

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

The Triple Canon (Tipiṭaka)

The Canon of Discourses (Sutta Piṭaka)

1. The Collection of the Long Discourses (1. Dīgha Nikāya)

2. The Great Chapter (2. Mahāvaggapāḷi)

3. The Great Discourse on the Final Nibbāna
(3. Mahāparinibbānasuttaṃ)

[DN 16, PTS 2.72-2.168]



PaliVerse

1. The Collection of the Long Discourses

2. The Great Chapter

3. The Great Discourse on the Final Nibbāna

131. Thus have I heard - On one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling at Rājagaha on the Vulture's Peak mountain. Now at that time King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha wished to march against the Vajjis. He speaks thus: "I shall cut off these Vajjis, so mighty and powerful, I shall destroy the Vajjis, I shall bring calamity and disaster upon the Vajjis."

132. Then King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha addressed Vassakāra the brahmin, the chief minister of Magadha - "Come, brahmin, go to where the Blessed One is; having approached, in my name pay respect with your head at the Blessed One's feet, and ask about his health, whether he is free from illness, free from affliction, light in rising, strong, and dwelling in comfort - 'King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha, venerable sir, pays respect with his head at the Blessed One's feet, and asks about his health, whether he is free from illness, free from affliction, light in rising, strong, and dwelling in comfort.' And say this: 'King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha, venerable sir, wishes to march against the Vajjis. He speaks thus: 'I shall cut off these Vajjis, so mighty and powerful, I shall destroy the Vajjis, I shall bring calamity and disaster upon them.'" As the Blessed One answers you, having learnt that well, report it to me. For Truth-finders do not speak falsely."

The Brahmin Vassakāra

133. "Yes, sir," the brahmin Vassakāra, the chief minister of Magadha, having assented to King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha, having harnessed the finest vehicles, having ascended the finest vehicle, departed from Rājagaha with the finest vehicles, and set out towards the Vulture's Peak mountain. Having gone by vehicle as far as the ground was passable for vehicles, he descended from the vehicle and approached the Blessed One on foot; having approached, he exchanged friendly greetings with the Blessed One. Having concluded the pleasant and memorable talk, he sat down to one side. Seated to one side, the brahmin Vassakāra, the chief minister of Magadha, said this to the Blessed One - "King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha, Master Gotama, pays respect with his head at Master Gotama's feet, and asks about his health, whether he is free from illness, free from affliction, light in rising, strong, and dwelling in comfort. King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha, Master Gotama, wishes to march against the Vajjis. He speaks thus: 'I shall cut off these Vajjis, so mighty and powerful, I shall destroy the Vajjis, I shall bring calamity and disaster upon them.'"

The Conditions Preventing the Decline of Kings

134. Now at that time the Venerable Ānanda was standing behind the Blessed One, fanning the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "What have you heard, Ānanda, whether the Vajjis assemble frequently and have

frequent assemblies?" "I have heard this, venerable sir - 'The Vajjis assemble frequently and have frequent assemblies.'" "As long as, Ānanda, the Vajjis will assemble frequently and have frequent assemblies, only growth is to be expected for the Vajjis, Ānanda, not decline.

"What have you heard, Ānanda, whether the Vajjis assemble in unity, rise in unity, and perform their Vajji duties in unity?" "I have heard this, venerable sir - 'The Vajjis assemble in unity, rise in unity, and perform their Vajji duties in unity.'" "As long as, Ānanda, the Vajjis will assemble in unity, will rise in unity, will perform their Vajji duties in unity, only growth is to be expected for the Vajjis, Ānanda, not decline.

"What have you heard, Ānanda, whether the Vajjis do not establish what has not been established, do not abolish what has been established, and proceed according to the ancient Vajji principles as they were established?" "I have heard this, venerable sir - 'The Vajjis do not establish what has not been established, do not abolish what has been established, and proceed according to the ancient Vajji principles as they were established.'" "As long as, Ānanda, the Vajjis will not establish what has not been established, will not abolish what has been established, will proceed according to the ancient Vajji principles as they were established, only growth is to be expected for the Vajjis, Ānanda, not decline.

"What have you heard, Ānanda, whether the Vajjis honour, respect, revere, and venerate those who are the Vajji elders among the Vajjis, and think them worth listening to?" "I have heard this, venerable sir - 'The Vajjis honour, respect, revere, and venerate those who are the Vajji elders among the Vajjis, and think them worth listening to.'" "As long as, Ānanda, the Vajjis will honour, will respect, will revere, will venerate those who are the Vajji elders among the Vajjis, and will think them worth listening to, only growth is to be expected for the Vajjis, Ānanda, not decline.

"What have you heard, Ānanda, whether the Vajjis do not forcibly abduct and make to dwell with them women and girls of good families?" "I have heard this, venerable sir - 'The Vajjis do not forcibly abduct and make to dwell with them women and girls of good families.'" "As long as, Ānanda, the Vajjis will not forcibly abduct and make to dwell with them women and girls of good families, only growth is to be expected for the Vajjis, Ānanda, not decline.

"What have you heard, Ānanda, whether the Vajjis those

"What have you heard, Ānanda, whether the Vajjis honour, respect, revere, and venerate the Vajji shrines of the Vajjis, both inner and outer, and do not neglect the righteous offerings that were formerly given and formerly made to them?" "I have heard this, venerable sir - 'The Vajjis honour, respect, revere, and venerate those Vajji shrines of the Vajjis, both inner and outer, and do not neglect the righteous offerings that were formerly given and formerly made to them.'" "As long as, Ānanda, the Vajjis will honour, will respect, will revere, will venerate those Vajji shrines of the Vajjis, both inner and outer, and will not neglect the righteous offerings that were formerly given and formerly made to them, only growth is to be expected for the Vajjis, Ānanda, not decline.

"What have you heard, Ānanda, whether righteous protection, shelter, and guard is well arranged for the Worthy Ones among the Vajjis, so that Worthy Ones who have not come might come to the realm, and Worthy Ones who have come might dwell comfortably in the realm?" "I have heard this, venerable sir, 'Righteous protection, shelter, and guard is well arranged for the Worthy Ones among the Vajjis, so that Worthy Ones who have not come might come to the realm, and Worthy Ones who have come might dwell comfortably in the realm.'" "As long as, Ānanda, righteous protection, shelter, and guard will be well arranged for the Worthy Ones among the Vajjis, so that Worthy Ones who have not come might come to the realm, and Worthy Ones who have come might dwell comfortably in the realm, only growth is to be expected for the Vajjis, Ānanda, not decline."

135. Then the Blessed One addressed the brahmin Vassakāra, the chief minister of Magadha - "On one occasion, brahmin, I was dwelling at Vesālī in the Sārandada shrine. There I taught the Vajjis these seven conditions preventing decline. As long as, brahmin, these seven conditions preventing decline will remain among the Vajjis, and as long as the Vajjis will be seen practising these seven conditions preventing decline, only growth is to be expected for the Vajjis, brahmin, not decline."

When this was said, the brahmin Vassakāra, the chief minister of Magadha, said this to the Blessed One - "Even with one condition preventing decline, Master Gotama, only growth is to be expected for the Vajjis who are endowed with it, not decline. What then to say of seven conditions preventing decline. The Vajjis cannot be overcome, Master Gotama, by King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha, that is to say, by war, except by persuasion or except by breaking their alliance. Well then, Master Gotama, we will now go. We have much to do, we have many duties." "Now do as you think fit, brahmin." Then the brahmin Vassakāra, the chief minister of Magadha, having delighted in and given thanks for what the Blessed One had said, rose from his seat and departed.

The Conditions Preventing the Decline of Monks

136. Then the Blessed One, soon after the brahmin Vassakāra, the chief minister of Magadha, had departed, addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Go, Ānanda, and assemble in the assembly hall all the monks who are dwelling in dependence on Rājagaha." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied to the Blessed One, and having assembled all the monks who were dwelling in dependence on Rājagaha in the assembly hall, he approached the Blessed One; having approached, he paid respect to the Blessed One and stood to one side. Standing to one side, the Venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One - "The Community of monks has assembled, venerable sir. Now let the Blessed One do as he thinks fit, venerable sir."

Then the Blessed One, having risen from his seat, went to the assembly hall; having approached, he sat down on the prepared seat. Having sat down, the Blessed One addressed the monks: "I will teach you, monks, seven conditions preventing decline. Listen to that, pay close attention, I will speak." "Yes, venerable sir," those monks assented to the Blessed One. The Blessed One said this -

"As long as, monks, the monks will assemble frequently and have frequent assemblies, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline."

"As long as, monks, the monks will assemble in unity, will rise in unity, will perform their Community duties in unity, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks will not establish what has not been established, will not abolish what has been established, will proceed having accepted the training rules as they were established, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks will honour, will respect, will revere, will venerate those monks who are elders, of long standing, long gone forth, fathers of the Community, leaders of the Community, and will think them worth listening to, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks will not come under the control of arisen craving that leads to rebirth, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks will have longing for forest lodgings, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks will individually establish mindfulness -'How might well-behaved fellow monks who have not come, come, and well-behaved fellow monks who have come, dwell comfortably.' Only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, these seven conditions preventing decline will remain among the monks, and as long as the monks will be seen practising these seven conditions preventing decline, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

137. "I will teach you, monks, another seven conditions preventing decline. Listen to that, pay close attention, I will speak." "Yes, venerable sir," those monks assented to the Blessed One. The Blessed One said this -

"As long as, monks, the monks will not be delighting in activity, not devoted to activity, not engaged in delight in activity, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks will not be delighting in useless talk, not devoted to useless talk, not engaged in delight in useless talk, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks will not be delighting in sleep, not devoted to sleep, not engaged in delight in sleep, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks will not be delighting in company, not devoted to company, not engaged in delight in company, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks will not have evil desires, not come under the control of evil desires, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks will not have evil friends, not have evil companions, not be inclined towards evil, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks will not stop midway with a trifling specific attainment, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, these seven conditions preventing decline will remain among the monks, and as long as the monks will be seen practising these seven conditions preventing decline, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

138. "I will teach you, monks, another seven conditions preventing decline. Etc." "As long as, monks, the monks will have faith... etc. will be modest... will be scrupulous... will be very learned... will be putting forth strenuous energy... will be mindful... will be wise, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline. As long as, monks, these seven conditions preventing decline will remain among the monks, and as long as the monks will be seen practising these seven conditions preventing decline, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

139. "I will teach you, monks, another seven conditions preventing decline. Listen to that, pay close attention, I will speak." "Yes, venerable sir," those monks assented to the Blessed One. The Blessed One said this -

"As long as, monks, the monks will develop the enlightenment factor of mindfulness... etc. will develop the enlightenment factor of investigation of phenomena... will develop the enlightenment factor of energy... will develop the enlightenment factor of rapture... will develop the enlightenment factor of tranquillity... will develop the enlightenment factor of concentration... will develop the enlightenment factor of equanimity, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, these seven conditions preventing decline will remain among the monks, and as long as the monks will be seen practising these seven conditions preventing decline, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

140. "I will teach you, monks, another seven conditions preventing decline. Listen to that, pay close attention, I will speak." "Yes, venerable sir," those monks assented to the Blessed One. The Blessed One said this -

"As long as, monks, the monks will develop the perception of impermanence... etc. will develop the perception of non-self... will develop the perception of foulness... will develop the perception of danger... will develop the perception of abandoning... will develop the perception of dispassion... will develop the perception of cessation, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, these seven conditions preventing decline will remain among the monks, and as long as the monks will be seen practising these seven conditions preventing decline, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

141. "I will teach you, monks, six conditions preventing decline. Listen to that, pay close attention, I will speak." "Yes, venerable sir," those monks assented to the Blessed One. The Blessed One said this -

"As long as, monks, the monks will establish bodily action of friendliness towards their fellows in the holy life both openly and in private, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks will establish verbal action of friendliness... etc. will establish mental action of friendliness towards their fellows in the holy life both openly and in private, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks, with those gains that are righteous and righteously acquired, even as little as what is contained in the bowl, will be ones who share without reservation with such gains, ones who share in common with virtuous fellows in the holy life, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks will dwell having attained similarity of morality with their fellows in the holy life both openly and in private in whatever moral practices that are unbroken, without holes, unspotted, unblemished, liberating, praised by the wise, not adhered to, and conducive to concentration, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, the monks will dwell having attained similarity of view with their fellows in the holy life both openly and in private in such a view that is noble and leading to liberation, that leads one who practises it to the complete elimination of suffering, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline.

"As long as, monks, these six conditions preventing decline will remain among the monks, and as long as the monks will be seen practising these six conditions preventing decline, only growth is to be expected for the monks, monks, not decline."

142. There the Blessed One, while dwelling at Rājagaha on the Vulture's Peak mountain, frequently gave this talk on the Teaching to the monks: "Such is morality, such is concentration, such is wisdom. Concentration developed through morality is of great fruit and great benefit. Wisdom developed through concentration is of great fruit and great benefit. The mind developed through wisdom becomes completely liberated from the mental corruptions, as follows: the mental corruption of sensuality, the mental corruption of existence, the mental corruption of ignorance."

143. Then the Blessed One, having dwelt at Rājagaha as long as he liked, addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come, Ānanda, let us approach Ambalaṭṭhikā." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One together with a large Community of monks arrived at Ambalaṭṭhikā. There the Blessed One stayed at Ambalaṭṭhikā in the royal lodging. There too the Blessed One, while dwelling at Ambalaṭṭhikā in the royal lodging, frequently gave this talk on the Teaching to the monks - "Such is morality, such is concentration, such is wisdom. Concentration developed through morality is of great fruit and great benefit. Wisdom developed through concentration is of great fruit and great benefit. The mind developed through wisdom becomes completely liberated from the mental corruptions, as follows: the mental corruption of sensuality, the mental corruption of existence, the mental corruption of ignorance."

144. Then the Blessed One, having dwelt at Ambalaṭṭhikā as long as he liked, addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come, Ānanda, let us approach Nālandā." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One together with a large Community of monks arrived at Nālandā. There the Blessed One stayed at Nālandā in Pāvārika's mango grove.

Sāriputta's Lion's Roar

145. Then the Venerable Sāriputta approached the Blessed One; having approached, he paid respect to the Blessed One and sat down to one side. Seated to one side, the Venerable Sāriputta said this to the Blessed One - "Thus confident am I, Venerable Sir, in the Blessed One; there has not been, nor will there be, nor is there at present found another ascetic or brahmin more directly knowledgeable than the Blessed One, that is to say, regarding highest enlightenment." "This lofty, imposing speech has been spoken by you, Sāriputta, a definite conclusion has been taken, a lion's roar has been roared - 'Thus confident am I, Venerable Sir, in the Blessed One; there has not been, nor will there be, nor is there at present found another ascetic or brahmin more directly knowledgeable than the Blessed One, that is to say, regarding highest enlightenment.'

"Have you, Sāriputta, encompassed with your mind the minds of all those Blessed Ones who were Worthy Ones, Perfectly Enlightened Ones in the past period of time, and known - 'Those Blessed Ones were of such morality, of such teachings, of such wisdom, of such dwelling, of such liberation were those Blessed Ones'?" "No, Venerable Sir."

"But have you, Sāriputta, encompassed with your mind the minds of all those Blessed Ones who will be Worthy Ones, Perfectly Enlightened Ones in the future period of time, and known - 'Those Blessed Ones will be of such morality, of such teachings, of such wisdom, of such dwelling, of such liberation will those Blessed Ones be'?" "No, Venerable Sir."

"But have you, Sāriputta, encompassed with your mind my mind, I who am at present a Worthy One, a Perfectly Enlightened One, and known - 'The Blessed One is of such morality, of such teachings, of such wisdom, of such dwelling, of such liberation is the Blessed One'?" "No, Venerable Sir."

"Here indeed, Sāriputta, you do not have knowledge of others' mental states regarding the Worthy Ones, Perfectly Enlightened Ones of the past, future, and present. Then why now has this lofty, imposing speech been spoken by you, Sāriputta, a definite conclusion taken, a lion's roar roared - 'Thus confident am I, Venerable Sir, in the Blessed One; there has not been, nor will there be, nor is there at present found another ascetic or brahmin more directly knowledgeable than the Blessed One, that is to say, regarding highest enlightenment'?"

146. "I do not indeed, venerable sir, have knowledge of others' mental states regarding the Worthy Ones, Perfectly Enlightened Ones of the past, future, and present, but the inference from the teaching is known to me. Just as, venerable sir, there might be a king's border city with strong foundations, strong walls and gateways, with a single door, and there might be a doorkeeper who is wise, accomplished, and intelligent, one who keeps out strangers and admits those who are

known. He, following the path going all around that city, would not see any gap in the wall or opening in the wall, even one large enough for a cat to slip through. He would think thus - 'Whatever gross living beings enter or leave this city, all of them enter or leave by this very door.' Just so indeed, venerable sir, the inference from the teaching is known to me - 'Those, venerable sir, who were Worthy Ones, Perfectly Enlightened Ones in the past period of time, all those Blessed Ones, having abandoned the five mental hindrances, impurities of the mind that weaken wisdom, with minds well established in the four establishments of mindfulness, having developed the seven factors of enlightenment as they really are, fully awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment. Those too, venerable sir, who will be Worthy Ones, Perfectly Enlightened Ones in the future period of time, all those Blessed Ones, having abandoned the five mental hindrances, impurities of the mind that weaken wisdom, with minds well established in the four establishments of mindfulness, having developed the seven factors of enlightenment as they really are, will fully awaken to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment. The Blessed One too, venerable sir, at present a Worthy One, a Perfectly Enlightened One, having abandoned the five mental hindrances, impurities of the mind that weaken wisdom, with mind well established in the four establishments of mindfulness, having developed the seven factors of enlightenment as they really are, has fully awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment."

147. There too the Blessed One, while dwelling at Nāḷandā in Pāvārika's mango grove, frequently gave this talk on the Teaching to the monks: "Such is morality, such is concentration, such is wisdom. Concentration developed through morality is of great fruit and great benefit. Wisdom developed through concentration is of great fruit and great benefit. The mind developed through wisdom becomes completely liberated from the mental corruptions, as follows: the mental corruption of sensuality, the mental corruption of existence, the mental corruption of ignorance."

The Danger of Immorality

148. Then the Blessed One, having dwelt at Nāḷandā as long as he liked, addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come, Ānanda, let us approach Pāṭaligāma." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One together with a large Community of monks arrived at Pāṭaligāma. The lay followers of Pāṭaligāma heard - "The Blessed One, it is said, has arrived at Pāṭaligāma." Then the lay followers of Pāṭaligāma approached the Blessed One; having approached, they paid respect to the Blessed One and sat down to one side. Seated to one side, the lay followers of Pāṭaligāma said this to the Blessed One - "May the Blessed One consent to the rest-house for us, venerable sir." The Blessed One consented by silence. Then the lay followers of Pāṭaligāma, having learned of the Blessed One's acceptance, rose from their seats, paid respect to the Blessed One, circumambulated him keeping him on their right, and approached the rest-house; having approached, they completely spread the rest-house with coverings, prepared seats, set up a water jar, and lit an oil lamp, then approached the Blessed One; having approached, they paid respect to the Blessed One and stood to one side. Standing to one side, the lay followers of Pāṭaligāma said this to the Blessed One - "The rest-house is completely spread with coverings, venerable sir, seats have been prepared, a water jar has been set up, an oil lamp has been lit; now let the Blessed One do as he thinks fit, venerable sir." Then

the Blessed One, in the evening, having dressed, taking his bowl and robe, together with the Community of monks, approached the rest-house; having approached, having washed his feet, he entered the rest-house and sat down leaning against the middle pillar, facing east. The Community of monks too, having washed their feet, entered the rest-house and sat down leaning against the western wall, facing east, with the Blessed One in front. The lay followers of Pāṭaligāma too, having washed their feet, entered the rest-house and sat down leaning against the eastern wall, facing west, with the Blessed One in front.

149. Then the Blessed One addressed the lay followers of Pāṭaligāma:

"Householders, there are these five dangers of being immoral, of failure in morality. Which five? Here, householders, one who is immoral, failing in morality, because of heedlessness undergoes great loss of wealth. This is the first danger of being immoral, of failure in morality.

"Furthermore, householders, a bad reputation arises for one who is immoral, failing in morality. This is the second danger of being immoral, of failure in morality.

"Furthermore, householders, one who is immoral, failing in morality, whatever assembly he approaches - whether an assembly of warriors, whether an assembly of brahmins, whether an assembly of householders, whether an assembly of ascetics - he approaches unconfident, downcast. This is the third danger of being immoral, of failure in morality.

"Furthermore, householders, one who is immoral, failing in morality, dies deluded. This is the fourth danger of being immoral, of failure in morality.

"Furthermore, householders, one who is immoral, failing in morality, upon the body's collapse at death, is reborn in a realm of misery, an unfortunate realm, a nether world, in hell. This is the fifth danger of being immoral, of failure in morality. These, householders, are the five dangers of being immoral, of failure in morality.

The Benefit of Being Moral

150. "Householders, there are these five benefits of being moral, of accomplishment in morality. Which five? Here, householders, one who is moral, accomplished in morality, because of diligence attains a great mass of wealth. This is the first benefit of being moral, of accomplishment in morality.

"Furthermore, householders, a good reputation arises for one who is moral, accomplished in morality. This is the second benefit of being moral, of accomplishment in morality.

"Furthermore, householders, one who is moral, accomplished in morality, whatever assembly he approaches - whether an assembly of warriors, whether an assembly of brahmins, whether an assembly of householders, whether an assembly of ascetics - he approaches confident, unabashed. This is the third benefit of being moral, of accomplishment in morality.

"Furthermore, householders, one who is moral, accomplished in morality, dies undeluded. This is the fourth benefit of being moral, of accomplishment in morality.

"Furthermore, householders, one who is moral, accomplished in morality, upon the body's collapse at death, is reborn in a fortunate realm, in a heavenly world. This is the fifth benefit of being moral, of accomplishment in morality. These, householders, are the five benefits of being moral, of accomplishment in morality."

151. Then the Blessed One, having instructed, encouraged, inspired, and gladdened the lay followers of Pāṭaligāma with a talk on the Teaching for much of the night, dismissed them - "The night has passed, householders, now do as you think fit." "Yes, venerable sir," the lay followers of Pāṭaligāma replied to the Blessed One, rose from their seats, paid respect to the Blessed One, circumambulated him keeping him on their right, and departed. Then the Blessed One, when the lay followers of Pāṭaligāma had recently departed, entered the empty house.

The Building of the City of Pāṭaliputta

152. Now at that time Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Magadha, were building a city at Pāṭaligāma to obstruct the Vajjis. At that time many deities, in their thousands, were taking possession of sites at Pāṭaligāma. In whatever region influential deities take possession of sites, there the minds of influential kings and royal ministers incline to build dwellings. In whatever region middling deities take possession of sites, there the minds of middling kings and royal ministers incline to build dwellings. In whatever region inferior deities take possession of sites, there the minds of inferior kings and royal ministers incline to build dwellings. The Blessed One saw with the divine eye, which is pure and surpasses the human, those deities, in their thousands, taking possession of sites at Pāṭaligāma. Then the Blessed One, having risen towards the break of dawn, addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Who, Ānanda, is building a city at Pāṭaligāma?" "Sunidha and Vassakāra, venerable sir, the chief ministers of Magadha, are building a city at Pāṭaligāma to obstruct the Vajjis." "Just as if, Ānanda, having consulted with the gods of the Tāvatiṃsa heaven, just so, Ānanda, Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Magadha, are building a city at Pāṭaligāma to obstruct the Vajjis. Here, Ānanda, I saw with the divine eye, which is pure and surpasses the human, many deities, in their thousands, taking possession of sites at Pāṭaligāma. In whatever region, Ānanda, influential deities take possession of sites, there the minds of influential kings and royal ministers incline to build dwellings. In whatever region middling deities take possession of sites, there the minds of middling kings and royal ministers incline to build dwellings. In whatever region inferior deities take possession of sites, there the minds of inferior kings and royal ministers incline to build dwellings. As far as, Ānanda, the noble realm extends, as far as trade extends, this will be the chief city, Pāṭaliputta, a place for the opening of packages. For Pāṭaliputta, Ānanda, there will be three dangers -from fire or from water or from the breaking of alliance."

153. Then Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Magadha, approached the Blessed One; having approached, they exchanged friendly greetings with the Blessed One, and having concluded the pleasant and memorable talk, stood to one side. Standing to one side, Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Magadha, said this to the Blessed One: "May Master Gotama consent to accept a meal from us today together with the Community of monks." The Blessed One consented by silence. Then Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Magadha, having learned of the Blessed One's acceptance, approached their own public rest-house; having

approached, they had superior solid and soft food prepared at their own public rest-house and announced the time to the Blessed One: "It is time, Master Gotama, the meal is ready."

Then the Blessed One, having dressed in the earlier period of the day, taking his bowl and robe, together with the Community of monks, approached the public rest-house of Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Magadha; having approached, he sat down on the prepared seat. Then Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Magadha, with their own hands satisfied and served the Community of monks headed by the Buddha with superior solid and soft food. Then Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Magadha, when the Blessed One had finished eating and had removed his hand from the bowl, having taken a certain low seat, sat down to one side. When Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Magadha, were seated to one side, the Blessed One gave thanks with these verses:

"In whatever region one of wise birth makes his dwelling,
Having fed the virtuous here, the restrained ones living the holy life,

Whatever deities are there, to them he should dedicate the offering;
They, being venerated, venerate him; being honoured, they honour him.

Therefore they have compassion for him, as a mother for her own son;
A man favoured by deities always sees good fortune."

Then the Blessed One, having given thanks to Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Magadha, with these verses, rose from his seat and departed.

154. Now at that time Sunidha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Magadha, were following closely behind the Blessed One - "By whichever door the ascetic Gotama will depart today, that will be named the Gotama Door. By whichever ford he will cross the river Ganges, that will be named the Gotama Ford." Then by whichever door the Blessed One departed, that was named the Gotama Door. Then the Blessed One went to the river Ganges. Now at that time the river Ganges was full, level to the brim, so that a crow could drink from it. Some people were seeking a boat, some were seeking a raft, some were binding together a float, wishing to go from the near shore to the far shore. Then the Blessed One - just as a strong man might extend his bent arm or bend his extended arm, even so - having vanished from the near shore of the river Ganges, appeared on the far shore together with the Community of monks. The Blessed One saw those people, some seeking a boat, some seeking a raft, some binding together a float, wishing to go from the near shore to the far shore. Then the Blessed One, having understood this matter, at that time uttered this inspired utterance -

"Those who cross the ocean, the flowing stream, having made a bridge,
leaving behind the pools;
While people bind together a raft, the wise have crossed over."

First recitation section.

The Discussion on the Noble Truths

155. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come, Ānanda, let us approach Koṭigāma." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One together with a large Community of monks arrived at Koṭigāma. There the Blessed One stayed at Koṭigāma. There the Blessed One addressed the monks -

"Monks, through not understanding, through not penetrating the four noble truths, thus this long course has been run through and wandered through by me as well as by you. Which four? Monks, through not understanding, through not penetrating the noble truth of suffering, thus this long course has been run through and wandered through by me as well as by you. Monks, through not understanding, through not penetrating the noble truth of the origin of suffering, thus this long course has been run through and wandered through by me as well as by you. Monks, through not understanding, through not penetrating the noble truth of the cessation of suffering, thus this long course has been run through and wandered through by me as well as by you. Monks, through not understanding, through not penetrating the noble truth of the practice leading to the cessation of suffering, thus this long course has been run through and wandered through by me as well as by you. Monks, this noble truth of suffering has been understood and penetrated, this noble truth of the origin of suffering has been understood and penetrated, this noble truth of the cessation of suffering has been understood and penetrated, this noble truth of the practice leading to the cessation of suffering has been understood and penetrated, craving for existence has been cut off, the conduit to existence has been eliminated, there is now no more rebirth." This is what the Blessed One said. Having said this, the Fortunate One, the Teacher, further said this -

"Through not seeing the four noble truths as they really are;
This long course has been wandered through, in birth after birth.

These have been seen, the conduit to existence has been uprooted;
The root of suffering has been cut off, there is now no more rebirth."

There too the Blessed One, while dwelling at Koṭigāma, frequently gave this talk on the Teaching to the monks - "Such is morality, such is concentration, such is wisdom. Concentration developed through morality is of great fruit and great benefit. Wisdom developed through concentration is of great fruit and great benefit. The mind developed through wisdom becomes completely liberated from the mental corruptions, as follows: the mental corruption of sensuality, the mental corruption of existence, the mental corruption of ignorance."

Those Not Subject to Return, Headed for the Highest Enlightenment

156. Then the Blessed One, having dwelt at Koṭigāma as long as he liked, addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come, Ānanda, let us approach Nātikā." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One together with a large Community of monks arrived at Nātikā. There too the Blessed One dwelt at Nātikā in the brick house. Then the Venerable Ānanda approached the Blessed One; having approached, he paid respect to the Blessed One and sat down to one side. Seated to one side, the Venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One - "Venerable sir, the monk named Sāḷha has died at Nātikā. What is his destination,

what is his future life? Venerable sir, the nun named Nandā has died at Nātikā. What is her destination, what is her future life? Venerable sir, the lay follower named Sudatta has died at Nātikā. What is his destination, what is his future life? Venerable sir, the female lay follower named Sujātā has died at Nātikā. What is her destination, what is her future life? Venerable sir, the lay follower named Kukkuṭṭha has died at Nātikā. What is his destination, what is his future life? Venerable sir, the lay follower named Kāḷimba... etc. Venerable sir, the lay follower named Nikaṭṭha... Venerable sir, the lay follower named Kaṭissaha... Venerable sir, the lay follower named Tuṭṭha... Venerable sir, the lay follower named Santuṭṭha... Venerable sir, the lay follower named Bhadda... Venerable sir, the lay follower named Subhadda has died at Nātikā. What is his destination, what is his future life?"

157. "Sāḷha, Ānanda, the monk, with the elimination of the mental corruptions, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge himself, having attained, dwelt in the liberation of mind and liberation by wisdom that are without mental corruptions. Nandā, Ānanda, the nun, with the utter elimination of the five lower mental fetters, is one of spontaneous birth, attaining final nibbāna there, not subject to return from that world. Sudatta, Ānanda, the lay follower, with the utter elimination of the three mental fetters and with the reduction of lust, hate, and delusion, is a once-returner, who, having come to this world only once more, will make an end of suffering. Sujātā, Ānanda, the female lay follower, with the utter elimination of the three mental fetters, is a stream-enterer, no longer subject to fall into lower realms, fixed in destiny, heading for the highest enlightenment. Kukkuṭṭha, Ānanda, the lay follower, with the utter elimination of the five lower mental fetters, is one of spontaneous birth, attaining final nibbāna there, not subject to return from that world. Kāḷimba, Ānanda, the lay follower... etc. Nikaṭṭha, Ānanda, the lay follower... Kaṭissaha, Ānanda, the lay follower... Tuṭṭha, Ānanda, the lay follower... Santuṭṭha, Ānanda, the lay follower... Bhadda, Ānanda, the lay follower... Subhadda, Ānanda, the lay follower, with the utter elimination of the five lower mental fetters, is one of spontaneous birth, attaining final nibbāna there, not subject to return from that world. More than fifty, Ānanda, lay followers who have died at Nātikā, with the utter elimination of the five lower mental fetters, are ones of spontaneous birth, attaining final nibbāna there, not subject to return from that world. More than ninety, Ānanda, lay followers who have died at Nātikā, with the utter elimination of the three mental fetters and with the reduction of lust, hate, and delusion, are once-returners, who, having come to this world only once more, will make an end of suffering. More than five hundred, Ānanda, lay followers who have died at Nātikā, with the utter elimination of the three mental fetters, are stream-enterers, no longer subject to fall into lower realms, fixed in destiny, heading for the highest enlightenment.

The Mirror of the Teaching Exposition

158. "But this is not wonderful, Ānanda, that one who has become a human being should die. Each time someone dies, you will approach the Truth-finder and ask about this matter; that would be harming for the Truth-finder, Ānanda. Therefore, Ānanda, I will teach an exposition of the Teaching called 'the mirror of the Teaching', possessed of which a noble disciple, if he wishes, may declare of himself: 'For me, hell is eliminated, the animal realm is eliminated, the sphere of ghosts is eliminated, the

realm of misery, the unfortunate realm, the nether world is eliminated; I am a stream-enterer, no longer subject to fall into lower realms, fixed in destiny, heading for the highest enlightenment.'

159. "And what, Ānanda, is that mirror of the Teaching, that exposition of the Teaching, possessed of which a noble disciple, if he wishes, may declare of himself: 'For me, hell is eliminated, the animal realm is eliminated, the sphere of ghosts is eliminated, the realm of misery, the unfortunate realm, the nether world is eliminated; I am a stream-enterer, no longer subject to fall into lower realms, fixed in destiny, heading for the highest enlightenment'?"

"Here, Ānanda, a noble disciple is endowed with unwavering confidence in the Buddha: 'Thus indeed is the Blessed One: the Worthy One, the Perfectly Enlightened One, accomplished in true knowledge and conduct, the Fortunate One, knower of the world, unsurpassed trainer of persons to be tamed, Teacher of gods and humans, the Enlightened One, the Blessed One.'

"He is endowed with unwavering confidence in the Teaching: 'Well proclaimed by the Blessed One is the Teaching, visible here and now, immediately effective, inviting one to come and see, leading onward, to be individually experienced by the wise.'

"He is endowed with unwavering confidence in the Community: 'The Community of the Blessed One's disciples is practicing well, the Community of the Blessed One's disciples is practicing uprightly, the Community of the Blessed One's disciples is practicing by the true method, the Community of the Blessed One's disciples is practicing properly, that is, the four pairs of persons, the eight types of individuals; this Community of the Blessed One's disciples is worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of reverential salutation, an unsurpassed field of merit for the world.'

"He is endowed with morality pleasing to the noble ones, unbroken, without gaps, spotless, unblemished, liberating, praised by the wise, not adhered to, conducive to concentration.

"This, Ānanda, is that mirror of the Teaching, that exposition of the Teaching, possessed of which a noble disciple, if he wishes, may declare of himself: 'For me, hell is eliminated, the animal realm is eliminated, the sphere of ghosts is eliminated, the realm of misery, the unfortunate realm, the nether world is eliminated; I am a stream-enterer, no longer subject to fall into lower realms, fixed in destiny, heading for the highest enlightenment.'"

There too the Blessed One, while dwelling at Nātikā in the brick house, frequently gave this talk on the Teaching to the monks:

"Such is morality, such is concentration, such is wisdom. Concentration developed through morality is of great fruit and great benefit. Wisdom developed through concentration is of great fruit and great benefit. The mind developed through wisdom becomes completely liberated from the mental corruptions, as follows: the mental corruption of sensuality, the mental corruption of existence, the mental corruption of ignorance."

160. Then the Blessed One, having dwelt at Nātikā as long as he liked, addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come, Ānanda, let us approach Vesālī." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One together with a large Community of monks arrived at Vesālī. There the Blessed One stayed at Vesālī in Ambapālī's grove. There the Blessed One addressed the monks -

"Monks, a monk should dwell mindful and fully aware; this is our instruction to you. And how, monks, is a monk mindful? Here, monks, a monk dwells observing the body in the body, ardent, fully aware, mindful, having removed covetousness and displeasure regarding the world. He dwells observing feelings in feelings... etc. He dwells observing mind in mind... etc. He dwells observing mental phenomena in mental phenomena, ardent, fully aware, mindful, having removed covetousness and displeasure regarding the world. Thus, monks, a monk is mindful.

"And how, monks, is a monk fully aware? Here, monks, a monk acts with full awareness when going forward and returning, acts with full awareness when looking ahead and looking aside, acts with full awareness when bending and stretching, acts with full awareness when wearing the double robe, bowl and robes, acts with full awareness when eating, drinking, chewing and tasting, acts with full awareness when defecating and urinating, acts with full awareness when walking, standing, sitting, sleeping, waking, speaking and remaining silent. Thus, monks, a monk is fully aware. Monks, a monk should dwell mindful and fully aware; this is our instruction to you."

The Courtesan Ambapālī

161. The courtesan Ambapālī heard - "The Blessed One, it is said, has arrived at Vesālī and is staying at Vesālī in my mango grove." Then the courtesan Ambapālī, having had the finest vehicles harnessed, having ascended the finest vehicle, departed from Vesālī with the finest vehicles. She set out towards her own park. Having gone by vehicle as far as the ground was passable for vehicles, she descended from the vehicle and approached the Blessed One on foot; having approached, he paid respect to the Blessed One and sat down to one side. The Blessed One instructed, encouraged, inspired, and gladdened the courtesan Ambapālī seated to one side with a talk on the Teaching. Then the courtesan Ambapālī, having been instructed, encouraged, inspired, and gladdened by the Blessed One with a talk on the Teaching, said this to the Blessed One - "May the Blessed One consent to accept a meal from me tomorrow together with the Community of monks, venerable sir." The Blessed One consented by silence. Then the courtesan Ambapālī, having learned of the Blessed One's acceptance, rose from her seat, paid respect to the Blessed One, circumambulated him keeping him on her right, and departed.

The Licchavis of Vesālī heard - "The Blessed One, it is said, has arrived at Vesālī and is staying at Vesālī in Ambapālī's grove." Then those Licchavis, having had the finest vehicles harnessed, having ascended the finest vehicle, departed from Vesālī with the finest vehicles. There some Licchavis were blue, of blue complexion, with blue clothes and blue ornaments; some Licchavis were yellow, of yellow complexion, with yellow clothes and yellow ornaments; some Licchavis were red, of red complexion, with red clothes and red ornaments; some Licchavis were white, of white complexion, with white clothes and white ornaments. Then the courtesan Ambapālī collided axle to axle, wheel to wheel, yoke to yoke with the young Licchavis. Then those Licchavis

said this to the courtesan Ambapālī - "Why, woman Ambapālī, do you collide axle to axle, wheel to wheel, yoke to yoke with the young Licchavis?" "Because, young masters, the Blessed One has been invited by me for tomorrow's meal together with the Community of monks." "Give us, woman Ambapālī, this meal for a hundred thousand." "Even if you were to give me Vesālī with its revenues, young masters, I would not give up that meal." Then those Licchavis snapped their fingers - "We have been defeated indeed, friend, by the mango woman, we have been defeated indeed, friend, by the mango woman."

Then those Licchavis set out towards Ambapālī's grove. The Blessed One saw those Licchavis coming from afar. Having seen them, he addressed the monks - "Those monks, monks, who have not seen the gods of the Thirty-three before, look at the assembly of Licchavis, monks; gaze upon the assembly of Licchavis, monks; compare the assembly of Licchavis, monks - similar to the Thirty-three." Then those Licchavis, having gone by vehicle as far as the ground was passable for vehicles, descended from the vehicles and approached the Blessed One on foot; having approached, they paid respect to the Blessed One and sat down to one side. The Blessed One instructed, encouraged, inspired, and gladdened those Licchavis seated to one side with a talk on the Teaching. Then those Licchavis, having been instructed, encouraged, inspired, and gladdened by the Blessed One with a talk on the Teaching, said this to the Blessed One - "May the Blessed One consent to accept a meal from us tomorrow together with the Community of monks, venerable sir." Then the Blessed One said this to those Licchavis - "I have already accepted a meal for tomorrow from the courtesan Ambapālī, Licchavis." Then those Licchavis snapped their fingers - "We have been defeated indeed, friend, by the mango woman, we have been defeated indeed, friend, by the mango woman." Then those Licchavis, having delighted in and given thanks for what the Blessed One had said, rose from their seats, paid respect to the Blessed One, circumambulated him keeping him on their right, and departed.

162. Then the courtesan Ambapālī, after that night had passed, having had superior solid and soft food prepared at her own park, announced the time to the Blessed One - "It is time, venerable sir, the meal is ready." Then the Blessed One, having dressed in the earlier period of the day, taking his bowl and robe, together with the Community of monks, approached the dwelling of the courtesan Ambapālī; having approached, he sat down on the prepared seat. Then the courtesan Ambapālī with her own hand satisfied and served the Community of monks headed by the Buddha with superior solid and soft food. Then the courtesan Ambapālī, when the Blessed One had finished eating and had removed his hand from the bowl, having taken a certain low seat, sat down to one side. Seated to one side, the courtesan Ambapālī said this to the Blessed One - "I give this park, venerable sir, to the Community of monks headed by the Buddha." The Blessed One accepted the park. Then the Blessed One, having instructed, encouraged, inspired, and gladdened the courtesan Ambapālī with a talk on the Teaching, rose from his seat and departed. There too the Blessed One, while dwelling at Vesālī in Ambapālī's grove, frequently gave this talk on the Teaching to the monks - "Such is morality, such is concentration, such is wisdom. Concentration developed through morality is of great fruit and great benefit. Wisdom developed through concentration is of great fruit and great benefit. The mind developed through

wisdom becomes completely liberated from the mental corruptions, as follows: the mental corruption of sensuality, the mental corruption of existence, the mental corruption of ignorance."

Entering the Rains at Veḷuva Village

163. Then the Blessed One, having dwelt in Ambapālī's grove as long as he liked, addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come, Ānanda, let us approach the village of Veḷuva." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One together with a large Community of monks arrived at the village of Veḷuva. There the Blessed One stayed at the village of Veḷuva. There the Blessed One addressed the monks - "Come, monks, enter the rains retreat all around Vesālī according to your friends, according to your acquaintances, according to your close companions. But I shall enter the rains retreat right here at the village of Veḷuva." "Yes, venerable sir," those monks replied to the Blessed One and entered the rains retreat all around Vesālī according to their friends, according to their acquaintances, according to their close companions. But the Blessed One entered the rains retreat right there at the village of Veḷuva.

164. Then a severe illness arose in the Blessed One who had entered the rains retreat, and painful feelings occurred, bordering on death. These the Blessed One endured, mindful and fully aware, without being distressed. Then this occurred to the Blessed One: "It is not proper for me that I should attain final nibbāna without addressing my attendants, without taking leave of the Community of monks. What if I were to suppress this illness by energy and dwell having determined the life-activities." Then the Blessed One, having suppressed that illness by energy, dwelt having determined the life-activities. Then that illness of the Blessed One subsided. Then the Blessed One, having recovered from the illness, not long after recovering from the sickness, having come out from the dwelling, sat down on the prepared seat in the shade of the dwelling. Then the Venerable Ānanda approached the Blessed One; having approached, he paid respect to the Blessed One and sat down to one side. Seated to one side, the Venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One - "I have seen the Blessed One's comfort, venerable sir; I have seen the Blessed One's endurance, venerable sir, but my body has become as if weak and stiff, venerable sir. The directions are not clear to me; the teachings do not occur to me because of the Blessed One's sickness, but there was some measure of comfort to me, venerable sir: 'The Blessed One will not attain final nibbāna until the Blessed One has declared something concerning the Community of monks.'"

165. "But, Ānanda, what does the Community of monks expect from me? The Teaching has been expounded by me, Ānanda, making no distinction between inner and outer. There is not, Ānanda, a closed fist of a teacher in the Truth-finder regarding the teachings. If anyone, Ānanda, should think thus - 'I will lead the Community of monks' or 'The Community of monks is under my direction' - he indeed, Ānanda, might declare something concerning the Community of monks. But the Truth-finder, Ānanda, does not think thus - 'I will lead the Community of monks' or 'The Community of monks is under my direction.' Why then, Ānanda, should the Truth-finder declare anything concerning the Community of monks? I am now, Ānanda, old, aged, elderly, one who has traversed the span of life, advanced in years. My age is now eighty years. Just as, Ānanda, an old cart is kept going by being held

together with straps, just so, Ānanda, methinks the Truth-finder's body is kept going by being held together with straps. At the time, Ānanda, when the Truth-finder, through inattention to all signs and through the cessation of certain feelings, enters and dwells in the signless concentration of mind, at that time, Ānanda, the Truth-finder's body is more comfortable. Therefore, Ānanda, dwell having yourselves as an island, having yourselves as a refuge, with no other refuge, having the Teaching as an island, having the Teaching as a refuge, with no other refuge. And how, Ānanda, does a monk dwell having himself as an island, having himself as a refuge, with no other refuge, having the Teaching as an island, having the Teaching as a refuge, with no other refuge? Here, Ānanda, a monk dwells observing the body in the body, ardent, fully aware, mindful, having removed covetousness and displeasure regarding the world. In feelings... etc. In mind... etc. He dwells observing mental phenomena in mental phenomena, ardent, fully aware, mindful, having removed covetousness and displeasure regarding the world. Thus indeed, Ānanda, a monk dwells having himself as an island, having himself as a refuge, with no other refuge, having the Teaching as an island, having the Teaching as a refuge, with no other refuge. Whoever, Ānanda, either now or after my passing, will dwell having themselves as an island, having themselves as a refuge, with no other refuge, having the Teaching as an island, having the Teaching as a refuge, with no other refuge - these monks, Ānanda, will be at the very topmost, whoever are eager to train."

Second recitation section.

The Talk on the Sign and Light

166. Then the Blessed One, having dressed in the earlier period of the day, taking his bowl and robe, entered Vesālī for almsfood. Having walked for almsfood in Vesālī, after the meal, having returned from his alms round, he addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Take the sitting cloth, Ānanda, let us approach the Cāpāla shrine for the day's abiding." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied to the Blessed One, and taking the sitting cloth, he followed closely behind the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One approached the Cāpāla shrine; having approached, he sat down on the prepared seat. The Venerable Ānanda also, having paid respect to the Blessed One, sat down to one side.

167. To the Venerable Ānanda seated to one side, the Blessed One said this - "Delightful, Ānanda, is Vesālī, delightful is the Udena shrine, delightful is the Gotamaka shrine, delightful is the Sattamba shrine, delightful is the Bahuputta shrine, delightful is the Sārandada shrine, delightful is the Cāpāla shrine. For anyone, Ānanda, who has developed, cultivated, mastered, made a basis of, practised, accumulated, and thoroughly undertaken the four bases for spiritual power, if he wishes, he could remain for a cosmic cycle or the remainder of a cosmic cycle. The Truth-finder, Ānanda, has developed, cultivated, mastered, made a basis of, practised, accumulated, and thoroughly undertaken the four bases for spiritual power; if he wishes, Ānanda, the Truth-finder could remain for a cosmic cycle or the remainder of a cosmic cycle." Yet even when such a gross sign was being made by the Blessed One, such a gross indication was being made, the Venerable Ānanda was not able to penetrate it; he did not request the Blessed One - "Let the Blessed One remain for a cosmic cycle, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One remain for a cosmic

cycle, for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans," as his mind was possessed by Māra. For the second time the Blessed One... etc. For the third time the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Delightful, Ānanda, is Vesālī, delightful is the Udena shrine, delightful is the Gotamaka shrine, delightful is the Sattamba shrine, delightful is the Bahuputta shrine, delightful is the Sārāṇḍada shrine, delightful is the Cāpāla shrine. For anyone, Ānanda, who has developed, cultivated, mastered, made a basis of, practised, accumulated, and thoroughly undertaken the four bases for spiritual power, if he wishes, he could remain for a cosmic cycle or the remainder of a cosmic cycle. The Truth-finder, Ānanda, has developed, cultivated, mastered, made a basis of, practised, accumulated, and thoroughly undertaken the four bases for spiritual power; if he wishes, Ānanda, the Truth-finder could remain for a cosmic cycle or the remainder of a cosmic cycle." Yet even when such a gross sign was being made by the Blessed One, such a gross indication was being made, the Venerable Ānanda was not able to penetrate it; he did not request the Blessed One - "Let the Blessed One remain for a cosmic cycle, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One remain for a cosmic cycle, for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans," as his mind was possessed by Māra. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Go, Ānanda, now do as you think fit." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied to the Blessed One, and rising from his seat, having paid respect to the Blessed One and circumambulated him keeping him on his right, he sat down at the foot of a certain tree not far away.

The Talk on Māra's Request

168. Then Māra the Evil One, soon after the Venerable Ānanda had departed, approached the Blessed One; having approached, he stood to one side. Standing to one side, Māra the Evil One said this to the Blessed One - "Let the Blessed One now attain final Nibbāna, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One attain final Nibbāna. Now is the time, venerable sir, for the Blessed One's final Nibbāna. For this speech was spoken by the Blessed One, venerable sir - 'I will not attain final Nibbāna, Evil One, until my monks become disciples who are learned, disciplined, confident, very learned, bearers of the Teaching, practicing in accordance with the Teaching, practicing properly, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learnt their teacher's own doctrine, will tell, teach, make known, establish, open up, analyse, and make clear, and having thoroughly refuted with reason the arisen doctrines of others, will expound the Teaching with the wondrous effect of liberation.' But now, venerable sir, the Blessed One's monks are disciples who are learned, disciplined, confident, very learned, bearers of the Teaching, practicing in accordance with the Teaching, practicing properly, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learnt their teacher's own doctrine, they tell, teach, make known, establish, open up, analyse, and make clear, and having thoroughly refuted with reason the arisen doctrines of others, they expound the Teaching with the wondrous effect of liberation. Let the Blessed One now attain final Nibbāna, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One attain final Nibbāna. Now is the time, venerable sir, for the Blessed One's final Nibbāna.

"For this speech was spoken by the Blessed One, venerable sir -'I will not attain final Nibbāna, Evil One, until my nuns become disciples who are learned, disciplined, confident, very learned, bearers of the Teaching, practicing in accordance with the Teaching, practicing properly, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learnt their teacher's own doctrine, will tell, teach, make known, establish, open up, analyse, and make clear, and having thoroughly refuted with reason the arisen doctrines of others, will expound the Teaching with the wondrous effect of liberation.' But now, venerable sir, the Blessed One's nuns are disciples who are learned, disciplined, confident, very learned, bearers of the Teaching, practicing in accordance with the Teaching, practicing properly, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learnt their teacher's own doctrine, they tell, teach, make known, establish, open up, analyse, and make clear, and having thoroughly refuted with reason the arisen doctrines of others, they expound the Teaching with the wondrous effect of liberation. Let the Blessed One now attain final Nibbāna, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One attain final Nibbāna. Now is the time, venerable sir, for the Blessed One's final Nibbāna.

"For this speech was spoken by the Blessed One, venerable sir -'I will not attain final Nibbāna, Evil One, until my male lay followers become disciples who are learned, disciplined, confident, very learned, bearers of the Teaching, practicing in accordance with the Teaching, practicing properly, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learnt their teacher's own doctrine, will tell, teach, make known, establish, open up, analyse, and make clear, and having thoroughly refuted with reason the arisen doctrines of others, will expound the Teaching with the wondrous effect of liberation.' But now, venerable sir, the Blessed One's male lay followers are disciples who are learned, disciplined, confident, very learned, bearers of the Teaching, practicing in accordance with the Teaching, practicing properly, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learnt their teacher's own doctrine, they tell, teach, make known, establish, open up, analyse, and make clear, and having thoroughly refuted with reason the arisen doctrines of others, they expound the Teaching with the wondrous effect of liberation. Let the Blessed One now attain final Nibbāna, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One attain final Nibbāna. Now is the time, venerable sir, for the Blessed One's final Nibbāna.

"For this speech was spoken by the Blessed One, venerable sir -'I will not attain final Nibbāna, Evil One, until my female lay followers become disciples who are learned, disciplined, confident, very learned, bearers of the Teaching, practicing in accordance with the Teaching, practicing properly, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learnt their teacher's own doctrine, will tell, teach, make known, establish, open up, analyse, and make clear, and having thoroughly refuted with reason the arisen doctrines of others, will expound the Teaching with the wondrous effect of liberation.' But now, venerable sir, the Blessed One's female lay followers are disciples who are learned, disciplined, confident, very learned, bearers of the Teaching, practicing in accordance with the Teaching, practicing properly, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learnt their teacher's own doctrine, they tell, teach, make known, establish, open up, analyse, and make clear, and having thoroughly refuted with reason the arisen doctrines of others, they expound the Teaching with the wondrous effect of liberation. Let the Blessed One now attain final Nibbāna, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One attain final Nibbāna. Now is the time,

venerable sir, for the Blessed One's final Nibbāna.

"For this speech was spoken by the Blessed One, venerable sir - 'I will not attain final Nibbāna, Evil One, until this holy life of mine becomes successful and prosperous, widespread, known to many, become widespread, until it is well proclaimed among gods and humans.' But now, venerable sir, the Blessed One's holy life is successful and prosperous, widespread, known to many, become widespread, well proclaimed among gods and humans. Let the Blessed One now attain final Nibbāna, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One attain final Nibbāna. Now is the time, venerable sir, for the Blessed One's final Nibbāna."

When this was said, the Blessed One said this to Māra the Evil One - "Be at ease, Evil One. It will not be long before the Truth-finder's final Nibbāna takes place. After the elapse of three months from now, the Truth-finder will attain final Nibbāna."

The Relinquishing of the Life Force

169. Then the Blessed One, at the Cāpāla shrine, mindful and fully aware, relinquished the life principle. And when the life principle was relinquished by the Blessed One, there was a great earthquake, terrifying and hair-raising, and the divine drums resounded. Then the Blessed One, having understood this matter, at that time uttered this inspired utterance -

"The measurable and the immeasurable origination, the activity of becoming, the sage relinquished;
Delighting internally, concentrated, he broke through self-existence like armour."

The Cause of the Great Earthquake

170. Then this occurred to the Venerable Ānanda: "Wonderful indeed, friend, marvellous indeed, friend, this is indeed a great earthquake; this is indeed a very great earthquake, terrifying and hair-raising; and the divine drums resounded. What is the cause, what is the condition for the manifestation of a great earthquake?"

Then the Venerable Ānanda approached the Blessed One, and having approached, he paid respect to the Blessed One and sat down to one side. Seated to one side, the Venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One: "Wonderful, Venerable Sir, marvellous, Venerable Sir, this is indeed a great earthquake, Venerable Sir; this is indeed a very great earthquake, Venerable Sir, terrifying and hair-raising; and the divine drums resounded. What, Venerable Sir, is the cause, what is the condition for the manifestation of a great earthquake?"

171. "Ānanda, there are these eight causes, eight conditions for the manifestation of a great earthquake. What are the eight? This great earth, Ānanda, is established upon water, the water is established upon wind, the wind rests upon space. There comes a time, Ānanda, when great winds blow. The great winds blowing cause the water to tremble. The water trembling causes the earth to tremble. This is the first cause, the first condition for the manifestation of a great earthquake.

"Furthermore, Ānanda, there is an ascetic or a brahmin possessing supernormal power, having attained mastery of mind, or a god of great supernormal power, of great might; he has developed a limited perception of earth and an immeasurable perception of water. He causes this earth to tremble, quake, shake, and shudder violently. This is the second cause, the second condition for the manifestation of a great earthquake.

"Furthermore, Ānanda, when a Bodhisatta, having passed away from the Tusita realm, mindful and fully aware, descends into his mother's womb, then this earth trembles, quakes, shakes, and shudders violently. This is the third cause, the third condition for the manifestation of a great earthquake.

"Furthermore, Ānanda, when a Bodhisatta, mindful and fully aware, emerges from his mother's womb, then this earth trembles, quakes, shakes, and shudders violently. This is the fourth cause, the fourth condition for the manifestation of a great earthquake.

"Furthermore, Ānanda, when a Truth-finder fully awakens to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment, then this earth trembles, quakes, shakes, and shudders violently. This is the fifth cause, the fifth condition for the manifestation of a great earthquake.

"Furthermore, Ānanda, when a Truth-finder sets in motion the unsurpassed wheel of the Teaching, then this earth trembles, quakes, shakes, and shudders violently. This is the sixth cause, the sixth condition for the manifestation of a great earthquake.

"Furthermore, Ānanda, when a Truth-finder, mindful and fully aware, relinquishes the life principle, then this earth trembles, quakes, shakes, and shudders violently. This is the seventh cause, the seventh condition for the manifestation of a great earthquake.

"Furthermore, Ānanda, when a Truth-finder attains final Nibbāna through the Nibbāna element without residue of clinging, then this earth trembles, quakes, shakes, and shudders violently. This is the eighth cause, the eighth condition for the manifestation of a great earthquake. These, Ānanda, are the eight causes, the eight conditions for the manifestation of a great earthquake."

The Eight Assemblies

172. "Ānanda, there are these eight assemblies. What are the eight? The assembly of nobles, the assembly of brahmins, the assembly of householders, the assembly of ascetics, the assembly of the Four Great Kings, the assembly of the Tāvātimsa gods, the assembly of Māra, the assembly of Brahmā. I directly know, Ānanda, that I have approached many hundreds of assemblies of nobles. There too I have previously sat down, conversed, and engaged in discussion. There, whatever their appearance was, such was my appearance. Whatever their voice was, such was my voice. I instruct, encourage, inspire, and gladden them with a talk on the Teaching. And while I am speaking, they do not know me - "Who is this speaking, a god or a human being?" Having instructed, encouraged, inspired, and gladdened them with a talk on the Teaching, I disappear. And when I have disappeared, they do not know me - "Who is this that has disappeared, a god or a human being?" I directly know, Ānanda, that I have approached many hundreds of assemblies of brahmins... etc. assemblies of householders... assemblies of ascetics... assemblies of the Four Great Kings...

assemblies of the Tāvatiṃsa gods... assemblies of Māra... assemblies of Brahmā. There too I have previously sat down, conversed, and engaged in discussion. There, whatever their appearance was, such was my appearance. Whatever their voice was, such was my voice. I instruct, encourage, inspire, and gladden them with a talk on the Teaching. And while I am speaking, they do not know me - "Who is this speaking, a god or a human being?" Having instructed, encouraged, inspired, and gladdened them with a talk on the Teaching, I disappear. And when I have disappeared, they do not know me - "Who is this that has disappeared, a god or a human being?" These, Ānanda, are the eight assemblies.

The Eight Bases of Overcoming

173. "Ānanda, there are these eight bases of overcoming. What are the eight? Perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally, limited, beautiful or ugly. Having overcome them, one has this perception: 'I know, I see.' This is the first basis of overcoming.

"Perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally, immeasurable, beautiful or ugly. Having overcome them, one has this perception: 'I know, I see.' This is the second basis of overcoming.

"Not perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally, limited, beautiful or ugly. Having overcome them, one has this perception: 'I know, I see.' This is the third basis of overcoming.

"Not perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally, immeasurable, beautiful or ugly. Having overcome them, one has this perception: 'I know, I see.' This is the fourth basis of overcoming.

"Not perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally, blue, of blue colour, of blue appearance, of blue lustre. Just as a flax flower is blue, of blue colour, of blue appearance, of blue lustre. Or just as that Benares cloth, smoothed on both sides, is blue, of blue colour, of blue appearance, of blue lustre. Just so, not perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally, blue, of blue colour, of blue appearance, of blue lustre. Having overcome them, one has this perception: 'I know, I see.' This is the fifth basis of overcoming.

"Not perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally, yellow, of yellow colour, of yellow appearance, of yellow lustre. Just as a kaṇikāra flower is yellow, of yellow colour, of yellow appearance, of yellow lustre. Or just as that Benares cloth, smoothed on both sides, is yellow, of yellow colour, of yellow appearance, of yellow lustre. Just so, not perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally, yellow, of yellow colour, of yellow appearance, of yellow lustre. Having overcome them, one has this perception: 'I know, I see.' This is the sixth basis of overcoming.

"Not perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally, red, of red colour, of red appearance, of red lustre. Just as a bandhujīvaka flower is red, of red colour, of red appearance, of red lustre. Or just as that Benares cloth, smoothed on both sides, is red, of red colour, of red appearance, of red lustre. Just so, not perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally, red, of red colour, of red appearance, of red lustre. Having overcome them, one has this perception: 'I know, I see.' This is the seventh basis of overcoming.

"Not perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally, white, of white colour, of white appearance, of white lustre. Just as the morning star is white, of white colour, of white appearance, of white lustre. Or just as that Benares cloth, smoothed on both sides, is white, of white colour, of white appearance, of white lustre. Just so, not perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally, white, of white colour, of white appearance, of white lustre. Having overcome them, one has this perception: 'I know, I see.' This is the eighth basis of overcoming. These, Ānanda, are the eight bases of overcoming.

The Eight Deliverances

174. "Ānanda, there are these eight deliverances. What are the eight? One who is material sees forms - this is the first deliverance. Internally not perceiving material forms, one sees forms externally - this is the second deliverance. One is intent only upon the beautiful - this is the third deliverance. With the complete transcendence of perceptions of form, with the passing away of perceptions of sensory impingement, with inattention to perceptions of diversity, aware that 'space is infinite,' one enters and dwells in the plane of infinite space - this is the fourth deliverance. Having completely transcended the plane of infinite space, aware that 'consciousness is infinite,' one enters and dwells in the plane of infinite consciousness - this is the fifth deliverance. Having completely transcended the plane of infinite consciousness, aware that 'there is nothing,' one enters and dwells in the plane of nothingness - this is the sixth deliverance. Having completely transcended the plane of nothingness, one enters and dwells in the plane of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. This is the seventh deliverance. Having completely transcended the plane of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, one enters and dwells in the cessation of perception and feeling - this is the eighth deliverance. These, Ānanda, are the eight deliverances.

175. "On one occasion, Ānanda, I was dwelling at Uruvelā on the bank of the river Nerañjarā at the goatherd's banyan tree, newly fully enlightened. Then, Ānanda, Māra the Evil One approached me; having approached, he stood to one side. Standing to one side, Ānanda, Māra the Evil One said this to me - 'Let the Blessed One now attain final Nibbāna, venerable sir; let the Fortunate One attain final Nibbāna. Now is the time, venerable sir, for the Blessed One's final Nibbāna.' When this was said, I, Ānanda, said this to Māra the Evil One -

'I will not attain final Nibbāna, Evil One, until my monks become disciples who are learned, disciplined, confident, very learned, bearers of the Teaching, practicing in accordance with the Teaching, practicing properly, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learnt their teacher's own doctrine, will tell, teach, make known, establish, open up, analyse, and make clear, and having thoroughly refuted with reason the arisen doctrines of others, will expound the Teaching with the wondrous effect of liberation.

'I will not attain final Nibbāna, Evil One, until my nuns become disciples who are learned, disciplined, confident, very learned, bearers of the Teaching, practicing in accordance with the Teaching, practicing properly, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learnt their teacher's own doctrine, will tell, teach, make known,

establish, open up, analyse, and make clear, and having thoroughly refuted with reason the arisen doctrines of others, will expound the Teaching with the wondrous effect of liberation.

'I will not attain final Nibbāna, Evil One, until my male lay followers become disciples who are learned, disciplined, confident, very learned, bearers of the Teaching, practicing in accordance with the Teaching, practicing properly, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learnt their teacher's own doctrine, will tell, teach, make known, establish, open up, analyse, and make clear, and having thoroughly refuted with reason the arisen doctrines of others, will expound the Teaching with the wondrous effect of liberation.

'I will not attain final Nibbāna, Evil One, until my female lay followers become disciples who are learned, disciplined, confident, very learned, bearers of the Teaching, practicing in accordance with the Teaching, practicing properly, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learnt their teacher's own doctrine, will tell, teach, make known, establish, open up, analyse, and make clear, and having thoroughly refuted with reason the arisen doctrines of others, will expound the Teaching with the wondrous effect of liberation.

'I will not attain final Nibbāna, Evil One, until this holy life of mine becomes successful and prosperous, widespread, known to many, become widespread, until it is well proclaimed among gods and humans.'

176. "Just now, Ānanda, today at the Cāpāla shrine, Māra the Evil One approached me; having approached, he stood to one side. Standing to one side, Ānanda, Māra the Evil One said this to me - 'Let the Blessed One now attain final Nibbāna, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One attain final Nibbāna. Now is the time, venerable sir, for the Blessed One's final Nibbāna. For this speech was spoken by the Blessed One, venerable sir - "I will not attain final Nibbāna, Evil One, until my monks become disciples... etc. until my nuns become disciples... etc. until my male lay followers become disciples... etc. until my female lay followers become disciples... etc. until this holy life of mine becomes successful and prosperous, widespread, known to many, become widespread, until it is well proclaimed among gods and humans." But now, venerable sir, the Blessed One's holy life is successful and prosperous, widespread, known to many, become widespread, well proclaimed among gods and humans. Let the Blessed One now attain final Nibbāna, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One attain final Nibbāna. Now is the time, venerable sir, for the Blessed One's final Nibbāna.'

177. "When this was said, I, Ānanda, said this to Māra the Evil One - 'Be at ease, Evil One. It will not be long before the Truth-finder's final Nibbāna takes place. After the elapse of three months from now, the Truth-finder will attain final Nibbāna.' Just now, Ānanda, today at the Cāpāla shrine, the Truth-finder, mindful and fully aware, has relinquished the life force."

The Talk on Ānanda's Request

178. When this was said, the Venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One - "Let the Blessed One remain for a cosmic cycle, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One remain for a cosmic cycle, for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many

people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans."

"Enough now, Ānanda. Do not request the Truth-finder, it is now the wrong time, Ānanda, for requesting the Truth-finder." For the second time, the Venerable Ānanda... etc. For the third time, the Venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One - "Let the Blessed One remain for a cosmic cycle, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One remain for a cosmic cycle, for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans."

"Do you have faith, Ānanda, in the Truth-finder's enlightenment?" "Yes, venerable sir." "Then why now, Ānanda, did you press the Truth-finder up to the third time?" "Face to face with the Blessed One I heard this, venerable sir, face to face I received it - 'For anyone, Ānanda, who has developed, cultivated, mastered, made a basis of, practised, accumulated, and thoroughly undertaken the four bases for spiritual power, if he wishes, he could remain for a cosmic cycle or the remainder of a cosmic cycle. The Truth-finder, Ānanda, has developed, cultivated, mastered, made a basis of, practised, accumulated, and thoroughly undertaken the four bases for spiritual power. If he wishes, Ānanda, the Truth-finder could remain for a cosmic cycle or the remainder of a cosmic cycle.'" "Do you have faith, Ānanda?" "Yes, venerable sir." "Therefore, Ānanda, this is your wrong-doing, this is your failure, that when such a gross sign was being made by the Truth-finder, such a gross indication was being made, you were not able to penetrate it, you did not request the Truth-finder - 'Let the Blessed One remain for a cosmic cycle, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One remain for a cosmic cycle, for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans.' If you, Ānanda, had requested the Truth-finder, the Truth-finder would have rejected your words twice, but the third time he would have consented. Therefore, Ānanda, this is your wrong-doing, this is your failure.

179. "On one occasion, Ānanda, I was dwelling at Rājagaha on the Vulture's Peak mountain. There too I addressed you, Ānanda - 'Delightful, Ānanda, is Rājagaha, delightful, Ānanda, is the Vulture's Peak mountain. For anyone, Ānanda, who has developed, cultivated, mastered, made a basis of, practised, accumulated, and thoroughly undertaken the four bases for spiritual power, if he wishes, he could remain for a cosmic cycle or the remainder of a cosmic cycle. The Truth-finder, Ānanda, has developed, cultivated, mastered, made a basis of, practised, accumulated, and thoroughly undertaken the four bases for spiritual power; if he wishes, Ānanda, the Truth-finder could remain for a cosmic cycle or the remainder of a cosmic cycle.' Yet even so, Ānanda, when such a gross sign was being made by the Truth-finder, such a gross indication was being made, you were not able to penetrate it, you did not request the Truth-finder - 'Let the Blessed One remain for a cosmic cycle, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One remain for a cosmic cycle, for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans.' If you, Ānanda, had requested the Truth-finder, the Truth-finder would have rejected your words twice, but the third time he would have consented. Therefore, Ānanda, this is your wrong-doing, this is your failure.

180. "On one occasion, Ānanda, I was dwelling right there at Rājagaha at the Gotama banyan tree... etc. right there at Rājagaha I was dwelling at the Thieves' Precipice... right there at Rājagaha I was dwelling at the Sattapaṇṇi Cave on the slope of Vebhāra... right there at Rājagaha I was dwelling at the Black Rock on the slope of Isigili... right there at Rājagaha I was dwelling at the Sappasoṇḍika Cave in the Cool Grove... right there at Rājagaha I was dwelling at the Tapoda Monastery...right there at Rājagaha I was dwelling at the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Feeding Ground... right there at Rājagaha I was dwelling at Jīvaka's Mango Grove...right there at Rājagaha I was dwelling at the Deer Park in Maddakucchi. There too I addressed you, Ānanda - 'Delightful, Ānanda, is Rājagaha, delightful is the Vulture's Peak mountain, delightful is the Gotama banyan tree, delightful is the Thieves' Precipice, delightful is the Sattapaṇṇi Cave on the slope of Vebhāra, delightful is the Black Rock on the slope of Isigili, delightful is the Sappasoṇḍika Cave in the Cool Grove, delightful is the Tapoda Monastery, delightful is the Squirrels' Feeding Ground in the Bamboo Grove, delightful is Jīvaka's Mango Grove, delightful is the Deer Park in Maddakucchi. For anyone, Ānanda, who has developed, cultivated, mastered, made a basis of, practised, accumulated, and thoroughly undertaken the four bases for spiritual power... etc. if he wishes, Ānanda, the Truth-finder could remain for a cosmic cycle or the remainder of a cosmic cycle.' Yet even so, Ānanda, when such a gross sign was being made by the Truth-finder, such a gross indication was being made, you were not able to penetrate it, you did not request the Truth-finder - 'Let the Blessed One remain for a cosmic cycle, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One remain for a cosmic cycle, for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans.' If you, Ānanda, had requested the Truth-finder, the Truth-finder would have rejected your words twice, but the third time he would have consented. Therefore, Ānanda, this is your wrong-doing, this is your failure.

181. "On one occasion, Ānanda, I was dwelling right here at Vesālī in the Udena shrine. There too I addressed you, Ānanda - 'Delightful, Ānanda, is Vesālī, delightful is the Udena shrine. For anyone, Ānanda, who has developed, cultivated, mastered, made a basis of, practised, accumulated, and thoroughly undertaken the four bases for spiritual power, if he wishes, he could remain for a cosmic cycle or the remainder of a cosmic cycle. The Truth-finder, Ānanda, has developed, cultivated, mastered, made a basis of, practised, accumulated, and thoroughly undertaken the four bases for spiritual power; if he wishes, Ānanda, the Truth-finder could remain for a cosmic cycle or the remainder of a cosmic cycle.' Yet even so, Ānanda, when such a gross sign was being made by the Truth-finder, such a gross indication was being made, you were not able to penetrate it, you did not request the Truth-finder - 'Let the Blessed One remain for a cosmic cycle, venerable sir, let the Fortunate One remain for a cosmic cycle, for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans.' If you, Ānanda, had requested the Truth-finder, the Truth-finder would have rejected your words twice, but the third time he would have consented. Therefore, Ānanda, this is your wrong-doing, this is your failure.

182. "On one occasion, Ānanda, I was dwelling right here at Vesālī in the Gotamaka shrine... etc. Right here at Vesālī I was dwelling in the Sattamba shrine. Right here at Vesālī I was dwelling in the Bahuputta shrine. Right here at Vesālī I was dwelling in

the Sārandada shrine. Just now, Ānanda, today at the Cāpāla shrine I addressed you - 'Delightful, Ānanda, is Vesālī, delightful is the Udena shrine, delightful is the Gotamaka shrine, delightful is the Sattamba shrine, delightful is the Bahuputta shrine, delightful is the Sārandada shrine, delightful is the Cāpāla shrine. For anyone, Ānanda, who has developed, cultivated, mastered, made a basis of, practised, accumulated, and thoroughly undertaken the four bases for spiritual power, if he wishes, he could remain for a cosmic cycle or the remainder of a cosmic cycle. The Truth-finder, Ānanda, has developed, cultivated, mastered, made a basis of, practised, accumulated, and thoroughly undertaken the four bases for spiritual power; if he wishes, Ānanda, the Truth-finder could remain for a cosmic cycle or the remainder of a cosmic cycle.' Yet even so, Ānanda, when such a gross sign was being made by the Truth-finder, such a gross indication was being made, you were not able to penetrate it, you did not request the Truth-finder - 'Let the Blessed One remain for a cosmic cycle, let the Fortunate One remain for a cosmic cycle, for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans.' If you, Ānanda, had requested the Truth-finder, the Truth-finder would have rejected your words twice, but the third time he would have consented. Therefore, Ānanda, this is your wrong-doing, this is your failure.

183. "Has this not been declared by me beforehand, Ānanda - 'There is separation, parting, and becoming otherwise from all that is dear and beloved. How could it be obtained here, Ānanda, that what is born, come to be, conditioned, subject to disintegration, should not disintegrate - this is impossible.' But now, Ānanda, that which has been given up, rejected, released, abandoned, relinquished by the Truth-finder - the life force has been let go, a definite statement has been spoken - 'It will not be long before the Truth-finder's final Nibbāna takes place. After the elapse of three months from now, the Truth-finder will attain final Nibbāna.' That the Truth-finder should take that back again for the sake of life - this is impossible. Come, Ānanda, let us approach the Great Forest, to the Pinnacled Hall." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One, together with the Venerable Ānanda, approached the Great Forest, to the Pinnacled Hall; having approached, he addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Go, Ānanda, and assemble in the assembly hall all the monks who are dwelling in dependence on Vesālī." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied to the Blessed One, and having assembled all the monks who were dwelling in dependence on Vesālī in the assembly hall, he approached the Blessed One; having approached, he paid respect to the Blessed One and stood to one side. Standing to one side, the Venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One - "The Community of monks has assembled, venerable sir. Now let the Blessed One do as he thinks fit, venerable sir."

184. Then the Blessed One went to the assembly hall; having approached, he sat down on the prepared seat. Having sat down, the Blessed One addressed the monks: "Therefore, monks, those teachings that have been taught by me through direct knowledge, having learnt them well, should be practised, developed, and cultivated by you, so that this holy life may last long and endure, for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans. And what, monks, are those

teachings that have been taught by me through direct knowledge, which, having learnt them well, should be practised, developed, and cultivated by you, so that this holy life may last long and endure, for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans? That is: 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. These, monks, are the teachings that have been taught by me through direct knowledge, which, having learnt them well, should be practised, developed, and cultivated by you, so that this holy life may last long and endure, for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans."

185. Then the Blessed One addressed the monks: "Come now, monks, I address you: all activities have the nature of fall; strive with diligence. It will not be long before the Truth-finder's final Nibbāna takes place. After the elapse of three months from now, the Truth-finder will attain final Nibbāna." This the Blessed One said, and having said this, the Fortunate One, the Teacher, further said this:

"My age is fully ripe, my life is limited;
Leaving you, I shall go, I have made myself my own refuge.

"Be diligent, mindful, and virtuous, monks;
With well-concentrated thoughts, guard your own minds.

"Whoever in this Teaching and discipline will dwell diligently;
Having abandoned the round of rebirths, will make an end of suffering."

Third recitation section.

The Elephant's Gaze

186. Then the Blessed One, having dressed in the earlier period of the day, taking his bowl and robe, entered Vesālī for almsfood. Having walked for almsfood in Vesālī, after the meal, having returned from his alms round, having looked back at Vesālī with an elephant's gaze, he addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "This, Ānanda, will be the Truth-finder's last seeing of Vesālī. Come, Ānanda, let us approach Bhaṇḍagāma." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One together with a large Community of monks arrived at Bhaṇḍagāma. There the Blessed One stayed at Bhaṇḍagāma. There the Blessed One addressed the monks - "Monks, through not understanding, through not penetrating four things, thus this long course has been run through and wandered through by me as well as by you. Which four? Monks, through not understanding, through not penetrating noble morality, thus this long course has been run through and wandered through by me as well as by you. Monks, through not understanding, through not penetrating noble concentration, thus this long course has been run through and wandered through by me as well as by you. Monks, through not understanding, through not penetrating noble wisdom, thus this long course has been run through and wandered through by me as well as by you. Monks, through not understanding, through not penetrating noble liberation, thus this long course has been run through

and wandered through by me as well as by you. Monks, this noble morality has been understood and penetrated, noble concentration has been understood and penetrated, noble wisdom has been understood and penetrated, noble liberation has been understood and penetrated, craving for existence has been cut off, the conduit to existence has been eliminated, there is now no more rebirth." This the Blessed One said, and having said this, the Fortunate One, the Teacher, further said this:

"Morality, concentration, and wisdom, and unsurpassed liberation;
These things have been understood by Gotama of great fame.

"Thus the Buddha, having directly known, declared the Teaching to the monks;
The Teacher who makes an end of suffering, the one with vision, has attained
final Nibbāna."

There too the Blessed One, while dwelling at Bhaṇḍagāma, frequently gave this talk on the Teaching to the monks - "Such is morality, such is concentration, such is wisdom. Concentration developed through morality is of great fruit and great benefit. Wisdom developed through concentration is of great fruit and great benefit. The mind developed through wisdom becomes completely liberated from the mental corruptions, as follows: the mental corruption of sensuality, the mental corruption of existence, the mental corruption of ignorance."

The Talk on the Four Great References

187. Then the Blessed One, having dwelt at Bhaṇḍagāma as long as he liked, addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come, Ānanda, let us approach Hatthigāma, Ambagāma, Jambugāma, and Bhoganagara." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One together with a large Community of monks arrived at Bhoganagara. There the Blessed One stayed at Bhoganagara in the Ānanda shrine. There the Blessed One addressed the monks - "I will teach you, monks, these four great references. Listen to that, pay close attention, I will speak." "Yes, venerable sir," those monks assented to the Blessed One. The Blessed One said this -

188. "Here, monks, a monk might say thus: 'Face to face with the Blessed One I heard this, friend, face to face I received it: this is the Teaching, this is the monastic discipline, this is the Teacher's instruction.' That monk's words, monks, should neither be delighted in nor protested against. Without delighting in and without protesting against, having thoroughly learnt those terms and phrases, they should be traced back to the discourses and compared with the monastic discipline. If, when being traced back to the discourses and compared with the monastic discipline, they do not fit into the discourses and do not agree with the monastic discipline, the conclusion should be reached here: 'Certainly, this is not the word of that Blessed One; and it has been misapprehended by this monk.' Thus, monks, you should reject it. If, when being traced back to the discourses and compared with the monastic discipline, they do fit into the discourses and agree with the monastic discipline, the conclusion should be reached here: 'Certainly, this is the word of that Blessed One; and it has been rightly taken by this monk.' This, monks, you should remember as the first great reference.

"Here again, monks, a monk might say thus: 'In such and such a residence a monastic community dwells with elders and leaders. Face to face with that monastic community I heard this, face to face I received it: this is the Teaching, this is the monastic discipline, this is the Teacher's instruction.' That monk's words, monks, should neither be delighted in nor protested against. Without delighting in and without protesting against, having thoroughly learnt those terms and phrases, they should be traced back to the discourses and compared with the monastic discipline. If, when being traced back to the discourses and compared with the monastic discipline, they do not fit into the discourses and do not agree with the monastic discipline, the conclusion should be reached here: 'Certainly, this is not the word of that Blessed One; and it has been misapprehended by that monastic community.' Thus, monks, you should reject it. If, when being traced back to the discourses and compared with the monastic discipline, they do fit into the discourses and agree with the monastic discipline, the conclusion should be reached here: 'Certainly, this is the word of that Blessed One; and it has been rightly taken by that monastic community.' This, monks, you should remember as the second great reference.

"Here again, monks, a monk might say thus: 'In such and such a residence several elder monks dwell who are very learned, who have learnt the collections, who are bearers of the Teaching, bearers of the monastic discipline, bearers of the matrices. Face to face with those elders I heard this, face to face I received it: this is the Teaching, this is the monastic discipline, this is the Teacher's instruction.' That monk's words, monks, should neither be delighted in etc. and do not agree with the monastic discipline, the conclusion should be reached here: 'Certainly, this is not the word of that Blessed One; and it has been misapprehended by those elders.' Thus, monks, you should reject it. If, when being traced back to the discourses etc. and agree with the monastic discipline, the conclusion should be reached here: 'Certainly, this is the word of that Blessed One; and it has been rightly taken by those elders.' This, monks, you should remember as the third great reference.

"Here again, monks, a monk might say thus: 'In such and such a residence there dwells a single elder monk who is very learned, who has learnt the collections, a bearer of the Teaching, a bearer of the monastic discipline, a bearer of the matrices. Face to face with that elder I heard this, face to face I received it: this is the Teaching, this is the monastic discipline, this is the Teacher's instruction.' That monk's words, monks, should neither be delighted in nor protested against. Without delighting in it, without protesting against it, having learnt those terms and phrases well, they should be reinstated in the discourses, they should be compared with the monastic discipline. If, when being traced back to the discourses and compared with the monastic discipline, they do not fit into the discourses and do not agree with the monastic discipline, the conclusion should be reached here: 'Certainly, this is not the word of that Blessed One; and it has been misapprehended by that elder.' Thus, monks, you should reject it. But if, when being reinstated in the discourses and compared with the monastic discipline, they do enter into the discourses and are seen in the monastic discipline, the conclusion should be reached here: 'Certainly, this is the word of that Blessed One; and it has been rightly taken by that elder.' This, monks, is the fourth great reference that you should keep. These, monks, are the four great references that you should keep."

There too the Blessed One, while dwelling at Bhoganagara in the Ānanda shrine, frequently gave this talk on the Teaching to the monks: "Such is morality, such is concentration, such is wisdom. Concentration developed through morality is of great fruit and great benefit. Wisdom developed through concentration is of great fruit and great benefit. The mind developed through wisdom becomes completely liberated from the mental corruptions, as follows: the mental corruption of sensuality, the mental corruption of existence, the mental corruption of ignorance."

The Story of Cunda the Smith's Son

189. Then the Blessed One, having dwelt at Bhoganagara as long as he liked, addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come, Ānanda, let us approach Pāvā." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One together with a large Community of monks arrived at Pāvā. There the Blessed One stayed at Pāvā in the mango grove of Cunda, the smith's son. Cunda, the smith's son, heard - "The Blessed One, it is said, has arrived at Pāvā and is staying at Pāvā in my mango grove." Then Cunda, the smith's son, approached the Blessed One; having approached, he paid respect to the Blessed One and sat down to one side. The Blessed One instructed, encouraged, inspired, and gladdened Cunda, the smith's son, seated to one side with a talk on the Teaching. Then Cunda, the smith's son, having been instructed, encouraged, inspired, and gladdened by the Blessed One with a talk on the Teaching, said this to the Blessed One - "May the Blessed One consent to accept a meal from me tomorrow together with the Community of monks, venerable sir." The Blessed One consented by silence. Then Cunda, the smith's son, having learned of the Blessed One's acceptance, rose from his seat, paid respect to the Blessed One, circumambulated him keeping him on his right, and departed.

Then Cunda, the smith's son, after that night had passed, having had superior solid and soft food prepared at his own dwelling, and an abundance of sūkaramaddava, announced the time to the Blessed One - "It is time, venerable sir, the meal is ready." Then the Blessed One, having dressed in the earlier period of the day, taking his bowl and robe, together with the Community of monks, approached the dwelling of Cunda, the smith's son; having approached, he sat down on the prepared seat. Having sat down, the Blessed One addressed Cunda, the smith's son - "Cunda, serve me with the sūkaramaddava that has been prepared. But serve the Community of monks with the other solid and soft food that has been prepared." "Yes, venerable sir," Cunda, the smith's son, having replied to the Blessed One, served the Blessed One with the sūkaramaddava that had been prepared. And he served the Community of monks with the other solid and soft food that had been prepared. Then the Blessed One addressed Cunda, the smith's son - "Cunda, bury in a pit whatever sūkaramaddava is left over. I do not see anyone, Cunda, in the world with its gods, with its Māras, with its Brahmās, among the generation with its ascetics and brahmins, with its gods and humans, by whom that, when eaten, would be properly digested, except by the Truth-finder." "Yes, venerable sir," Cunda, the smith's son, having replied to the Blessed One, buried in a pit the sūkaramaddava that was left over, and approached the Blessed One; having approached, he paid respect to the Blessed One and sat down to one side. The Blessed One, having instructed, encouraged, inspired, and gladdened Cunda, the smith's son, seated to one side with a talk on the Teaching, rose from his seat and departed.

190. Then a severe illness arose in the Blessed One who had finished eating the meal of Cunda, the smith's son, bloody diarrhoea with painful feelings occurring, bordering on death. These the Blessed One endured, mindful and fully aware, without being distressed. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come, Ānanda, let us approach Kusinārā." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One.

Having eaten the meal of Cunda, the smith's son, thus have I heard;
The wise one experienced an illness, severe, bordering on death.

And having eaten the sūkaramaddava,
A severe illness arose in the Teacher;
While purging, the Blessed One said,
"I am going to the city of Kusinārā."

The Fetching of Water

191. Then the Blessed One, having turned aside from the road, approached a certain tree-root; having approached, he addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come now, Ānanda, prepare for me the double robe folded in four, I am tired, Ānanda, I will sit down." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied to the Blessed One and prepared the double robe folded in four. The Blessed One sat down on the prepared seat. Having sat down, the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come now, Ānanda, bring me drinking water, I am thirsty, Ānanda, I will drink." When this was said, the Venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One - "Just now, venerable sir, about five hundred carts have passed by, that water cut up by the wheels flows shallow, stirred up, and muddy. This, venerable sir, is the Kakudhā river not far away, with clear water, with sweet water, with cool water, with pure water, with good fords, delightful. Here the Blessed One will drink drinking water and will cool his limbs."

For the second time the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come now, Ānanda, bring me drinking water, I am thirsty, Ānanda, I will drink." For the second time the Venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One - "Just now, venerable sir, about five hundred carts have passed by, that water cut up by the wheels flows shallow, stirred up, and muddy. This, venerable sir, is the Kakudhā river not far away, with clear water, with sweet water, with cool water, with pure water, with good fords, delightful. Here the Blessed One will drink drinking water and will cool his limbs."

For the third time the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come now, Ānanda, bring me drinking water, I am thirsty, Ānanda, I will drink." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied to the Blessed One, and taking the bowl, he approached that small river. Then that small river, which had been cut up by the wheels, shallow, stirred up, and muddy, flowing, when the Venerable Ānanda approached, flowed clear, very pure, and undisturbed. Then this occurred to the Venerable Ānanda: "Wonderful indeed, friend, marvellous indeed, friend, is the great supernormal power and great majesty of the Truth-finder. For this small river, which had been cut up by the wheels, shallow, stirred up, and muddy, flowing, when I approached, flows clear, very pure, and undisturbed." Having taken drinking water with the bowl, he approached the Blessed One; having approached, he said this to the Blessed One - "Wonderful, venerable sir, marvellous, venerable sir, is the great

supernormal power and great majesty of the Truth-finder. Just now, venerable sir, that small river, which had been cut up by the wheels, shallow, stirred up, and muddy, flowing, when I approached, flowed clear, very pure, and undisturbed. Let the Blessed One drink the drinking water, let the Fortunate One drink the drinking water." Then the Blessed One drank the drinking water.

The Story of Pukkusa the Malla's Son

192. Now at that time Pukkusa, a son of the Mallas, a disciple of Āḷāra Kālāma, was travelling along the highway from Kusinārā to Pāvā. Pukkusa, a son of the Mallas, saw the Blessed One seated at the foot of a certain tree. Having seen him, he approached the Blessed One; having approached, he paid respect to the Blessed One and sat down to one side. Seated to one side, Pukkusa, a son of the Mallas, said this to the Blessed One - "Wonderful, venerable sir, marvellous, venerable sir, indeed, venerable sir, those gone forth dwell with a peaceful abiding. Once upon a time, venerable sir, Āḷāra Kālāma, while travelling along the highway, having turned aside from the road, sat down for the day's abiding at the foot of a certain tree not far away. Then, venerable sir, about five hundred carts passed by close to Āḷāra Kālāma. Then, venerable sir, a certain man coming along behind that caravan approached Āḷāra Kālāma; having approached, he said this to Āḷāra Kālāma - 'Did you, venerable sir, see about five hundred carts that have passed by?' 'No indeed, friend, I did not see them.' 'But then, venerable sir, did you hear the sound?' 'No indeed, friend, I did not hear the sound.' 'But then, venerable sir, were you asleep?' 'No indeed, friend, I was not asleep.' 'But then, venerable sir, were you conscious?' 'Yes, friend.' 'So you, venerable sir, being conscious and awake, neither saw about five hundred carts that passed by close by, nor heard the sound; yet, venerable sir, was your double robe covered with dust?' 'Yes, friend.' Then, venerable sir, this occurred to that man - 'Wonderful indeed, friend, marvellous indeed, friend, indeed, friend, those gone forth dwell with a peaceful abiding. For one who is conscious and awake neither sees about five hundred carts that have passed by close by, nor will hear the sound!' Having declared lofty confidence in Āḷāra Kālāma, he departed."

193. "What do you think, Pukkusa, which is more difficult to do or more difficult to attain - that one who is conscious and awake would neither see about five hundred carts that passed by close by, nor hear the sound; or that one who is conscious and awake, while the sky was raining, while the sky was thundering, while lightning was flashing, while a thunderbolt was crashing, would neither see nor hear the sound?" "What indeed, venerable sir, would five hundred carts do, or six hundred carts, or seven hundred carts, or eight hundred carts, or nine hundred carts, or a thousand carts, or a hundred thousand carts? Rather, this indeed is more difficult to do and more difficult to attain - that one who is conscious and awake, while the sky was raining, while the sky was thundering, while lightning was flashing, while a thunderbolt was crashing, would neither see nor hear the sound."

"On one occasion, Pukkusa, I was dwelling at Ātumā in a granary. Now at that time, while the sky was raining, while the sky was thundering, while lightning was flashing, while a thunderbolt was crashing, not far from the granary, two farmer brothers were killed and four oxen. Then, Pukkusa, a great multitude of people, having gone out from Ātumā, approached where those two farmer brothers had been killed and the four oxen. Now at that time, Pukkusa, having come out from the granary, I was

walking up and down in the open air at the door of the granary. Then, Pukkusa, a certain man from that great multitude of people approached me; having approached, he paid respect to me and stood to one side. To that man standing to one side, Pukkusa, I said this - 'Why, friend, has this great multitude of people gathered together?' 'Just now, venerable sir, while the sky was raining, while the sky was thundering, while lightning was flashing, while a thunderbolt was crashing, two farmer brothers were killed and four oxen. Here this great multitude of people has gathered together. But where were you, venerable sir?' 'I was right here, friend.' 'But then, venerable sir, did you see?' 'No indeed, friend, I did not see them.' 'But then, venerable sir, did you hear the sound?' 'No indeed, friend, I did not hear the sound.' 'But then, venerable sir, were you asleep?' 'No indeed, friend, I was not asleep.' 'But then, venerable sir, were you conscious?' 'Yes, friend.' 'So you, venerable sir, being conscious and awake, while the sky was raining, while the sky was thundering, while lightning was flashing, while a thunderbolt was crashing, neither saw nor heard the sound?' 'Yes, friend.'

"Then, Pukkusa, this occurred to that man - 'Wonderful indeed, friend, marvellous indeed, friend, indeed, friend, those gone forth dwell with a peaceful abiding. For one who is conscious and awake, while the sky was raining, while the sky was thundering, while lightning was flashing, while a thunderbolt was crashing, neither sees nor will hear the sound!' Having declared lofty confidence in me, having paid respect to me, having circumambulated me keeping me on his right, he departed."

When this was said, Pukkusa, a son of the Mallas, said this to the Blessed One - "I, venerable sir, whatever confidence I had in Ājāra Kālāma, that I scatter to the great wind or let it be carried away by a swift-flowing river. Excellent, venerable sir, excellent, venerable sir! Just as, venerable sir, one might set upright what had been overturned, or reveal what had been concealed, or point out the path to one who was lost, or hold up an oil lamp in the darkness so that those with eyes might see forms; just so, the Teaching has been made clear by the Blessed One in many ways. I, venerable sir, go for refuge to the Blessed One, to the Teaching, and to the Community of monks. May the Blessed One remember me as a lay follower who has gone for refuge from this day forth for life."

194. Then Pukkusa, a son of the Mallas, addressed a certain man - "Come now, my good man, bring me a pair of polished gold-coloured robes to wear." "Yes, venerable sir," that man replied to Pukkusa, a son of the Mallas, and brought that pair of polished gold-coloured robes to wear. Then Pukkusa, a son of the Mallas, offered that pair of polished gold-coloured robes to wear to the Blessed One - "This, venerable sir, is a pair of polished gold-coloured robes to wear. May the Blessed One accept it from me out of compassion." "Well then, Pukkusa, clothe me with one and Ānanda with one." "Yes, venerable sir," Pukkusa, a son of the Mallas, replied to the Blessed One, and clothed the Blessed One with one and the Venerable Ānanda with one. Then the Blessed One instructed, encouraged, inspired, and gladdened Pukkusa, a son of the Mallas, with a talk on the Teaching. Then Pukkusa, a son of the Mallas, having been instructed, encouraged, inspired, and gladdened by the Blessed One with a talk on the Teaching, rose from his seat, paid respect to the Blessed One, circumambulated him keeping him on his right, and departed.

195. Then the Venerable Ānanda, when Pukkusa, a son of the Mallas, had recently

departed, offered that pair of polished gold-coloured robes to wear to the Blessed One's body. That, offered to the Blessed One's body, appeared like a faded ember. Then the Venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One - "Wonderful, Venerable Sir, marvellous, Venerable Sir, how pure, Venerable Sir, is the Truth-finder's complexion, how bright. This, Venerable Sir, pair of polished gold-coloured robes to wear, offered to the Blessed One's body, appears like a faded ember." "So it is, Ānanda, so it is, Ānanda. On two occasions the Truth-finder's body is exceedingly pure, the complexion bright. On which two? On the night, Ānanda, when the Truth-finder fully awakens to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment, and on the night when he attains final Nibbāna through the Nibbāna element without residue of clinging. On these two occasions indeed, Ānanda, the Truth-finder's body is exceedingly pure, the complexion bright. "Today indeed, Ānanda, in the last watch of the night, at Kusinārā in the Upavattana, in the Sāla grove of the Mallas, between the twin Sāla trees, the Truth-finder's final Nibbāna will take place. Come, Ānanda, let us approach the Kakudhā river." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One.

A pair of polished gold-coloured robes, Pukkusa offered;
Covered with them, the Teacher, golden-coloured, shone.

196. Then the Blessed One together with a large Community of monks approached the Kakudhā river; having approached, having plunged into the Kakudhā river, having bathed and drunk, having come out, he approached the mango grove. Having approached, he addressed the Venerable Cundaka - "Come now, Cundaka, prepare for me the double robe folded in four, I am tired, Cundaka, I will lie down."

"Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Cundaka replied to the Blessed One and prepared the double robe folded in four. Then the Blessed One lay down in the lion's posture on his right side, overlapping foot upon foot, mindful and fully aware, having attended to the perception of rising. But the Venerable Cundaka sat down right there in front of the Blessed One.

Having gone, the Buddha, to the river Kakudhā,
With clear water, with sweet water, very pure;
The Teacher plunged in, with unwearied form,
The Truth-finder, incomparable in the world.

Having bathed and drunk, the Teacher came up,
Honoured in the midst of the group of monks;
The speaker, the proclaimer, the Blessed One here in the Teaching,
The great sage approached the mango grove.

He addressed the monk named Cundaka,
"Spread out for me the fourfold covering to lie down";
Thus urged by the one of developed self, Cunda,
Spread out the fourfold covering very quickly.

The Teacher lay down, with unwearied form,
And Cunda too sat down there at the front.

197. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Now, Ānanda, someone might cause regret to Cunda, the smith's son - 'It is a loss for you, friend Cunda, it is ill-gained for you, that the Truth-finder, having eaten your last almsfood, attained final Nibbāna.' Ānanda, the regret of Cunda, the smith's son, should be removed thus - 'It is a gain for you, friend Cunda, it is well-gained for you, that the Truth-finder, having eaten your last almsfood, attained final Nibbāna. Face to face with the Blessed One I heard this, friend Cunda, face to face I received it - these two almsfoods are of equal fruit, of equal result, far greater in fruit and far greater in benefit than other almsfoods. Which two? The almsfood having eaten which the Truth-finder fully awakens to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment, and the almsfood having eaten which the Truth-finder attains final Nibbāna through the Nibbāna element without residue of clinging. These two almsfoods are of equal fruit, of equal result, far greater in fruit and far greater in benefit than other almsfoods. Action conducive to life has been accumulated by the Venerable Cunda, the smith's son, action conducive to beauty has been accumulated by the Venerable Cunda, the smith's son, action conducive to happiness has been accumulated by the Venerable Cunda, the smith's son, action conducive to fame has been accumulated by the Venerable Cunda, the smith's son, action conducive to heaven has been accumulated by the Venerable Cunda, the smith's son, action conducive to authority has been accumulated by the Venerable Cunda, the smith's son.' Ānanda, the regret of Cunda, the smith's son, should be removed thus." Then the Blessed One, having understood this matter, at that time uttered this inspired utterance -

"For one who gives, merit increases,
For one who is self-controlled, enmity is not accumulated;
The skilful one abandons evil,
Through the elimination of lust, hate, and delusion, one is quenched."

Fourth recitation section.

The Twin Sāla Trees

198. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come, Ānanda, let us approach the far bank of the river Hiraññavatī, to Kusinārā, to the Upavattana, to the Sāla grove of the Mallas." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One together with a large Community of monks approached the far bank of the river Hiraññavatī, to Kusinārā, to the Upavattana, to the Sāla grove of the Mallas. Having approached, he addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Come now, Ānanda, prepare for me a small bed between the twin Sāla trees with the head to the north, I am tired, Ānanda, I will lie down." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied to the Blessed One and prepared a small bed between the twin Sāla trees with the head to the north. Then the Blessed One lay down in the lion's posture on his right side, overlapping foot upon foot, mindful and fully aware.

Now at that time the twin Sāla trees were in full bloom with flowers out of season. They scattered, showered, and covered the Truth-finder's body in homage to the Truth-finder. Divine mandārava flowers also fell from the sky; they scattered, showered, and covered the Truth-finder's body in homage to the Truth-finder. Divine sandalwood powder also fell from the sky; it scattered, showered, and covered the

Truth-finder's body in homage to the Truth-finder. Divine musical instruments also sounded in the sky in homage to the Truth-finder. Divine songs also resounded in the sky in homage to the Truth-finder.

199. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Ānanda, the twin Sāla trees are in full bloom with flowers out of season. They scattered, showered, and covered the Truth-finder's body in homage to the Truth-finder. Divine mandārava flowers also fell from the sky; they scattered, showered, and covered the Truth-finder's body in homage to the Truth-finder. Divine sandalwood powder also fell from the sky; it scattered, showered, and covered the Truth-finder's body in homage to the Truth-finder. Divine musical instruments also sounded in the sky in homage to the Truth-finder. Divine songs also resounded in the sky in homage to the Truth-finder. But not by this much, Ānanda, is the Truth-finder honoured or respected or revered or venerated or esteemed. Whoever, Ānanda, whether monk or nun or male lay follower or female lay follower, dwells practicing in accordance with the Teaching, practicing properly, living in conformity with the Teaching, that one honours the Truth-finder, respects, reveres, venerates, and esteems with the supreme homage. Therefore, Ānanda, 'We will dwell practicing in accordance with the Teaching, practicing properly, living in conformity with the Teaching.' Thus indeed, Ānanda, should you train."

The Elder Upavāṇa

200. Now at that time the Venerable Upavāṇa was standing in front of the Blessed One, fanning the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One dismissed the Venerable Upavāṇa - "Step aside, monk, do not stand in front of me." Then this occurred to the Venerable Ānanda: "This Venerable Upavāṇa has for a long time been the Blessed One's attendant, one who kept near, one who stayed close by. And yet the Blessed One at this final time dismisses the Venerable Upavāṇa - 'Step aside, monk, do not stand in front of me.' What is the cause, what is the condition, that the Blessed One dismisses the Venerable Upavāṇa - 'Step aside, monk, do not stand in front of me'?" Then the Venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One - "This, Venerable Sir, Venerable Upavāṇa has for a long time been the Blessed One's attendant, one who kept near, one who stayed close by. And yet the Blessed One at this final time dismisses the Venerable Upavāṇa - "Step aside, monk, do not stand in front of me." What, Venerable Sir, is the cause, what is the condition, that the Blessed One dismisses the Venerable Upavāṇa - "Step aside, monk, do not stand in front of me?" "Mostly, Ānanda, deities from the ten world systems have gathered together to see the Truth-finder. As far as, Ānanda, twelve yojanas all around from Kusinārā to the Upavattana, the Sāla grove of the Mallas, there is no spot even the size of the tip of a hair that is not pervaded by influential deities. The deities, Ānanda, are grumbling - 'From afar indeed we have come to see the Truth-finder. Rarely, from time to time, do Truth-finders arise in the world, Worthy Ones, Perfectly Enlightened Ones. Today itself, in the last watch of the night, the Truth-finder's final Nibbāna will take place. And this influential monk is standing in front of the Blessed One, obstructing, and we do not get to see the Truth-finder at this final time.'"

201. "But of what sort, venerable sir, does the Blessed One consider the deities to be?" "There are, Ānanda, deities in space with perception of earth who, having dishevelled their hair, weep, having raised their arms, weep, fall down as if cut off,

roll forward, roll backward - 'Too soon the Blessed One will attain final nibbāna, too soon the Fortunate One will attain final nibbāna, too soon the eye in the world will disappear.'

"There are, Ānanda, deities on earth with perception of earth who, having dishevelled their hair, weep, having raised their arms, weep, fall down as if cut off, roll forward, roll backward - 'Too soon the Blessed One will attain final nibbāna, too soon the Fortunate One will attain final nibbāna, too soon the eye in the world will disappear.'"

"But those deities who are without lust, they, mindful and fully aware, accept it - 'Impermanent are activities, how could it be obtained here?'"

The Four Places Inspiring Spiritual Urgency

202. "Formerly, venerable sir, monks who had completed the rains retreat in various directions would come to see the Truth-finder. We would get to see those monks who are inspiring to the mind, we would get to attend upon them. But after the Blessed One's passing, venerable sir, we will not get to see those monks who are inspiring to the mind, we will not get to attend upon them."

"There are, Ānanda, these four places inspiring spiritual urgency that a faithful son of good family should go and see. What are the four? 'Here the Truth-finder was born' - this, Ānanda, is a place inspiring spiritual urgency that a faithful son of good family should go and see. 'Here the Truth-finder fully awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment' - this, Ānanda, is a place inspiring spiritual urgency that a faithful son of good family should go and see. 'Here the unsurpassed wheel of the Teaching was set in motion by the Truth-finder' - this, Ānanda, is a place inspiring spiritual urgency that a faithful son of good family should go and see. 'Here the Truth-finder attained final Nibbāna through the Nibbāna element without residue of clinging' - this, Ānanda, is a place inspiring spiritual urgency that a faithful son of good family should go and see. 'These, Ānanda, are the four places inspiring spiritual urgency that a faithful son of good family should go and see.'

"Faithful monks, nuns, male lay followers, and female lay followers will come, Ānanda - 'Here the Truth-finder was born,' 'Here the Truth-finder fully awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment,' 'Here the unsurpassed wheel of the Teaching was set in motion by the Truth-finder,' 'Here the Truth-finder attained final Nibbāna through the Nibbāna element without residue of clinging.' Whoever, Ānanda, while wandering on a pilgrimage to the shrines, will die with a confident mind, all of them, upon the body's collapse at death, will be reborn in a fortunate realm, in a heavenly world."

The Talk on Ānanda's Questions

203. "How, venerable sir, should we proceed with regard to womankind?" "Not seeing them, Ānanda." "But when there is seeing, Blessed One, how should one proceed?" "Not conversing, Ānanda." "But, venerable sir, when one is being addressed, how should one proceed?" "Mindfulness, Ānanda, should be established."

204. "How, venerable sir, should we proceed with regard to the Truth-finder's body?" "You, Ānanda, should not be occupied with the veneration of the Truth-finder's body. Come now, Ānanda, strive for the essential goal, devote yourselves to the essential

goal, dwell diligent, ardent, and resolute for the essential goal. There are, Ānanda, wise warriors, wise brahmins, and wise householders who have faith in the Truth-finder, they will perform the veneration of the Truth-finder's body."

205. "But how, venerable sir, should one proceed with regard to the Truth-finder's body?" "Just as, Ānanda, they proceed with regard to the body of a universal monarch, so should one proceed with regard to the Truth-finder's body." "But how, venerable sir, do they proceed with regard to the body of a universal monarch?" "Ānanda, they wrap the body of a universal monarch with new cloth, having wrapped it with new cloth they wrap it with carded cotton, having wrapped it with carded cotton they wrap it with new cloth. By this method, having wrapped the body of a universal monarch with five hundred pairs of cloths, having placed it in an iron oil vessel, having covered it with another iron vessel, having made a funeral pyre of all kinds of fragrant woods, they cremate the body of the universal monarch. At a crossroads they build a monument for the universal monarch. Thus indeed, Ānanda, they proceed with regard to the body of a universal monarch. Just as, Ānanda, they proceed with regard to the body of a universal monarch, so should one proceed with regard to the Truth-finder's body. A monument for the Truth-finder should be built at a crossroads. There, those who will offer garlands or fragrance or scented powder, or will pay respect, or will gladden their minds, that will be for their welfare and happiness for a long time.

The Person Worthy of a Stūpa

206. "There are these four, Ānanda, who are worthy of a monument. Which four? A Truth-finder, a Worthy One, a Perfectly Enlightened One is worthy of a monument; a Paccekabuddha is worthy of a monument; a disciple of the Truth-finder is worthy of a monument; a wheel-turning monarch is worthy of a monument.

"And for what reason, Ānanda, is a Truth-finder, a Worthy One, a Perfectly Enlightened One worthy of a monument? 'This is the monument of that Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Perfectly Enlightened One' - Ānanda, many people gladden their minds. Having gladdened their minds there, upon the body's collapse at death, they are reborn in a fortunate realm, in a heavenly world. This indeed, Ānanda, is the reason why a Truth-finder, a Worthy One, a Perfectly Enlightened One is worthy of a monument.

"And for what reason, Ānanda, is a Paccekabuddha worthy of a monument? 'This is the monument of that Blessed Paccekabuddha' - Ānanda, many people gladden their minds. Having gladdened their minds there, upon the body's collapse at death, they are reborn in a fortunate realm, in a heavenly world. This indeed, Ānanda, is the reason why a Paccekabuddha is worthy of a monument.

"And for what reason, Ānanda, is a disciple of the Truth-finder worthy of a monument? 'This is the monument of a disciple of that Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Perfectly Enlightened One' - Ānanda, many people gladden their minds. Having gladdened their minds there, upon the body's collapse at death, they are reborn in a fortunate realm, in a heavenly world. This indeed, Ānanda, is the reason why a disciple of the Truth-finder is worthy of a monument.

"And for what reason, Ānanda, is a wheel-turning monarch worthy of a monument? 'This is the monument of that righteous king of righteousness' - Ānanda, many people gladden their minds. Having gladdened their minds there, upon the body's collapse at death, they are reborn in a fortunate realm, in a heavenly world. This indeed, Ānanda, is the reason why a wheel-turning monarch is worthy of a monument. These indeed, Ānanda, are the four who are worthy of a monument."

The Marvellous Quality of Ānanda

207. Then the Venerable Ānanda, having entered the dwelling and taken hold of the lintel of the door, stood crying - "Alas, I am still a learner with work still to be done, and my Teacher will attain final Nibbāna, he who has compassion for me." Then the Blessed One addressed the monks: "Where, monks, is Ānanda?" "This, venerable sir, the Venerable Ānanda, having entered the dwelling and taken hold of the lintel of the door, is standing crying - 'Alas, I am still a learner with work still to be done, and my Teacher will attain final Nibbāna, he who has compassion for me.'" Then the Blessed One addressed a certain monk - "Come, monk, in my name address Ānanda - 'The Teacher calls you, friend Ānanda.'" "Yes, venerable sir," that monk replied to the Blessed One and approached the Venerable Ānanda; having approached, he said this to the Venerable Ānanda - "The Teacher calls you, friend Ānanda." "Yes, friend," the Venerable Ānanda replied to that monk and approached the Blessed One; having approached, he paid respect to the Blessed One and sat down to one side. To the Venerable Ānanda seated to one side, the Blessed One said this - "Enough, Ānanda, do not grieve, do not lament. Has this not been declared by me beforehand, Ānanda - 'There is separation, parting, and becoming otherwise from all that is dear and beloved'; how could it be obtained here, Ānanda? 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. For a long time, Ānanda, the Truth-finder has been attended by you with bodily action through friendliness, beneficial, pleasant, undivided, limitless; with verbal action through friendliness, beneficial, pleasant, undivided, limitless; with mental action through friendliness, beneficial, pleasant, undivided, limitless. You have made merit, Ānanda; devote yourself to striving, soon you will be without mental corruptions."

208. Then the Blessed One addressed the monks: "Monks, those who were Worthy Ones, Perfectly Enlightened Ones in the past period of time, those Blessed Ones too had just such supreme attendants, just as Ānanda is to me. Monks, those who will be Worthy Ones, Perfectly Enlightened Ones in the future period of time, those Blessed Ones too will have just such supreme attendants, just as Ānanda is to me. Monks, Ānanda is wise; monks, Ānanda is intelligent. He knows 'This is the time for monks to approach the Truth-finder for an audience, this is the time for nuns, this is the time for male lay followers, this is the time for female lay followers, this is the time for kings, royal ministers, sectarians, and disciples of sectarians.'

209. "Monks, there are these four wonderful and marvellous qualities in Ānanda. Which four? If, monks, an assembly of monks approaches Ānanda for an audience, that assembly is delighted by seeing him. If there Ānanda speaks the Teaching, that assembly is also delighted by what is spoken. The assembly of monks is unsatisfied, monks, when Ānanda becomes silent. If, monks, an assembly of nuns approaches Ānanda for an audience, that assembly is delighted by seeing him. If there Ānanda

speaks the Teaching, that assembly is also delighted by what is spoken. The assembly of nuns is unsatisfied, monks, when Ānanda becomes silent. If, monks, an assembly of lay followers approaches Ānanda for an audience, that assembly is delighted by seeing him. If there Ānanda speaks the Teaching, that assembly is also delighted by what is spoken. The assembly of lay followers is unsatisfied, monks, when Ānanda becomes silent. If, monks, an assembly of female lay followers approaches Ānanda for an audience, that assembly is delighted by seeing him. If there Ānanda speaks the Teaching, that assembly is also delighted by what is spoken. The assembly of female lay followers is unsatisfied, monks, when Ānanda becomes silent. These, monks, are the four wonderful and marvellous qualities in Ānanda.

"Monks, there are these four wonderful and marvellous qualities in a wheel-turning monarch. Which four? If, monks, an assembly of nobles approaches the wheel-turning monarch for an audience, that assembly is delighted by seeing him. If there the wheel-turning monarch speaks, that assembly is also delighted by what is spoken. The assembly of nobles is unsatisfied, monks. Then the wheel-turning monarch becomes silent. If, monks, an assembly of brahmins... etc. an assembly of householders... etc. an assembly of ascetics approaches the wheel-turning monarch for an audience, that assembly is delighted by seeing him. If there the wheel-turning monarch speaks, that assembly is also delighted by what is spoken. The assembly of ascetics is unsatisfied, monks, when the wheel-turning monarch becomes silent. Just so, monks, there are these four wonderful and marvellous qualities in Ānanda. If, monks, an assembly of monks approaches Ānanda for an audience, that assembly is delighted by seeing him. If there Ānanda speaks the Teaching, that assembly is also delighted by what is spoken. The assembly of monks is unsatisfied, monks. Then Ānanda becomes silent. If, monks, an assembly of nuns... etc. an assembly of lay followers... etc. an assembly of female lay followers approaches Ānanda for an audience, that assembly is delighted by seeing him. If there Ānanda speaks the Teaching, that assembly is also delighted by what is spoken. The assembly of female lay followers is unsatisfied, monks. Then Ānanda becomes silent. These, monks, are the four wonderful and marvellous qualities in Ānanda."

The Teaching of the Mahāśudassana Discourse

210. When this was said, the Venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One - "Venerable sir, let not the Blessed One attain final Nibbāna in this small town, this barren town, this branch town. There are, venerable sir, other great cities, as follows - Campā, Rājagaha, Sāvatthī, Sāketa, Kosambī, Bārāṇasī; let the Blessed One attain final Nibbāna here. Here there are many wealthy warriors, wealthy brahmins, and wealthy householders who have faith in the Truth-finder. They will perform the veneration of the Truth-finder's body." "Do not say so, Ānanda; do not say so, Ānanda - 'a small town, a barren town, a branch town.'

"Once upon a time, Ānanda, there was a king named Mahāśudassana, a wheel-turning monarch, a righteous king of righteousness, ruler of the four quarters, victorious, who had established the security of his realm, possessed of the seven treasures. Ānanda, for King Mahāśudassana, this Kusinārā was a royal city named Kusāvātī, twelve yojanas in length from east to west; and seven yojanas in breadth from north to south. Kusāvātī, Ānanda, the royal city, was prosperous and flourishing, populous, crowded with people, and having plenty of food. Just as, Ānanda, the royal

city of the gods named Āḷakamandā is prosperous and flourishing, populous, crowded with spirits, and having plenty of food; just so, Ānanda, Kusāvatī the royal city was prosperous and flourishing, populous, crowded with people, and having plenty of food. Kusāvatī, Ānanda, the royal city, was never free from ten sounds both by day and by night, as follows - the sound of elephants, the sound of horses, the sound of chariots, the sound of drums, the sound of tabors, the sound of lutes, the sound of singing, the sound of conches, the sound of cymbals, the sound of hand-clapping, and the tenth sound of 'eat, drink, and chew.'

"Go, Ānanda, having entered Kusinārā, announce to the Mallas of Kusinārā - 'Today indeed, Vāseṭṭhas, in the last watch of the night, the Truth-finder's final Nibbāna will take place. Come forth, Vāseṭṭhas, come forth, Vāseṭṭhas. Do not be remorseful afterwards - the Truth-finder's final Nibbāna took place in our village territory, and we did not get to see the Truth-finder at the final time.'" "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied to the Blessed One, and having dressed, taking his bowl and robe, with a companion, entered Kusinārā.

The Homage of the Mallas

211. Now at that time the Mallas of Kusinārā were assembled in the assembly hall on some business. Then the Venerable Ānanda approached the assembly hall of the Mallas of Kusinārā; having approached, he announced to the Mallas of Kusinārā - "Today indeed, Vāseṭṭhas, in the last watch of the night, the Truth-finder's final Nibbāna will take place. Come forth, Vāseṭṭhas, come forth, Vāseṭṭhas. Do not be remorseful afterwards - 'The Truth-finder's final Nibbāna took place in our village territory, and we did not get to see the Truth-finder at the final time.'" Having heard this word of the Venerable Ānanda, the Mallas and the sons of the Mallas and the daughters-in-law of the Mallas and the wives of the Mallas, afflicted with misery, unhappy, overcome with mental suffering, some having dishevelled their hair weep, having raised their arms weep, fall down as if cut off, roll forward, roll backward - "Too soon the Blessed One will attain final Nibbāna, too soon the Fortunate One will attain final Nibbāna, too soon the eye in the world will disappear." Then the Mallas and the sons of the Mallas and the daughters-in-law of the Mallas and the wives of the Mallas, afflicted with misery, unhappy, overcome with mental suffering, approached the Upavattana, the Sāla grove of the Mallas, where the Venerable Ānanda was. Then this occurred to the Venerable Ānanda: "If I have the Mallas of Kusinārā pay respect to the Blessed One one by one, the Blessed One will not have been paid respect by the Mallas of Kusinārā, and this night will become light. What if I were to have the Mallas of Kusinārā pay respect to the Blessed One, having arranged them generation by generation - 'Venerable sir, the Malla of such and such a name, together with his sons, together with his wife, together with his retinue, together with his ministers, pays respect with his head at the Blessed One's feet.'" Then the Venerable Ānanda had the Mallas of Kusinārā pay respect to the Blessed One, having arranged them generation by generation - "Venerable sir, the Malla of such and such a name, together with his sons, together with his wife, together with his retinue, together with his ministers, pays respect with his head at the Blessed One's feet." Then the Venerable Ānanda, by this method, had the Mallas of Kusinārā pay respect to the Blessed One in the first watch itself.

The Story of the Wandering Ascetic Subhadda

212. Now at that time a wandering ascetic named Subhadda was dwelling at Kusinārā. The wandering ascetic Subhadda heard - "Today, it seems, in the last watch of the night, the final Nibbāna of the ascetic Gotama will take place." Then this occurred to the wandering ascetic Subhadda - "I have heard this from wandering ascetics who are senior, elderly, teachers and teachers' teachers, when they speak - 'Rarely, from time to time, do Truth-finders arise in the world, Worthy Ones, Perfectly Enlightened Ones.' Today itself, in the last watch of the night, the final Nibbāna of the ascetic Gotama will take place. And this matter of uncertainty has arisen in me; thus confident am I in the ascetic Gotama: 'The ascetic Gotama is able to expound to me the Teaching in such a way that I might abandon this matter of uncertainty.'" Then the wandering ascetic Subhadda went to the Upavattana, the Sāla grove of the Mallas, and approached the Venerable Ānanda; having approached, he said this to the Venerable Ānanda - "I have heard this, dear Ānanda, from wandering ascetics who are senior, elderly, teachers and teachers' teachers, when they speak - 'Rarely, from time to time, do Truth-finders arise in the world, Worthy Ones, Perfectly Enlightened Ones.' Today itself, in the last watch of the night, the final Nibbāna of the ascetic Gotama will take place. And this matter of uncertainty has arisen in me -thus confident am I in the ascetic Gotama: 'The ascetic Gotama is able to expound to me the Teaching in such a way that I might abandon this matter of uncertainty.' It would be good, dear Ānanda, if I could obtain an audience with the ascetic Gotama." When this was said, the Venerable Ānanda said this to the wandering ascetic Subhadda - "Enough, friend Subhadda, do not trouble the Truth-finder; the Blessed One is weary." For the second time, the wandering ascetic Subhadda... etc. For the third time, the wandering ascetic Subhadda said this to the Venerable Ānanda - "I have heard this, dear Ānanda, from wandering ascetics who are senior, elderly, teachers and teachers' teachers, when they speak - 'Rarely, from time to time, do Truth-finders arise in the world, Worthy Ones, Perfectly Enlightened Ones.' Today itself, in the last watch of the night, the final Nibbāna of the ascetic Gotama will take place. And this matter of uncertainty has arisen in me - thus confident am I in the ascetic Gotama: 'The ascetic Gotama is able to expound to me the Teaching in such a way that I might abandon this matter of uncertainty.' It would be good, dear Ānanda, if I could obtain an audience with the ascetic Gotama." For the third time, the Venerable Ānanda said this to the wandering ascetic Subhadda - "Enough, friend Subhadda, do not trouble the Truth-finder; the Blessed One is weary."

213. The Blessed One heard this friendly conversation of the Venerable Ānanda with the wandering ascetic Subhadda. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Enough, Ānanda, do not obstruct Subhadda, let Subhadda, Ānanda, obtain an audience with the Truth-finder. Whatever Subhadda will ask me, all that he will ask seeking knowledge, not seeking to trouble. And whatever I, being asked, will answer, he will understand that quickly." Then the Venerable Ānanda said this to the wandering ascetic Subhadda - "Go, friend Subhadda, the Blessed One gives you permission." Then the wandering ascetic Subhadda approached the Blessed One; having approached, he exchanged friendly greetings with the Blessed One, and having concluded the pleasant and memorable talk, he sat down to one side. Seated to one side, the wandering ascetic Subhadda said this to the Blessed One - "These ascetics and brahmins, Master Gotama, who have followings, who have groups, who

are teachers of groups, who are well-known, famous, founders of sects, highly honoured by many people, as follows - Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambala, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Sañcaya Belaṭṭhaputta, Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta - did all of them directly know according to their own acknowledgment, or did none of them directly know, or did some directly know and some not directly know?" "Enough, Subhadda, let this be - 'Did all of them directly know according to their own acknowledgment, or did none of them directly know, or did some directly know and some not directly know.' I will expound to you the Teaching, Subhadda; listen to that, pay close attention, I will speak." "Yes, venerable sir," the wandering ascetic Subhadda assented to the Blessed One. The Blessed One said this -

214. "In whatever Teaching and discipline, Subhadda, the noble eightfold path is not found, an ascetic is not found there. A second ascetic is not found there. A third ascetic is not found there. A fourth ascetic is not found there. But in whatever Teaching and discipline, Subhadda, the noble eightfold path is found, an ascetic is found there, a second ascetic is found there, a third ascetic is found there, a fourth ascetic is found there. In this Teaching and discipline, Subhadda, the noble eightfold path is found; here only, Subhadda, is an ascetic, here is a second ascetic, here is a third ascetic, here is a fourth ascetic; the other doctrines are empty of ascetics. And if, Subhadda, these monks were to dwell rightly, the world would not be empty of Worthy Ones."

"At twenty-nine years of age, Subhadda,
I went forth, seeking what is wholesome;
More than fifty years have passed,
Since I went forth, Subhadda.

One practising in the domain of the true method of the Teaching,
Outside of this there is not even an ascetic.

"There is no second ascetic. There is no third ascetic. There is no fourth ascetic. The other doctrines are empty of ascetics. And if, Subhadda, these monks were to dwell rightly, the world would not be empty of Worthy Ones."

215. When this was said, the wandering ascetic Subhadda said this to the Blessed One - "Excellent, venerable sir, excellent, venerable sir. Just as, venerable sir, one might set upright what had been overturned, or reveal what had been concealed, or point out the path to one who was lost, or hold up an oil lamp in the darkness so that those with eyes might see forms; just so, the Teaching has been made clear by the Blessed One in many ways. I, venerable sir, go for refuge to the Blessed One, to the Teaching, and to the Community of monks. May I, venerable sir, receive the going forth under the Blessed One, may I receive the full ordination." "Whoever, Subhadda, was formerly of another sect and wishes for the going forth in this Teaching and discipline, wishes for full ordination, he undergoes probation for four months. After the elapse of four months, monks having won the favour give the going forth and give full ordination for monkhood. But here the difference among individuals is known to me." "If, venerable sir, those formerly of other sects wishing for the going forth in this Teaching and discipline, wishing for full ordination, undergo probation for four months, and after the elapse of four months monks having won the favour give the

going forth and give full ordination for monkhood, I will undergo probation for four years. After the elapse of four years, let monks having won the favour give the going forth and give full ordination for monkhood."

Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Then, Ānanda, give Subhadda the going forth." "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda assented to the Blessed One. Then the wandering ascetic Subhadda said this to the Venerable Ānanda - "It is a gain for you, friend Ānanda; it is well gained for you, friend Ānanda, that here you have been consecrated with the consecration of a pupil in the presence of the Teacher." Then the wandering ascetic Subhadda received the going forth under the Blessed One, he received the full ordination. And not long after being fully ordained, dwelling alone, withdrawn, diligent, ardent, and resolute, the Venerable Subhadda soon realised for himself, with direct knowledge, in this very life, that unsurpassed consummation of the holy life for the sake of which sons of good family rightly go forth from home into homelessness; and, having entered upon it, he dwelt in it. He directly knew: "Birth is eliminated, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more coming back to any state of being." And the Venerable Subhadda became one of the Worthy Ones. He was the last direct disciple of the Blessed One.

Fifth recitation section.

The Truth-finder's Final Words

216. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Now, Ānanda, you might think thus - 'The Scriptures belong to a Teacher who has passed away, we have no Teacher.' But this, Ānanda, should not be seen thus. The Teaching and the monastic discipline that have been taught and laid down by me for you, Ānanda, they will be your Teacher after my passing. Now, Ānanda, just as monks at present address one another as 'friend', after my passing they should not address one another thus. A younger monk, Ānanda, should be addressed by an elder monk by name or by clan or by addressing as 'friend'. An elder monk should be addressed by a younger monk as 'venerable sir' or 'venerable'. If it wishes, Ānanda, the monastic community may abolish the lesser and minor training rules after my passing. The highest penalty should be given to the monk Channa after my passing, Ānanda." "But what, venerable sir, is the highest penalty?" "The monk Channa, Ānanda, may say whatever he wishes. He should not be spoken to by the monks, not be exhorted, not be instructed."

217. Then the Blessed One addressed the monks: "Perhaps, monks, even for one monk there may be uncertainty or doubt about the Buddha, or the Teaching, or the Community, or the path, or the practice. Ask, monks, do not be remorseful afterwards - 'The Teacher was present before us, yet we were not able to question the Blessed One face to face.'" When this was said, those monks remained silent. For the second time the Blessed One... etc. For the third time the Blessed One addressed the monks: "Perhaps, monks, even for one monk there may be uncertainty or doubt about the Buddha, or the Teaching, or the Community, or the path, or the practice. Ask, monks, do not be remorseful afterwards - 'The Teacher was present before us, yet we were not able to question the Blessed One face to face.'" For the third time those monks remained silent. Then the Blessed One addressed the monks: "Perhaps, monks, out of

respect for the Teacher you would not ask. Let a friend inform a friend, monks." When this was said, those monks remained silent. Then the Venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One - "Wonderful, Venerable Sir, marvellous, Venerable Sir! Thus confident am I, Venerable Sir, in this community of monks: 'There is not even for one monk any uncertainty or doubt about the Buddha, or the Teaching, or the Community, or the path, or the practice.'" "You speak out of confidence, Ānanda; but here, Ānanda, the Truth-finder has knowledge. There is not in this community of monks even for one monk any uncertainty or doubt about the Buddha, or the Teaching, or the Community, or the path, or the practice. For, Ānanda, of these five hundred monks, the last monk is a stream-enterer, no longer subject to fall into lower realms, fixed in destiny, heading for the highest enlightenment."

218. Then the Blessed One addressed the monks: "Come now, monks, I address you: all activities have the nature of fall; strive with diligence." This was the Truth-finder's final speech.

The Talk on the Final Nibbāna

219. Then the Blessed One attained the first meditative absorption, and having emerged from the first meditative absorption, he attained the second meditative absorption, and having emerged from the second meditative absorption, he attained the third meditative absorption, and having emerged from the third meditative absorption, he attained the fourth meditative absorption. Having emerged from the fourth meditative absorption, he attained the plane of infinite space, and having emerged from the attainment of the plane of infinite space, he attained the plane of infinite consciousness, and having emerged from the attainment of the plane of infinite consciousness, he attained the plane of nothingness, and having emerged from the attainment of the plane of nothingness, he attained the plane of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, and having emerged from the attainment of the plane of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, he attained the cessation of perception and feeling.

Then the Venerable Ānanda said this to the Venerable Anuruddha - "Venerable sir Anuruddha, the Blessed One has attained final Nibbāna." "No, friend Ānanda, the Blessed One has not attained final Nibbāna, he has attained the cessation of perception and feeling."

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, and having emerged from the attainment of the plane of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, he attained the plane of nothingness, and having emerged from the attainment of the plane of nothingness, he attained the plane of infinite consciousness, and having emerged from the attainment of the plane of infinite consciousness, he attained the plane of infinite space, and having emerged from the attainment of the plane of infinite space, he attained the fourth meditative absorption, and having emerged from the fourth meditative absorption, he attained the third meditative absorption, and having emerged from the third meditative absorption, he attained the second meditative absorption, and having emerged from the second meditative absorption, he attained the first meditative absorption, and having emerged from the first meditative absorption, he attained the second

meditative absorption, and having emerged from the second meditative absorption, he attained the third meditative absorption, and having emerged from the third meditative absorption, he attained the fourth meditative absorption, and having emerged from the fourth meditative absorption, immediately the Blessed One attained final Nibbāna.

220. When the Blessed One attained final Nibbāna, together with the final Nibbāna there was a great earthquake, terrifying and hair-raising. And the divine drums resounded. When the Blessed One attained final Nibbāna, together with the final Nibbāna, Brahmā Sahampati spoke this verse -

"All beings in the world will lay down the body;
Where such a Teacher, without equal in the world,
The Truth-finder who has attained power, the Perfectly Enlightened One, has
attained final Nibbāna."

221. When the Blessed One attained final Nibbāna, together with the final Nibbāna, Sakka, the lord of the gods, spoke this verse -

"Impermanent indeed are activities, having the nature of arising and falling;
Having arisen, they cease; their appeasement is happiness."

222. When the Blessed One attained final Nibbāna, together with the final Nibbāna, the Venerable Anuruddha spoke these verses -

"There was no in-breath and out-breath, for such a one whose mind was
stable;
Without longing, referring to peace, the sage died.

"With a mind that was not withdrawn, he endured the feeling;
Like the extinguishing of a lamp, there was deliverance of the mind."

223. When the Blessed One attained final Nibbāna, together with the final Nibbāna, the Venerable Ānanda spoke this verse -

"Then there was what was terrifying, then there was what was hair-raising;
When the Perfectly Enlightened One, endowed with all excellent qualities,
attained final Nibbāna."

224. When the Blessed One attained final Nibbāna, those monks there who were not free from lust, some having raised their arms, wept, fell down as if cut off, rolled forward, rolled backward, "Too soon the Blessed One has attained final Nibbāna, too soon the Fortunate One has attained final Nibbāna, too soon the eye in the world has disappeared." But those monks who were without lust, they, mindful and fully aware, accepted it - "Impermanent are activities, how could it be obtained here?"

225. Then the Venerable Anuruddha addressed the monks: "Enough, friends, do not grieve, do not lament. Has this not been declared by the Blessed One beforehand, friends - 'There is separation, parting, and becoming otherwise from all that is dear and beloved.' How could it be obtained here, friends? 'That what is born, come to be, conditioned, subject to disintegration, should not disintegrate' - this is impossible. The deities, friends, are grumbling." "But of what sort, venerable sir, does the Venerable

Anuruddha consider the deities to be?"

"There are, friend Ānanda, deities in space with perception of earth who, having dishevelled their hair, weep, having raised their arms, weep, fall down as if cut off, roll forward, roll backward - 'Too soon the Blessed One has attained final Nibbāna, too soon the Fortunate One has attained final Nibbāna, too soon the eye in the world has disappeared.' There are, friend Ānanda, deities on earth with perception of earth who, having dishevelled their hair, weep, having raised their arms, weep, fall down as if cut off, roll forward, roll backward - 'Too soon the Blessed One has attained final Nibbāna, too soon the Fortunate One has attained final Nibbāna, too soon the eye in the world has disappeared.' But those deities who are without lust, they, mindful and fully aware, accept it - 'Impermanent are activities, how could it be obtained here?'" Then the Venerable Anuruddha and the Venerable Ānanda spent the remainder of the night in talk on the Teaching.

226. Then the Venerable Anuruddha addressed the Venerable Ānanda - "Go, friend Ānanda, having entered Kusinārā, announce to the Mallas of Kusinārā - 'The Blessed One has attained final Nibbāna, Vāsetṭhas, now do as you think fit.'" "Yes, venerable sir," the Venerable Ānanda replied to the Venerable Anuruddha, and having dressed in the earlier period of the day, taking his bowl and robe, with a companion, entered Kusinārā. Now at that time the Mallas of Kusinārā were assembled in the assembly hall on that very business. Then the Venerable Ānanda approached the assembly hall of the Mallas of Kusinārā; having approached, he announced to the Mallas of Kusinārā - "The Blessed One has attained final Nibbāna, Vāsetṭhas, now do as you think fit." Having heard this word of the Venerable Ānanda, the Mallas and the sons of the Mallas and the daughters-in-law of the Mallas and the wives of the Mallas, afflicted with misery, unhappy, overcome with mental suffering, some having dishevelled their hair weep, having raised their arms weep, fall down as if cut off, roll forward, roll backward - "Too soon the Blessed One has attained final Nibbāna, too soon the Fortunate One has attained final Nibbāna, too soon the eye in the world has disappeared."

The Veneration of the Buddha's Body

227. Then the Mallas of Kusinārā commanded their men: "Well then, my good men, gather together in Kusinārā all the perfumes and garlands and all the musical instruments." Then the Mallas of Kusinārā, taking perfumes and garlands and all the musical instruments and five hundred pairs of garments, approached the Upavattana, the Sāla grove of the Mallas, where the Blessed One's body was; having approached, honouring, respecting, revering, and venerating the Blessed One's body with dancing, singing, music, garlands, and perfumes, making cloth canopies, preparing circular pavilions, they spent one day.

Then this occurred to the Mallas of Kusinārā: "It is too late today to cremate the Blessed One's body; tomorrow we will cremate the Blessed One's body." Then the Mallas of Kusinārā, honouring, respecting, revering, and venerating the Blessed One's body with dancing, singing, music, garlands, and perfumes, making cloth canopies, preparing circular pavilions, spent a second day, spent a third day, spent a fourth day, spent a fifth day, spent a sixth day.

Then on the seventh day this occurred to the Mallas of Kusinārā: "We, honouring,

respecting, revering, and venerating the Blessed One's body with dancing, singing, music, garlands, and perfumes, having carried it through the south to the south of the city, passing outside to the outside, will cremate the Blessed One's body to the south of the city."

228. Now at that time, eight chief Mallas, having bathed their heads and dressed in new garments, thinking "We will lift up the Blessed One's body," were unable to lift it up. Then the Mallas of Kusinārā said this to the Venerable Anuruddha - "What, Venerable Anuruddha, is the cause, what is the condition, by which these eight chief Mallas, having bathed their heads and dressed in new garments, thinking 'We will lift up the Blessed One's body,' are unable to lift it up?" "Your intention, Vāseṭṭhas, is one thing; the intention of the deities is another." "But how, venerable sir, is the intention of the deities?" "Your intention, Vāseṭṭhas, is this - 'We, honouring, respecting, revering, and venerating the Blessed One's body with dancing, singing, music, garlands, and perfumes, having carried it through the south to the south of the city, passing outside to the outside, will cremate the Blessed One's body to the south of the city'; but the intention of the deities, Vāseṭṭhas, is this - 'We, honouring, respecting, revering, and venerating the Blessed One's body with divine dancing, singing, music, and perfumes, having carried it through the north to the north of the city, having entered the city by the northern gate, having carried it through the middle to the middle of the city, having departed by the eastern gate, to the east of the city at the shrine of the Mallas named Makuṭabandhana, here we will cremate the Blessed One's body.' "As is the intention of the deities, venerable sir, so let it be."

229. Now at that time Kusinārā, as far as the refuse heaps at the junctions and rubbish places, was covered with mandārava flowers to a depth reaching the knees. Then the deities and the Mallas of Kusinārā, honouring, respecting, revering, and venerating the Blessed One's body with divine and human dancing, singing, music, garlands, and perfumes, having carried it through the north to the north of the city, having entered the city by the northern gate, having carried it through the middle to the middle of the city, having departed 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.

230. Then the Mallas of Kusinārā said this to the Venerable Ānanda - "How, venerable Ānanda, should we proceed with regard to the Truth-finder's body?" "Just as, Vāseṭṭhas, they proceed with regard to the body of a universal monarch, so should one proceed with regard to the Truth-finder's body." "But how, venerable Ānanda, do they proceed with regard to the body of a universal monarch?" "Vāseṭṭhas, they wrap the body of a universal monarch with new cloth, having wrapped it with new cloth they wrap it with carded cotton, having wrapped it with carded cotton they wrap it with new cloth. By this method, having wrapped the body of a universal monarch with five hundred pairs of cloths, having placed it in an iron oil vessel, having covered it with another iron vessel, having made a funeral pyre of all kinds of fragrant woods, they cremate the body of the universal monarch. At a crossroads they build a monument for the universal monarch. Thus, Vāseṭṭhas, they proceed with regard to the body of a universal monarch. Just as, Vāseṭṭhas, they proceed with regard to the body of a universal monarch, so should one proceed with regard to the Truth-finder's body. A monument for the Truth-finder should be built at a crossroads. There, those

who will offer garlands or fragrance or scented powder, or will pay respect, or will gladden their minds, that will be for their welfare and happiness for a long time." Then the Mallas of Kusinārā commanded their men: "Well then, my good men, gather together the carded cotton of the Mallas."

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā, having wrapped the Blessed One's body with new cloth, wrapped it with carded cotton, having wrapped it with carded cotton, wrapped it with new cloth. By this method, having wrapped the Blessed One's body with five hundred pairs of cloths, having placed it in an iron oil vessel, having covered it with another iron vessel, having made a funeral pyre of all kinds of fragrant woods, they placed the Blessed One's body on the funeral pyre.

The Story of the Elder Mahākassapa

231. Now at that time the Venerable Mahākassapa was travelling on the highway from Pāvā to Kusinārā together with a large Community of monks, about five hundred monks. Then the Venerable Mahākassapa, having turned aside from the road, sat down at the foot of a certain tree. Now at that time a certain naked ascetic, having taken a mandārava flower from Kusinārā, was travelling on the highway to Pāvā. The Venerable Mahākassapa saw that naked ascetic coming from afar, and having seen him, he said this to that naked ascetic - "Friend, do you know our Teacher?" "Yes, friend, I know. Today, seven days ago, the ascetic Gotama attained final Nibbāna. From there this mandārava flower was taken by me." "There, those monks who were not free from lust, some having raised their arms, wept, fell down as if cut off, rolled forward, rolled backward - "Too soon the Blessed One has attained final Nibbāna, too soon the Fortunate One has attained final Nibbāna, too soon the eye in the world has disappeared." But those monks who were without lust, they, mindful and fully aware, accepted it - "Impermanent are activities, how could it be obtained here?"

232. Now at that time a senior who had gone forth in old age named Subhadda was seated in that assembly. Then Subhadda, the senior who had gone forth in old age, said this to those monks - "Enough, friends, do not grieve, do not lament, we are well released from that Great Ascetic. We were troubled - 'This is allowable for you, this is not allowable for you.' But now we shall do whatever we wish, and what we do not wish, that we shall not do." Then the Venerable Mahākassapa addressed the monks - "Enough, friends, do not grieve, do not lament. Has this not been declared by the Blessed One beforehand, friends - 'There is separation, parting, and becoming otherwise from all that is dear and beloved.' How could it be obtained here, friends? '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."

233. Now at that time, four chief Mallas, having bathed their heads and dressed in new garments - thinking "We will set fire to the Blessed One's funeral pyre," were unable to set fire to it. Then the Mallas of Kusinārā said this to the Venerable Anuruddha - "What, Venerable Anuruddha, is the cause, what is the condition, by which these four chief Mallas, having bathed their heads and dressed in new garments - thinking 'We will set fire to the Blessed One's funeral pyre,' are unable to set fire to it?" "The intention of the deities, Vāsetṭhas, is otherwise." "But how, venerable sir, is the intention of the deities?" "The intention of the deities, Vāsetṭhas, is this - 'This Venerable Mahākassapa is travelling on the highway from Pāvā to

Kusinārā together with a large Community of monks, about five hundred monks. The Blessed One's funeral pyre will not blaze up until the Venerable Mahākassapa has paid respect with his head at the Blessed One's feet.'" "As is the intention of the deities, venerable sir, so let it be."

234. Then the Venerable Mahākassapa approached Kusinārā, the shrine of the Mallas named Makuṭabandhana, where the Blessed One's funeral pyre was; having approached, having arranged his robe on one shoulder, having extended joined palms in salutation, having circumambulated the funeral pyre three times keeping it on his right, he paid respect with his head at the Blessed One's feet. Those five hundred monks also, having arranged their robes on one shoulder, having extended joined palms in salutation, having circumambulated the funeral pyre three times keeping it on their right, paid respect with their heads at the Blessed One's feet. And when the Venerable Mahākassapa and those five hundred monks had paid respect, the Blessed One's funeral pyre blazed up by itself.

235. Now as the Blessed One's body was burning, whatever there was called outer skin, or hide, or meat, or sinews, or synovial fluid, of that neither ashes appeared, nor soot; only the relics remained. Just as when ghee or oil is burning, neither ashes appear, nor soot; just so, as the Blessed One's body was burning, whatever there was called outer skin, or hide, or meat, or sinews, or synovial fluid, of that neither ashes appeared, nor soot; only the relics remained. And of those five hundred pairs of cloths, only two cloths were not burnt - the innermost and the outermost. And when the Blessed One's body had been burnt, a torrent of water appeared from the sky and extinguished the Blessed One's funeral pyre. Water also rose up from the sal trees and extinguished the Blessed One's funeral pyre. The Mallas of Kusinārā also extinguished the Blessed One's funeral pyre with all kinds of scented water. Then the Mallas of Kusinārā, having made a cage of spears in the assembly hall and having caused a wall of bows to be placed around it, honoured, respected, revered, and venerated the Blessed One's relics for seven days with dancing, singing, music, garlands, and perfumes.

The Distribution of the Bodily Relics

236. King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha heard - "The Blessed One, it is said, has attained final Nibbāna at Kusinārā." Then King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā - "The Blessed One too was of the warrior caste, I too am of the warrior caste, I too deserve a share of the Blessed One's relics, I too will make a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics."

The Licchavis of Vesālī heard - "The Blessed One, it is said, has attained final Nibbāna at Kusinārā." Then the Licchavis of Vesālī sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā - "The Blessed One too was of the warrior caste, we too are of the warrior caste, we too deserve a share of the Blessed One's relics, we too will make a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics."

The Sakyans dwelling at Kapilavatthu heard - "The Blessed One, it is said, has attained final Nibbāna at Kusinārā." Then the Sakyans dwelling at Kapilavatthu sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā - "The Blessed One is the foremost of our kinsmen, we too deserve a share of the Blessed One's relics, we too will make a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics."

The Bulayas of Allakappa heard - "The Blessed One, it is said, has attained final Nibbāna at Kusinārā." Then the Bulayas of Allakappa sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā - "The Blessed One too was of the warrior caste, we too are of the warrior caste, we too deserve a share of the Blessed One's relics, we too will make a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics."

The Koliyas of Rāmagāma heard - "The Blessed One, it is said, has attained final Nibbāna at Kusinārā." Then the Koliyas of Rāmagāma sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā - "The Blessed One too was of the warrior caste, we too are of the warrior caste, we too deserve a share of the Blessed One's relics, we too will make a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics."

The brahmin Veṭṭhadīpaka heard - "The Blessed One, it is said, has attained final Nibbāna at Kusinārā." Then the brahmin Veṭṭhadīpaka sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā - "The Blessed One too was of the warrior caste, I am a brahmin, I too deserve a share of the Blessed One's relics, I too will make a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics."

The Mallas of Pāvā heard - "The Blessed One, it is said, has attained final Nibbāna at Kusinārā." Then the Mallas of Pāvā sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā - "The Blessed One too was of the warrior caste, we too are of the warrior caste, we too deserve a share of the Blessed One's relics, we too will make a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics."

When this was said, the Mallas of Kusinārā said this to those groups and companies - "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 said this to those groups and companies -

"Let the venerable sirs hear my one word,
Our Buddha was an advocate of patience;
For it is not good that for the highest person,
There should be strife over a portion of the body.

Let all the venerable sirs be united and in harmony,
Rejoicing together, let us make eight portions;
Let the stupas be widespread in the directions,
Many people have faith in the One with Vision."

238. "Well then, brahmin, you yourself divide the Blessed One's relics into eight equal portions with proper distribution." "Yes, sir," the brahmin Doṇa, having assented to those groups and companies, having divided the Blessed One's relics into eight equal well-distributed portions, said this to those groups and companies - "Let the venerable sirs give me this vessel, I too will make a stupa and a great festival for the vessel." They gave the vessel to the brahmin Doṇa.

The Moriyas of Pippalivana heard - "The Blessed One, it is said, has attained final Nibbāna at Kusinārā." Then the Moriyas of Pippalivana sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā - "The Blessed One too was of the warrior caste, we too are of the

warrior caste, we too deserve a share of the Blessed One's relics, we too will make a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics." "There is no share of the Blessed One's relics, the Blessed One's relics have been divided. Take the embers from here." They took the embers from there.

The Veneration of the Relic Stūpas

239. Then King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha made a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics at Rājagaha. The Licchavis of Vesālī too made a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics at Vesālī. The Sakyans dwelling at Kapilavatthu too made a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics at Kapilavatthu. The Bulayas of Allakappa too made a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics at Allakappa. The Koliyas of Rāmagāma too made a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics at Rāmagāma. The brahmin of Veṭṭhadīpa too made a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics at Veṭṭhadīpa. The Mallas of Pāvā too made a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics at Pāvā. The Mallas of Kusinārā too made a stupa and a great festival for the Blessed One's relics at Kusinārā. The brahmin Doṇa too made a stupa and a great festival for the vessel. The Moriyas of Pippalivana too made a stupa and a great festival for the embers at Pippalivana. Thus there were eight relic stupas, the ninth was the vessel stupa, and the tenth was the embers stupa. Thus it was in the past.

240. The body of the One with Vision was eight doṇas; seven doṇas they honour in the Indian subcontinent.

And one doṇa of the best of men, the highest, the king of nāgas honours at Rāmagāma.

One tooth is venerated by the gods of the celestial abode, and one is honoured in the city of Gandhāra;
Yet another in the realm of the Kālīṅga king, and one the king of nāgas honours.

By his very power this earth,
The land is adorned with the finest shrines;
Thus this body of the One with Vision,
Is well honoured by those who are honoured among the honoured.

Venerated by the lord of gods, the lord of nāgas, and the lord of men,
Likewise venerated by the foremost lords of humans;
Pay homage to him with joined palms, having obtained the opportunity,
For a Buddha is indeed rare in hundreds of cosmic cycles.

Forty even teeth, hairs of the head and body hair altogether;
The gods carried away each one, to a succession of world-systems.

The Discourse on the Great Final Nibbāna is concluded as third.



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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