, when did you penetrate this quality?" He, not speaking even indirectly of what was not present - said "There is no supramundane quality in me, great king." "But, venerable sir, did you not say so before?" "Yes, great king, I am one who has fulfilled the principle of cordiality; from the time of fulfilling that quality, at the place where articles are to be distributed, I receive the finest article." Having paid homage saying "Good, good, venerable sir, this is befitting for you," he departed. This - is the story here regarding "receives the finest article at the place where articles are to be distributed."

Now during the danger of Brāhmaṇatissa, the residents of Bhātaragāma fled without even informing the Elder Nun Nāgā. The elder nun, towards the break of dawn -said to the young nuns "The village is exceedingly quiet; go and investigate." They, having gone and having found out that everyone had departed, having returned, informed the elder nun. She, having heard, having said "Do not think about the fact that they have gone; apply yourselves only to exertion in recitation, interrogation, and wise attention," at the time for the alms round, having put on her robe, herself as the twelfth, stood at the village entrance at the foot of a banyan tree. The deity inhabiting the tree, having given almsfood to all twelve nuns, said "Ladies, do not go elsewhere; always come right here." Now the elder nun had a younger brother named the Elder Nāga; he - thinking "The danger is great; it is not possible to sustain oneself here; I shall go to the far shore," himself as the twelfth, having departed from his own dwelling place, having seen the elder nun, thinking "I shall go," came to Bhātaragāma. The elder nun - having heard "The elders have come," having gone to their presence, asked "What is it, venerable sir?" He told her that news. She - said "Having stayed just one day right in the monastery today, you should go tomorrow." The elders went to the monastery.

The elder nun, on the following day, having walked for almsfood at the foot of a tree, having approached the elder, said "Please consume this almsfood." The elder - having said "It will be proper, elder nun," stood silent. "The almsfood is righteous, dear, without making remorse, please consume it." "It will be proper, elder nun." She, having taken the bowl, threw it into the sky. The bowl stood in the sky. The elder - having said "Even standing at the height of seven palm trees, it is still a nun's meal, elder nun" - "Fear does not exist at all times; when the fear has subsided, while teaching the noble lineage, being censured by the mind thus 'Friend almsfood eater, you spent the time having eaten a nun's meal,' I shall not be able to stand firm. Be diligent, elder nuns," and he set out on the road.

The tree-spirit too - "If the elder will consume the almsfood from the elder nun's hand, I shall not turn him back. If he will not consume it, I shall turn him back," having stood thinking thus, having seen the elder's departure, having descended from the tree, saying "Venerable sir, give the bowl," having taken the bowl, having brought the elder to the very foot of the tree, having prepared a seat, having given the almsfood, having made him give an acknowledgment that the meal duty was done, she attended upon the twelve nuns and twelve monks for seven years. This - is the story here regarding "deities show zeal." For therein the elder nun was one who fulfilled the principle of cordiality.

In the passage beginning with "unbroken," for one whose training rule is broken at the beginning or at the end among the seven classes of offences, his morality is called broken, like a cloth torn at the edge. But for one whose training rule is broken in the middle, it is called having holes, like a cloth with a hole in the middle. But for one whose two or three are broken in succession, it is called spotted, like a cow of one colour among dark-red and so on, with a dissimilar colour arisen on the back or the belly. But for one whose training rules are broken here and there, it is called blemished, like a cow variegated with spots of dissimilar colour here and there. But for one whose training rules are in every way unbroken, those moral practices are called unbroken, without holes, unspotted, and unblemished. And moreover, those

are liberating because of freeing from the slavery of craving and producing the state of freedom. They are praised by the wise because of being commended by the wise such as the Buddha and others; they are not adhered to because of not being grasped by craving and wrong view - and because of the impossibility of anyone being able to reproach them saying "You have formerly committed this offence," they are not adhered to; because they conduce to access concentration or absorption concentration, they are called conducive to concentration.

"Will dwell having attained similarity of morality" means they will dwell with morality that has attained the state of equality with monks dwelling in those various directions. For the morality of stream-enterers and so on is the same as the morality of other stream-enterers and so on, even those dwelling across the ocean or in the heavenly worlds; there is no diversity in path-morality. With reference to that, this was said.

"Such a view" means right view associated with the path. "Noble" means faultless. "Leads forth" means leading to liberation. "Of one who practises it" means one who acts accordingly. "To the complete destruction of suffering" means for the purpose of the complete destruction of suffering. "Having attained similarity of view" means they will dwell having attained the state of similar view. "Only growth" means for those dwelling thus, only growth is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

**142.** "Frequently this" means that, because the final Nibbāna was near, while exhorting the monks, he gave this very talk on the Teaching again and again. "Such is morality" means morality in this way, this much morality. Here, the fourfold purification morality should be understood as morality, unified focus of mind as concentration, and insight wisdom as wisdom. In the passages beginning with "developed through morality," having stood established in whatever morality, they produce path concentration and fruition concentration. That, developed through that morality, is of great fruit and great benefit. Having stood established in whatever concentration they produce path wisdom and fruition wisdom, that, developed through that concentration, is of great fruit and great benefit. Having stood established in whatever wisdom they produce consciousness of the path and consciousness of fruition, that, developed through that, becomes completely liberated from the mental corruptions.

"As long as one likes" means for Buddhas there is no distress called discontent; but what is meant is according to preference, according to disposition. "Let us go" means come, let us go. "Ayāmā" is also a reading; the meaning is "let us go." "Ānanda" - the Blessed One addresses the elder because of his being one who kept near. But the elder - reports to the monks: "Take your bowls and robes, friends; the Blessed One wishes to go to such and such a place."

**144.** The going to Ambalaṭṭhikā is clear in itself. The passage beginning with "Then the Venerable Sāriputta" etc. has been expanded in the Sampasādanīya.

### Explanation of the Danger of Immorality

**148.** "Rest-house" in the passage about going to Pāṭaligāma means a rest-house for visiting people. It is said that at Pāṭaligāma, constantly, allies of the two kings would come and, having driven families out of their houses, would dwell there for a month

or even a fortnight. Those people, constantly troubled - thinking "There will be a dwelling place for them when they come," built a large hall in the middle of the town, and in one area of it made a place for storing goods, and in one area a place for lodging. They - having merely heard "The Blessed One has come" - thinking "The Blessed One should have been brought even by us going to him, yet he himself has arrived at our dwelling place; today we shall have the Blessed One speak a blessing at the rest-house" - were approaching for that very purpose. Therefore they spoke thus. "To the rest-house" - it is said that they - not knowing the Blessed One's mind, thinking "Buddhas by nature are inclined to the forest, delighting in the forest; they may or may not wish to dwell within the village," came without having prepared the rest-house. Now, having known the Blessed One's mind, thinking "We shall go ahead first and prepare it," they approached the rest-house. "Completely spread" means they spread it in such a way that everything was spread.

**149.** "Immoral" means without morality, devoid of morality. "Failing in morality" means one whose morality has failed, whose restraint is broken. "Because of heedlessness" means by reason of heedlessness.

And this discourse has come by way of householders, but it is applicable to those gone forth as well. For a householder earns his living by whatever craft - whether by farming, whether by trade, being heedless by way of killing living beings and so on, he is unable to accomplish this or that at the proper time, and then even his capital is destroyed. But during the non-killing period, one who commits killing of living beings and taking what is not given and so on, undergoes great loss of wealth by way of punishment. And one gone forth who is immoral, by reason of heedlessness, undergoes loss of morality, of the Buddha's teaching, of meditative absorption, and of the seven noble treasures.

For a householder - A bad reputation arises in the midst of the fourfold assembly: "The one named so-and-so, born in such and such a family, is immoral, of bad character, who has abandoned both this world and the world beyond, and does not give even so much as a ticket meal." Or for one gone forth - It arises thus: "The one named so-and-so was not able to guard morality, nor to learn the Buddha's teaching; he lives by medical practice and so on, and is endowed with the six disrespects."

"Unconfident" - first, as for a householder - He approaches with fear, thinking "Inevitably at a place where many are assembled, some will know my deed, and then they will restrain me," or "They will hand me over to the royal family." He sits down downcast, with drooping shoulders, face cast down, scratching the ground with his finger, and is unable to speak with confidence. Also one gone forth - He approaches with fear, thinking "Many monks have assembled; inevitably someone will know my deed, and then, having set aside my Observance and invitation ceremonies, having removed me from the ascetic life, they will expel me." He is unable to speak with confidence. However, a certain one, even though immoral, goes about as if arrogant; yet even he is indeed downcast in his disposition.

"Dies deluded" means for him, as he lies on his deathbed, the place where immoral deeds were undertaken and carried out comes into range. He opens his eyes and sees this world; he closes his eyes and sees the world beyond. The four realms of

misery present themselves to him; it is as if he were being struck on the head with a hundred spears. He Dies crying out "Stop it, stop it!" Therefore it was said - "Dies deluded." The fifth term is clear in itself.

**150.** The discussion on benefits should be understood by the reverse of what has been stated.

**151.** "For much of the night with a talk on the Teaching" means that, having understood, with a talk on the Teaching independent of the canonical text as well as with a thanksgiving for the public rest-house, as if bringing down the celestial river, as if squeezing a great honey of one yojana in measure and giving a honey beverage to drink, for much of the night, having instructed and gladdened, he dismissed them. "Passed" means gone beyond, eliminated, having undergone destruction and passing away. "Empty house" - there was no separate empty house as such, but right there on one side, having enclosed it with a screen wall - "The Teacher will rest here," they prepared a small bed. The Blessed One - "What is used by them in all four postures will be of great fruit," and there he lay down in the lion's posture. With reference to that it was said - "He entered the empty house."

### Explanation of the Building of the City of Pāṭaliputta

**152.** "Sunidha and Vassakāra" means Sunidha and Vassakāra, two brahmins. "The chief ministers of Magadha" means the chief ministers, the great councillors, of the king of Magadha; or the chief ministers in the country of Magadha, endowed with a great measure of supremacy - thus "the chief ministers of Magadha." "A city at Pāṭaligāma" means they are building Pāṭaligāma by making it into a city. "To obstruct the Vajjis" means for the purpose of cutting off the sources of income of the Vajji royal families. "In their thousands" means becoming a thousand and a thousand by way of each group. "Sites" means house sites. "The minds incline to build dwellings" means the minds of the reciters of the science of building-sites incline to build dwellings for kings and royal ministers. It is said that they, by the power of their own craft, in a place measuring about thirty cubits below in the earth - "Here is a serpent's haunt, here is a demon's haunt, here is a spirit's haunt, or there is a rock or a stump" - thus they perceive. They then, having recited their craft, build as if consulting with the deities. Or alternatively, the deities, having possessed their bodies, direct their minds to build dwellings here and there. Those deities, having driven stakes at the four corners, withdraw as soon as the site has been taken. Faithful deities do so for faithful families, and faithless deities likewise for faithless families. Why? For the faithful ones think thus - "Here human beings, having built a dwelling, will first cause the Community of monks to be seated and will promote a blessing. Then we shall obtain the seeing of virtuous ones, a talk on the Teaching, the answering of questions, and the hearing of thanksgiving, and the human beings, having given a gift, will give us a share of merit."

"With the Tāvatiṃsa gods" means just as, on account of one wise person in one family, or on account of one very learned monk in one monastery - the reputation arises "The people in such and such a family are wise, the monks in such and such a monastery are very learned," just so, on account of Sakka, the king of the gods, and



the young god Vissakamma - the reputation arose "The Tāvatiṃsa gods are wise." Therefore he said - "With the Tāvatiṃsa gods." The meaning is they build as if having consulted with the Tāvatiṃsa gods.

"As far as the noble realm" means however far there is what is called a place of resort for the people of the noble lands. "As far as trade extends" means however far there is what is called a place of buying and selling in heaps of goods brought by merchants, or a dwelling place of merchants. "This will be the chief city" means this will be the chief city, the foremost, the eminent one, among those noble realms and trade centres. "A place for the opening of packages" means a place for the opening of packages of goods; what is meant is a place for the unpacking of bundles of merchandise. For even goods unobtainable in the whole of Jambudīpa will be obtainable right here, and even what does not come for sale elsewhere will come right here. Therefore the meaning is they will open their packages right here. "Four at the four gates and one in the assembly hall" - thus it shows that day after day five hundred thousand will arise.

In "from fire or" and so on, the word "or" has the meaning of "and." The meaning is that it will perish by fire and by water and by breaking of alliance. One portion will perish by fire; they will not be able to extinguish it. One the Ganges will take away and carry off. One - The meaning is that it will perish through the mutual dissension of people divided by the influence of divisive speech of those who say "this one has said what was not said by that one, that one has said what was not said by this one." Having said thus, the Blessed One, towards the break of dawn, having gone to the bank of the Ganges, having washed his face, sat down waiting for the time for the alms round.

**153.** Sunidha and Vassakāra too - "Our king is an attendant of the ascetic Gotama; he will ask us, 'The Teacher, it is said, went to Pāṭaligāma; did you approach his presence or did you not approach?' When it is said 'We approached' - he will also ask 'Did you invite him or did you not invite him?' When it is said 'We did not invite him,' having laid blame upon us, he will rebuke us. Moreover, we are building a city at the place where he has come; and wherever the ascetic Gotama goes, unfortunate beings retreat from that place; we shall have him speak a blessing for the city" - having thought thus, they approached the Teacher and invited him. Therefore - "Then Sunidha and Vassakāra" and so on was stated.

"In the earlier period of the day" means in the forenoon time. "Having dressed" means having put on the inner robe in the manner of entering a village and having tied the waistband. "Taking his bowl and robe" means having taken the bowl and the robe and having made them connected to the body.

"Sīlavantettha" means "the virtuous ones here." "Restrained" means restrained in body, speech, and mind.

"To them he should dedicate the offering" means when the four requisites have been given to the Community, he should dedicate to those household deities; he should give a share of merit. "Being venerated, they venerate" - "These people are not even our relatives, yet even so they give us a share of merit" - thinking thus, they arrange protection well; they provide protection thoroughly. "Being honoured, they honour" means honoured by the making of oblations from time to time, they honour them,

thinking "These people are not even our relatives, yet they make oblations to us at intervals of four months or six months"; honouring them, they remove arisen dangers.

"Therefore him" means therefore him, the person of wise birth. "Own" means reared by placing on the breast; just as a mother has compassion for her own son, she strives solely for the purpose of removing arisen dangers for him - thus they have compassion; this is the meaning. "Sees good fortune" means sees beautiful things.

**154.** "Raft" means that which is made by hammering in nails for the purpose of going to the far shore. "Float" means that which is made by binding together with creepers and so on.

In the verse "Those who cross the ocean," "ocean" is a designation for a body of water that is, at its utmost limit, about a yojana in extent, and is both deep and broad. "Flowing stream" - here a river is intended. This is what is meant: those who cross the deep and wide flowing stream of craving, they do so having made a bridge reckoned as the noble path. "Leaving behind the pools" means without touching the low-lying places filled with water. But this one - even one wishing to cross this trifling amount, people bind together a raft. Buddhas and disciples of the Buddha have crossed over without a raft at all - they are the wise people.

*The explanation of the first recitation section is completed.*

### Explanation of the Talk on the Noble Truths

**155.** "Koṭigāma" means a village built at the corner of the palace of Mahāpanāda. "Of the noble truths" means of the truths that make one noble. "Through not understanding" means through not awakening to, through not knowing. "Through not penetrating" means through not piercing through. "Has been run through" means run through by way of going from existence to existence. "Has been wandered through" means wandered through by way of going and coming again and again. "By me as well as by you" means by me and by you. Or alternatively, "has been run through and wandered through" - the meaning here should be understood thus: the running through and the wandering through was for me as well as for you. "The conduit to existence has been uprooted" means the rope of craving, capable of leading from existence to existence, has been well destroyed, cut off, made to cease.

### Explanation of Not Subject to Return and Headed for the Highest Enlightenment

**156.** "Nātikā" means two villages of the sons of two brothers - a younger uncle and an elder uncle - situated in dependence on one lake. "Nātike" means in one village of relatives. "Giṇṇakāvasathe" means in a public rest-house made of bricks.

**157.** "Lower" means belonging to the lower part; the meaning is those that cause the taking of conception in sensual existence only. They are also called "lower" because they are to be abandoned by the three paths that have received the name "lower." Therein, sensual desire and anger - these two, when not suppressed by meditative attainment or not utterly cut off by the path, by way of rebirth do not allow one to go to the upper part, to fine-material existence and immaterial existence. The three

beginning with identity view, even having brought one who has been reborn there, cause rebirth again right here - therefore all are indeed lower. "Not subject to return" means having the intrinsic nature of not coming back by way of conception.

Regarding "with the reduction of lust, hate, and delusion," here the reduced state should be understood in two ways: by the occasional and rare arising, and by the weakness of prepossession. For in the case of a once-returner, lust and so on do not arise frequently as for worldlings; they arise only occasionally and rarely. And when arising, they do not arise thick and dense as for worldlings; they arise thin and slight, like a fly's bowl. But the Elder Mahāsīva, the Dīgha-reciter and master of the Triple Canon, said: "Since a once-returner has sons and daughters, and has harem ladies, therefore the mental defilements are thick. But this was spoken with reference to the reduction of existences." That is rejected in the commentary - "For a stream-enterer, setting aside seven existences, in the eighth existence there is no reduction of existence. For a once-returner, setting aside two existences, in five existences there is no reduction of existence. For a non-returner, setting aside fine-material and immaterial existence, in sensual existence there is no reduction of existence. For one who has eliminated the mental corruptions, in any existence there is no reduction of existence" - because this was said, it is rejected.

"This world" was said with reference to this sensual-sphere world. And here the intention is this: if one who has attained the fruition of once-returning among human beings, having been reborn among the gods, realises arahantship, that is wholesome. But if unable, he inevitably realises it having come to the human world. Even one who has attained the fruition of once-returning among the gods, if having been reborn among human beings he realises arahantship, that is wholesome. But if unable, he inevitably realises it having gone to the world of the gods.

"No longer subject to fall into lower realms" - here, falling is the nether world; one whose nature is not to fall into the nether world is one no longer subject to fall into lower realms. "No longer subject to fall into lower realms in the four realms of misery" means having the intrinsic nature of not falling into the four realms of misery. "Fixed in destiny" means fixed by the cosmic law of phenomena. "Headed for the highest enlightenment" means the highest enlightenment reckoned as the upper three paths is the further destination, his course, his refuge, that must inevitably be attained - thus he is one headed for the highest enlightenment.

### Explanation of the Dhamma-Mirror Exposition of the Teaching

**158.** "Harming" explains that for the Truth-finder, looking at the knowledge-destination, the knowledge-rebirth, and the knowledge-future life of those various persons, this is merely bodily weariness, Ānanda; but mental harming does not exist for Buddhas. "Mirror of the Teaching" means a mirror made of the Teaching. "By which" means possessed of which mirror of the Teaching. "The realm of misery, the unfortunate realm, the nether world is eliminated" - this is said by way of synonyms for hell and so on. For hell and so on are "realms of misery" because they are devoid of growth, which is reckoned as prosperity. "Unfortunate realm" means the destination and shelter of suffering. "Nether worlds" because those who are doers of wrong-doing fall therein helplessly.

"With unwavering confidence" means with unshakeable and imperishable confidence,

because the qualities of the Buddha are known as they really are. The same method applies to the two terms above as well. The detail of "Thus indeed is the Blessed One" and so on, however, has been stated in the Visuddhimagga.

"Pleasing to the noble ones" means pleasing to the noble ones, dear and agreeable. For the five moral precepts are pleasing to noble disciples, because they are not to be abandoned even in another existence. This was said with reference to those. But here, all restraint is also obtained.

"I am a stream-enterer" - this is merely the heading of the teaching. But once-returners and so on also declare in the manner beginning with "I am a once-returner" and so on. For the declaration by all of them in the appropriate situation, without conflict with the training rules, is indeed permitted.

### Explanation of the Story of the Courtesan Ambapālī

**161.** "Was dwelling at Vesālī" - here, the prosperous state of Vesālī should be understood according to the method stated in the chapter beginning with "Now at that time Vesālī was prosperous and flourishing" and so on. "In Ambapālī's grove" means in the mango grove that served as a pleasure park of the courtesan Ambapālī. "Mindful, monks" - the Blessed One began the teaching on the establishment of mindfulness here specifically for the purpose of establishing mindfulness upon seeing Ambapālī. Therein, "he remembers" - thus "mindful." "He fully comprehends" - thus "fully aware." The meaning is: having become endowed with mindfulness and full awareness, one should dwell. What should be said regarding "observing the body in the body" and so on, we shall explain in the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna.

"Blue" - this is all-inclusive. "Of blue complexion" and so on is the showing of the classification of that very same. Therein, their natural complexion was not blue, but this was said because they were anointed with blue cosmetic ointment. "With blue clothes" means their cloth, fine cloth, silk and so on were all blue. "With blue ornaments" means adorned with blue gems and blue flowers; their chariots too were studded with blue gems, draped with blue cloth, with blue banners, with blue armour, with blue ornaments, yoked with blue horses, and even the goading sticks were blue. By this method the meaning should be understood in all terms. "Collided" means struck against. "Why, woman Ambapālī" - "je" is a term of address; it means "Dear lady Ambapālī, for what reason?" "Kiñcā" is also a reading; the meaning here is the same. "With its revenues" means together with the countryside. "Snapped their fingers" means they shook their fingers. "By the mango woman" means by the woman.

"Yesam" is the genitive case used in the instrumental sense; it means "by whom not seen before." "Look at" means see. "Gaze upon" means see again and again.

"Compare" means bring near. Compare this assembly of Licchavis with your mind as similar to the Tāvatiṃsa gods, bring it near, make it adhere. Just as the Tāvatiṃsa gods are lovely, pleasing, of various colours beginning with blue, so too are these Licchavi kings - the meaning is: having made them equal to the Tāvatiṃsa gods, see them.

But why does the Blessed One, having prohibited the grasping of signs in forms and so on through the eye and so on in many hundreds of discourses, here with great endeavour encourage the grasping of signs? Out of desire for their welfare. For therein, it is said, some monks had sunken energy, and enticing them with that splendour - He said "For those who practise the ascetic duty with diligence, such sovereign splendour is easily obtained" for the purpose of generating enthusiasm in the ascetic duty. And also for the purpose of making clear the characteristic of impermanence he spoke thus. For before long all these will meet with destruction through the power of Ajātasattu. Then the monks who stood having seen their splendour of sovereign glory - "Even of such splendour of glory, destruction will be discerned" - having developed the characteristic of impermanence, they will attain arahantship together with the analytical knowledges - thus he spoke for the purpose of making clear the characteristic of impermanence.

"May the Blessed One consent" - even though they knew that Ambapālī had already invited him, why did they invite? Because of not believing and because it is the lead of duty. For their thought was "She is a cheat of a woman; she might say 'I have invited' even without having invited." And having heard the Teaching and having invited at the time of going, going is indeed the duty of human beings.

#### Explanation of the Entering of the Rains at Veḷuvagāma

**163.** "Veḷuvagāmako" means the village of Veḷuva near Vesālī. In "according to friends" and so on, friends means friends themselves. "Acquaintances" means those merely seen by meeting here and there, not very firm friends. "Close companions" means those well devoted, possessing affection, firm friends. The meaning is: wherever there are such monks for whomever, those monks should enter the rains retreat there in those places. Why did he say thus? For their comfortable abiding. For at the village of Veḷuva lodging was not sufficient for them, and almsfood too was scarce. But all around Vesālī there were many lodgings, and almsfood too was easily obtained; therefore he said thus. Then why did he not send them off saying "Go as you please"? Out of compassion for them. For thus it occurred to him - "I shall remain for about ten months and then attain final Nibbāna. If these monks go far away, they will not be able to see me at the time of my final Nibbāna. Then for them - 'The Teacher, while attaining final Nibbāna, did not give us even a moment's thought; if we had known, we would not have dwelt so far away' - there would be regret. But dwelling all around Vesālī, they will come eight times a month and hear the Teaching, and will receive the exhortation of the Fortunate One" - thus he did not send them off.

**164.** "Severe" means harsh. "Illness" means a disease of a disagreeable nature. "Painful" means powerful. "Bordering on death" means capable of bringing one to the end of death, to the proximity of death. "He endured, mindful and fully aware" means having well established mindfulness, having discerned with knowledge, he endured. "Without being distressed" means not turning over again and again by way of following the feeling, not being oppressed, not being afflicted, he endured. "Without addressing" means without informing. "Without taking leave" means not having asked for permission; it means not having given exhortation and instruction. "By energy" means by both the preliminary energy and the energy of fruition attainment. "Having suppressed" means having overcome. "Life-activities": here life itself is a life-activity. That by which life is sustained, being cut off is joined together and maintained - that

factor of fruition attainment too is a life-activity. That is what is intended here. "Having determined" means having determined and set going; the meaning here in brief is that he should attain the fruition attainment capable of maintaining life.

But did the Blessed One not attain fruition attainment before this? He did attain it. But that was a momentary attainment. A momentary attainment suppresses feeling only within the attainment itself; for one who has merely emerged from the attainment, feeling again overwhelms the body, like water whose moss has been cut by the fall of a stick or the fall of a potsherd. But the attainment that is attained by way of great insight, having made the material septad and the immaterial septad cleared of thickets and disentangled - that suppresses well. Just as when moss that has been well pushed aside by a man who has plunged into a pond with his hands and feet, the water covers over only after a long time; just so, for one who has emerged from that, feeling arises only after a long time. Thus the Blessed One, as if establishing fresh insight on the seat of the great enlightenment on that day, having made the material septad and the immaterial septad cleared of thickets and disentangled, having compressed them in fourteen modes, having suppressed feeling by great insight - he attained the attainment thus: "May they not arise for ten months." The feeling suppressed by the attainment did not arise at all for ten months.

"Having recovered from illness" means having been ill and then having recovered again. "As if weak and stiff" means having become heavy, having become rigid, like a man impaled on a stake. "Are not clear" means they do not shine forth, they do not present themselves in their various aspects. "The teachings do not occur to me" explains that the teachings beginning with the establishments of mindfulness are not evident to me. But the textual teachings were well mastered by the elder. "Does not declare" means does not give the final exhortation. He speaks with reference to that.

**165.** "Making no distinction between inner and outer" means without making both either by way of teachings or by way of persons. For one thinking "I shall not teach this much of the teaching to another" is said to make the teaching inner. One thinking "I shall teach this much to another" is said to make the teaching outer. But one thinking "I shall teach to this person" is said to make the person inner. One thinking "I shall not teach to this one" is said to make the person outer. The meaning is that he taught without doing thus. "Closed fist of a teacher" means just as outsiders have what is called a closed fist of a teacher. Without having spoken to anyone in their younger days, in their final days, lying on their deathbed, they speak to a dear and beloved pupil; thus for the Truth-finder - it shows that there is nothing kept back by making a fist thinking "I shall speak of this in old age, at the final occasion," and set aside thinking "I shall preserve it."

"I will lead the Community of monks" means "I alone will lead the Community of monks," or "under my direction" means "I should be the one to be pointed to" in the sense of being the one to be designated - thus "under my direction." The meaning is: or for whomever there would be thus - "Having designated me alone, let the Community of monks look to me expectantly, or after my passing let them not exist, or let whatever be whatever." "Does not think thus" means because jealousy and stinginess were destroyed while still on the seat of enlightenment, it is not thus. "Sa kiṃ" means "so kiṃ" (why then). "Eighty years old" means one of eighty years. This was said for the purpose of illustrating the state of having reached the final stage of



life. "By being held together with straps" means by being held together with straps through repairs such as binding the shafts and binding the wheels and so on.

"Methinks" means it is kept going, methinks, by being held together with straps, like an old cart. It shows that the maintaining of the four postures for the Truth-finder occurs through the binding of the fruition of arahantship.

Now, making known that meaning, he said beginning with "At the time, Ānanda." Therein, "of all signs" means of signs of matter and so on. "Of certain feelings" means of mundane feelings. "Therefore, Ānanda" shows that because there is comfort through this dwelling in fruition attainment, therefore you too should dwell thus for that purpose. "Having yourselves as an island" means dwell having made oneself an island, a support, like an island in the great ocean. "Having yourselves as a refuge" means be ones whose resort is oneself alone, not ones whose resort is another. In the terms "having the Teaching as an island" and "having the Teaching as a refuge" too, the same method applies. "Tamatagge" means "tama-agge" (at the topmost of darkness). The letter "ta" in the middle is stated by way of word-junction. This is what is meant - "These are the topmost of darkness" - thus "tamatagge." Thus, having cut off all bondage to darkness, these monks, Ānanda, will be exceedingly at the highest, in the supreme state. Among them, at the very highest will be whoever are eager to train; all those monks too, having the four establishments of mindfulness as their domain, will be at the highest - thus he concludes the teaching with the pinnacle of arahantship.

*The explanation of the second recitation section is completed.*

### Explanation of the Talk on the Sign and the Light

**166.** "Entered Vesālī for almsfood" - when did he enter? At the time when he had departed from Ukkacela and gone to Vesālī. The Blessed One, it is said, having finished keeping the rains retreat, having departed from the village of Veļuva, thinking "I shall go to Sāvattthī," turning back by the very road by which he had come, gradually having reached Sāvattthī, entered Jeta's Grove. The General of the Teaching, having shown his duty to the Blessed One, went to his day-quarters. He there, having shown his duty to his pupils, when they had departed, having swept the day-quarters, having laid out a piece of leather, having washed his feet, folding his legs crosswise, entered fruition attainment. Then, having emerged from that at the determined time, this reflection arose in him - "Do Buddhas attain final Nibbāna first, or do the chief disciples?" Thereupon - Having known "The chief disciples first," he looked at his own life principle. He Having known "My life principle continues for only seven days" - He thought "Where shall I attain final Nibbāna?" Thereupon - Thinking again "Rāhula attained final Nibbāna among the Tāvattīsa gods, the Elder Aññāsikoṇḍañña at the Chaddanta lake, where shall I attain final Nibbāna?" he aroused mindfulness concerning his mother - Having reflected "My mother, even though being the mother of seven Worthy Ones, is without faith in the Buddha, the Teaching, and the Community; is there indeed a decisive support for her, or is there not?" - having seen the decisive support for the path of stream-entry - Looking to see "Through whose teaching will the full realisation occur?" - "It will occur through my expounding of the Teaching only, not through another's. But if I were to remain living at ease, there would be those who would say of me - 'The Elder Sāriputta is a support even for the

remaining people. For thus indeed, on the day of the teaching of the Samacitta Sutta and so on, a hundred thousand koṭis of deities attained arahantship. There is no counting of the deities who penetrated the three paths. And in other places many full realisations are seen. Eighty thousand families, having gladdened their minds through the Elder alone, were reborn in heaven. Yet now he was not able to remove even the mere wrong view of his own mother.' Therefore, having freed my mother from wrong view, I shall attain final Nibbāna in the very birth-chamber" - having made this conclusion - "This very day, having obtained permission from the Blessed One, I shall depart" - he addressed the Elder Cunda. "Friend Cunda, give notice to our assembly of five hundred monks - 'Take your bowls and robes, friends; the General of the Teaching wishes to go to Nāḷaka village.'" The Elder did so. The monks, having set in order their lodgings, taking their bowls and robes, came to the Elder's presence. The Elder, having set in order his lodging, having swept the day-quarters, standing at the door of the day-quarters, looking at the day-quarters - "This is now the last sight; there is no coming again" - surrounded by five hundred monks, having approached the Blessed One and having paid homage, said this -

"Now I shall be cut off, O Protector of the World, O Great Sage;  
There is no going and coming, this is the last homage.

My life is little, after the passing of seven days from now;  
I shall lay down this body, as the laying down of a burden.

May the Blessed One give me leave, venerable sir, may the Fortunate One give me leave;  
It is the time of my final Nibbāna, the life force has been let go."

But since Buddhas, if they were to say "Attain final Nibbāna," those holding wrong view would charge them with praising death, and if they were to say "Do not attain final Nibbāna," those holding wrong view would charge them with speaking of the virtue of the round of rebirths - therefore they say neither of those two. Therefore the Blessed One said to him - "Where will you attain final Nibbāna, Sāriputta?" When it was said "There is, venerable sir, in the Magadhan village of Nāḷaka, a birth-chamber; there I shall attain final Nibbāna," he said "Now, Sāriputta, do as you think fit; but henceforth the seeing of such a monk will be rare for your elder and younger brothers - expound to them the Teaching."

The elder - Having known "The Teacher expects from me a proclamation of the Teaching preceded by a display of supernormal power," having paid homage to the Blessed One, having risen up to the height of a palm tree, having descended again and paid homage to the Blessed One, standing in the sky at the height of seven palm trees, having displayed a supernormal transformation, he expounded the Teaching. The whole city assembled. The elder, having descended, having paid homage to the Blessed One, said "It is the time for me to go, venerable sir." The Blessed One, thinking "I shall send off the General of the Teaching," having risen from the pulpit, having gone facing towards the Perfumed Chamber, stood on the jewelled terrace. The elder, having circumambulated three times, having paid homage at four places - "Blessed One, more than one incalculable period plus a hundred thousand cosmic cycles ago from now, having fallen at the feet of the Perfectly Enlightened One

Anomadassī, I aspired for the sight of you. That aspiration of mine has been fulfilled; I have seen you; that was the first seeing, this is the last seeing. There is no seeing of you again" - Having said this, having raised the salutation with joined palms resplendent with the joining of ten fingernails, having stepped backwards while still facing him as far as the range of sight, having paid homage saying "From now on, by way of death and rebirth-linking, there is no going and coming whatsoever to any place," he departed. There was a great earthquake reaching to the waters' boundary. The Blessed One said to the monks who stood surrounding him - "Follow, monks, your elder brother." The monks went as far as the gateway. The elder - Having turned them back saying "Stay, friends, be diligent," he departed together with his own assembly only. People - Lamenting "Previously the noble one wandered on a journey of return, but now this going is not for returning again," they followed behind. Then too he turned back saying "Be diligent, friends; activities are of such a nature."

Then the Venerable Sāriputta, assisting people for seven days on the way, in the evening having reached the village of Nāḷaka, stood at the village entrance at the foot of a banyan tree. Then a nephew of the elder named Uparevata, going outside the village, having seen the elder, having approached and paid homage, stood there. The elder said to him - "Is your grandmother at home?" Yes, venerable sir. Go and announce our arrival here. And when asked "Why has he come?" say "Today, it seems, he will stay one day within the village; prepare the birth-chamber; find a dwelling place for five hundred monks." He, having gone, said "Grandmother, my maternal uncle has come." Where is he now? At the village entrance. Alone, or is there anyone else? There are five hundred monks. For what reason has he come? He told her that news. The brahmin lady - Thinking "Why does he have a dwelling place prepared for so many? Having gone forth in his youth, does he wish to become a householder in his old age?" - having had the birth-chamber prepared, having had a dwelling place made for the five hundred monks, having lit torches, she sent them to the elder.

The elder ascended the mansion together with the monks. Having ascended, he entered the birth-room and sat down. Just by sitting down - he dismissed the monks saying "Go to your dwelling places." Just as they had barely gone, a severe illness arose in the elder; bloody diarrhoea with feelings bordering on death occurred; one vessel goes in, one comes out. The brahmin lady - thinking "The condition of my son does not please me," stood leaning against the door of her own dwelling chamber. The four great kings, looking to see "Where does the General of the Teaching dwell?" thinking "He is lying on his final Nibbāna bed in the birth-room in Nāḷaka village; let us go for a last sight of him," having come and paid homage, stood there. The elder - Who are you? The great kings, venerable sir. Why have you come? We shall be attendants of the sick. Let it be; there is an attendant of the sick; go, you - he dismissed them. At the end of their departure, in the same manner Sakka, the lord of the gods, and when he had gone, Suyāma and the others and the Great Brahmā came. Then too the elder dismissed in the same way.

The brahmin woman, having seen the coming and going of the deities -thinking "Who indeed are these who, having paid homage to my son, are departing?" having gone to the door of the elder's chamber - asked "Dear Cunda, what is the news?" He, having told her that news - said "The great female lay follower, venerable sir, has come." The

elder asked "Why has she come at an improper time?" She, having said "For the purpose of seeing you, dear son," asked "Dear son, who came first?" The four great kings, lay follower. Dear son, are you greater than the four great kings? These are like monastery attendants, lay follower; from the time of our Teacher's conception they took up protection with swords in hand. Dear son, after their departure, who came? Sakka, the lord of the gods. Dear son, are you greater even than the king of the gods? He is like a novice who carries the requisites, lay follower; at the time of our Teacher's descent from the Tāvātimsa heaven, he descended having taken the bowl and robes. Dear son, after his departure, who came, as if shining? Lay follower, he is called the Great Brahmā, your lord and teacher. Dear son, are you greater even than the Great Brahmā of my lord? Yes, lay follower; these indeed, it is said, on the day of our Teacher's birth, four Great Brahmās received the Great Man with a golden net.

Then the brahmin woman - As she was thinking "This is the power of my son alone; what indeed will be the power of my son's Teacher, the Blessed One?" suddenly the fivefold rapture arose and pervaded her whole body. The elder - Having thought "Joy and pleasure have arisen in my mother; now is the time for expounding the Teaching" - said "What are you thinking, great female lay follower?" She - said "This is the virtue of my son alone; but what kind of virtue will his Teacher have - this, dear, is what I am thinking." Great female lay follower, at the moment of my Teacher's birth, at the Great Renunciation, at the highest enlightenment, and at the turning of the wheel of the Teaching, the ten-thousandfold world system trembled; in morality, concentration, wisdom, liberation, and knowledge and vision of liberation there is none equal - "Thus indeed is the Blessed One" - thus having expanded in detail, he gave a proclamation of the Teaching connected with the virtues of the Buddha.

The brahmin woman, at the conclusion of the proclamation of the Teaching by her dear son, having become established in the fruition of stream-entry, said to her son - "Dear, Upatissa, why did you do thus? You did not give me such a thing as the Deathless for so long a time." The elder - Having thought "Now the debt for nurturing has been given to my mother, the brahmin woman Rūpasārī; this much will suffice," having dismissed the brahmin woman saying "Go, great female lay follower," said "Cunda, what is the time?" It is almost the break of dawn, venerable sir. Then assemble the community of monks. The community has assembled, venerable sir. "Lift me up and seat me, Cunda" - he lifted him up and seated him. The elder addressed the monks - "Friends, for forty-four years you have been wandering together with me; whatever bodily or verbal conduct of mine was not pleasing to you, forgive that, friends." "For so long, venerable sir, for us who have been wandering without leaving you, like a shadow, there is nothing displeasing whatsoever; but you, forgive us." Then the elder, as the crest of dawn was becoming visible, causing the great earth to resound, attained final Nibbāna through the Nibbāna element without residue of clinging. Many gods and humans paid honour at the elder's final Nibbāna.

The Venerable Cunda, having taken the elder's bowl and robes and the relic-strainer, having gone to Jeta's Grove, having taken the Elder Ānanda, approached the Blessed One. The Blessed One, having taken the relic-strainer, having spoken of the elder's virtues with five hundred verses, having had a relic shrine built, gave a sign to the Elder Ānanda for the purpose of going to Rājagaha. The elder announced it to the monks. The Blessed One, surrounded by the great community of monks, went to

Rājagaha. When he had arrived there, the Elder Mahāmoggallāna attained final Nibbāna. The Blessed One, having taken his relics, having had a shrine built, having departed from Rājagaha, having gone gradually facing towards the Ganges, went to Ukkacela. There, surrounded by the community of monks, having sat down on the bank of the Ganges, having taught there the discourse connected with the final Nibbāna of Sāriputta and Moggallāna, having departed from Ukkacela, he went to Vesālī. When he had thus gone, then the Blessed One, having dressed in the earlier period of the day, taking his bowl and robe, entered Vesālī for almsfood - this is the progressive account here.

"Sitting cloth" - here a piece of leather is intended. "Udena shrine" - the monastery built at the shrine site of the demon Udena is what is meant. The same method applies for Gotamaka and so on too. "Developed" means cultivated. "Cultivated" means done again and again. "Made a vehicle" means made like a yoked vehicle. "Made a foundation" means made like a foundation in the meaning of a support. "Established" means determined. "Accumulated" means heaped up on all sides, well cultivated. "Well undertaken" means thoroughly undertaken.

Having thus spoken in an unspecified manner, then specifying and showing, he said beginning with "of the Truth-finder, indeed" and so on. Here, "a cosmic cycle" means a duration of life. Whatever the life-span of human beings is at any given time, he could remain fulfilling that completely. "Or the remainder of a cosmic cycle" - means exceeding the stated hundred years by "a little more." But the Elder Mahāsīva said - "For Buddhas there is no thundering in an impossibility. For just as he suppresses the death-bordering feeling that arose at the village of Veḷuva for ten months, so, by attaining that attainment again and again, suppressing it for ten months each time, he could remain for this very fortunate cosmic cycle. Why then did he not remain? The clung-to body is indeed overcome by broken teeth and so on, and Buddhas, without reaching the state of broken teeth and so on, attain final Nibbāna in the fifth portion of the life-span, at a time when they are still dear and agreeable to many people. And when the great disciples who had awakened following the Buddha have attained final Nibbāna, he would have to remain like a single stump, or surrounded by young novices. Thereupon - He would incur the state of being despised, thinking 'Alas, the assembly of the Buddhas!' Therefore he did not remain." Even though this was said, that is not accepted; "duration of life" alone is what is defined in the commentary.

**167.** In "as his mind was possessed by Māra" (yathā taṃ mārena pariyuṭṭhitacitto), here "taṃ" is merely a particle. Just as any other worldling whose mind was possessed by Māra, whose mind was overwhelmed, would not be able to penetrate it, even so he was not able to penetrate it - this is the meaning. Why? For Māra pervades the mind of one for whom all twelve illusions are entirely not abandoned. Four illusions were not abandoned in the Elder; therefore Māra pervaded his mind. But what does he do when effecting the prepossession of the mind? He shows a frightful visual object or makes heard a sound as object; thereupon beings, having seen or heard that, giving up mindfulness, become open-mouthed. Having inserted his hand through their mouths, he crushes their hearts. Thereupon they remain as though unconscious. But would he be able to insert his hand through the Elder's mouth? However, he shows a frightful object. Having seen that, the Elder did not

penetrate the sign and indication. The Blessed One, though already knowing - "For what purpose did he address him up to the third time?" For the purpose of reducing sorrow by attributing fault, saying "this is your wrong-doing, this is your failure," when later he would request "Let the Blessed One remain, venerable sir."

### Explanation of the Talk on Māra's Request

**168.** "Māra the Evil One" - here, "Māra" means one who kills by urging beings towards harm, thus he is "Māra". "The Evil One" is a synonym for that very one. For he is called "the Evil One" because of being endowed with evil qualities. The Dark One, the Ender, Namuci, the Kinsman of the Heedless - these too are names of that very one. "For this speech was spoken" - for this one, having come to the seat of enlightenment itself in the eighth week after the Blessed One's attainment of highest enlightenment - having said "Blessed One, the purpose for which the perfections were fulfilled by you, that purpose has been reached by you, the knowledge of omniscience has been penetrated, what is there for you in wandering about the world?" just as today, in the very same way requested "Let the Blessed One now attain final Nibbāna, venerable sir." And the Blessed One to him - having said "I will not yet" and so on, rejected it. With reference to that, he said beginning with "For this speech was spoken, venerable sir."

Therein, "learned" means learned by means of the path. Likewise "disciplined," likewise "confident." "Very learned" means they are very learned because much has been learnt by them by means of the three Canons. "Bearing that very Teaching" means bearers of the Teaching. Or alternatively, very learned in the Scriptures and very learned in penetration. "Bearers of the Teaching" because of bearing the teachings of the Scriptures and penetration themselves - thus the meaning here should be understood. "Practicing in accordance with the Teaching" means practicing the teaching of insight, which is in conformity with the noble Teaching. "Practicing properly" means practicing a befitting practice. "Living in conformity with the Teaching" means habitually conducting oneself in conformity with the Teaching. "Their own teacher's doctrine" means the doctrine of one's own teacher. "Will tell" and so on - all are synonyms of one another. "With reason" means with a statement that has grounds and has cause. "With the wondrous effect of liberation" means until they will expound the Teaching having made it leading to liberation.

"Holy life" means the entire holy life of the Dispensation included in the threefold training. "Successful" means prosperous by means of the enjoyment of meditative absorption. "Prosperous" means having reached growth, like a tree fully in fruit and blossom, by means of the achievement of direct knowledge. "Widespread" means extended, by means of being established in each and every region. "Known to many" means known by many people, penetrated by means of the full realisation of the multitude. "Become widespread" means having attained a state of broadness in every respect. How? "Well proclaimed among gods and humans" means the meaning is that it is well proclaimed by all whatever intelligent gods and humans there are.

"Be at ease" means free from attachment. For you, Evil One, from the eighth week onwards - wandered about crying out "Let the Blessed One now attain final Nibbāna, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One attain final Nibbāna." From today onwards, be without endeavour; He says: do not make effort for the purpose of my final Nibbāna.



## Explanation of the Relinquishing of the Life Activities

**169.** "Mindful and fully aware, relinquished the life principle" means having well established mindfulness, having discerned with knowledge, he gave up, abandoned the life principle. Therein, the Blessed One did not relinquish the life principle like a clod of earth with the hand; but rather, having attained the meditative attainment for just three months, he produced the thought "Beyond that I shall not attain." With reference to that it was said - "Relinquished." "Ussajjī" is also a reading. "Great earthquake" means a great trembling of the earth. At that time, it is said, the ten-thousandfold world system trembled. "Terrifying" means fear-producing. "And the divine drums resounded" means the divine drums resounded, the rain god thundered with dry thunder, untimely lightning flashes went forth, momentary rain fell - thus it has been said.

"Uttered an inspired utterance" - why did he utter it? Someone might say - "The Blessed One, having been followed from behind again and again - 'Attain final nibbāna, venerable sir, attain final nibbāna, venerable sir' - troubled by fear, gave up the life principle." "May there be no occasion for that; for one who is frightened there is no inspired utterance" - for the purpose of explaining this, he uttered an inspired utterance released by the force of joy.

Therein, "measurable" means weighed and defined because of being evident to all, even dogs and jackals and so on. What is that? Sensual-sphere action. Not measurable, or there is no other mundane action similar to the measurable - thus "immeasurable." What is that? Exalted action. Or alternatively, sensual-sphere and fine-material-sphere is measurable, immaterial-sphere is immeasurable. Or that of little result is measurable, that of much result is immeasurable. "Origination" means being the cause of origination, making a mass, making a heap - this is the meaning. "Activity of becoming" means that which produces renewed becoming. "Relinquished" means gave up. "Sage" means the Buddha-sage. "Delighting internally" means delighting internally by oneself. "Concentrated" means concentrated by means of access and absorption concentration. "Broke through like armour" means he broke through like armour. "Self-existence" means the mental defilement arisen in oneself. This is what is meant - "He relinquished the mundane action reckoned as measurable and immeasurable, which had obtained the name 'origination' in the sense of having result, and 'activity of becoming' in the sense of producing becoming, and also Like a great warrior at the head of the battlefield breaks through armour, having been delighting internally and concentrated, he broke through the self-arisen mental defilement."

Or alternatively, "measurable" means weighing, determining. "And the immeasurable origination" means Nibbāna and origination. "Activity of becoming" means action leading to existence. "The sage relinquished" means the Buddha-sage, weighing by the method beginning with "the five aggregates are impermanent, the cessation of the five aggregates is Nibbāna, which is permanent," having seen the danger in existence and the benefit in Nibbāna, that action of the activity of becoming which is the root of the aggregates - he relinquished by the noble path that brings about the elimination of action, as stated thus "it leads to the elimination of action." How? Delighting internally, concentrated, he broke through self-existence like armour. For he, delighting internally by means of insight, concentrated by means of serenity -

thus, beginning from the preliminary stage, by the power of serenity and insight, he broke through the entire net of mental defilements that had stood enveloping individuality like armour, and which had obtained the name "self-existence" because of originating in oneself. And through the absence of mental defilements, the action already done, being incapable of producing rebirth-linking, is called relinquished - thus through the abandoning of mental defilements he abandoned action; and for one whose mental defilements have been abandoned there is no fear; therefore, being fearless, he relinquished the life principle, and it should be understood that he uttered the inspired utterance for the purpose of making known his fearless state.

### Explanation of the Great Earthquake

**171.** "When great winds blow" means at whatever time or in whatever time great winds blow, even as the great winds blow, winds called lifting winds arise; those, blowing, break off the water-sustaining wind that is nine hundred thousand yojanas plus sixty thousand in thickness; thereupon the water falls down into space, and as that falls down, the earth falls down. Again the wind, by its own power, binds and holds the water as if in a bellows; thereupon the water rises up, and as that rises up, the earth rises up. Thus the water, having been caused to tremble, causes the earth to tremble. And this trembling occurs even up to the present day, but due to the thickness, the sinking down and rising up is not discerned.

"Of great supernormal power, of great might" means of great supernormal power because of the greatness of what succeeds, of great might because of the greatness of what is to be experienced. "Limited" means weak. "Immeasurable" means powerful. "He causes this earth to tremble" means he causes the earth to tremble having produced supernormal power, either causing agitation like Mahāmoggallāna, or investigating like the novice Saṅgharakkhita, the nephew of the Elder Mahānāga. It is said that that venerable one, having attained arahantship at the very hall of tonsure, thought - "Is there indeed any monk by whom, having attained arahantship on the very day of going forth, the Vejayanta mansion has been caused to tremble before?" Thereupon - having known "There is no one" - thinking "I shall cause it to tremble," having stood on the top of the Vejayanta mansion by the power of direct knowledge, having struck with his foot, he was not able to cause it to tremble. Then Sakka's dancing women said to him - "Son Saṅgharakkhita, you wish to cause the Vejayanta mansion to tremble with your foul-smelling head alone; the mansion is firmly established, dear, how will you be able to cause it to tremble?"

The novice - reflecting "These deities are making sport with me, but I did not obtain a teacher; where indeed is my teacher, the Elder Mahānāga of the ocean?" having known that he had created a water-cave in the great ocean and was seated for the day's abiding, having gone there, having paid homage to the elder, stood there. Thereupon the elder - having said "What, dear Saṅgharakkhita, have you entered battle without having trained?" asked "Were you not able, dear, to cause the Vejayanta mansion to tremble?" "I did not obtain a teacher, venerable sir." Then the elder - "Dear, when one of your kind is unable to cause it to tremble, who else will cause it to tremble? Have you seen before, dear, a lump of cow-dung floating on the surface of water? Dear, those cooking a pan-cake mark it off edge by edge; understand by this simile," he said. He having said "That will suffice, venerable sir, with just that much," having determined "Let the place where the mansion is

established become water," went towards the Vejayanta mansion.

The celestial maidens, having seen him - said "Having gone away ashamed once, the novice comes again, comes again." Sakka, the king of gods - said "Do not speak with my son; now a teacher has been obtained by him; in a moment he will cause the mansion to tremble." The novice too struck the pinnacle of the mansion with his big toe. The mansion tilted from the four directions. The deities - cried out "Allow the mansion to be established, dear, allow the mansion to be established, dear!" The novice, having placed the mansion back in its original place, having stood on the top of the mansion, uttered an inspired utterance -

"Today indeed I have gone forth, today I have attained the elimination of mental corruptions;

Today I shake the mansion - oh, the eminence of the Buddha!"

"Today indeed I have gone forth... etc. oh, the eminence of the Teaching!"

"Today indeed I have gone forth... etc. oh, the eminence of the Community!"

Regarding the remaining six earthquakes beyond this, what should be said has already been stated in the Mahāpadāna.

Thus, among these eight earthquakes, the first is through the disturbance of the elements, the second through supernormal power, the third and fourth through the power of merit, the fifth through the power of knowledge, the sixth by way of giving applause, the seventh through the state of compassion, and the eighth through lamentation. When the Great Being was descending into his mother's womb and when emerging from it, the earth trembled through the power of his merit. At the full enlightenment, having been struck by the power of knowledge, it trembled. At the turning of the wheel of the Teaching, established in the state of applause, giving applause, it trembled. At the relinquishing of the life principle, established in its own nature of compassion, unable to endure the agitation of mind, it trembled. At the final Nibbāna, having been overwhelmed by the force of lamentation, it trembled. But this meaning should be understood by way of the earth deity; for the great primary earth, this does not apply, because it is without consciousness.

"These, Ānanda, are the eight causes" - here, "these" is a demonstration of what has been indicated. And by this much, the Venerable Ānanda - observed: "Surely today the life principle has been relinquished by the Blessed One." But the Blessed One, even though knowing that it had been observed, without giving an opportunity, combining the other sets of eight as well - said beginning with "There are these eight."

### Explanation of the Eight Assemblies

**172.** Therein, "many hundreds of assemblies of nobles" means similar to the meeting with Bimbisāra, the meeting with relatives, the meeting with the Licchavis, and so on; and that is obtained even in other world-systems. "Previously conversed" means conversation and talk had been done before. "Discussion" means discussion on the Teaching too had been previously engaged in. "Whatever their appearance" means they may be fair-skinned, dark-skinned, or of tawny complexion, but the Teacher was only of golden colour. But this was said with reference to bodily form. And only the

bodily form of those appears to them; but the Blessed One does not become like a barbarian, nor adorned with jewelled earrings; he sits only in the appearance of a Buddha. But they see only a form similar to their own. "Whatever their voice" means they may have broken voices, or croaking voices, or voices like crows, but the Teacher had only a voice like Brahmā. But this was said with reference to a different language. For even if the Teacher speaks while seated on the royal throne, they think "Today the king speaks with a sweet voice." But when the Blessed One has departed after speaking, upon seeing the king who has come again - The inquiry arises "Who indeed was that?" Therein, "who indeed was that" means: in this place, the one who was just now speaking in the Māgadhan language, in the Sinhalese language, in a sweet manner - "Who indeed has this one disappeared? Was it a god or a human being?" - even though investigating thus, they do not know. This is the meaning. For what purpose then does he expound the Teaching to those who do not know him? For the purpose of habituation. For the Teaching heard even in this way becomes a condition in the future; thus he teaches with regard to the future. The origination of "many hundreds of assemblies of brahmins" and so on too should be understood by way of the meeting with Soṇadaṇḍa, the meeting with Kūṭadaṇḍa, and so on, and also by way of other world-systems.

But for what purpose did the Blessed One bring forth these eight assemblies? Only for the purpose of showing his fearless nature. Having brought forth these, it is said, he spoke thus - "Ānanda, for the Truth-finder who has approached even these eight assemblies and is expounding the Teaching, there is neither fear nor timidity. But who is worthy of producing the perception that the Truth-finder would be afraid upon seeing Māra alone? Fearless, Ānanda, the Truth-finder, unfrightened, mindful and fully aware, relinquished the life principle."

### Explanation of the Eight Bases of Overcoming

**173.** "Bases of overcoming" means causes of overcoming. What do they overcome? Both opposing states and objects. For they overcome opposing states by way of being their counterpart, and objects by the person's superiority of knowledge.

Now, in the terms beginning with "perceiving material forms internally," one is called a percipient of material forms internally by way of preliminary work on internal material form. For one doing the blue preliminary work internally does it on the head-hair, or on the bile, or on the pupil of the eye. One doing the yellow preliminary work does it on the fat, or on the skin, or on the backs of the hands and feet, or on the yellow place of the eyes. One doing the red preliminary work does it on the flesh, or on the blood, or on the tongue, or on the red place of the eyes. One doing the white preliminary work does it on the bone, or on the teeth, or on the nails, or on the white place of the eyes. But that is not deeply blue, deeply yellow, deeply red, or deeply white; it is simply impure.

"One sees forms externally" means for one whose preliminary work has arisen internally, but the sign is external, he, thus by way of the preliminary work internally and absorption externally - is said to be "perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally." "Limited" means not extended. "Beautiful or ugly" means they are either beautiful or ugly. It should be understood that this basis of overcoming is stated only by way of the limited. "Having overcome them" means just as a person

with an effective digestion, having obtained a ladleful of food - gathering it together thinking "Is there anything here to eat?" makes it into just one mouthful, just so a person with superior knowledge, of clear knowledge - having overcome those forms thinking "Is there anything here to attain in this limited object? This is no burden for me," attains; the meaning is that right here, together with the arising of the sign, he reaches absorption. "I know, I see" - by this, his reflective attention is stated. And that is of one who has emerged from the attainment, not within the attainment. "One has this perception" means one has this perception both by way of the perception of reflective attention and by way of the perception of meditative absorption. For the perception of overcoming exists for him even within the attainment, but the perception of reflective attention is only for one who has emerged from the attainment.

"Immeasurable" means of extended measure; the meaning is great. "Having overcome" - but here, just as a man who eats much, having obtained one serving of food - does not see it as great, thinking "Let there be more too, what will this do for me?" just so a person with superior knowledge, of clear knowledge, having overcome them thinking "What is there here to attain? This is not immeasurable; there is no burden for me in producing unified focus of mind," attains; the meaning is that right here, together with the arising of the sign, he reaches absorption.

"Not perceiving material forms internally" means devoid of the perception of preliminary work on internal material form, either through not obtaining it or through not desiring it.

"One sees forms externally" means for one whose preliminary work and sign have both arisen only externally, he, thus by way of the preliminary work externally and absorption externally - is said to be "not perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally." The remainder here is by the same method as stated for the fourth basis of overcoming. Now, among these four, the limited has come by way of the applied-thought temperament, the immeasurable by way of the delusion temperament, the beautiful by way of the hate temperament, and the ugly by way of the lust temperament. For these are suitable for those. And that suitability of theirs has been stated in detail in the Visuddhimagga in the description of temperaments.

In the fifth basis of overcoming and so on, "blue" is said by way of all-inclusive classification. "Of blue colour" is by way of colour. "Of blue appearance" is by way of appearance; it means that without discerning the openings of measurement, the unmixed colours, having become uniformly blue only, are seen. "Of blue lustre" - this, however, is said by way of light; the meaning is having blue light, endowed with blue radiance. By this he shows their purity. For these four bases of overcoming are stated by way of pure colour only. "Flax flower" - for this flower is smooth and soft, and even when seen, it is only blue. But girikaṇṇikā flowers and so on, when seen, are only of white element. Therefore only this was taken, not those. "Of Benares" means originating from Benares. There, it is said, the cotton too is soft, the thread-spinners and the weavers too are skilful, and the water too is pure and smooth. Therefore that cloth is smoothed on both sides. On both sides it appears polished, soft, and smooth.

In "yellow" and so on too, the meaning should be understood by this very method. But here, the making of the kasiṇa, the preliminary work, and the procedure for absorption, beginning with "One who takes up the blue kasiṇa grasps the sign in blue, whether in a flower, or in a cloth, or in a colour element" - all this has been stated in detail in the Visuddhimagga itself. These eight bases of overcoming too were brought in for the purpose of showing the state of fearlessness only. It is said that having stated these, he said thus - "Ānanda, for the Truth-finder who is both entering into and emerging from even such attainments, there is neither fear nor timidity. But who is worthy of producing the perception that the Truth-finder would be afraid upon seeing Māra alone? Fearless, Ānanda, the Truth-finder, unfrightened, mindful and fully aware, relinquished the life principle."

### Explanation of the Eight Deliverances

**174.** The discussion on deliverances is of manifest meaning only. These eight deliverances too were brought in for the purpose of showing the state of fearlessness only. It is said that having stated these too, he said thus - "Ānanda, for the Truth-finder who is both entering into and emerging from even these attainments, there is neither fear nor timidity, etc. relinquished."

**175.** Now too, the Blessed One, without giving Ānanda an opportunity, began yet another teaching by the method beginning with "On one occasion, I." Therein, "newly fully enlightened" means having fully awakened, at the very first, in the eighth week.

**177.** "Relinquished" means let go, given up. It is said that having said thus - "Therefore this ten-thousandfold world system trembled" he said.

### The Talk on Ānanda's Request

**178.** "Enough" - this is a word of rejection. "Enlightenment" means the penetration of the knowledge of the four paths. "Do you have faith" - he says "you have faith in what has been thus spoken by the Truth-finder." "Therefore, Ānanda" - because you have faith in this statement, therefore he shows that "this is your wrong-doing."

**179.** "Ekamidāhan" - the Blessed One said this - "Not only did I address you right here, but on other occasions too, having addressed you, I made a gross sign, and that too was not penetrated by you; this is your own failure" - thus, for the purpose of dispelling sorrow, he began placing the fault upon the elder himself in various ways.

**183.** "From those who are dear and beloved" means from mother, father, brothers, sisters, and so on; through birth there is separation, through death there is parting, through existence there is becoming otherwise. "How could it be obtained here" - "that" means therefore, since there is separation from all that is dear and beloved, therefore even having fulfilled the ten perfections, even having attained the highest enlightenment, even having set in motion the wheel of the Teaching, even having displayed the Twin Miracle, even having made the descent from the heavenly world, that what is born, come to be, conditioned, subject to disintegration - that indeed even the Truth-finder's body should not disintegrate - this is impossible; even by crying, even by wailing, it is not possible to obtain that reason. "Should take back again" means what has been given up, rejected - that indeed he should eat again - this is the meaning.



**184.** "So that this holy life" means so that this holy life of the Dispensation included in the threefold training. "Last long" means enduring through time. "Endure" means enduring by way of long continuance. "The four establishments of mindfulness" and so on - all is spoken of in terms of both the mundane and the supramundane. However, the judgment on these qualities conducive to enlightenment has been stated in every way in the Visuddhimagga in the description of purification by knowledge and vision of the way. The remainder here is clear in itself.

*The explanation of the third recitation section is completed.*

### Commentary on the Elephant-Look

**186.** "With an elephant's gaze" means: for the public, the bones stand with tip touching tip, and for Individually Enlightened Ones, like hooks attached to one another; but it is not thus for Buddhas. For Buddhas, however, they stand bound together like fetters as one; therefore, at the time of looking behind, it is not possible to turn the neck. But just as a noble elephant wishing to look behind turns with his entire body, so it has to be turned. But when the Blessed One stood at the city gate - as soon as the thought "I shall look back at Vesālī" had arisen in his mind this earth, having turned like a potter's wheel, made the Blessed One face towards the city of Vesālī, thinking "Throughout many thousands of ten millions of cosmic cycles while fulfilling the perfections, the act of looking back was not done by you by turning the neck." With reference to that, this was said.

But was it not the case that not only from Vesālī, but also from Sāvattthī, Rājagaha, Nālandā, Pāṭaligāma, Koṭigāma, and Nāṭikagāma, at the time of departing from each of those places, each and every one of those was the last seeing; why did he not look back with an elephant's gaze at each of those places? Because it would not have been marvellous. Indeed, for one turning back and looking at each of those places, this would not have been marvellous; therefore he did not look back. Moreover, the kings of Vesālī were near to destruction; they would be destroyed within three years. They would make a shrine named "Elephant's Gaze" at the city gate and venerate it with scents, garlands, and so on; that would be for their welfare and happiness for a long time - thus out of compassion for them, he looked back.

"Who makes an end of suffering" means one who makes an end of the suffering of the round of rebirths. "The one with vision" means one with vision through five eyes. "Attained final Nibbāna" means attained final Nibbāna through the final extinguishment of the mental defilements.

### Commentary on the Four Great References

**187.** "Great references" means great occasions, or great citations; the meaning is great reasons stated by citing great ones such as the Buddha and so on.

**188.** "Should neither be delighted in" means it should not be heard beforehand by those full of mirth giving applause; for when this is done, afterwards when being told "this does not agree" - having said "What, was this the Teaching before, and now it is not the Teaching?" he does not give up his theory. "Should not be protested against" means - it should not be said beforehand thus "What is this fool saying?" for when spoken to thus, even what is fitting to say he will not say. Therefore he said - "without

delighting in, without protesting against." "Terms and phrases" means phrases reckoned as terms. "Having thoroughly learnt" means having well grasped thus: in this passage the canonical text is stated, in this passage the meaning is stated, in this passage the connection is spoken, in this passage the former and latter is spoken. "Should be traced back to the discourses" means should be brought down into the discourses. "Should be compared with the monastic discipline" means should be collated with the monastic discipline.

And here "discourse" means the Vinaya. As he said - "Where was it rejected? At Sāvattihī, in the Suttavibhaṅga." "Monastic discipline" means the Khandhaka. As he said - "In the offence against discipline." Thus even the Canon of monastic discipline is not exhausted. But the two Vibhaṅgas are the "discourse," and the Khandhaka and Parivāra are the "monastic discipline" - thus the Canon of monastic discipline is exhausted. Or alternatively, the Canon of discourses is the "discourse," and the Canon of monastic discipline is the "monastic discipline" - thus only two Canons are exhausted. Or the Canon of discourses and the Canon of the higher teaching are the "discourse," and the Canon of monastic discipline is the "monastic discipline" - even thus the three Canons are not yet exhausted. For indeed there is the word of the Buddha that is not named "discourse." That is: the Jātaka, the Paṭisambhidā, the Niddesa, the Suttanipāṭa, the Dhammapada, the Udāna, the Itivuttaka, the Vimānavatthu, the Petavatthu, the Theragāthā, the Therīgāthā, and the Apadāna.

But the Elder Sudinna - having rejected all that, saying "there is no word of the Buddha not named 'discourse'" - said "the three Canons are the 'discourse,' but the 'monastic discipline' is the reason." Then, showing that reason, he brought forth this discourse -

"Whatever teachings you, Gotamī, would know - 'these teachings lead to lust, not to dispassion; they lead to bondage, not to separation from bondage; they lead to accumulation, not to diminution; they lead to great desire, not to fewness of wishes; they lead to discontent, not to contentment; they lead to company, not to solitude; they lead to idleness, not to arousal of energy; they lead to being difficult to support, not to being easy to support' - you should definitely keep in mind, Gotamī - 'This is not the Teaching, this is not the monastic discipline, this is not the Teacher's instruction.' And whatever teachings you, Gotamī, would know - 'these teachings lead to dispassion, not to lust; they lead to separation from bondage, not to bondage; they lead to diminution, not to accumulation; they lead to fewness of wishes, not to great desire; they lead to contentment, not to discontent; they lead to solitude, not to company; they lead to arousal of energy, not to idleness; they lead to being easy to support, not to being difficult to support' - you should definitely keep in mind, Gotamī - 'This is the Teaching, this is the monastic discipline, this is the Teacher's instruction.'"

Therefore "in the discourses" means they should be traced back to the word of the Buddha in the three Canons. "In the monastic discipline" means they should be compared with this cause for the removal of lust and so on - this is the meaning here. "Do not fit into the discourses" means not having come anywhere in the succession of discourses, having peeled off the bark, they appear to have come from one or another of the Hidden Vessantara, the Hidden Ummagga, the Hidden Vinaya, or the Vedalla Canon - this is the meaning. For those that have come down thus and are not

seen in the removal of lust and so on should be rejected. Therefore it was said - "Thus indeed, monks, you should reject it." By this method the meaning should be understood everywhere.

"This, monks, is the fourth great reference that you should keep" means you should keep this fourth occasion for the establishment of the Teaching.

But in this instance, this miscellaneous matter should be understood. The four great references in the discourses, the four great references in the chapters, the four methods of answering questions, the discourse, the conformity with the discourse, the teacher's tradition, one's own opinion, and the three councils.

Therein - When a judgment on the Teaching has been reached as "this is the Teaching, this is the monastic discipline," these four great references are the measure. Whatever agrees herein, that alone should be accepted; the other should not be accepted even from one who cries out. Whatever agrees herein, that alone should be accepted; the other should not be accepted even from one who cries out.

When a judgment on what is allowable and not allowable has been reached as "this is allowable, this is not allowable" - The four great references stated in the chapter by the method beginning with "Whatever, monks, has not been rejected by me as 'this is not allowable', if that is in accordance with what is not allowable and prevents what is allowable, that is not allowable for you" are the measure. The discussion for judgment on those is stated in the Samantapāsādikā. According to the method stated therein, whatever is in accordance with what is allowable, that alone is allowable; the other is not allowable - thus the conclusion should be made.

A question to be answered definitively, a question to be answered analytically, a question to be answered with a counter-question, a question to be set aside - these are called the four methods of answering questions. Therein, when asked "Is the eye impermanent?" - It should be answered definitively "Yes, impermanent." This same method applies to the ear and so on. This is a question to be answered definitively. When asked "Is it the eye that is called impermanent?" - It should be answered by analysing thus: "Not only the eye; the ear too is impermanent, the nose too is impermanent." This is a question to be answered analytically. When asked "As the eye, so the ear; as the ear, so the eye," having asked in return "In what meaning do you ask?" when it is said "I ask in the meaning of seeing," it should be answered "No indeed"; when it is said "I ask in the meaning of impermanence," it should be answered "Yes." This is a question to be answered with a counter-question. But when asked such things as "The soul is the same as the body," it should be set aside as "This has been left undeclared by the Blessed One"; this question should not be answered. This is a question to be set aside. Thus, when questions have arrived in that manner, these four methods of answering questions are the measure. That question should be answered by means of these.

But among the discourse and so on, "discourse" means the three Canons that have been taken up at the three rehearsals. "Conformity with the discourse" means what is allowable by conformity. "Traditional teaching" means the commentary. "One's own idea" means one's own discernment through grasping the method by following understanding. Therein, the discourse cannot be obstructed; by one who obstructs it, the Buddha himself is obstructed. But what is allowable by conformity should be

accepted only when it agrees with the discourse, not otherwise. The traditional teaching too should be accepted only when it agrees with the discourse, not otherwise. But one's own idea is the weakest of all; that too should be accepted only when it agrees with the discourse, not otherwise. The rehearsal of five hundred, the rehearsal of seven hundred, and the rehearsal of a thousand - these are the three rehearsals. Even a discourse that has come in those rehearsals alone is the standard; a blameworthy discourse otherwise should not be accepted. Therein, even terms and phrases that appear to fit in should be understood as not fitting into the discourses and not agreeing with the monastic discipline.

### Commentary on the Story of Cunda the Smith's Son

**189.** "Of the smith's son" means of the goldsmith's son. It is said that he, being wealthy, a great householder, having become a stream-enterer at the very first sight of the Blessed One, had a monastery built in his own mango grove and dedicated it. With reference to that it was said - "in the mango grove."

"Sūkaramaddava" means the available meat of a pig that was neither too young nor too old, a chief boar. That, it is said, is both soft and smooth; the meaning is having had that prepared and having had it well cooked. Some say - "Sūkaramaddava is the name of a method of cooking soft rice in a broth of the five dairy products, just as 'gavapāna' is a name for a preparation." Others say - "Sūkaramaddava is a method of preparing an elixir; that comes in the treatise on elixirs; that was prepared by Cunda as an elixir thinking - 'May the final Nibbāna of the Blessed One not occur.'" Therein, however, in the four great continents with their surrounding two thousand islands, deities infused nutritive essence.

"I do not" - for what purpose does he roar this lion's roar? For the purpose of freeing from the censure of others. For those wishing to say "He did not give the remainder of what he himself had eaten to either monks or humans, but had it buried in a pit and destroyed" - having heard this, there will be no opportunity for such words - thus he roars the lion's roar for the purpose of freeing from the reproach of others.

**190.** "And having eaten the sūkaramaddava" means it arose after he had eaten, but not as a condition of having eaten. For if it had arisen without having eaten, it would have been excessively severe. But because he had eaten smooth food, his feeling was mild. By that very means he was able to walk on foot. "While purging" means being as if continuously undergoing a purging of flowing blood. "Said" means he said thus for the purpose of final nibbāna at the place wished for by himself. But these should be understood as verses placed by the elder monks who compiled the teachings.

### Commentary on the Bringing of Drinking Water

**191.** "In̐gha" is an indeclinable particle used in the sense of urging. "With clear water" means with pure water. "With sweet water" means with sweet-tasting water. "With cool water" means with delicately cool water. "Pure" means free from mud. "With good fords" means with beautiful fords.

### Commentary on the Story of Pukkusa the Malla's Son

**192.** "Pukkusa" is his name. "A son of the Mallas" means a prince of the Mallas. The Mallas, it is said, exercise kingship by turns. Until their turn arrives, they engage in trade. This one too, while engaged in trade, having had five hundred carts harnessed, when a headwind is blowing he goes in front, when the wind is blowing from behind, having sent the caravan leader in front, he himself goes behind. At that time, however, the wind blew from behind; therefore he, having sent the caravan leader in front, having sat down in the vehicle adorned with all jewels, having departed from Kusinārā, set out on the road thinking "I shall go to Pāvā." Therefore it was said - "Was travelling along the highway from Kusinārā to Pāvā."

"Āḷāra" is his name. He was tall and tawny-eyed, it is said; therefore his name was "Āḷāra." "Kālāma" is his clan. "Yatra hi nāma" means "whoever indeed." "Neither sees" means he did not see. But because of being connected with the word "yatra," this was stated in the sense of the future tense. For such is the characteristic of the word in instances like these.

**193.** "Niccharantīsu" means while flashing about. "Asaniyā phalantiyā" means of a ninefold thunderbolt, as if breaking apart, roaring with a great roar. For there are nine kinds of thunderbolts - the unconscious-maker, the wheel-maker, the arrow-like, the rumbling, the monkey-headed, the fish-tossing, the cock-like, the plough-handle, and the dry thunderbolt. Therein, the unconscious-maker renders one unconscious. The wheel-maker makes a single wheel. The arrow-like, having become like an arrow, falls. The rumbling falls making a rumbling sound. The monkey-headed is like a monkey raising its eyebrows. The fish-tossing is like a tossed fish. The cock-like, having become like a cock, falls. The plough-handle, having become like a plough, falls. The dry thunderbolt uproots the place where it falls.

"Deve vassante" means while the sky, having thundered with dry thunder, rains now and then. "Ātumāyaṃ" means I was dwelling in dependence on Ātumā. "Bhusāgāre" means in a threshing-floor hall. "Ettheso" means for this reason this great multitude of people has gathered together. "Kva ahosi" means where were you. "So taṃ bhante" means so you, venerable sir.

**194.** "Gold-coloured" means the colour of siṅgī-gold. "A polished pair" means a pair that is polished; the meaning is a pair of smooth cloaks. "To wear" means to be worn by me now and then; the meaning is to be put on. It is said that he would wear that only on such festival days and put it aside at other times. Thus he spoke with reference to a finest pair of auspicious garments. "Out of compassion" means dependent on compassion towards me. "Clothe" is a courteous expression - the meaning is: give one to me, one to Ānanda. But did the Elder take it? Yes, he took it. Why? Because his duty had reached its summit. Although he had entered the position of attendant having rejected such gains. But that duty of attendant of his had reached its summit. Therefore he took it. And also those who might speak thus - "Ānanda is one who does not fulfil, methinks; though attending for twenty-five years, nothing has previously been obtained by him from the Blessed One." He also took it for the purpose of cutting off the opportunity for their words. Moreover, the Blessed One knows - "Ānanda, even having taken it, will not wear it himself; he will make an offering to me alone. And by the son of the Mallas venerating Ānanda, the monastic community too will be venerated; thus there will be a great heap of merit for him" - so he had one given to the Elder. The Elder too took it for that very reason. "With a

talk on the Teaching" means with a talk of thanksgiving for the cloth offering.

**195.** "Offered to the Blessed One's body" means it was placed close by way of the inner robe and upper robe. The Blessed One too wore one of them as an inner robe and put on one as an upper robe. "Like a faded ember" means just as a faded ember glows only from within, but outside it has no radiance, so the meaning is that it appeared as having its radiance concealed outside.

"On these two occasions indeed, Ānanda" - why is it thus on these two occasions? Because of the distinction of nutriment and because of powerful pleasure. For on these two occasions, deities throughout the entire world-circle infuse nutritive essence into the food; that sumptuous food, having entered the belly, produces bright materiality. Because of the brightness of the nutriment-originated materiality, the faculties with mind as the sixth shine exceedingly. And on the day of his highest enlightenment - "The heap of mental defilements accumulated over many hundreds of thousands of tens of millions of cosmic cycles has indeed been eliminated by me today" - for him reflecting thus, powerful pleasure arises, consciousness becomes bright, when consciousness is bright the blood becomes bright, when the blood is bright the faculties with mind as the sixth shine exceedingly. And on the day of final Nibbāna too - "Today, now I shall enter the city called the Deathless, the great Nibbāna, which has been entered by many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas" - for him reflecting thus, powerful pleasure arises, consciousness becomes bright, when consciousness is bright the blood becomes bright, when the blood is bright the faculties with mind as the sixth shine exceedingly. Thus it should be understood that because of the distinction of nutriment and because of powerful pleasure, it is thus on these two occasions. "Upavattana" means in the Sāla grove turning back from the east. "Between the twin Sāla trees" means in the middle of the twin Sāla trees.

"Gold-coloured" - this verse was placed at the time of the communal recitation.

**196.** "Having bathed and drunk" - here, at that time, it is said, when the Blessed One was bathing, the fish and turtles within the river and the jungle thicket on both banks - everything became gold-coloured. "Mango grove" means the mango grove on the bank of that very river. "The Venerable Cundaka" - at that moment, it is said, the Elder Ānanda, wringing out his bathing cloth, stayed behind; the Elder Cunda was nearby. The Blessed One addressed him.

"Having gone, the Buddha, to the river Kakudhā" - these verses too were placed at the time of the Council itself. Therein, "the proclaimer, the Blessed One here in the Teaching" means the Blessed One proclaimed the Teaching in this Dispensation; the meaning is that eighty-four thousand aggregates of the Teaching were proclaimed. "Sat down at the front" means he sat down right in front of the Teacher. And by this time the Elder had arrived. When he had thus arrived, then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda.

**197.** "A loss" means those gains which are reckoned as the benefits of giving for others, those are losses. "Ill-gained" means even human existence obtained through the distinction of merit is ill-gained. "For you" (yassa te) means "for you" (yassa tava). Whether with uncooked grains or overcooked, who knows? Having eaten whatever kind of last almsfood, the Truth-finder attained final Nibbāna; certainly whatever this



or that was given by you. "A gain" means gains reckoned as the benefits of giving pertaining to the present life and the future life. "Well-gained" means your human existence is well-gained. "Of equal fruit" means of equal fruit in every way.

But is it not that the almsfood given by Sujātā, having eaten which the Truth-finder fully awakened, was consumed at a time when there was still lust, hate, and delusion, whereas this one given by Cunda was consumed at a time when lust, hate, and delusion were gone - why then are these of equal fruit? Because of the equality of final Nibbāna, the equality of attainments, and the equality of recollection. For the Blessed One, having eaten the almsfood given by Sujātā, attained final Nibbāna through the Nibbāna element with residue of clinging, and having eaten that given by Cunda, attained final Nibbāna through the Nibbāna element without residue of clinging - thus they are of equal fruit also by the equality of final Nibbāna. And on the day of full awakening he entered upon attainments numbering twenty-four hundred thousand ten millions, and on the day of final Nibbāna too he entered upon all those - thus they are of equal fruit also by the equality of attainments. And Sujātā afterwards heard - "That was not, it is said, a tree deity; he was, it is said, a Bodhisatta; having eaten, it is said, that almsfood, he fully awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment; for seven weeks, it is said, there was sustenance for him by that." Having heard this, for her - Powerful joy and pleasure arose as she recollected "It is indeed a gain for me." And for Cunda too, afterwards - Having heard "The final almsfood, it is said, was given by me; the pinnacle of the Teaching, it is said, was grasped on my account; having eaten, it is said, my almsfood, the Teacher attained final Nibbāna through the Nibbāna element without residue of clinging," as he recollected "It is indeed a gain for me," powerful pleasure arose - thus they should be understood as of equal fruit also by the equality of recollection.

"Conducive to fame" means conducive to a retinue. "Conducive to authority" means conducive to the state of being the chief.

"For one who is self-controlled" means for one who is self-controlled through the self-control of morality; the meaning is for one established in restraint. "Enmity is not accumulated" means the fivefold enmity does not increase. "The skilful one abandons evil" means the skilful one, accomplished in knowledge, by the noble path gives up completely all evil, inferior, unwholesome states. "Through the elimination of lust, hate, and delusion, one is quenched" means he, having given up this evil, through the elimination of lust and so on, is quenched through the quenching of the mental defilements. Thus, seeing both the offering of Cunda and the achievement of his own worthiness to receive offerings, he uttered the inspired utterance.

*The explanation of the fourth recitation section is completed.*

### Commentary on the Twin Sal Trees

**198.** "Together with a large community of monks" means here there is no limit to the counting of monks. For from the time of the suppression of the painful feeling at Veḷuvagāma - having heard "before long the Blessed One will attain final Nibbāna," among the monks who came from here and there, not even a single monk had departed. Therefore the Community had passed beyond counting. "The Upavattana, the Sāla grove of the Mallas" means just as from the bank of the Kalambana river one

must go through the gate of the Rājamātu monastery to the Thūpārāma, so too from the far bank of the Hiraññavatī to the Sāla grove park; just as the Thūpārāma is to Anurādhapura, so that is to Kusinārā. Just as from the Thūpārāma the road entering the city through the southern gate goes facing east and then turns to the north, so from the park the Sāla grove goes facing east and then turns to the north. Therefore that - is called "Upavattana." "Between the twin Sāla trees with the head to the north" means of that small bed, it is said, one row of Sāla trees was at the head end, one at the foot end. There too, one young Sāla tree was near the head end, one near the foot end. But further, it is said that "twin Sāla trees" are Sāla trees standing as if sewn together with each other by their roots, trunks, branches, and leaves. "Prepare a small bed" means in that park, it is said, there is a sleeping bed belonging to the royal family; with reference to that he said "prepare." The Elder too, having prepared that very one, offered it.

"I am tired, Ānanda, I will lie down" - for the Truth-finder indeed -

"Gocari, Kaḷāpa, Gaṇgeyya, Piṅgala, Pabbateyyaka;  
Hemavata and Tamba, Mandākinī, Uposatha;  
Chaddanta as the tenth - these are the best among elephants."

Herein, whatever is the strength of ten ordinary elephants reckoned as Gocari, that is the strength of one Kaḷāpa. Thus, by a calculation increasing tenfold, the strength measuring ten thousand koṭis of ordinary elephants - all that, from the time of partaking of Cunda's almsfood, went to utter elimination like water thrown into a sieve. From the city of Pāvā to the city of Kusinārā is three leagues; in this interval, even though coming with great endeavour, having sat down at twenty-five places, the Blessed One entered the Sāla grove at the time of sunset, at the evening time. Thus illness comes crushing all health. As if showing this meaning, speaking words that arouse religious emotion in the whole world - he said "I am tired, Ānanda, I will lie down."

But why did the Blessed One come here with such great endeavour? Is it not possible to attain final Nibbāna elsewhere? It is not that it is not possible to attain final Nibbāna anywhere; but he came here for three reasons. For the Blessed One sees thus - "If I attain final Nibbāna elsewhere, the occasion for the arising of the Mahāsudassana Sutta will not occur; but attaining final Nibbāna at Kusinārā, the success that I was to experience in the heavenly world I experienced in the human world itself - that I shall teach, having adorned it with two recitation sections; having heard that from me, many people will think that wholesome deeds should be done."

He also sees further - "Subhadda will not see me attaining final Nibbāna elsewhere, and he is one to be guided by a Buddha, not one to be guided by a disciple; disciples are not able to guide him. But having approached me attaining final Nibbāna at Kusinārā, he will ask a question, and at the conclusion of the answering of the question, having become established in the refuges, having obtained the going forth and full ordination in my presence, having taken a meditation subject, while I am still living, having attained arahantship, he will become the last disciple."

He also sees further - "When I attain final Nibbāna elsewhere, at the distribution of the relics there will be a great dispute; blood will appear flowing like a river. When I have attained final Nibbāna at Kusinārā, the brahmin Doṇa, having appeased that contention, will distribute the relics." It should be understood that the Blessed One came here with such great endeavour for these three reasons.

"Lion's posture" - here there are four sleeping places: the sleeping place of one who enjoys sensual pleasures, the sleeping place of ghosts, the lion's sleeping place, and the Truth-finder's sleeping place.

Therein - "Mostly, monks, beings who enjoy sensual pleasures sleep on their left side" - this is the sleeping place of one who enjoys sensual pleasures. For among them, mostly there are none who sleep on their right side.

"Mostly, monks, ghosts sleep lying on their backs" - this is the sleeping place of ghosts. For because of having little flesh and blood, ghosts, entangled with a mass of bones, are unable to sleep on one side; they sleep only on their backs.

"A lion, monks, the king of beasts, prepares his sleeping place on his right side, etc. he is delighted" - this is the lion's sleeping place. For because of the abundance of energy, the lion, the king of beasts, having placed the two front paws in one place and the hind paws in one place, having inserted the tail between the thighs, having observed the position of the front paws, hind paws, and tail, having placed the head on top of the two front paws, sleeps. Even having slept during the day, when awakening he awakens without being startled, but having raised his head, he observes the position of the front paws and so on. If anything has shifted from its position - "This is not suitable for your birth and valour," becoming displeased, he sleeps right there and does not depart for his food resort. But when they have remained without shifting - "This is suitable for your birth and valour," full of mirth, having risen, having stretched with a lion's stretch, having shaken off the mass of his mane, having roared the lion's roar three times, he departs for his food resort.

"The sleeping place of the fourth meditative absorption is called the Truth-finder's sleeping place." Among those, here the lion's sleeping place has come. For this is called the highest sleeping place because it is a posture abundant in energy.

"Foot upon foot" means the left foot upon the right foot. "Overlapping" means placing over, having placed slightly beyond. For when ankle rubs against ankle, or knee against knee, feeling arises repeatedly, the mind does not become fully focused, and the sleeping place is uncomfortable. But when placed beyond so that they do not rub together, feeling does not arise, the mind becomes fully focused, and the sleeping place is comfortable. Therefore he lay down thus. But here, because of having entered the sleeping place of non-rising - "Having attended to the perception of rising" was not said. And here the non-rising should be understood in terms of the body; but in terms of sleep, on that night there was no opportunity at all for the Blessed One's life-continuum. For in the first watch there was a proclamation of the Teaching to the Mallas, in the middle watch to Subhadda, in the last watch he exhorted the Community of monks, and at the strong break of dawn he attained final Nibbāna.

"In full bloom with all flowers" means they were all in bloom all around, from the root up to the top, covered under one canopy. And not only the twin Sāla trees alone; all the trees too were entirely in full bloom. And not only in that very park; indeed in the entire ten-thousand world-systems, flower-bearing trees bore flowers, fruit-bearing trees bore fruit, on the trunks of all trees trunk-lotuses, on the branches branch-lotuses, on the creepers creeper-lotuses, in the sky sky-lotuses, and breaking through the surface of the earth stalk-lotuses bloomed. The entire great ocean was covered with lotuses of five colours. The Himalaya, three thousand yojanas in extent, was like a densely bound peacock-tail fan, like an unbroken string of flower garlands, like a flower wreath well pressed and bound, and like a well-filled flower basket - exceedingly delightful.

"They scatter upon the Truth-finder's body" means those twin Sāla trees, with their trunks, branches, and boughs shaken by the earth deities, scatter upon the Truth-finder's body; the meaning is they sprinkle flowers upon the body. "Showered" means they scatter as if submerging. "Covered" means they scatter repeatedly, again and again. "Divine" means originating from the Nanda pond in the heavenly world; they are golden in colour, with petals the size of a leaf-parasol, and they bear pollen the size of a large water-vessel. And not only mandārava flowers alone; but also other divine flowers such as coral tree and koviḷāra flowers and so on, having filled golden baskets, thrown by deities stationed at the rim of the world-circle, in the city of the Thirty-three, and in the Brahmā world, fall from the sky. "Upon the Truth-finder's body" means having come without being scattered along the way, they scatter upon the Truth-finder's body alone with the powder of petal-filament pollen.

"Divine sandalwood powder also" means the sandalwood powder used by the deities. And not only of the deities alone; also the sandalwood powder used by serpents, supaṇṇas, and human beings. And not only sandalwood powder alone; powders of all divine fragrant substances such as black aloe, red sandalwood, and so on, powders of yellow orpiment, eye ointment, gold, and silver, all divine fragrant preparations, having filled caskets of gold, silver, and so on, thrown by deities stationed at the rim of the world-circle and elsewhere, without being scattered along the way, scatter upon the Truth-finder's body alone.

"Divine musical instruments also" means the musical instruments used by the deities. And not only those alone; it should be understood that all musical instruments of the types of stringed, leather-covered, solid, and hollow, belonging to gods, serpents, supaṇṇas, and human beings in the ten-thousand world-systems, having assembled together in a single world-system, sound in the sky.

"Divine songs also" means the Varuṇa-Vāraṇa deities, it is said, are long-lived deities by that name - Having heard "The Great Man, having been reborn in the human realm, will become a Buddha," they began to string a garland, thinking "We shall take it and go on the day of his taking conception." While they were still stringing - Having heard "The Great Man has been born in his mother's womb," when asked "For whom are you stringing?" they said "It is not yet finished; we shall take it and go on the day of his emergence from the womb." Again, having heard "He has come forth," they said "We shall go on the day of the Great Renunciation." Having lived at home for twenty-nine years, having heard "Today he has gone forth in the Great Renunciation," they said "We shall go on the day of the full enlightenment." Having striven for six

years, having heard "Today he has fully awakened," they said "We shall go on the day of the setting in motion of the wheel of the Teaching." Having heard "Having spent seven weeks at the seat of enlightenment, having gone to Isipatana, the wheel of the Teaching was set in motion," they said "We shall go on the day of the Twin Miracle." Having heard "Today he performed the Twin Miracle," they said "We shall go on the day of the descent from the heavenly world." Having heard "Today he made the descent from the heavenly world," they said "We shall go at the relinquishing of the life principle." Having heard "Today he relinquished the life principle," they said "It is not yet finished; we shall go on the day of the final Nibbāna." "Today the Blessed One, between the twin Sāla trees, mindful and fully aware, has assumed the lion's posture on his right side, and will attain final Nibbāna at the time approaching the break of dawn. For whom are you stringing?" - having heard this, however - "What is this indeed! 'This very day he took conception in his mother's womb, this very day he emerged from his mother's womb, this very day he went forth in the Great Renunciation, this very day he became the Buddha, this very day he set in motion the wheel of the Teaching, this very day he performed the Twin Miracle, this very day he descended from the heavenly world, this very day he relinquished the life principle, this very day, it is said, he will attain final Nibbāna.' Surely he should have remained at least for the time of drinking rice gruel on the second day. For one who has fulfilled the ten perfections and attained Buddhahood, this is indeed unsuitable" - and taking the garlands though still unfinished, having come and not finding space within the world-circle, having hung upon the rim of the world-circle, running along the very rim of the world-circle, grasping hand with hand and neck with neck, having sung concerning the Three Jewels, the thirty-two marks of a great man, the six-coloured rays, the ten perfections, the five hundred and fifty Jātaka stories, and the fourteen Buddha-knowledges, at the conclusion of each they say "Of great fame, of great fame." It was dependent on this that it was said - "Divine songs also resound in the sky in homage to the Truth-finder."

**199.** But the Blessed One, lying on his right side between the twin Sāla trees, having seen the great endeavour of the assembly that had gathered together from the surface of the earth up to the rim of the world-circle, and from the rim of the world-circle up to the Brahmā world, announced it to the Venerable Ānanda. Therefore it was said - "Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda, etc. in homage to the Truth-finder." Having thus shown the great honour, showing thereby that he himself was not truly honoured, he said beginning with "But not by this much, Ānanda."

This is what is meant - "Ānanda, when I lay prostrate at the feet of Dīpaṅkara, having combined the eight qualities and making the resolution, the resolution was not made for the sake of garlands, scents, musical instruments, and songs, nor were the perfections fulfilled for that purpose. Therefore I am not truly venerated by this homage."

But why does the Blessed One, having elsewhere praised the result - unlimited even by a Buddha's knowledge - of homage made by taking even a single flax flower and reflecting on the virtues of the Buddha, here reject such great homage? Out of compassion for the assembly and out of desire for the long duration of the Dispensation. For if the Blessed One had not thus rejected it, in the future they would

not fulfil morality where morality should come, they would not fulfil concentration where concentration should come, and they would not cause the seed of insight to be taken up where insight should come. Having encouraged their attendants, they would dwell merely making offerings. And this material offering is unable to sustain the Dispensation even for one day, even for the duration of drinking a single bowl of rice gruel. For even a thousand monasteries like the Mahāvihāra and a thousand shrines like the Mahācetiya are unable to sustain the Dispensation. By whomever the action is done, it belongs to that one alone. But right practice is the befitting homage to the Truth-finder. For that was wished for by him, and it is able to sustain the Dispensation; therefore, showing that, he said beginning with "Whoever indeed, Ānanda."

Therein, "practising in accordance with the Teaching" means one who has entered upon the preliminary practice, which is the practice in conformity with the ninefold supramundane Teaching. But that very practice, because of its being befitting, is called "proper." "One who has entered upon that proper course" means one practising properly. One who practises and fulfils that very conformity with the Teaching, reckoned as the preliminary practice, is one living in conformity with the Teaching.

And "preliminary practice" should be understood as right practice comprising morality, the regulation of good conduct, the undertaking of ascetic practices, up to change-of-lineage. Therefore, whatever monk, having become established in the six disrespects, transgresses the regulation and earns his livelihood by wrong means of livelihood, he is not one practising in accordance with the Teaching. But whoever does not transgress even to the slightest degree all the training rules laid down by himself, the Conqueror's boundary, the Conqueror's limit, the Conqueror's measuring line, he is called one practising in accordance with the Teaching. For a nun too, the same method applies. Whatever male lay follower, having undertaken the five enmities and the ten unwholesome courses of action, proceeds and applies himself to them, he is not one practising in accordance with the Teaching. But whoever is one who fulfils the three refuges, the five precepts as well, and the ten precepts, observes eight Observance days in a month, gives gifts, makes offerings of scent and offerings of garlands, attends upon mother and father, attends upon righteous ascetics and brahmins, he is called one practising in accordance with the Teaching. For a female lay follower too, the same method applies.

"With the supreme homage" means with the highest homage. For this spiritual homage is able to sustain my Dispensation. For as long as these four assemblies will venerate me with this homage, so long my Dispensation will shine like a full moon in the middle of the sky - thus he shows.

### Commentary on the Elder Upavāṇa

**200.** "Dismissed" means removed. "Step aside" means go away. The Elder, by just a single word, having laid down the fan, stood to one side. "Attendant" and so on was said with reference to the state of being a non-regular attendant at the time of the first enlightenment. When the Elder said thus "This, Venerable Sir, Venerable Upavāṇa," Ānanda observes the state of being at fault of Upavāṇa; thinking "Come, I shall speak of his faultless state," the Blessed One said beginning with "Mostly, Ānanda." Therein, "mostly" - this was said with reference to the state of being left



behind of the non-percipient beings and the immaterial deities. "Unpervaded" means not contacted or not filled. It is said that in the region near the Blessed One, in a space the size of a hair-tip, having created a subtle individual existence, ten by ten influential deities stood. Beyond them, twenty by twenty. Beyond them, thirty by thirty. Beyond them, forty by forty. Beyond them, fifty by fifty. Beyond them, sixty by sixty deities stood. They do not harm one another with hand or foot or cloth. There is no occasion to say "Move away from me, do not jostle me." They were just as stated: "Now those deities, being ten, being twenty, being thirty, being forty, being fifty, stand on a space the size of the pricking of a needle-point, and they do not harm one another." "Obstructing" means blocking. It is said that the Elder was by nature of large body, resembling a young elephant. He, having put on a rag-robe, appeared as if exceedingly large.

"To see the Truth-finder" - not being able to see the Blessed One's face, they grumbled thus. But could they not pierce through the Elder and see? Yes, they were not able. For deities are able to pierce through and see worldlings, but not those who have eliminated the mental corruptions. And because of the Elder's influence and abundance of radiance, they were not able even to approach him. But why was only the Elder abundant in radiance, and not other Worthy Ones? Because he had been a guardian deity at the shrine of the Buddha Kassapa.

It is said that when the Perfectly Enlightened One Vipassī had attained final Nibbāna, they made just one shrine for the relic body which was like a solid mass of gold, for Buddhas of long life span have just one shrine. That, human beings raised to the measure of a yojana with golden bricks a ratana in length, a span in width, and two inches in thickness, using yellow orpiment and red arsenic to serve the function of clay, and sesame oil to serve the function of water. Then the terrestrial deities raised it to the measure of a yojana, then the sky-dwelling deities, then the hot rain cloud deities, then the cloud rain cloud deities, then the gods ruled by the four great kings, then the gods of the Thirty-three raised it to the measure of a yojana - thus the shrine was seven yojanas in height. When human beings came having taken garlands, scents, cloths, and so on, the guardian deity, having taken them, venerated the shrine while they themselves were watching.

At that time this elder, having been a wealthy brahmin, having taken one yellow cloth, went. The deity, having taken the cloth from his hand, venerated the shrine. The brahmin, having seen that, with a gladdened mind, having made the aspiration "May I too in the future be a guardian deity at the shrine of such a Buddha," having passed away from there, was reborn in the heavenly world. While he was still wandering in the heavenly world and the human world, the Blessed One Kassapa arose in the world and attained final Nibbāna. His too was just one body of relics. Having taken that, they had a shrine of one yojana built. He, having been a guardian deity there, when the Dispensation had disappeared, having been reborn in heaven, in the time of our Blessed One, having passed away from there, having taken conception in a great family, having gone out, having gone forth, attained arahantship. Thus, because he had come having been a guardian deity at the shrine, the elder should be understood as one abundant in radiance.

"The deities, Ānanda, are grumbling" - thus, Ānanda, the deities are grumbling; it shows that there is no other fault whatsoever in my son.

**201.** Why did he say "But of what sort, venerable sir"? The Blessed One, you - you say "the deities are grumbling," but of what sort do you consider them to be, do they accept your final nibbāna? - thus he asks. Then the Blessed One - showing their state of non-acceptance, meaning "I am not speaking of a reason for acceptance," said beginning with "There are, Ānanda" and so on.

Therein, "in space with perception of earth" means having created earth in space, there they have perception of earth. "Weep" (kandanti) means they cry. "Fall down as if cut off" means having become as if cut in the middle, they fall here and there. "Roll forward" means rolling forward, they come back to the very place where they fell. "Roll backward" means rolling, they go to the further side from the place where they fell. Furthermore, having stretched out both feet, rolling about once forwards, once backwards, once to the left, once to the right - they are called "rolling forward, rolling backward." "There are, Ānanda, deities on earth with perception of earth" - the natural earth, it is said, is unable to support deities. There, like the Brahmā Hatthaka, deities sink. Therefore the Blessed One said - "Create a gross individual existence, Hatthaka." Therefore, with reference to those deities who created earth upon the earth, this was said - "on earth with perception of earth."

"Without lust" means deities who are non-returners and those who have eliminated the mental corruptions, who have abandoned displeasure, who are like stone pillars.

#### Commentary on the Four Places of Reverence

**202.** "Completed the rains retreat": during the time of the Buddha, it is said, monks gather together on two occasions - when entering the rains retreat is approaching, for the purpose of taking a meditation subject, and having completed the rains retreat, for the purpose of announcing the distinction produced through the pursuit of the meditation subject taken. And just as in the time of the Buddha, so too in the island of Tambapaṇṇi, monks on the near side of the Ganges gathered together at the Brazen Palace, and monks on the far side of the Ganges at the Tissa Great Monastery. Among those, the monks on the near side of the Ganges, having taken refuse-removing brooms, having come and gathered together at the Great Monastery, having done the plastering work at the shrine - having made the arrangement "Having completed the rains retreat, come and gather together at the Brazen Palace," having dwelt in comfortable places, having completed the rains retreat, having come to the Brazen Palace, in the halls of the five collections, those for whom the canonical text was well-practised recite the canonical text. Those for whom the commentary was well-practised recite the commentary. Whoever fails in the canonical text or the commentary, him - having investigated "In whose presence was it learned by you?" they correct and make him learn it properly. Those dwelling on the far side of the Ganges also do exactly the same at the Tissa Great Monastery. Thus, when monks have gathered together on two occasions, those who previously, at the time of entering the rains retreat, having taken a meditation subject and gone, come for the purpose of announcing their distinction - with reference to such ones, he said beginning with "Formerly, venerable sir, having completed the rains retreat."

"Inspiring to the mind" means cultivated by the mind, esteemed. Or those who develop the mind, increase the mind, and wash away the dust of lust and so on - such ones is the meaning. The Elder, it is said, being dutiful, upon seeing a senior monk,

does not remain sitting rigidly, but having gone out to meet him, having taken the umbrella and bowl and robes from his hand, having dusted off a chair, gives it to him; having performed the duty for the one seated there, having prepared and given a lodging. Upon seeing a junior monk, he does not remain sitting in silence, but standing nearby, he performs the duty. He, aspiring to non-decline through that practice of duty, spoke thus.

Then the Blessed One - thinking "Ānanda is thinking 'I shall not obtain the sight of those inspiring to the mind,'" "Come, I shall tell him the place for seeing those inspiring to the mind, where dwelling, without wandering here and there, he will obtain the sight of monks inspiring to the mind" - having thought thus, he said beginning with "There are these four."

Therein, "of a faithful one" means of one with a confident mind towards the Buddha and so on, one who is dutiful, for whom from early morning onwards all duties such as the duties of the shrine courtyard and so on are clearly seen as already performed. "To be seen" means worthy of seeing, to be gone to for the purpose of seeing. "That arouse spiritual urgency" means productive of spiritual urgency. "Places" means reasons, or indeed actual locations.

"Whoever" - this was said for the purpose of showing the beneficial nature of pilgrimage to shrines. Therein, "wandering on a pilgrimage to the shrines" means first, as for those who wander about here and there sweeping the shrine courtyard, washing the seats, pouring water at the Bodhi tree - regarding them there is nothing at all to be said; it shows that even those who, having set out from such and such a monastery thinking "We shall pay homage at the shrine," die along the way with a confident mind, will without obstacle become established in heaven.

### Commentary on the Discussion of Ānanda's Questions

**203.** "Not seeing them, Ānanda" - this shows that not seeing womankind, this is the highest practice here. For a monk who has closed the door and is seated in his lodging, as long as he does not see a woman who has come and is standing at the door, for so long definitively neither greed arises in him nor does his mind waver. But when there is seeing, both of those would indeed occur for him. Therefore he said - "Not seeing them, Ānanda." "When there is seeing, Blessed One, how" - taking almsfood and having gone to places approached and so on, when there is seeing, he asks how one should proceed. Then the Blessed One, because - it is better to converse with a man standing with a sword taken up, saying "If you speak with me, I shall strike off your head right here," or with a demoness standing saying "If you speak with me, I shall crunch your flesh right here and devour it." For there is only the destruction of one single individual existence on that account, not the experiencing of unlimited suffering in the realms of misery. But when there is conversation and talk with a woman, intimacy arises; when there is intimacy, an opportunity arises; one with a mind overcome by lust, having reached disaster regarding morality, becomes one who fills the realms of misery. Therefore he said "not conversing." And this too was said -

"One may converse with one sword in hand, one may converse even with a goblin;

One may approach even a venomous snake, by which one bitten does not live.

But one alone should never converse with a woman alone."

"But when one is being addressed" means if a woman asks the day, or requests morality, or wishes to hear the Teaching, or asks a question, or there is such work to be done by those gone forth, at such a time one who does not speak, she says "This one is dumb, this one is deaf, having eaten he just sits with mouth shut." Therefore one must inevitably speak. But when thus being addressed, he asks how one should proceed. Then the Blessed One - with reference to this exhortation: "Come, monks, establish the thought of a mother towards those who are like mothers, establish the thought of a sister towards those who are like sisters, establish the thought of a daughter towards those who are like daughters" - he said "Mindfulness, Ānanda, should be established."

**204.** "Should not be occupied" means be unbound by obligations, free from concern. "Strive for the essential goal" means strive for the highest goal, for arahantship. "Devote yourselves" means make pursuit for the achievement of that. "Diligent" means therein with mindfulness not lapsed. "Ardent" through the exertion of energy and ardour. "Resolute" means dwell with minds directed forth, through disregard for the body and for life.

**205.** "But how, venerable sir" - how should one proceed with those wise warriors and others. "Surely they will ask me in return" - "How, venerable sir Ānanda, should one proceed with regard to the Truth-finder's body?" He asks "What reply should I give to them?" "With new cloth" means with new Kāsi cloth. "With carded cotton" means with thoroughly beaten cotton. For Kāsi cloth, because of its fineness, does not absorb oil, but cotton does absorb it. Therefore he said "with carded cotton." "Iron" means golden. For here "gold" is what is intended by "iron."

#### Commentary on Persons Worthy of a Pagoda

**206.** "A wheel-turning monarch" - here, why does the Blessed One allow worthiness of a monument for a king who has died having lived in the midst of a household, but not for a moral worldling monk? Because it would not have been marvellous. For if monuments for worldling monks were allowed, in the island of Tambapaṇṇi alone there would be no room for monuments, and likewise in other places. Therefore, thinking "they would not be marvellous," he does not allow it. A wheel-turning monarch arises only once; therefore a monument for him is marvellous. However, for a moral worldling, just as for a monk who has attained final Nibbāna, it is proper indeed to make even a great honour.

#### Commentary on the Wonderful Qualities of Ānanda

**207.** "Dwelling" means here a circular pavilion is intended by "dwelling," having entered it. "Lintel of the door" means the door-bolt timber standing at the top of the door-post. "Stood crying" means it is said that that venerable one thought - "The Teacher has spoken to me of a dwelling place productive of religious emotion, the beneficial nature of pilgrimage to shrines has been spoken of, the question of how to conduct oneself regarding womankind has been answered, the practice regarding one's own body has been declared, the four who are worthy of a monument have been spoken of; certainly today the Blessed One will attain final Nibbāna." As he was

thus thinking, strong displeasure arose in him. Then this occurred to him - "Crying in the presence of the Blessed One is indeed uncomfortable; having gone to one side, I shall make my sorrow thin." He did so. Therefore it was said - "Stood crying."

"Ahañca vatamhī" means "ahañca vata amhi"; "aham vatamhī" is also a reading. "He who has compassion for me" means he who has compassion for me and instructs me. "From tomorrow onwards, to whom shall I give water for washing the face, whose feet shall I wash, whose lodging shall I look after, whose bowl and robes shall I take and go about with?" - thus he lamented much. "Addressed" means not seeing the elder among the community of monks, he addressed them.

"With bodily action through friendliness" means by bodily action such as giving water for washing the face and so on, carried out through the influence of a mind of friendliness. "Beneficial" means done for the growth of welfare. "Pleasant" means done with happiness and pleasure only, not having been afflicted and unhappy - this is the meaning. "Undivided" means not done by making two portions. For just as one person acts only face to face and not in one's absence, and another acts only in one's absence and not face to face - it is said to mean done without making such a division. "Limitless" means devoid of measure. For even the world-circle is too confined, even the highest point of existence is too low - it shows that the bodily action done by you is indeed great.

"With verbal action through friendliness" means by verbal action such as announcing the time for washing the face and so on, carried out through the influence of a mind of friendliness. But further, having heard an exhortation - The word "Good, venerable sir" is also verbal action of friendliness itself. "With mental action through friendliness" means right early, having attended to one's toilet, having sat down on a secluded seat - By mental action carried out thus: "May the Teacher be healthy, free from affliction, happy." "You have made merit" shows that you are one accomplished in resolution for a hundred thousand cosmic cycles. And by "You have made merit," to this extent being confident, do not fall into negligence; rather, devote yourself to striving. For thus devoted, you will soon be without mental corruptions; at the time of the recital of the Teaching, you will attain arahantship. It shows that service done for one such as me is indeed not fruitless.

**208.** And having said thus, as if spreading out the great earth, as if expanding space, as if pushing down the world-circle mountain, as if lifting up Sineru, as if taking the great rose-apple tree upon his shoulders and shaking it, beginning the talk of praise of the Venerable Ānanda, then the Blessed One addressed the monks. Therein, why was "Monks, those who are at present" not said? Because of the nonexistence of another Buddha. And by this itself this should be understood - "Just as even in the interval between world-circles there is no other Buddha." "Wise" means experienced. "Intelligent" means skilled in the aggregates, elements, sense bases and so on.

**209.** "An assembly of monks approaches Ānanda for an audience" means those who, wishing to see the Blessed One, approach the elder, and those who, having heard the elder's virtues thus: "The Venerable Ānanda, it seems, is all-pleasing, handsome, beautiful, very learned, an ornament of the monastic community," come - with reference to them it was said "an assembly of monks approaches Ānanda for an audience." This same method applies everywhere. "Delighted" means joyful, with

gladdened minds, thinking "by hearing, seeing too is matched." "The Teaching" means such a manner of friendly welcome as: "Is it bearable, friend, is it endurable, do you do your work with wise attention, do you fulfil your duty to your teachers and preceptors?" Therein, in the case of nuns - "Do you, sisters, proceed having undertaken the eight rules of respect?" - this too is a difference. When lay followers have come, he does not make a friendly welcome thus: "Lay follower, does your head or a limb not ail you, are your sons and brothers healthy?" Rather, he does thus - "How do you, lay followers, keep the three refuges and the five moral precepts, do you observe the eight Observance days of the month, do you fulfil the duty of attendance upon your mother and father, do you look after righteous ascetics and brahmins?" For female lay followers too, the same method applies.

Now, making a comparison of the Elder Ānanda with a wheel-turning monarch, he said beginning with "These four, monks." Therein, "nobles" means those of the warrior caste, both consecrated and unconsecrated. They, it is said - Having heard the talk of his virtues thus: "The king, the wheel-turning monarch by name, is handsome, beautiful, pleasing, travelling through the sky, he instructs the kingdom, a righteous king of righteousness," they are delighted, thinking "by hearing, even seeing is matched." "Speaks" means speaking - He makes a friendly welcome thus: "How do you, dear ones, fulfil the duty of a king, do you preserve the tradition?" But in the case of brahmins - He makes a friendly welcome thus: "How do the teachers recite the sacred verses, how do the pupils learn the sacred verses, have you received offerings or garments or tawny cows?" In the case of householders - He makes a friendly welcome thus: "How are you, dear ones, is there no oppression from the royal family by way of punishment or taxation, does the rain god send down showers properly, are the crops succeeding?" In the case of ascetics - He makes a friendly welcome thus: "How is it, venerable sir, are the requisites of one gone forth easily obtained, are you not negligent in the duties of an ascetic?"

### Commentary on the Teaching of the Mahāsudassana Sutta

**210.** "Small town" means a cramped small town resembling a town in appearance. "Barren town" means an uneven town. "Branch town" means just as the branches of trees are small, even so, in a small town resembling a branch of other great cities. "Wealthy warriors" means great warriors who have attained the substance of great warrior wealth. This same method applies everywhere.

Among these, those called wealthy warriors are those who have wealth of a hundred ten millions or a thousand ten millions buried and stored away; the daily expenditure comes to one cartload of coins, and in the evening two come in. Those called wealthy brahmins are those who have eighty ten millions of wealth deposited; the daily expenditure comes to one pot of coins, and in the evening one cartload comes in. Those called very wealthy householders are those who have forty ten millions of wealth deposited; the daily expenditure comes to five baskets of coins, and in the evening a pot comes in.

"Do not say so, Ānanda" means Ānanda, do not say so; this should not be called "a small town." For I, in order to speak of the success of this very city -having said "standing and sitting on many occasions, with great endeavour, with great effort, I have come here," he spoke beginning with "Once upon a time." "Having plenty of



food" means endowed with hard and soft foods. "By the sound of elephants" means when one elephant makes a sound, eighty-four thousand elephants make a sound; thus it was never free from the sound of elephants; likewise with the sound of horses. But here, meritorious beings, travelling in chariots yoked with four Sindh horses, following one another, move about in the side streets; thus it was never free from the sound of chariots. But here, drums and other musical instruments were constantly being played; thus it was never free from the sound of drums and so on as well. Therein, "the sound of cymbals" means the sound of bronze cymbals. "The sound of hand-clapping" means the sound of striking a four-cornered basket with the hand. Some also say "the sound of a kettle-drum."

"Eat, drink, and chew" means eat, drink, and chew. Here, however, this is the summary: with this tenth sound of "consume, dear," it was never free from sound, having uninterrupted sound. But just as in other cities there are sounds of this kind: "Throw away the rubbish, take the spade, take the basket, we shall go abroad, take the packet of rice-grain, take the parcel of food, prepare the shields, weapons, and so on" - he shows that here it was not so.

And having said "with the tenth sound," having completed the entire Mahāsudassana Sutta with "Kusāvatī, Ānanda, the royal city, was surrounded by seven walls," he spoke beginning with "Go, Ānanda." Therein, "come forth" means come facing forward; the meaning is "come." But did they not know of the Blessed One's arrival? They knew. Wherever the Buddhas go, there is indeed a great commotion; they had not come because they were seated on some business. Thinking "They, having come, will arrange standing and sitting space for the Community of monks and will see him," the Blessed One sent word to them even at an untimely hour.

### Commentary on the Homage of the Mallas

**211.** "Amhākañca no": here the syllable "no" is merely a particle. "Afflicted with misery" (aghāvino) means those in whom suffering has arisen. "Unhappy" (dummanā) means displeased. "Overcome with mental suffering" (cetodukkkhasamappitā) means overcome with displeasure. "Having arranged them generation by generation" (kulaparivattaso kulaparivattaso ṭhapetvā) means having arranged each generation, each family group, separately according to street sections and according to road sections.

### Commentary on the Story of Subhadda the Wandering Ascetic

**212.** "A wandering ascetic named Subhadda" means a clothed wandering ascetic who had gone forth from a wealthy brahmin family of northern origin. "Matter of uncertainty" means a matter of doubt. But why did this occur to him today in this way? Because of a decisive support of such a kind. Formerly, it is said, at the time of making merit, there were two brothers. They cultivated the crop together. Therein, the elder one - had the thought: "The gift of the first-fruits of the crop should be given by me on nine occasions in one crop." He, having given the first-fruits of the seed at sowing time, consulted with the younger brother at the time of the grain forming - "At the time of the grain forming, we shall split open the grain and give." The younger one - said: "You wish to destroy the young crop." The elder, having known the younger brother's state of non-compliance, having divided the field, from his own portion, having split open the grain, having extracted the milk, having combined it

with ghee and butter, gave it; at the time of flattened rice, having made flattened rice, he gave it; at the reaping time, the first-fruits of the reaping; at the sheaf-making, the first-fruits of the sheaves; at the bundling and so on, the first-fruits of the bundles, the first-fruits of the threshing floor, the first-fruits of the threshing-floor produce, the first-fruits of the granary - thus in one crop he gave the gift of the first-fruits on nine occasions. But the younger one gave after taking out from the granary.

Among those two, the elder one was born as the Elder Aññāsikoṇḍañña. The Blessed One - looking to see "To whom indeed should I first expound the Teaching?" expounded the Teaching at the very first, thinking "Aññāsikoṇḍañña gave nine gifts of the first-fruits in one crop; I shall teach him this highest Teaching." He became established in the fruition of stream-entry together with eighteen crores of brahmā gods. But the younger one, having fallen behind because of having given the gift afterwards, having thus reflected at the time of the Teacher's final Nibbāna, wished to see the Teacher.

"Do not trouble the Truth-finder" - the Elder, it is said - imagining "These followers of other sects by nature only grasp their own position; for the purpose of answering him, there will be bodily and verbal harming of the Blessed One who would have to speak much, and even by nature the Blessed One is already weary," spoke thus. The wandering ascetic - thinking "This monk does not give me permission, but one who is in need should comply and get it done," conforming to the Elder, spoke for the second time and the third time also.

**213.** "He heard" means he heard with his natural ear while he was standing at the curtain-door speaking, and having heard, because he had come with great endeavour solely for the benefit of Subhadda, he said beginning with "Enough, Ānanda." Therein, "enough" (alaṃ) is an indeclinable particle in the sense of rejecting. "Seeking knowledge" (aññāpekkho) means having become one desirous of knowing. "Directly knew" (abbhaññimsu) means they knew according to their acknowledgment, just so. This is what is meant - If that acknowledgment of theirs was leading to liberation, all of them directly knew; if not, they did not directly know. Therefore, "Is their acknowledgment leading to liberation or not leading to liberation?" - this alone is the meaning of that question. Then the Blessed One, by stating the nature of their not leading to liberation, having rejected with "enough" because of the absence of purpose and the absence of opportunity, expounded the Teaching itself. For in the first watch, having expounded the Teaching to the Mallas, in the middle watch to Subhadda, in the last watch having exhorted the Community of monks, "I shall attain final Nibbāna at the time approaching the break of dawn" - thus indeed had the Blessed One come.

**214.** "An ascetic is not found there" means the first ascetic, the stream-enterer, is not found there; the second, the once-returner ascetic; the third, the non-returner ascetic; the fourth, the arahantship ascetic is not found there - this is the meaning. "In this" - having spoken without specification in the former teaching, now specifying his own Dispensation, he said. "The other doctrines are empty of ascetics" means empty of ascetics, hollow, void are the other doctrines - of the twelve ascetics, namely the four who have begun insight for the purpose of the four paths, the four who have attained the paths, and the four who have attained the fruitions. "And these, Subhadda" means these twelve monks. "Were to dwell rightly" - here, a stream-enterer, having

spoken to another about the state he has attained, making that one a stream-enterer, is called one who dwells rightly. This same method applies to the once-returner and so on. One who has attained the path of stream-entry, making another also one who has attained the path of stream-entry, is called one who dwells rightly. This same method applies to those who have attained the remaining paths. One who has begun insight for the purpose of the path of stream-entry, having spoken about one's own well-practised meditation subject, making another also one who has begun insight for the purpose of the path of stream-entry, is called one who dwells rightly. This same method applies to those who have begun insight for the purpose of the remaining paths. With reference to this he said - "Were to dwell rightly." "The world would not be empty of Worthy Ones" means it would be without interval, like a reed thicket or an arrow-reed grove.

"At twenty-nine years of age" means having been twenty-nine years old by age. In "yaṃ pabbajim," here "yaṃ" is merely a particle. "Seeking what is wholesome" means searching and seeking "what is wholesome." Therein - "What is wholesome" - the knowledge of omniscience is intended; the meaning is seeking that. "Since I" means since I went forth; he shows that in between here there are more than fifty years. "Of the true method of the Teaching" means of the noble path teaching. "One practising in the domain" means one practising in the domain, on the path of insight. "Outside of this" means outside of my Dispensation. "There is not even an ascetic" means there is not even one practising insight in the domain; it has been said that the first ascetic, the stream-enterer, is not found.

"Who here" means you who here in the Dispensation have been consecrated with the consecration of a pupil in the presence of the Teacher - it is a gain for you, it is well-gained for you. In the external doctrine, it is said, whichever pupil the teacher - "Give this one the going forth, exhort this one, instruct this one" - says, that one has been established by him in his own position; therefore for him - "Give this one the going forth, exhort this one, instruct this one" - these are gains. Subhadda too, having taken that very external doctrine, spoke thus to the Elder.

"He received" - how did he receive? The Elder, it is said, having led him aside, having moistened his head with drinking water from a water vessel, having spoken about the meditation subject of the skin pentad, having shaved off his hair and beard, having had him clothed in ochre robes, having given the refuges, brought him to the presence of the Blessed One. The Blessed One, having given full ordination, told him the meditation subject. He, having taken that, in a secluded part of the park, having determined upon walking meditation, striving, endeavouring, developing insight, having attained arahantship together with the analytical knowledges, having come back, having paid homage to the Blessed One, sat down. With reference to that - "Not long after being fully ordained" and so on was stated.

"He was the last direct disciple of the Blessed One" - this is the utterance of the Elders who held the convocations. Therein, one who, having gone forth while the Blessed One was still living, afterwards obtained full ordination, took a meditation subject, and attains arahantship; or one who, having obtained full ordination while he was still living, afterwards took a meditation subject and attains arahantship; or one who, having taken a meditation subject while he was still living, afterwards attains arahantship - all of these are the last direct disciple. But this one, while the Blessed

One was still living, both went forth and was fully ordained and, having taken a meditation subject, attained arahantship.

*The explanation of the fifth recitation section is completed.*

### Commentary on the Last Words of the Truth-finder

**216.** Now he began the exhortation to the community of monks; to show that, "Then the Blessed One" and so on was said. Therein, "expounded and laid down" means the Teaching was both expounded and laid down, and the monastic discipline was both expounded and laid down. "Laid down" means established, set up - this is the meaning. "That will be your Teacher after my passing" means that Teaching and discipline will be your Teacher after my passing. For by me, while still present, for you - "This is light, this is heavy, this is curable, this is incurable, this is a worldly fault, this is a fault by regulation, this offence is emerged from in the presence of an individual, this offence is emerged from in the presence of a group, this offence is emerged from in the presence of the monastic community" - thus, when a case has arisen by way of the seven classes of offences, the monastic discipline called the Ubhatovibhaṅga together with the Khandhakas as its supplement was taught. That entire Canon of monastic discipline, when I have attained final Nibbāna, will accomplish the function of the Teacher for you.

And by me, while still present - "These are the four establishments of mindfulness, the four right strivings, the four bases for spiritual power, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven factors of enlightenment, the noble eightfold path" - having analysed and classified these teachings in this way and that way, the Canon of discourses was taught. That entire Canon of discourses, when I have attained final Nibbāna, will accomplish the function of the Teacher for you. And by me, while still present - "These are the five aggregates, the twelve sense bases, the eighteen elements, the four truths, the twenty-two faculties, the nine causes, the four nutriments, the seven contacts, the seven feelings, the seven perceptions, the seven volitions, the seven consciousnesses. Therein too, 'this many phenomena belong to the sensual-sphere, this many belong to the fine-material-sphere, this many belong to the immaterial-sphere, this many are included, this many are not included, this many are mundane, this many are supramundane'" - having analysed and classified these teachings, the Canon of the higher teaching adorned with the twenty-four universal conditional relations and the Great Book of Conditional Relations of infinite methods was taught. That entire Canon of the higher teaching, when I have attained final Nibbāna, will accomplish the function of the Teacher for you.

Thus all this, from the full enlightenment up to the final Nibbāna, was spoken and uttered for forty-five years - "Three Canons, five collections, nine factors, eighty-four thousand portions of the Teaching" - thus it is of great classification. Thus these eighty-four thousand portions of the Teaching remain; I alone attain final Nibbāna. And now I alone exhort and instruct; when I have attained final Nibbāna, these eighty-four thousand portions of the Teaching will exhort you and instruct you - thus the Blessed One, showing many reasons - Having exhorted "That will be your Teacher after my passing," again showing the conduct for the future, he said beginning with "Now, just as."

Therein, "address" means they speak, they express. "By name or by clan" means without saying "junior," he should be addressed by name thus "Tissa, Nāga," or by clan thus "Kassapa, Gotama," or by addressing as "friend" thus "friend Tissa, friend Kassapa." "As 'venerable sir' or as 'venerable'" means he should be addressed thus "venerable sir Tissa, venerable Tissa." "May abolish" means if wishing, may abolish; if he wishes, he may abolish - this is the meaning. But why did he establish it with an alternative expression rather than saying definitively "abolish"? Because of having seen the power of Mahākassapa. For the Blessed One sees - "Even if 'abolish' were said, at the time of the communal recitation Kassapa will not abolish." Therefore he established it only with an alternative.

Therein - "Some elder monks said thus - Setting aside the four expulsions, the remaining are the lesser and minor" - by this method, the discussion on the lesser and minor that came up at the Recitation of the Five Hundred, the judgment on this is stated in the Samantapāsādikā. Some, however, say - When asked by King Milinda, "Venerable sir, Nāgasena, which is the lesser, which is the minor?" Because it was said "Wrong-doing, great king, is the lesser; insulting speech is the minor," the Elder Nāgasena knows the lesser and minor. But Mahākassapa, not knowing that -

"Let the Community hear me, friends. There are training rules of ours that have gone among householders; even householders know - 'This is allowable for you ascetics, disciples of the Sakyan, this is not allowable for you.' If we abolish the lesser and minor training rules, there will be those who will say - 'The training rule was laid down by the ascetic Gotama for disciples like smoke for a time. As long as their Teacher remained, they trained in the training rules. Since their Teacher attained final Nibbāna, now they do not train in the training rules.' If it is the proper time for the Community, the Community should not establish what has not been established, should not abolish what has been established, should proceed having accepted the training rules as they were established. This is the motion" -

He announced the wording of the legal act. That should not be taken thus. For the Elder Nāgasena - said thus: "Let there be no opportunity for those of other doctrines." The Elder Mahākassapa announced the wording of the legal act: "I will not abolish the lesser and minor offences."

The discussion on the highest penalty too, because it came in the communal recitation, was judged in the Samantapāsādikā.

"Uncertainty" means wavering. "Doubt" means the inability to judge; for whomever doubt should arise - "Is he indeed a Buddha, or is he not a Buddha? Is it indeed the Teaching, or is it not the Teaching? Is it indeed the Community, or is it not the Community? Is it indeed the path, or is it not the path? Is it indeed the practice, or is it not the practice?" - to you I say "Ask, monks." This is the meaning here in brief. "You should not fail to ask even out of respect for the Teacher" means if, out of respect for the Teacher, you do not ask thus: "We went forth in the presence of the Teacher, even the four requisites are as if belonging to the Teacher, we, having not had uncertainty for so long a time, are not worthy to have uncertainty today in the final period." "Let a friend inform a friend, monks" shows that among you, whoever is a friend and devoted companion of whatever monk, let him inform that one: "I will speak to this monk," and having heard that talk, all will become free from uncertainty.

"Thus confident" means the meaning is "thus I believe, I." "Knowledge itself" means just the knowledge that makes evident the state of being free from uncertainty; the meaning is that here for the Truth-finder it is not mere faith. "Of these, Ānanda" means of these five hundred monks seated within the curtain. "Who is the last" means who is the last in terms of spiritual qualities. He said this with reference to the Elder Ānanda himself.

**218.** "Strive with diligence" means you should accomplish all duties through the continuous presence of mindfulness. Thus the Blessed One, lying on his final Nibbāna bed, having put all the exhortation given over forty-five years into the single term of diligence, gave it. "This was the Truth-finder's final speech" - this, however, is the utterance of the Elders who held the convocations.

### Commentary on the Account of the Final Nibbāna

**219.** Hereafter, to show the preliminary work for final Nibbāna that the Blessed One performed before attaining final Nibbāna, "Then the Blessed One attained the first meditative absorption" and so on was said. Therein, "The Blessed One has attained final Nibbāna, venerable sir" - having seen the absence of in-breath and out-breath of the Blessed One who had attained cessation, he asks. "No, friend" - how does the Elder know? The Elder, it is said, entering into each and every attainment together with the Teacher, having gone as far as the emergence from the plane of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, knows that "Now the Blessed One has attained cessation, and within cessation there is no such thing as death."

"Then the Blessed One, having emerged from the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling, attained the plane of neither-perception-nor-non-perception" etc. "Having emerged from the third meditative absorption, he attained the fourth meditative absorption" - here the Blessed One attained the first meditative absorption in twenty-four states, the second meditative absorption in thirteen states, likewise the third meditative absorption, and the fourth meditative absorption in fifteen states. How? In the ten foulnesses, in the thirty-two aspects, in the eight kasiṇas, in friendliness, compassion, and altruistic joy, in breathing, and in demarcated space - in these twenty-four states, to begin with, he attained the first meditative absorption. But having set aside the thirty-two aspects and the ten foulnesses, in the remaining thirteen he attained the second meditative absorption, and in those very same the third meditative absorption. But in the eight kasiṇas, in the equanimity divine abiding, in breathing, in demarcated space, and in the four immaterial states - in these fifteen states he attained the fourth meditative absorption. And this too is merely a condensed account. But the Blessed One, the lord of the Teaching, entering the city of Nibbāna, having entered all the attainments numbering twenty-four hundred thousand ten millions, like one going to a foreign country having embraced his relatives, having experienced the happiness of all attainments, entered.

"Having emerged from the fourth meditative absorption, immediately the Blessed One attained final Nibbāna" - here there are two kinds of contiguity: contiguity with meditative absorption and contiguity with reviewing. Therein, having emerged from the meditative absorption, the final Nibbāna of one who has descended into the life-continuum right there is called contiguity with meditative absorption. Having emerged from the meditative absorption, having again reviewed the factors of



meditative absorption, the final Nibbāna of one who has descended into the life-continuum right there is called contiguity with reviewing. These too are just two kinds of contiguity. But the Blessed One, having attained the meditative absorption, having emerged from the meditative absorption, having reviewed the factors of meditative absorption, attained final Nibbāna with the life-continuum consciousness, which is indeterminate, which is the truth of suffering. For whoever they may be - Buddhas or Individually Enlightened Ones or noble disciples - even including an ant, all die with the life-continuum consciousness alone, which is indeterminate, which is the truth of suffering. The great earthquakes and so on are according to the method already stated.

**220.** "Beings" means living beings. "Without equal" means devoid of a counterpart person. "Who has attained power" means one who has attained the tenfold power of knowledge.

**221.** "Having the nature of arising and falling" means having the intrinsic nature of arising and falling. "Their appeasement" means the appeasement of those activities; the meaning is that the unconditioned Nibbāna itself is happiness.

**222.** "There was no in-breath and out-breath" means in-breath and out-breath did not arise. "Without longing" means without longing due to the absence of longing, which is a term for craving. "Referring to peace" means referring to, dependent on, with reference to Nibbāna without residue of clinging. "The one who died" means he who died. This is what is meant - "Friend, my Teacher, the Buddha-sage, thinking 'I shall go to peace,' died referring to peace; for such a one whose mind was stable, in-breath and out-breath has now not arisen, does not exist, does not occur."

"With a mind that was not withdrawn" means with a mind that was not sluggish, not shrunken, but well expanded. "He endured the feeling" means he endured the feeling; he did not become one who followed feeling and roll about here and there.

"Deliverance" means deliverance unobstructed by any phenomenon, the attainment of the state of complete non-designation in every respect, arose similar to the extinguishing of a lamp.

**223.** "Then there was" - he said this with reference to the very earthquake stated below thus: "together with the final Nibbāna there was a great earthquake." For that was both hair-raising and terrifying. "Endowed with all excellent qualities" means endowed with all excellent causes.

**224.** "Not free from lust" means worldlings as well as stream-enterers and once-returns. For displeasure has not been abandoned by them. Therefore they too, having raised their arms, wept. "Having placed both hands on their heads, they cried" - all this should be understood by the former method.

**225.** "Are grumbling" means they grumble, saying "The venerable ones are unable to accept it even themselves; how will they console the remaining people?" "But of what sort, venerable sir, does the Venerable Anuruddha consider the deities to be?" means "Venerable sir, of what sort does the Venerable Anuruddha observe the deities to be? Do they accept the Teacher's final Nibbāna?"

Then, for the purpose of showing their situation, the Elder said beginning with "There are, friend." The meaning of that has already been stated. "The remainder of the

night" means a short period remaining of the night, because he attained final Nibbāna at the strong break of dawn. "In talk on the Teaching" means there was no other separate talk on the Teaching as such; rather, they spent the time with talk connected with death of such a kind as "Friends, this King of Death is not ashamed even of the Teacher who is without rival in the world together with its gods; how much less will he be ashamed of the worldly multitude?" For while they were speaking that talk, in just a moment the dawn arose.

**226.** "Then" means the Elder said this to the Elder having seen the break of dawn. "On that very business" means what kind of honour with garlands, scents and so on should there be at the place of final Nibbāna, what kind of sitting place should there be for the community of monks, what kind of solid and soft food should there be - thus, on that very business which was to be done having heard of the Blessed One's state of having attained final Nibbāna.

### Commentary on the Veneration of the Buddha's Body

**227.** "And all the musical instruments" means all the musical instruments. "Gather together" means having had the drum circulated, assemble. They did just so. "Circular pavilions" means circular pavilions made of cloth. "Preparing" means making ready.

"Through the south to the south" means by the southern direction of the city to the southern direction. "Passing outside to the outside" means without entering into the inner city, carrying along the outer side of the city by the outside itself. "To the south of the city" means having placed it at a location similar to the southern gate of Anurādhapura, having made honour and respect, they will cremate it at a location similar to Jetavana - this is the meaning.

**228.** "Eight chief Mallas" means eight Malla kings of middle age, endowed with strength. "Having bathed their heads" means having washed their heads and bathed. "The Venerable Anuruddha" - the Elder alone was well-known as one possessing the divine eye; therefore, even though there were other great elders present - they asked the Elder, thinking "He will make it clear to us and explain." "But how, venerable sir, is the intention of the deities" - venerable sir, we know our own intention at least. They ask how is the intention of the deities. The Elder, first showing their intention, said beginning with "Your, indeed" and so on. "The shrine of the Mallas named Makuṭabandhana" - this is the name of the adornment-ceremonial hall of the Malla kings. But it is called "shrine" in the sense of being respected.

**229.** "As far as the junctions, refuse heaps and rubbish places": here "junction" means a house junction. "Refuse heap" means a drain for expelling dung heaps. "Rubbish place" means a rubbish heap. "With divine and human dancing": above there are the dances of the deities, below those of human beings. This same method applies to singing and so on. Furthermore, human beings among the deities, deities among the human beings - thus too they went honouring and venerating. "Having carried it through the middle to the middle of the city": while the Blessed One's body was being thus carried, the wife of the Malla general Bandhula, named Mallikā - having heard "They are bringing the Blessed One's body," having had brought out the great creeper parure, similar to the ornament of Visākhā, which had been kept

unused since the time of her husband's death - thinking "With this I shall venerate the Teacher," having had it polished and washed with scented water, she stood at the door.

That ornament, it is said, existed in only three places: with those two women, and in the house of the thief Devadāniya. And when the Teacher's body arrived at the door, she - having said "Lower the Teacher's body, dear ones," fastened that ornament on the Teacher's body. That was fastened on from the head down to the soles of the feet. The golden-coloured body of the Blessed One, adorned with the great ornament made of the seven precious things, shone exceedingly. Having seen that, she, with a confident mind, made an aspiration - "Blessed One, for as long as I shall wander in the round of rebirths, may there be no separate task of adorning for me; may my body always be like one with an ornament fastened on."

Then, having lifted up the Blessed One with the great ornament made of the seven precious things, having carried him out by the eastern gate, to the east of the city at the shrine of the Mallas named Makuṭabandhana, here they laid down the Blessed One's body.

### Commentary on the Story of the Elder Mahākassapa

**231.** "From Pāvā to Kusinārā" means having walked for almsfood in the city of Pāvā, thinking "I shall go to Kusinārā," he was travelling on the highway. "Sat down at the foot of a tree" - here, why is "day residence" not said? Because he did not sit down for the purpose of day residence. For the Elder's retinue monks were all reared in comfort and of great merit. They, going on foot at the noon period on ground like heated rock, became wearied. The Elder, having seen them - "The monks are wearied, and the place to be reached is not far; having rested a little and having allayed the disturbance, in the evening time I shall go to Kusinārā and see the One of Ten Powers" - having turned aside from the road, at the foot of a certain tree, having laid out his double robe, having cooled his hands and feet with water from a water vessel, he sat down. His retinue monks too, having sat down at the foot of a tree, doing the work of wise attention, speaking the praise of the three jewels, sat down. Thus, because he sat down for the purpose of dispelling disturbance, "day residence" was not said.

"Having taken a mandārava flower" means having placed a flower the size of a large bowl on a makeshift stick and having taken it like an umbrella. "He saw" means he saw him coming from afar. And having seen him, he thought -

"This mandārava flower appears in the hand of the naked ascetic, and this does not always appear on the human path; but when someone possessing supernormal power performs a supernormal transformation, then it occurs at the omniscient Bodhisatta's descent into the mother's womb and so on. But today no supernormal transformation has been performed by anyone; my Teacher has not descended into the mother's womb, nor is he emerging from the womb, nor is there today his full enlightenment, nor the setting in motion of the wheel of the Teaching, nor the Twin Miracle, nor the descent from the heavenly world, nor the relinquishing of the life principle. But my Teacher is old; certainly he must have attained final Nibbāna."

Thereupon - Having given rise to the thought "Shall I ask or not?" - "But if I ask while just sitting, disrespect towards the Teacher will have been shown" - having risen up, having stepped away from the place where he was standing, just as the elephant king Chaddanta puts on a jewelled hide, having put on the cloud-coloured rag-robe given by the One of Ten Powers, having placed on his head the salutation with joined palms resplendent with the joining of ten fingernails, with respect shown towards the Teacher, having turned to face the naked ascetic - He said "Friend, do you know our Teacher?" But did he ask knowing the Teacher's final Nibbāna, or not knowing? The knowledge of those who have eliminated the mental corruptions is dependent on advertizing; but because he had not adverted, he asked not knowing - so say some. The Elder was one who frequently entered attainments; in his night-quarters, day-quarters, rock cells, pavilions, and so on, he always sustained himself by the power of attainment alone; even having entered a village belonging to a family, having entered an attainment at the door, having emerged from the attainment, he would take almsfood. The Elder, it is said, thinking "With this final individual existence I shall assist the great multitude" - "Those who give me almsfood or show honour with scents, garlands, and so on, may that be of great fruit for them" - thus he acts. Therefore, due to the frequency of attainments, he does not know. Thus they say "He asks not knowing indeed"; that should not be accepted.

For here there is no reason for not knowing. The Teacher's final Nibbāna was marked by signs such as the trembling of the ten-thousandfold world system and so on. But in the Elder's assembly, by some monks the Blessed One had been seen before, by some he had not been seen before; therein, even those by whom he had been seen before wished to see him, and even those by whom he had not been seen before wished to see him. Therein, those by whom he had not been seen before, through excessive desire to see him, having gone and asking "Where is the Blessed One?" having heard "He has attained final Nibbāna," would not be able to bear it. Having thrown away their robes and bowls, wearing a single garment, or improperly dressed, or improperly clothed, beating their breasts, they would cry out and wail. There people - "The wearers of rag-robes who came together with the Elder Mahākassapa themselves too cry out like women; how will they console us?" - would attribute fault to me. But this is an empty great forest; here, when they cry in whatever way, there is no fault. Having heard earlier, even sorrow becomes thin - knowing this, for the purpose of arousing mindfulness in the monks, he asked.

"Today, seven days ago, the ascetic Gotama attained final Nibbāna" means today the ascetic Gotama attained final Nibbāna seven days ago. "From there this by me" means from there, from the place where the ascetic Gotama attained final Nibbāna.

**232.** "Named Subhadda, gone forth in old age" - "Subhadda" is his name. But because he went forth in old age, he is called "gone forth in old age." But why did he say thus? Out of resentment towards the Blessed One. This one, it is said, was the one gone forth in old age who was formerly a barber, in the case at Ātumā given in the chapter. When the Blessed One, having departed from Kusinārā, was coming to Ātumā together with twelve hundred and fifty monks, having heard that the Blessed One was coming - "When he has arrived, I shall make rice gruel as a beverage" - he said this to his two sons who were standing on the plane of novices - "The Blessed One, it is said, dear sons, is coming to Ātumā together with a large Community of

monks, twelve hundred and fifty monks; Go, dear sons, having taken the shaving equipment, wander from house to house with a measure and a container, collect salt, oil, rice, and solid food; when the Blessed One has arrived, we will make rice gruel as a beverage." They did so.

People, having seen those boys who were charming and quick-witted, even those who did not wish to have work done had work done. When the work was done - "What will you take, dear ones?" they ask. They say - "We have no need of anything else, but our father wishes to give a gift of rice gruel when the Blessed One has arrived." Having heard that, the people, without counting, gave everything that they were able to bring. Even what they were not able to bring, they sent by other people. Then, when the Blessed One had come to Ātumā and entered the granary, Subhadda, having gone to the village entrance in the afternoon, addressed the people - "Lay followers, I do not expect anything else from you; the rice and other things brought by my boys are sufficient for the Community. Whatever manual labour there is, give that to me." Having received all the provisions saying "Take this and this," having had ovens built at the monastery, having put on one black ochre robe as a lower garment and having wrapped himself in just such a one as an upper garment - Going about the whole night saying "Do this, do this," having spent a hundred thousand, he had thick eatable rice-gruel and honey-balls prepared. "Thick eatable rice-gruel" means rice gruel to be drunk after eating. Therein, one puts in whatever solid food there is - ghee, honey, molasses, fish, meat, flower essence, fruit essence, and so on; it is suitable for anointing the head of those who wish to play, and is of pleasant fragrance.

Then the Blessed One, right early, having attended to his toilet, surrounded by the Community of monks, set out facing the town of Ātumā to walk for almsfood. People informed him - "The Blessed One is entering the village for almsfood; for whom was the rice gruel prepared by you?" He, dressed and wrapped just as he was in those black ochre robes, having taken a spoon and a ladle with one hand, like a Brahmā, having placed his right knee-cap on the ground and having paid homage - "May the Blessed One accept rice gruel from me, venerable sir," he said.

Then, according to the method given in the chapter that "Even knowing, Truth-finders ask," the Blessed One, having asked and having heard, having rebuked that one gone forth in old age, having laid down two training rules in that case - the training rule on the acceptance of what is not allowable and the training rule on keeping shaving equipment - "Monks, many tens of millions of cosmic cycles have been spent just seeking food; but this food of yours is not allowable, arisen not by rule. For those who consume this, many thousands of individual existences will be reborn in the realms of misery alone. Go away, do not take it" - he went facing the alms round. Not even by a single monk was anything taken.

Subhadda, being displeased, thought: "This one wanders about claiming 'I know everything.' If he did not wish to accept it, he should have sent someone to inform us. This cooked food, at the very longest, lasting, could last for only about a week. For this would have been sufficient for me for life. All was ruined by him; this one wishes me harm" - having bound resentment towards the Blessed One, while the One of Ten Powers was still living, he was not able to say anything. For thus it occurred to him - "This is a great man who has gone forth from a high family; if I say anything, he will

threaten me alone." He, today, having heard "The Blessed One has attained final Nibbāna," as if having gained relief, full of mirth, said thus.

The Elder, having heard that, felt as if receiving a blow to the heart, as if a dry thunderbolt had fallen on his head, and religious emotion arose in him - "The Blessed One attained final Nibbāna only about a week ago, even today his golden-coloured body still remains; in the Dispensation established with difficulty by the Blessed One, so quickly such a great evil thorn of refuse has arisen. Indeed this evil one, growing, having obtained other such allies, is able to cause the Dispensation to decline." Then the Elder thought -

"But if I were to have this old man dressed in rags right here, have him sprinkled with ashes, and have him removed, people will show blame towards us, saying 'While the body of the ascetic Gotama still remains, the disciples are quarrelling.' Let me endure for now.

For the Teaching taught by the Blessed One is like a heap of flowers not strung together. Therein, just as flowers struck by the wind go here and there, just so, through the influence of such evil persons, as time goes on and on, in the monastic discipline one or two training rules will perish, in the discourses one or two sections on questions will perish, in the higher teaching one or two plane-intervals will perish; thus gradually, when the root is lost, we shall become like goblins. Therefore let us carry out the compilation of the Teaching and the monastic discipline. For in that case, like flowers firmly strung on a thread, this Teaching and discipline will be motionless.

For this very purpose the Blessed One went out three leagues to meet me, gave me full ordination with three exhortations, having removed from his own body made an exchange of robes on my body, waving his hand in the sky, while speaking of the practice like the moon, spoke making me a bodily witness, and three times made me accept the inheritance of the entire Dispensation. While a monk such as I remains, let not this evil one obtain growth in the Dispensation. So long as what is not the Teaching does not shine forth, the Teaching is not obstructed. What is not the monastic discipline does not shine forth, the monastic discipline is not obstructed. Those who speak what is not the Teaching are not powerful, those who speak what is the Teaching are not weak; those who speak what is not the monastic discipline are not powerful, those who speak what is the monastic discipline are not weak. So long let me recite together the Teaching and the monastic discipline. Then the monks, each having taken what is sufficient for themselves, will speak about what is allowable and what is not allowable. Then this evil one will himself meet with refutation, will not be able to raise his head again, and the Dispensation will be successful and prosperous."

He, without informing anyone that "Such a thought has arisen in me," consoled the Community of monks. Therefore it was said - "Then the Venerable Mahākassapa, etc. this is impossible."

**233.** "Funeral pyre" means a sandalwood funeral pyre one hundred and twenty cubits high. "We will set fire to" means we will cause the fire to be taken up. "Were unable to set fire to" means even eight, even sixteen, even thirty-two people, having taken pairs upon pairs of torches for the purpose of burning, fanning with palm-leaf fans,



blowing with bellows, doing this and that means, were indeed unable to cause the fire to be taken up. "The intention of the deities" - here those deities, it is said, were the very attendant deities of the Elder. For eighty thousand families, having gladdened their minds towards the eighty great disciples, being their attendants, were reborn in heaven. Therein, the deities who had gladdened their minds towards the elders and been reborn in heaven, not seeing the Elder at that assembly - "Where indeed is our Elder who frequents our family?" - having seen him travelling on the way, they determined: "May the funeral pyre not blaze up until our Elder who frequents our family has paid homage."

People, having heard that - "A monk named Mahākassapa, it is said, my dear, is coming together with five hundred monks thinking 'I will pay homage at the feet of the One of Ten Powers.' Until he arrives, it is said, the funeral pyre will not blaze up. What is that monk like, my dear - dark or fair, tall or short? When such a monk is present, my dear, how can there be what is called the final Nibbāna of the One of Ten Powers?" Some, with scents, garlands, and so on in their hands, went along the opposite road. Some, having decorated the streets, stood looking at the road of his arrival.

**234.** Then the Venerable Mahākassapa approached Kusinārā, etc. "He paid respect with his head" - the Elder, it is said, having circumambulated the funeral pyre, while reflecting, observed - "In this place is the head, in this place are the feet." Then, having stood near the feet, having attained the fourth meditative absorption which is the foundation for direct knowledge, and having emerged - he determined: "May the feet of the One of Ten Powers, established with the wheel mark adorned with a thousand spokes, together with the layers of cotton, having split in two the five hundred pairs of garments, the golden coffin, and the sandalwood funeral pyre, be established on my head, the highest part." Together with the consciousness of determination, having split those five hundred pairs of garments in two, the feet emerged like a full moon from amidst the clouds. The Elder, having stretched out his hands resembling fully opened red lotuses, having firmly grasped the golden-coloured feet of the Teacher up to the ankles, placed them on his own noble head. Therefore it was said - "He paid respect with his head at the Blessed One's feet."

The great multitude, having seen that marvel, all at once uttered a great roar, and having venerated with scents, garlands, and so on, paid homage according to their preference. But when the Elder and the great multitude and those five hundred monks had merely paid respect, there was no further function of determination. By the power of the natural determination itself, having been released from the Elder's hands, the lac-coloured soles of the Blessed One's feet, without disturbing anything whatsoever among the sandalwood logs and so on, were established in their original place; they remained standing in their original place. For whether the Blessed One's feet were coming out or going in, neither a fibre of cotton, nor a thread of fine cloth, nor a drop of oil, nor a log of wood was in the least displaced from its place.

Everything remained standing in its original place. But having risen up, when the Truth-finder's feet had disappeared like the moon that has set, like the sun, the great multitude wept with great lamentation. The grief was greater than at the time of the final Nibbāna.

"The Blessed One's funeral pyre blazed up by itself" - this was said on account of no

one being seen striving to make it blaze. But by the power of the deities, it blazed up all at once on all sides.

**235.** "Only the relics remained" means formerly, because of standing as a solid mass, it was called "body." Now, because of being scattered, "relics" was said; the meaning is that relics resembling jasmine buds, resembling washed pearls, and resembling gold remained. For the body of Buddhas of long life span is like a solid mass of gold, just one. But the Blessed One - "I shall attain final Nibbāna without standing for a long time; my Dispensation has not yet been spread everywhere; therefore, let the great multitude, even after my final Nibbāna, taking even a mustard-seed-sized relic, making a shrine at their own dwelling place, and attending to it, be destined for heaven" - thus he determined the scattering of the relics. But how many of his relics were scattered, and how many were not scattered? The four canine teeth, the two collar-bones, and the turban - these seven relics were not scattered; the rest were scattered. Therein, the smallest relic was the size of a mustard seed, the medium relic was the size of a rice grain broken in the middle, and the very large one was the size of a mung bean broken in the middle.

"A torrent of water" means torrents of water the size of the tip of an arm, the size of a leg, and the size of a palm-tree trunk, having fallen from the sky, extinguished it.

"From the sal trees" - this was said with reference to the sal trees standing surrounding it, for from between their trunks and between their branches too, torrents of water came forth and extinguished it. The Blessed One's funeral pyre was great. Even breaking through the earth all around, streams of water the size of a ploughshare tip, resembling crystal wreaths, having risen up, seized the funeral pyre itself. "With scented water" means with various kinds of scented water brought after filling golden pots and silver pots. "They extinguished" means they extinguished the sandalwood funeral pyre by sprinkling with eight-handled ladles made of gold and silver.

And here, while the funeral pyre was burning, flames rise up through the spaces between branches, between the forks, and between the leaves of the sal trees standing surrounding it; not a single leaf or branch or flower was burnt; even ants and spiders move about right between the flames. Regarding the torrents of water that fell from the sky, the torrents of water that came forth from the sal trees, and the torrents of water that came forth breaking through the earth - a talk on the Teaching alone is the measure. Having thus extinguished the funeral pyre, the Malla kings, having prepared the council hall with an encircling of the four kinds of scent, having scattered flowers with parched corn as the fifth, having tied a cloth canopy above, having inlaid it with golden stars and so on, having hung there garlands of scented strings, garlands of flower strings, and garlands of jewel strings, from the council hall up to the auspicious hall for head-adornment known as the Makuṭabandhana, having made an enclosure of curtains and mats on both sides, having had a cloth canopy tied above, having inlaid it with golden stars and so on, having hung there too garlands of scented strings, garlands of flower strings, and garlands of jewel strings, having raised five-coloured banners on bamboos of the colour of jewelled staffs, having surrounded it all around with wind-banners, having placed plantain trees and full pitchers on the well-swept streets, having lit torches with handles, having placed the golden coffin together with the relics on a decorated elephant's back, venerating

with garlands, scents, and so on, performing a worthy celebration, having entered the inner city, having placed it on a divan made of sarabha deer in the council hall, they held a white parasol above. Having done thus - "Then the Mallas of Kusinārā, having made a cage of spears in the council hall for the Blessed One's relics for seven days" - all should be understood.

Therein, "having made a cage of spears" means having caused men with spears in hand to surround it. "A wall of bows" means first they caused elephants to surround it, striking frontal globe against frontal globe; then horses striking neck against neck; then chariots striking linch-pin tip against linch-pin tip; then warriors striking arm against arm. At their border, they caused bows to surround it, striking tip against tip. Thus, having made an area of one yojana in extent all around like an armour-net for seven days, they arranged the protection. With reference to that it was said - "Having caused a wall of bows to be placed around it."

But why did they act thus? For in the two preceding weeks before this, they, while making standing and sitting space for the Community of monks and arranging solid and soft food, did not obtain the opportunity for a worthy celebration. Then it occurred to them - "During this week we shall perform a worthy celebration. But there is indeed the possibility that someone, having known our state of heedlessness, might come and take the relics; therefore, having set up protection, we shall celebrate." They did so accordingly.

### Commentary on the Distribution of the Body Relics

**236.** "The king heard" - how did he hear? It is said that first his ministers, having heard, thought - "The Teacher has attained final Nibbāna; he cannot be brought back again. But in worldling's faith there is no one equal to our king; if he hears in just this manner, his heart will split. The king, however, should be protected by us." They, having brought three golden troughs and having filled them with the four sweets, having gone to the presence of the king, said this - "Sire, a bad dream has been seen by us; for the purpose of counteracting it, you should put on a double-layered fine cloth and lie down in a trough of the four sweets in such a way that only the tip of the nose is visible." The king, having heard the words of the ministers who worked for his welfare, having accepted saying "Let it be so, dear ones," did accordingly.

Then one minister, having taken off his ornaments, having dishevelled his hair, having turned to face the direction in which the Teacher had attained final Nibbāna, having raised joined palms, said to the king - "Sire, there is no being who can escape from death. He who increases our life span, the shrine-place, the field of merit, the one who sprinkles the consecration - that Blessed One, the Teacher, has attained final Nibbāna at Kusinārā." The king, having merely heard, became unconscious and emitted heat into the trough of the four sweets. Then, having lifted him out, they made him lie down in the second trough. He, having regained consciousness again - asked "Dear ones, what are you saying?" "The Teacher, great king, has attained final Nibbāna." The king again became unconscious and emitted heat into the trough of the four sweets. Then, having lifted him out from there too, they made him lie down in the third trough. He, having regained consciousness again, asked "Dear ones, what

are you saying?" "The Teacher, great king, has attained final Nibbāna." The king again became unconscious; then, having lifted him out, having bathed him, they poured water on his head from pots.

The king, having regained consciousness, having risen from his seat, having scattered his jewel-coloured hair perfumed with fragrance, having spread it on his back which was the colour of a golden plank, having struck his chest with his hand, as if sewing his chest which was the colour of a golden bimbisaka fruit with his well-rounded fingers the colour of coral sprouts, having seized it, lamenting, in the guise of a madman he descended into the middle of the street. He, surrounded by decorated dancers, having departed from the city, having gone to Jīvaka's Mango Grove, having looked at the place where the Blessed One had sat and expounded the Teaching - "Blessed One, Omniscient One, did you not sit in this place and expound the Teaching? Did you not dispel the dart of sorrow for me? You extracted the dart of sorrow for me. I have gone for refuge to you. But now you do not even give me a reply, Blessed One." Having lamented again and again, "Is it not so, Blessed One, that at other times at such a time I hear 'You wander on a journey across the surface of Jambudīpa surrounded by the great Community of monks'? But now I hear news of you that is unfitting and inappropriate." Having said such things and having recollected the virtues of the Blessed One with about sixty verses, he thought - "By my mere lamenting nothing is accomplished; I shall have the relics of the One of Ten Powers brought." Thus he heard. And having heard, at the conclusion of this occurrence beginning with unconsciousness, he sent a messenger. With reference to that, "Then the king" and so on was said.

Therein, "sent a messenger" means he sent both a messenger and a letter. And having sent - "If they will give, that is good. If they will not give, I shall bring them by means of force" - having arrayed the fourfold army, he himself too set forth. And just as Ajātasattu, so too the Licchavis and the others, having sent a messenger, themselves too set forth with the fourfold army. Therein, the Mallas of Pāvā, being nearer than all the others, dwell in a city at a distance of three leagues from Kusinārā, and the Blessed One too, having entered Pāvā, went on to Kusinārā. Then why did they not come first? But these kings, having great retinues, became late precisely because of assembling their great retinues.

"They said this to those groups and companies" means all those inhabitants of the seven cities, having come - "Either give us the relics or give us war," having surrounded the city of Kusinārā and standing there - they gave the reply "The Blessed One is in our village territory." It is said that they spoke thus - "We did not send a message to the Teacher, nor did we go and bring him. Rather, the Teacher himself came and, having sent a message, had us summoned. You too, whatever jewel arises in your village territory, you do not give that to us. And in the world together with its gods, there is no jewel equal to the jewel of the Buddha; having obtained such a supreme jewel, we will not give it. It is not only by you that milk was drunk from the mother's breast; by us too milk was drunk from the mother's breast. Not only you are men; we too are men" - thus, having made assertions of self-importance to one another, they send messages and counter-messages, and roar the roar of conceit at one another. But had there been a war, victory would have been for the Kusinārā people alone. Why? Because the deities who had come for the purpose of attending

upon the relics were on their side. But in the Pāḷi - only this much has come: "The Blessed One attained final Nibbāna in our village territory, we will not give a share of the Blessed One's relics."

**237.** "When this was said, the brahmin Doṇa" means the brahmin Doṇa, having heard this contention of theirs - "These kings are making a contention at the place where the Blessed One attained final Nibbāna; this is indeed not proper; enough with this dispute; I shall appease it" - he, having gone, said this to those groups and companies. What did he say? Standing on a raised place, he said what is called the "Roar of Doṇa," measuring two recitation sections in length. Therein, during the first recitation section, they did not understand even a single word. At the conclusion of the second recitation section - "The sound is like that of our teacher, the sound is like that of our teacher" - all became silent. It is said that among those born in good families on the surface of Jambudīpa, there was for the most part no one who was not his pupil. Then he, having understood that they had become silent and still, having heard his words, again said this - "Let the venerable sirs hear" - he said this pair of verses.

Therein, "our Buddha" means our Buddha. "Was an advocate of patience" means even without having attained Buddhahood, while fulfilling the perfections, during the time of the ascetic who was an advocate of patience, during the time of the prince Dhammapāla, during the time of the six-tusked elephant, during the time of the nāga king Bhūridatta, during the time of the nāga king Campeyya, during the time of the nāga king Saṅkhapāla, during the time of the great monkey, and in many other birth stories, without becoming irritated towards others, he practised only patience. He praised only patience. How much less now, having attained the characteristic of such-likeness in desirable and undesirable things; in every way our Buddha was an advocate of patience - of one such as this. "For it is not good that for the highest person, there should be strife over a portion of the body" - "na hi sādhu yanti" means "na hi sādhu ayaṃ" - this is indeed not good. "A portion of the body" means on account of the division of the body; the meaning is for the reason of apportioning the relics. "There should be strife" means it has been said that strife with weapons should not be good.

"Let all the venerable sirs be united" means let all the venerable sirs be united; do not be divided. "In harmony" means be in harmony, of one assembly by body and of one speech by speech. "Rejoicing together" means be rejoicing together with one another even in mind. "Let us make eight portions" means let us make the Blessed One's relics into eight portions. "The One with Vision" means of the Buddha who has vision through five eyes. Not only you yourselves, but many people too have faith; among them there is no one who is not fit to receive even one - having stated many reasons, he convinced them.

**238.** "Having assented to those groups and companies" means having assented to those various monastic communities assembled from here and there and those various groups assembled from here and there. "Having divided the Blessed One's relics into eight equal well-distributed portions" - here this is the order of events - It is said that Doṇa, having assented to them, had the golden trough opened. The kings, having come and seeing the gold-coloured relics standing right there in the trough - "Blessed One, Omniscient One, formerly we saw your golden-coloured body adorned

with the thirty-two characteristics of a great man, studded with the six-coloured rays of the Buddha, resplendent with the beauty of the eighty minor marks; but now only gold-coloured relics remain. This is not fitting for you, Blessed One" - thus they lamented.

The brahmin too, at that time, having known their state of heedlessness, having taken the right canine tooth, placed it within his turban; then afterwards he divided into eight equal well-distributed portions. All the relics amounted to sixteen measures by the ordinary measure; the inhabitants of each city received two measures each. But even as the brahmin was dividing the relics, Sakka, the lord of the gods - Looking to see "By whom has the Blessed One's right canine tooth been taken, which has become the condition for the discourse on the four truths for the purpose of cutting off the uncertainty of the world with its gods?" having seen "It has been taken by the brahmin" - "The brahmin too will not be able to make a befitting honour for the canine tooth; I shall take it" - having taken it from within the turban, having placed it in a golden casket, having led it to the world of the gods, he established it in the Cūḷāmaṇi shrine.

The brahmin too, having divided the relics, not seeing the canine tooth, because it had been taken by theft - Was not able even to ask "By whom has my canine tooth been taken?" Seeing the attribution of blame upon himself thus: "Was it not you yourself who divided the relics? Why did you not first ascertain the existence of your own relic?" - He was not able even to say "Give me too a share." Thereupon - Having thought "This golden vessel too is of the nature of a relic-container, by which the Truth-finder's relics were measured; I shall make a stupa for this" - he said "Let the venerable sirs give me this vessel."

The Moriyas of Pippalivana too, just like Ajātasattu and the others, having sent a messenger, set forth prepared for war.

### Commentary on the Veneration of the Relic Pagodas

**239.** "He made a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics at Rājagaha" - how did he make it? From Kusinārā to Rājagaha is twenty-five yojanas; in between here, having had a level road eight usabhas wide constructed, such as the veneration that the Malla kings had caused to be made between the Makuṭabandhana and the council hall. Having caused such veneration to be made along the road of twenty-five yojanas too, for the purpose of the people's enjoyment, having spread out market places everywhere, having had the relics placed in the golden coffin surrounded by a cage of spears, he caused the people to assemble throughout his realm measuring five hundred yojanas in circumference. They, having taken the relics, departed from Kusinārā performing a worthy celebration, and wherever they saw golden-coloured flowers, there they placed the relics within the spear enclosure and made veneration. When those flowers were exhausted, they move on; when the front position of the chariot arrived at the rear position, they perform a worthy celebration for seven days. Thus, for those coming bringing the relics, seven years, seven months, and seven days had passed.

Those holding wrong views - Grumbling "From the time of the ascetic Gotama's attaining final Nibbāna, we have been troubled by force with the worthy celebration; all our activities are ruined," having corrupted their minds, about eighty-six thousand



were reborn in the realm of misery. Those who had eliminated the mental corruptions, having reflected and seen "The great multitude, having corrupted their minds, are being reborn in the realm of misery" - Thinking "We shall have Sakka, the king of the gods, devise a means for bringing the relics," having gone to his presence and having reported that matter - They said "Devise a means for bringing the relics, great king." Sakka said - "Venerable sirs, among worldlings there is none equal in faith to Ajātasattu; he will not do as I say. However, I shall display a terrifying spectacle similar to Māra's terrifying spectacle, I shall cause a great noise to be heard, I shall produce demon-possession, seizure-illness, and loss of appetite. You should say 'The non-human spirits are angry, great king; have the relics brought.' Thus he will have them brought." Then Sakka did all of that.

The elders too, having approached the king - Said "Great king, the non-human spirits are angry; have the relics brought." The king - "Not yet, venerable sirs, is my mind satisfied; even so, let them bring them," he said. On the seventh day they brought the relics. Thus, having taken the relics that had been brought, he made a stupa and a great festival at Rājagaha. The others too, having brought them in accordance with their own respective power, made stupas and great festivals in their own respective places.

**240.** "Thus this once in the past": thus this distribution of relics and the making of ten stupas once in the past in the Indian subcontinent - the Elders who held the convocations said afterwards. But when the stupas had thus been established, the Elder Mahākassapa, having seen an obstacle to the relics, having approached King Ajātasattu, said "Great king, it is fitting to make a single deposit of the relics." "Good, venerable sir, let the work of depositing be mine for now, but how shall I bring the remaining relics?" "No, great king, the bringing of the relics is not your burden; it is our burden." "Good, venerable sir, you bring the relics; I shall make the deposit of the relics." The Elder, having set aside only a mere portion for attending to those various royal families, brought the remaining relics. But at Rāmagāma the nāgas took possession of the relics; there is no obstacle to those. "In the future they will be deposited in the Great Shrine at the Great Monastery on the island of Laṅkā" - not having brought those, having brought them from the remaining seven cities, having stood to the east-south direction of Rājagaha - he determined: "Whatever rock there is in this place, let it disappear; let the soil be thoroughly purified; let water not rise up."

The king, having had that place dug, having had bricks made from the excavated soil, had shrines built for the eighty great disciples. Even to those asking "What is the king having built here?" they say "Shrines for the great disciples"; no one knows about the deposit of relics. But when that area had become eighty cubits deep, having had a copper flooring spread below, having had a house made of red copper built there, the size of the shrine-house at the Thūpārāma, he had eight each of caskets and stupas made of yellow sandalwood and so on. Then, having placed the Blessed One's relics in a yellow sandalwood casket, that yellow sandalwood casket too in another yellow sandalwood casket, that too in another - thus having combined eight yellow sandalwood caskets together, by this very method he placed those eight caskets in eight yellow sandalwood stupas, the eight yellow sandalwood stupas in eight red sandalwood caskets, the eight red sandalwood caskets in eight red sandalwood

stupas, the eight red sandalwood stupas in eight ivory caskets, the eight ivory caskets in eight ivory stupas, the eight ivory stupas in eight all-jewel caskets, the eight all-jewel caskets in eight all-jewel stupas, the eight all-jewel stupas in eight gold caskets, the eight gold caskets in eight gold stupas, the eight gold stupas in eight silver caskets, the eight silver caskets in eight silver stupas, the eight silver stupas in eight gem caskets, the eight gem caskets in eight gem stupas, the eight gem stupas in eight ruby caskets, the eight ruby caskets in eight ruby stupas, the eight ruby stupas in eight cat's eye caskets, the eight cat's eye caskets in eight cat's eye stupas, the eight cat's eye stupas in eight crystal caskets, the eight crystal caskets in eight crystal stupas.

The uppermost crystal shrine of all was the size of the Thūpārāma shrine; above that he had a house made of all jewels built, above that one of gold, above that one of silver, above that a house of red copper. There, having scattered sand made of all jewels, having strewn thousands of water-born and land-born flowers, he had five hundred and fifty Jātaka stories, the eighty great elders, the great King Suddhodana, Queen Mahāmāyā, and the seven born at the same time - all of these made entirely of gold. He had five hundred each of full pitchers made of gold and silver placed, and raised five hundred golden banners. Having had five hundred golden lamps and five hundred silver lamps made, having filled them with fragrant oil, he placed fine cloth wicks in them.

Then the Venerable Mahākassapa - having determined "Let the garlands not wither, let the scents not perish, let the lamps not be extinguished," had letters inscribed on a golden slab -

"In the future, a prince named Piyadāsa, having raised the parasol, will become the righteous King Asoka. He will make these relics widespread."

The king, having venerated with all ornaments, went out closing the doors from the beginning onwards; he, having closed the red copper door, having tied a key-seal on the door cord, having placed a great mass of gems right there - had letters inscribed: "In the future, let a poor king, having taken this gem, make an offering to the relics."

Sakka, the king of gods, having addressed Vissakamma -sent him saying "Dear one, a deposit of relics has been made by Ajātasattu; establish protection there." He, having come, set up a mechanism of fierce interlocking devices; having made wooden figures hold crystal-coloured swords in that relic chamber, having set up a mechanism revolving with speed like the wind, having fastened it with a single peg, having made a stone enclosure all around in the form of a brick rest-house, having closed it above with a single slab, having thrown in soil, having made the ground level, he established a stone stupa above it. When the deposit of relics was thus completed, having remained as long as life lasted, the Elder too attained final Nibbāna, the king too went according to his actions, and those people too passed away.

At a later time, a prince named Piyadāsa, having raised the parasol, having become the righteous King named Asoka, having taken those relics, made them widespread in the Indian subcontinent. How? He, in dependence on the novice Nigrodha, having gained confidence in the Dispensation, having had eighty-four thousand monasteries built, asked the Community of monks - "Venerable sirs, eighty-four thousand

monasteries have been built by me; from where shall I obtain relics?" Great king - "We hear that there is indeed a deposit of relics," but it is not evident - "at such and such a place." The king, having had the shrine at Rājagaha broken open, not seeing relics, having had it restored to its original state, having taken the four assemblies - monks, nuns, male lay followers, and female lay followers - went to Vesālī. Not having obtained them there either, to Kapilavatthu. Not having obtained them there either, he went to Rāmagāma. At Rāmagāma the nāgas did not allow the shrine to be broken open; a hoe that fell on the shrine broke into fragments. Thus, not having obtained them there either, having broken open the shrines everywhere at Allakappa, Veṭhadīpa, Pāvā, and Kusinārā, not having obtained relics at all, having restored them to their original state, having gone again to Rājagaha, having assembled the four assemblies - he asked "Has anyone heard before that 'at such and such a place there is a deposit of relics'?"

There one elder who was one hundred and twenty years old - "I do not know 'at such and such a place there is a relic deposit,' but my father, a great elder, having made me take a flower basket at the age of seven - 'Come, novice, among such and such shrubs there is a stone stupa, let us go there' - having gone and having venerated - said 'It is fitting to remember this place, novice.' I know this much, great king," he said. The king, having said "This is the very place," having had the shrubs removed and having removed the stone stupa and the soil, saw a lime floor underneath. Then, having removed the lime and the bricks, having descended gradually into the chamber, he saw sand of the seven precious things and wooden figures with swords in hand, revolving. He, having had the demon servants summoned and having had an oblation performed, yet seeing neither end nor limit, paying homage to the deities - said "I shall take these relics and deposit them in eighty-four thousand monasteries and make an honour offering. May the deities not create an obstacle for me."

Sakka, the king of gods, wandering on a journey, having seen that, addressed Vissakamma - "Dear one, Asoka the righteous king, thinking 'I shall take out the relics,' has descended into the chamber. Go and remove the wooden figures." He, having gone in the guise of a village boy with five topknots, stood before the king with a bow in hand - said "I shall remove them, great king." "Remove them, dear one" - having taken an arrow, he shot right at the joint, and everything was scattered about. Then the king took the key-seal ring tied to the drawstring, and saw a tremendous jewel. Having seen the letters again "In the future let a poor king, having taken this jewel, make an honour offering to the relics," having become angry - "It is inappropriate to call a king such as me a poor king" - having strived again and again, having had the door opened, he entered the inner chamber.

The lamps placed over two hundred and eighteen years were blazing just so. The blue water-lily flowers were as if brought and placed at that very moment, the flower carpet was as if spread at that very moment, the perfumes were as if ground and placed at that very moment - the king, having taken the golden slab - having read "In the future a prince named Piyadāsa, having raised the parasol, will become a righteous king named Asoka. He will make these relics widespread" - having said "I have been seen, friend, by the noble Great Elder Kassapa," having bent his left hand, he clapped with his right hand. He, having left at that place only a portion of relics for attending, having taken the remaining relics, having closed the relic chamber in the

same manner as it was previously closed, having made everything just as it was in its original state, having established a stone shrine above, having established relics in eighty-four thousand monasteries, having paid homage to the great elders, he asked - "I am an heir, venerable sir, in the Buddha's Dispensation." An heir of what are you, great king? You are an outsider to the Dispensation. Venerable sir, having given up ninety-six ten million in wealth and having had eighty-four thousand monasteries built, am I not an heir? Who else is an heir? You are a giver of requisites, great king. But whoever gives the going forth to one's own son and daughter, he is called an heir in the Dispensation. He gave the going forth to his son and daughter. Then the elders said to him - "Now, great king, you are an heir in the Dispensation."

"Thus this was once in the past" means thus this deposit of relics too was once in the past on the surface of the Indian subcontinent. Those who conducted the Third Council also placed this passage.

The verses beginning with "The body of the One with Vision was eight doṇas" were, however, spoken by the elder monks in the island of Tambapaṇṇi.

*Thus in the Sumaṅgalavilāsinī, the Commentary on the Dīgha Nikāya,  
the explanation of the Great Discourse on the Final Nibbāna is completed.*



## ABOUT THIS TRANSLATION

This translation is part of the PaliVerse Project - the first complete, unified English translation of the Pāli Canon together with its Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā) and Subcommentaries (Tīkā), accompanied by interactive study tools. PaliVerse is an ongoing project. The AI translations are continuously improved through experts' revisions and feedback. This text is the latest translation as of the date of download.

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